

**DEMYSTIFYING THE (POST-)POLITICS OF SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIA PROJECT
(GAP): AN ANALYSIS OF THE WHAT, WHY, AND HOW OF GAP AND THE
OPERATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN TURKEY FROM A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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To the memory of my grandfather
Ret. Col. Nuri Őevki Erbek (1925-2015),
who saw and read a lot in his 90 years of life,
except this dissertation he deeply wished to see and read.

May you rest in peace, *dede*,
you will always be missed and loved.

Abstract

Turkey's modernization process has been heavily influenced by the strong will and idealistic ambition of the Turkish state to ensure progress and development since the inception of the country in 1923, or even earlier, since the first modernization attempts of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. Elevating the whole nation to the level of "contemporary civilizations," which was perceived as the level and standards of the West, and ensuring integration and homogenization in political, economic, social, and cultural spheres at the national level have been indispensable principles of this process. For this reason, dispersing the population and services throughout the country and reducing the long-standing disparities between inner and coastal as well as eastern and western regions have also been crucial for the state to fulfill its regional policy and modernization goals and objectives.

Even though a wide range of modernizing reforms and development policies were implemented and many development plans, programs, and projects were formulated to this end since the 1920s, arguably Southeastern Anatolia Project (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi*, GAP) has been the most ambitious and sensational project in this regard. GAP was initiated in long "underdeveloped" Southeastern Anatolia Region—or GAP region—in the 1970s as a technical project primarily to produce energy and irrigate lands through constructing plenty of dams and hydroelectric power plants on Euphrates and Tigris. In time, however, the focus, scope, and character of GAP have undergone significant changes and the project has evolved into a bolder scheme to reorder and transform the political, social, economic, and cultural landscape of GAP region and reshape the mindset and behaviors of its local population.

Even though the advancement of GAP increased the influence of the project on GAP region and led to positive development outcomes such as increase in agricultural production and per capita income over time, it also led to controversy, unintended consequences, and contestation on different fronts. The mismatch of visions, aspirations, and expectations between the architects of GAP and the local population never ceased to exist. The negative environmental and social impacts and drawbacks of the project were also subjected to wide criticism. Despite these, the project was not only constantly redefined, repackaged, and reintroduced as a solution to socio-economic and socio-political problems of GAP region, but also given a "special" or "untouchable" status that prevented the questioning of its rationale, *raison d'être*, *modus operandi*, and similar deeper and often overlooked aspects. Also, GAP was rarely examined in the light of critical development approaches and especially the concept of depoliticization, both of which question the "neutral" and "non-political" nature of development and concentrate on contestation and power relations created or altered by

development. Discursive constructions and perceptions of the architects of GAP and their implications were also largely overlooked. The project remained mostly unpacked and many questions as to *what* it used to be in the past, has recently become, and would look like in the future; *why* it was initiated; and *how* it was initiated remained uncontested in the literature.

This study fills this important research gap and examines through what kind of discursive and material practices politicians, bureaucrats, experts, intellectuals, and other elite groups of the Turkish state have shaped the design and implementation of GAP. Based on written and spoken texts on GAP such as parliamentary proceedings between 1975 and 2014, archival resources of GAP Regional Development Administration, and 64 semi-structured interviews with the representatives of various governmental and non-governmental institutions, the study examines GAP's rationale, vocabulary, assumptions, constructions, and mechanisms. In the theoretical guidance of critical development approaches and depoliticization and methodological guidance of post-positivist discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis methods, the study demystifies the project and demonstrates how it could remain rarely problematized and retain its "sanctified" position, which was supposedly "above" and "beyond" politics. Finally, based on the empirical findings, the study introduces and discusses a number of illuminating inferences on the concept of development in general and GAP in particular.

The study comprises eight chapters that are subdivided into four parts. The first part, "Introduction," comprises the introduction chapter followed by the theoretical framework and methodology of the study (Chapter 1, 2, & 3). The second part, "Background and Literature Review," comprises one chapter (Chapter 4) and provides the history of modernization and development efforts of the Turkish state since the Ottoman period in the 19th century, distinct characteristics of Southeastern Anatolia Region, and a comprehensive and systematic literature review on GAP. The third part, "Empirical Analysis," comprises three chapters that examine the historical trajectory of GAP and oscillations in its governance since its inception (Chapter 5); what kind of sources gave impetus to the initiation of GAP and how it has been rationalized in more than four decades (Chapter 6); and the sources and forms of depoliticization in the overall GAP framework and how GAP and depoliticization have related to each other (Chapter 7). The fourth part, "Conclusion," comprises one concluding chapter (Chapter 8) that summarizes the study, identifies the major inferences drawn from the study about development and GAP, explains the implications of the study on GAP and development practice, and points to future research directions that can complement the study and initiate new research avenues in the relevant literature.

Kurzfassung

Seit der Gründung der Türkei, wenn nicht sogar seit den ersten Modernisierungsbestrebungen des Osmanischen Reiches im 19. Jahrhundert, ist der Modernisierungsprozess des Landes stark von dem unbedingten Willen und der idealistischen Ambition des türkischen Staates beeinflusst Fortschritt und Entwicklung zu gewährleisten. Die ganze Nation auf die Stufe der "zeitgenössischen Zivilisationen" zu heben, auf die Standards des Westens, und Integration und Homogenisierung auf der nationalen Ebene in politischen, sozialen und kulturellen Bereichen waren unabdingbare Bestandteile dieses Prozesses. Aus diesem Grund waren die Verteilung von Bevölkerung und Leistungen im ganzen Land und die Reduzierung der langjährigen Disparitäten zwischen inneren und küstennahen, sowie östlichen und westlichen Regionen ausschlaggebend für den Staat um seine modernisierungs- und regionalpolitischen Ziele erfüllen zu können.

Obwohl ein großes Spektrum modernisierender Reformen und Entwicklungsstrategien umgesetzt wurde und ein großer Anteil der Entwicklungspläne, -programme und Projekte seit den 1920er Jahren zu diesem Zweck formuliert wurde, ist das Südostanatolien-Projekt (türk. *Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi*, GAP) wohl das ambitionierteste und aufsehenerregendste Projekt in diesem Zusammenhang. GAP wurde in der seit langem "unterentwickelten" und konfliktgeschüttelten Südostanatolien Region, der GAP Region, in den 1970er Jahren als technisches Projekt initiiert. Das vorrangige Ziel war es, Energie zu erzeugen und trockene Böden durch die Konstruktion einer Vielzahl von Staudämmen und Wasserkraftwerke verschiedener Größe an Euphrat und Tigris zu bewässern. Im Verlauf der Jahre hat sich der Fokus, Umfang und Charakter des GAP erheblich verändert. Das Projekt ist zu einem gewagteren Vorhaben geworden, mit dem Ziel, die politische, soziale, ökonomische und kulturelle Landschaft der GAP Region zu verändern und die Mentalitäten und Verhaltensweisen der lokalen Bevölkerung umzuformen.

Obwohl das Fortschreiten von GAP den Einfluss des Projektes auf die GAP Region und seine lokale Bevölkerung durch bestimmte Entwicklungsdiskurse und -praktiken erhöhte und zu positiven Ergebnissen führte, führte es auch zu Kontroversen, unbeabsichtigten Konsequenzen und Anfechtungen an verschiedenen Fronten. Die Diskrepanzen zwischen Visionen, Aspirationen und Erwartungen zwischen den Architekten des GAP und der lokalen Bevölkerung bestanden dauerhaft. In der Tat waren GAP und seine zahlreichen positiven und negativen Aspekte in der Vergangenheit bereits Untersuchungsobjekte verschiedenster Disziplinen. Allerdings wurde das Projekt nicht nur immer wieder neu definiert und wiederholt als die Lösung der vielen sozio-ökonomischen und sozio-politischen Probleme der

GAP Region vor- und dargestellt, ihm wurde auch ein "spezieller" oder "unantastbarer" Status verliehen, der es verhinderte, dass seine Gründe, *raison d'être*, *modus operandi* oder ähnliche tieferliegende Aspekte in Frage gestellt wurden. Auch in der Literatur wurde das GAP selten im Lichte kritischer Entwicklungsansätze betrachtet und mit dem Konzept der Entpolitisierung betrachtet. Beide Ansätze stellen die angenommene neutrale und unpolitische Natur von Entwicklung in Frage und konzentrieren sich auf Konflikte und Machtbeziehungen, die von Idee und Praxis von Entwicklung geschaffen oder verändert werden. Sowohl diskursive Konstruktionen und Wahrnehmungen der Architekten des GAP, als auch die Vielzahl der Implikationen auf verschiedenen Ebenen wurden weitgehend übersehen. GAP wurde "glorifiziert" und in politischen Kreisen und der Literatur selten problematisiert. Viele Fragen im Hinblick auf *Was* das Projekt in der Vergangenheit war, im Verlauf wurde und in der Zukunft sein wird, aber auch *Warum* es initiiert und *Wie* es gestaltet und implementiert wurde, bleiben nach, wie, vor unangefochten.

Die vorliegende Studie füllt diese wichtige Forschungslücke und untersucht durch welche Art diskursiver und materieller Praktiken PolitikerInnen, BürokratInnen, ExpertInnen, Intellektuelle und andere Gruppen der Elite des türkischen Staates die Form und Implementierung des GAP gestaltet haben. Die Studie orientiert sich theoretisch an kritischen Entwicklungsansätzen und Entpolitisierungstheorien und methodisch an post-positivistischer Diskursanalyse und Methoden qualitativer Inhaltsanalyse. Auf Grundlage geschriebener und gesprochener Texte wie parlamentarischer Sitzungsberichte zwischen 1975 und 2014, den archivierten Ressourcen der regionalen GAP Entwicklungsadministration und 64 semi-strukturierten Interviews mit RepräsentantInnen verschiedener Regierungs- und Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen entmystifiziert die Studie GAP. Sie untersucht Argumentationen, Vokabular, Annahmen, Konstruktionen und Mechanismen und bietet so sowohl eine neue, innovative und alternative Perspektive auf GAP, als auch auf das Konzept der Entwicklung und die Entwicklungsvisionen und Praktiken des türkischen Staates.

Die Studie besteht aus acht Kapiteln, die sich in vier Teile aufteilen. Der erste Teil, "Einleitung" umfasst das Einführungskapitel, gefolgt von dem theoretischen Rahmen und der Methodologie (Kapitel 1, 2, 3). Der zweite Teil, "Hintergrund und Forschungsstand", besteht aus einem Kapitel (Kapitel 4) und rekapituliert die Modernisierungsgeschichte und die Entwicklungsbemühen des türkischen Staates seit dem Osmanischen Reich im 19. Jahrhundert. Außerdem beinhaltet es eine Darstellung der Besonderheiten von Südostanatolien und eine umfassende und systematische Literaturlauswertung über das GAP Projekt. Der dritte Teil "Empirische Analyse", besteht aus drei Kapiteln. Kapitel 5 untersucht

den geschichtlichen Ablauf des GAP und die Unstetigkeit in seiner Steuerung seit Beginn. Kapitel 6 geht der Frage nach, welcher Anlass den Anstoß zur Initiierung des GAP gab und wie es über mehr als vier Jahrzehnte legitimiert wurde. Die Gründe und Formen von Entpolitisierung im Rahmen des GAP und wie Entpolitisierung und GAP miteinander in Bezug stehen, wird in Kapitel 7 untersucht. Der vierte Teil "Zusammenfassung" besteht aus einem abschließenden Kapitel (Kapitel 8), welches die Studie, sowie die grundlegenden Erkenntnisse der Forschung über Entwicklung und GAP zusammenfasst. Das Kapitel erklärt die Implikationen der Forschungsergebnisse für die Entwicklungspraxis im Kontext von GAP und verweist auf zukünftigen weiterführenden Forschungsbedarf.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFC	Agriculture and Food International Consulting
AKP	<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i> (Justice and Development Party)
BDP	<i>Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi</i> (Peace and Democracy Party)
BOT	Build-operate-transfer
CHP	<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i> (Republican People's Party)
ÇATOM	<i>Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri</i> (Multi-Purpose Community Centers)
DA	Discourse analysis
DFID	Department for International Development
DPT	<i>Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı</i> (State Planning Organization)
DPT-MGAP	<i>DPT Müsteşarlık Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Grup Başkanlığı</i> (Southeastern Anatolia Project Group)
DSİ	<i>Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü</i> (General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FYDP	Five-year development plan
GAP	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi</i> (Southeastern Anatolia Project)
GAP-BKİ	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölgesel Kalkınma İdaresi</i> (Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration)
GAP-GİDEM	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Girişimci Destekleme ve Yönlendirme Merkezleri</i> (GAP Entrepreneur Support Centers)
GAP-RDA	GAP Regional Development Administration
GWh	Gigawatt-hours
ha	Hectare
HDI	Human Development Index
HPP	Hydroelectric power plant
IBRFP	Indo-British Rainfed Farming Project
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
km	Kilometer
kWh	Kilowatt hour
MAG	<i>Müsteşarlık Araştırma Grubu</i> (Research and Project Promotion Group)
METU	Middle East Technical University
MHP	<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi</i> (Nationalist Action Party)
MP	Member of Parliament
MOM	Management, Operation, and Maintenance
MW	Megawatts

NGO	Non-governmental organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PKK	<i>Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan</i> (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PYB	<i>Proje Yönetim Birimi</i> (Project Management Unit)
QCA	Qualitative content analysis
SAP	Structural adjustment program
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SODES	<i>Sosyal Destek Programı</i> (Social Support Programme)
SPO	State Planning Organization
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TBMM	<i>Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi</i> (Turkish Grand National Assembly)
TCMB	<i>Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Merkez Bankası</i> (Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey)
TEMAV	<i>Tarımsal Enerji ve Mekanizasyon Araştırma ve Eğitim Vakfı</i> (Foundation of Agricultural Energy and Mechanization Research and Training)
TMMOB	<i>Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odaları Birliği</i> (The Union of the Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects)
TOBB	<i>Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği</i> (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey)
TRT	<i>Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu</i> (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation)
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States
ZEF	<i>Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung</i> (Center for Development Research)

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“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step,” said the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu almost three thousand years ago. “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main,” wrote the English poet John Donne in the 17th century. “Sapere aude!” or “Have the courage to use your own reason!,” articulated the German philosopher Immanuel Kant in the 18th century. “If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them,” stated the American writer Henry David Thoreau in the 19th century. “I am on a long and narrow road; I walk day and night; I do not know what state I am in; I walk day and night,” sang the Turkish folk poet Âşık Veysel in the 20th century. “In a world of simplified communications and simplistic binary judgments, the semi-colon reconciles us with the plurality of propositions, and with the welcome nuances of the sentence and of complex realities,” noted the Swiss academic Tariq Ramadan in the 21st century.

The only common point among these unrelated quotes drawn from different centuries is that they all describe different aspects of my PhD journey. Just as Lao Tzu said, I began this journey with one small step in 2012. Just as Âşık Veysel said, it was indeed a long, narrow, and challenging road, a kind that required me to have a lot of patience and perseverance to reach my destination. Just as Kant said, I used nothing but my own reason to complete arduous and almost never-ending tasks throughout the journey. Just as Thoreau said, sometimes I had to build some “upside down” castles and similar imaginary structures in shapes no one has ever imagined before. Just as Ramadan said, I needed a lot of semi-colons so that I could connect my scattered ideas, opinions, and knowledge bits and eventually put them into this orderly, written, and less complex form. As PhD was a highly individualized process, I had to cope with difficulties and unexpected hindrances all by myself. Still, even though I was alone in this undertaking, I was never lonely. Just as Donne said, I was part of the main, which comprised great mentors, colleagues, friends, family, and a special partner. They are the people whom I want to thank and express my gratitude below.

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

We all have childhood memories. Some we repress so deeply that we hardly remember them, some we remember so clearly, as if they happened yesterday. I consider myself fortunate to have a great number of memories that fall into the latter category. For instance, I clearly remember how cold and snowy my place of birth was, how stressed I was on the first day of school, how proud I was when I first learned to read and write, or how happy I felt when my parents bought me a football for the first time. I have dozens, maybe hundreds of such moments I remember with mixed feelings. Among these, there is one special memory that stands out for the strong impression it left on me: I clearly remember seeing a gigantic concrete wall, a deep blue lake behind this wall, vast green fields, huge yellow machines operating on these fields, water coming out of pipes and sprinklers, factories with smoke coming out of their chimneys, shiny roads, complex intersections and viaducts, and similar images on television, possibly in the late 1980s or early 1990s. I am sure a considerable number of people who were born and raised in Turkey in the 1980s also remember at least one of these images. As a kid then, of course I did not have the slightest idea what these scenes were all about, but I remember feeling mesmerized by what I saw on the television screen on that specific day.

Years later, in the 1990s, I came to know that the scenes I saw then were actually part of a short video clip about Southeastern Anatolia Project (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi*, GAP). I came to know that the project was one of the largest, the most ambitious, and the most controversial development projects in the history of modern Turkey, initiated in the 1970s in Southeastern Anatolia Region—or GAP region—to produce energy and irrigate vast arid lands through constructing 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric power plants (HPPs) in various sizes on Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Over time, I became familiar with GAP and the concept of development not because I had a special interest in them as a boy then, but because they were simply everywhere. “Development,” “development move,” “rapid development,” “Turkey is developing,” “Turkey will develop,” “Turkey is growing fast,” “GAP,” “GAP will develop Turkey,” “GAP will bring abundance to Southeastern Anatolia,” “GAP will change Turkey’s destiny,” “GAP will change ‘the ill-fate’ of GAP region,” and similar words, slogans, and statements could be easily heard at schools, on the streets, on television and read in books, textbooks, magazines, and newspapers. There was even a special television channel entitled “TRT GAP,” launched in 1989 by the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu*, TRT) to present and publicize the project and its multiple impacts on southeastern Turkey. In time, I learned that the project was also designed

and implemented to radically transform the political, social, economic, and cultural landscape of GAP region—which corresponds to approximately 10% of Turkey’s surface area—and reshape the mindset and behaviors of the local population in GAP region—which corresponds to approximately 10% of Turkey’s population. Given the attention GAP received and the optimism it spread, I had no single doubt that development was a noble and virtuous cause and GAP was a flawless design that would eventually bring about a better future in which development, progress, order, peace, happiness, welfare would prevail.

Towards the late 1990s, however, it became clear—at least to me as a teenager then—that even a noble cause such as development could have detrimental consequences and even a benevolent project such as GAP could have imperfections and controversies. In addition to the regional and international controversy GAP created over the utilization of Euphrates and Tigris rivers among Turkey as the upstream state and Syria and Iraq as downstream states, more and more news footages, news articles, columns, and scholarly works drew attention to GAP-induced domestic controversies such as grave environmental and social problems including, but not limited to, soil salinization, soil erosion, waterlogging, climactic changes, flooding of historical sites, and forced displacement and resettlement. There was also another rising controversy with national, regional, and international dimensions over the alleged role of GAP in terms of its contribution to the Turkish state’s efforts to solve the long-standing and ongoing Kurdish question.¹ Then, it occurred to me for the first time that there might also be a “dark side” of development and an untold story of huge dams, vast green fields, orderly images, and promises of a better future. Still, despite the increased exposure of such unforeseen and/or unintended consequences of development-cum-GAP, neither development nor GAP suffered a serious popularity loss. Both were still associated with “the good” and perceived as panaceas. From prime ministers to members of parliament (MPs), from governors to local politicians, from bureaucrats to experts, almost all elite groups within the state structure unanimously continued to agree that development was a benevolent enterprise and a positive process and GAP would bring about positive change and transform GAP region and its local population in a good way. In other words, there was hardly a change in how development and GAP were perceived, interpreted, and narrated. Apparently, controversies and dramatic consequences of development-cum-GAP were not that critical and worrisome in the eyes of the designers and implementers of GAP.

¹ Alternative labels include, but not limited to, the Eastern problem, Southeastern problem, Kurdish problem, Kurdish conflict, Turkish-Kurdish conflict, terrorism problem.

In the first half of the 2000s, GAP was not as sensational as it once was. Despite this, the project was still mostly associated with betterment, prosperity, happiness, and wealth. Also, according to the original plan and schedule, the project was supposed to be completed in this period until 2005. However, it appeared that it was an optimistic estimation and the project needed at least another decade or so to become fully operational. From my perspective then—this time as an adult—what was remarkable was not the delay in the schedule but, generally speaking, how little it mattered to people whether GAP was on time or delayed, complete or incomplete, or successful or disastrous. Seemingly, there was a lack of excitement about and apathy towards GAP. The reasons might indeed vary, but then I thought it was because people somehow internalized the project over decades and perceived it as a timeless and spaceless entity, a part of their lives even if they were not located in GAP region. I realized that GAP was perceived almost like a constant that existed and would exist eternally. It did not matter whether coalition and single-party governments came and went, political and economic crises arose and faded away, ethno-political conflicts escalated and deescalated, and similar noteworthy developments took place in Turkey; GAP was always treated as a “national” project which was supposed to be “above” politics and insulated from the endless and vicious political debates and contestations. Given the strong will and idealistic ambition of the state to ensure development and “fetishization” of GAP to this end, I began to wonder how and why the project had a “special” and “untouchable” status and whether the project would end at some point or evolve into something else in the future.

From the second half of the 2000s onwards, the visibility and momentum of GAP significantly increased once again. New action plans, reports, and studies were prepared and new subprojects and activities were carried out to revitalize the project and complete it as soon as possible. Once again, a tremendous amount of resources were allocated to GAP in addition to billions of dollars already spent on it. Once again, narratives that emphasized how GAP would bring about the promised development to GAP region and its local population and “save” both from the so-called backwardness, underdevelopment, ignorance, poverty, and powerlessness gained currency. Once again, controversies and discontents regarding the construction of certain dams (e.g., Ilisu Dam), salinization of certain plains (e.g., Harran Plain), submerging of certain ancient sites (e.g., the Tomb of Zeynel Bey),² and resettlement of the residents of certain towns and villages (e.g., Hasankeyf) resurfaced. Once again,

² In order to prevent the flooding of the Tomb of Zeynel Bey, the 1,100 tonne tomb was lifted as a whole and transported on a wheeled platform to be installed in a new location on May 12, 2017 (Brown, 2017).

controversies over the role of GAP in the context of the Kurdish question reemerged. It was like a *déjà vu* moment; almost the same narratives on development, GAP, GAP region, and its local population were repeated and almost the same efforts were made to accomplish almost the same development goals and objectives. Given the magnitude of the profound and rapid change society and institutions in Turkey as well as GAP region have undergone since the initiation of GAP, this situation was somehow unexpected and counterintuitive.

Rist (2008, p. 23) observed that normally “if a politician makes too many demagogic promises, he ends up a failure in the eyes of his electorate. And if a researcher persists too long with experiments that show no result, he is eventually dismissed by his employer.” However, he continued, “nothing of the kind happens in the field of ‘development’: promises are tirelessly repeated and experiments constantly reproduced” (p. 23). In line with this observation, it was interesting to see that again and again different projects under the umbrella of GAP were found inadequate and inappropriate to meet the needs and demands of the local population; there was almost always a debate on a mismatch of visions, aspirations, and expectations between the architects and target groups of the project. For instance, projects were widely conceived as completely detached from the realities of the local population and state-centric rather than citizen-centric with their exclusive focus on energy production and weak focus on irrigation projects that would have a direct impact on people. In simpler terms, it was generally believed that the project benefits were not trickling down. Also, negative ecological, social, and humanitarian impacts of the project became too visible to ignore over time. Still, such criticisms and drawbacks did not prevent GAP from being constantly redefined, repackaged, and reintroduced as a solution to various socio-economic and socio-political problems of GAP region in particular and Turkey in general. The approach to the concept of development was no less different. Even though development vision, policies, and practices of the Turkish state were subjected to intense criticism for causing disappointments, unintended consequences, and negative impacts on many fronts, more and more development plans and projects were implemented nationwide over the years.

This situation was puzzling for several reasons. It was unclear why both GAP and development had “special,” “untouchable,” and almost “sanctified” statuses that limited debate and deliberation on their utility and consequences and prevented challenges to their foundations. In other words, it was unclear why GAP was being presented as the only possible alternative—“the only game in town”—that would “save” GAP region from its “underdeveloped” and conflict-ridden past. It was also unclear how almost every GAP- and development-induced negative impact and drawback could be justified somehow for years

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and the project could proceed incessantly as if its unforeseen outcomes that concerned environmental degradation or social degeneration were petty and negligible issues. In relation to these, it was unclear why both GAP and development were conceived and treated as objective and neutral schemes while it was clear that their practice on the ground were creating winners and losers, altering power dynamics, and leading to political implications and consequences. Furthermore, it was unclear why the problems and imperfections associated with GAP and development were always attributed to some external factors or phenomena beyond human agency, but never to GAP itself and/or the concept of development itself. Combined together, it was unclear how GAP could remain rarely problematized both within policy-making circles and in the literature and proceed without its politics, rationale, *raison d'être*, *modus operandi*, and similar deeper and often overlooked aspects being adequately questioned and challenged.

In order to demystify and untangle this “mystique” around GAP and development, in this study I focus primarily on the texts and words of GAP and development and how both were written and narrated in legislative documents, policy papers, action plans, reports, surveys, etudes, formal and informal discussions, parliamentary debates, speeches, and similar written and spoken sources that were produced by various elite groups in politics, bureaucracy, development sector, non-governmental sector, and academia. My intention is not to measure and evaluate the effects of GAP or provide a simple and static description of the project. Neither is it to condemn GAP and development and claim they are unquestionably and essentially “bad” or “evil.” Rather, my aim is to introduce a fresh, original, and alternative perspective on GAP and examine its rationale, vocabulary, assumptions, constructions, and mechanisms. In this light, I formulated the following main research question and asked: Through what kind of discursive and material practices have the political, bureaucratic, expert, and intellectual elite actors of the Turkish state shaped the design and implementation of GAP? Furthermore, in the guidance of critical approaches to development and specifically the concept of depoliticization, I asked: How have state practices contributed to depoliticization of issues, institutions, and processes in the overall GAP framework? In relation to these broad questions, more specifically I asked: How was Southeastern Anatolia Region represented in legislative and elite discourses? How was GAP perceived and interpreted by different actors? How did these discourses change over time? How did these representations and conceptions contribute to (re-)configuration of power relations and influence policies? How was GAP positioned within Turkey’s modernization ideals and process? How was the design and implementation of GAP rationalized and

motivated? In addition to the theoretical guidance of critical development approaches and depoliticization, I drew on the methodological guidance of qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis methods to answer these questions. In this process, asking the *how* questions was hardly sufficient for a rigorous examination and had to be complemented by *what* and *why* questions in order not to miss out any crucial points, especially in accordance with an “interstitial” focus. Also, the final reordering of the findings could well reflect the *what*, *why*, and *how* of GAP and the operation of development—or the development apparatus—in Turkey. For this reason, I also presented them in the same order and discussed *what* GAP used to be in the past, has recently become, and would look like in the future; *why* GAP was initiated; and *how* GAP was designed and implemented in a detailed manner.

As a scholarly work, this study is unique in certain respects. A careful examination of GAP-related literature indicates that the project and its various aspects were interpreted, evaluated, analyzed, and examined from the perspectives of various disciplines over decades. Still, unlike the majority of these mostly quantitative works on GAP and its various aspects, this qualitative study employs a post-positivist approach that challenges the positivist principles of hypotheses testing, objectivism, empiricism, and naturalism. In line with this, the study is one of the rare academic studies that focuses primarily on the discursive constructions and perceptions regarding GAP rather than numbers, official statistics, graphs, figures, and similar quantitative data, without claiming that “language is all there is” and the world can be reduced solely to the words of development (Crush, 1995, p. 5). Also, unlike the majority of the studies that had mainstream development approaches as their anchors and considered development as a neutral, technical, and power-free enterprise and process in examining GAP, this study examines the project and its implications through critical development approaches and especially the concept of depoliticization, both of which allow the consideration of power dynamics and contestation embedded in the idea, discourse, policy, and practice of development. In this regard, it would not be far-fetched to argue that the study is the most comprehensive and detailed study so far that focuses on and discusses the depoliticizing implications of the project. The study is also one of the few works that focuses not on the target groups of GAP—local communities, farmers, villagers, and similar laypersons—but on the designers and implementers or architects of the project—politicians, bureaucrats, experts, intellectuals, and similar elite groups within the Turkish state mechanism. In other words, the focus is on how elite groups who vary in type and possess different amounts of power have perceived, narrated, adjusted, and negotiated the project for more than four decades in order to understand and examine the operation of the complex

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organization or apparatus that formulated development policies and practiced development in the overall GAP framework.

Given its uniqueness and contribution to the relevant literature, the study is appealing not only to research community in the fields of development studies and political science, but also to practitioners and policy-making community with similar backgrounds. For instance, a researcher who adhered to mainstream development approaches can grasp a different and alternative perspective on how development projects are negotiated and operationalized on the ground and what kind of overlooked implications they might lead to. Another researcher who adhered to more critical and “post-” approaches can enrich his/her knowledge by comparing and contrasting the study with other similar analyses that were conducted through a critical lens and based on primary and qualitative data. Researchers who have a regional focus on the Middle East in general, Turkey in particular, and Southeastern Anatolia Region more specifically can also acquire valuable information regarding how the politics and non-politics of GAP have played out, how development and modernization vision and practices of the Turkish state have evolved, and how these two can be related to more recent developments as well as fluctuations in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres in Turkey. Also, practitioners and policy-makers can get a better idea of how complex and unpredictable development can become on the ground when development discourses are translated into action and plans are translated into policies. They can also gain insights on how to formulate policies that actually “work” and do not lead to unwanted and detrimental development-induced consequences. In that sense, the study is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional examination of the “problematique” of GAP and development rather than a prescriptive and one-dimensional analysis of the issue at hand.

The study is subdivided into four broad and interrelated parts. The first part, entitled “Introduction,” comprises the current introductory chapter (Chapter 1) followed by the theoretical framework (Chapter 2) and methodology of the study (Chapter 3). The second part, entitled “Background and Literature Review,” comprises one long chapter and not only provides detailed explanation about the history and background of the research topic, but also presents a comprehensive review of the relevant literature (Chapter 4). The third part, entitled “Empirical Analysis,” comprises three chapters which document and examine the historical trajectory of GAP and oscillations in its governance since its inception until 2015 (Chapter 5); examine the primary reasons or sources that rationalized the design and implementation of the project as well as their multiple implications on various fronts (Chapter 6); and identify and discuss the sources and forms of depoliticization in the overall project framework

(Chapter 7). The fourth and final part, entitled “Conclusion,” synthesizes what has been discussed in seven chapters and makes the concluding remarks of the study (Chapter 8).³

Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework of the study and illustrates the guiding premises to be followed and applied in the empirical analysis. In order to discuss how the concepts of development and depoliticization relate to each other, I first present a brief history of development from the 18th century onwards and discuss the roots of the concept, its historical trajectory in the light of major development theories, and criticisms made against its main assumptions and practice in different time periods. Second, I clarify how the concepts of the political, politics, and depoliticization are understood in this study through making references specifically to prominent thinkers such as Carl Schmitt, Chantal Mouffe, and Jacques Rancière as well as more recent approaches in the relevant literature, without the intention to construct an all-encompassing, overarching, and “flawless” theory based on these insights, but rather to benefit from the diversity and different explanatory powers of these insights in the analysis. Following this, I focus closely on depoliticization in the context of development and discuss in what ways depoliticization has been visible in the idea and practice of development so far.

Chapter 3 introduces the methodology of the study. In this brief chapter, I first provide detailed information regarding both the data collection methods I employed in the study and the process of how I managed to collect data. Following this, I explicate the process of how I interpreted and analyzed the collected data and clarify the stages of the analysis. Finally, I reflect on my position throughout the research process and explain not only what sort of prospects and challenges I faced in the whole process, but also how they influenced me as a researcher in particular and my research and findings in general.

Chapter 4 presents both a background of GAP’s design and implementation and a comprehensive review of GAP-related literature. In order to better explain how the idea of GAP came into being and show how the study fills an important research gap with its distinct theoretical and methodological approach, I first explicate how the idea of modernizing Turkey and ensuring development, integration, and homogenization in political, economic, social, and cultural spheres all over the country emerged through tracing their origins since the 19th century Ottoman Empire. Second, I discuss the distinct characteristics of Southeastern Anatolia Region to demonstrate the reasons as to why specifically that region

³ In addition, along with references, a separate part entitled “Appendices” documents the written texts that were examined, participants who were interviewed, and the coding frame that was formulated in this study.

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was chosen as the locus of GAP. Third, I systematically discuss the relevant GAP-related scholarly works as well as government documents that were produced so far to illustrate both the existing literature in different thematic categories and subcategories and under-researched areas in the literature.

Chapter 5 is an examination of the historical trajectory of GAP and oscillations in its governance since its initiation in the 1970s up until 2015 in the guidance of the historical trajectory of the idea and practice of development. By focusing primarily on how the architects of GAP have imagined, materialized, altered, and adjusted the project in their discursive practices, policy practices, conceptions, and arguments, I demonstrate what kind of changes the project has undergone in terms of its modes of governance, focus and scope, and embedded concepts, norms, and values and how various national, regional, and global processes have influenced and altered the course of the project in more than four decades. In relation to this, I identify six broad, interrelated, and at times overlapping periods in which GAP was (1) a water and land resources development project, (2) a multi-sectoral and integrated project, (3) in limbo, (4) a sustainable human development project, (5) a market-based project, and (6) “new GAP” and examine the most dominant narratives and notable developments within each period. In addition, I present a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the state of GAP as of 2015 from the perspective of politicians, bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals. Thus, I not only reflect on the implications of the trajectory of GAP on the project in particular and the concept of development in general, but also demonstrate *what* GAP used to be in the past, has recently become, and would look like in the future.

Chapter 6 is an examination of what kind of sources gave impetus to the design and implementation of GAP and through what kind of sources the project has been rationalized in the overall project framework over the years. Instead of focusing on the wide range of related and unrelated project goals and objectives in many different fields in a simplistic and reductionist manner, I closely examine broader, deeper, and more complex sources that apparently formed the basis of the design and implementation of the project, which I identify as (1) the rectification of differences of GAP region, (2) the admiration of the West and Western development trajectory, and (3) the pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction. Indeed, rationalization of the project on these grounds was not without outcomes. For this reason, I also identify and discuss the implications each major rationale led to, such as otherization and infantilization of the local population, legitimization of development interventions, characterization of the project as the Turkish nation’s strength,

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and normalization of development-induced destruction in a critical manner. Thus, I demonstrate and explain *why* GAP was initiated.

Chapter 7 is an examination of how GAP and the concept of depoliticization have related to each other and what kind of discursive and material practices have constituted the sources of depoliticization in the overall GAP framework. I show that in contrast to the claim that there has been only one, single, and simple source of depoliticization in the overall project framework, depoliticization originated from various complex and interrelated sources, which I identify as (1) the employment of technical language in the overall GAP framework, (2) the dominance of experts and expert knowledge in the overall GAP framework, (3) the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character, (4) the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, and (5) the extension of the visibility and authority of the state in the guise of GAP. I also illustrate that depoliticization does not take only one, rigid form in GAP, but rather takes various forms such as the negation of antagonisms, redefinition of political issues and conflicts along the lines of economics and morality, erosion of agency, and transferring of blame, responsibility, and costs to other people, institutions, or phenomena that are considered to be beyond human agency and control. Thus, I depict and elaborate on *how* GAP was designed and implemented.

Chapter 8 links the “Introduction,” “Background and Literature Review,” and “Empirical Analysis” parts together and synthesizes the arguments and discussions uttered throughout seven chapters. I first briefly summarize the study and highlight some of the significant and unique findings. Second, I identify and discuss the major inferences or “take-home messages” about both development and GAP, drawn upon the demystification of the project. Following this, I clarify the study’s implications on development practice in general and GAP in particular. Finally, I discuss some future research directions that can complement and strengthen the study as well as initiate new research avenues in the relevant literature.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I explain the theoretical framework of the study and discuss how the idea and practice of development and the concept of depoliticization relate to each other. The chapter comprises four sections. In the first section, I provide a concise history of development from the 18th century onwards and discuss (1) the origins of the concept, (2) continuities and ruptures in its historical trajectory in the light of major development theories, and (3) critiques towards the way development has been conceptualized and practiced. In the second section, for the sake of clarity and analytical precision, I explain how I conceive the concepts of the political, politics, and depoliticization through the perspectives of prominent thinkers such as Carl Schmitt, Chantal Mouffe, and Jacques Rancière as well as more recent approaches in the literature. In the third section, I discuss depoliticization in the context of development and elaborate on the ways as to how depoliticization has been visible and/or operationalized by different development actors. In the fourth and final section, I provide a brief summary of the chapter to concisely restate the guiding premises that will be followed and applied in the empirical analysis of the study.

2.1. A Concise History of Development: Origins, Fluctuations, and Critiques

2.1.1. Origins of Development: A History from the 18th to the mid-20th Century

In the literature, there is little consensus as to what the concept of development exactly refers to; it absorbs different meanings in different contexts. For this reason, there are many divergent opinions regarding its definition and objectives. It has been widely associated with (mainly economic) growth, progress, (mainly positive) change, and improvement. It has been conceived as an “immanent” process which is spontaneous, automatic, objective, and unconscious as well as an “intentional” process which requires deliberate and targeted policies and practices (Cowen & Shenton, 1995, p. 26). There is also little consensus whether development has been a successful or a failed project. While one party praises it for saving millions of people from starvation and providing them with new choices and opportunities, the other party denounces it for failing to eliminate poverty and inequalities and causing environmental and cultural destruction all around the world (Rapley, 2008, p. 177).

The debate on the meanings and functions of development is not a recent one, though. The origins of the idea of development can be traced back to the period of the Enlightenment in Europe in the 18th century. Herath (2009, p. 1449) notes that critical investigation of the organization and structure of societies, application of reason and science, and the use of empirical knowledge gained importance during the Enlightenment and arguably laid the foundations of the idea of development. From a Western perspective, the idea of change

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referred to organic processes composed of stages of growth, maturity, decay, and regeneration. The cyclical form of change was later on replaced by the idea of progress, which was conceptualized as a linear and irreversible process and associated with the potential for unlimited improvement (Nustad, 1997, p. 158). Given these, Cowen and Shenton (1995, p. 27) note that development was formulated in the context of social turbulences and fear of a revolution in Europe in the 19th century, with the expectation that it would tame the chaos induced by progress and address problems that emerged after the growth of capitalism such as rapid urbanization, poverty, and unemployment.

Saint-Simonians, the followers of the positivist political and social movement emerged in France in the 19th century,⁴ were the first to formulate a doctrine of development to address the problems induced by the immanent process of capitalism (Nustad, 1997, p. 158). They viewed capitalism as a critical, unstable, ineffective, and even destructive period on the grounds that means of production were in the control of irresponsible capitalists who were wasting resources in enormous scale and that the system lacked a general structuring of society's resources. Also, it was impossible for progress to be a natural and uncontrolled process. For this reason, they replaced progress with development, which involved active agency and intervention (p. 158). Thus, development was not something that occurred during a period of history anymore; it was the means through which the present period might be transformed into another superior order through the actions of those who were entrusted with the future of society (Cowen & Shenton, 1995, p. 31). In this context, Saint-Simonians proposed that trustees—a system of banks—had to have control over the means of production on the basis of the idea that they had the capacity to make critical and rational decisions about the investment of society's resources (Nustad, 1997, p. 158). Therefore, progress that was associated with chaos would be reconciled by order. Also, development that was associated with the intentional act of trustees would serve the purpose of taming the disorder. To illustrate this idea, John Stuart Mill, British theorist of liberal democracy who was highly influenced by Saint-Simonians, argued that development could take place in a society only if the conditions for development already existed. In relation to this, he argued that societies that were equipped with these suitable conditions had the obligation to guide those that lacked these conditions as trustees (Cowen & Shenton, 1995, pp. 35-38). In line with this idea, as an employee and mastermind of the East India Company, Mill was in favor of

⁴ Henri de Saint-Simon had a deep influence on the French philosopher August Comte, who worked with Saint-Simon until they quarreled and parted ways.

governing India by a strong imperial circle that exercised trusteeship—and arguably brutality—to prepare suitable conditions under which development could flourish (p. 38).

This colonial discourse in the 19th century was based on the crude distinction between civilized nations and uncivilized tribes or masses on the grounds that the former were both capable and even “destined” to rule the latter due to their incapability to manage their own affairs (Ziai, 2016, p. 27). Such a distinction engendered further distinctions between superior and inferior, rational and emotional, fit to govern and unfit to govern, and colonizer and colonized (p. 28). In the early 20th century, the idea that a colonizer had the obligation to improve the material conditions of its colonies rose to prominence. The mandate system of the League of Nations was, for instance, justified on this ground. Accordingly, it was believed that some countries would not be able to reach the conditions of the modern world without the external help of more advanced countries (p. 29). To put it differently, there was a gradual shift from colonial discourse to discourse of development as well as from the distinction of civilized and uncivilized to a division of developed and underdeveloped (p. 30). In this period, colonized subjects became aid recipients and colonial administrators became development practitioners (Kothari, 2002, p. 36) because “where colonialism left off, development took over” (Kothari, 1988, p. 143, as cited in Pieterse, 1991, p. 19).

2.1.2. Development as a Political Project and Field of Study: The Post-1945 Period

The period after the World War II represented the beginning of development as a political goal and later on as an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary field of enquiry (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 293). From 1945 onwards, this period accompanied a preoccupation with reconstruction, decolonization, newly independent states, and division of the world into different spatial zones according to their levels of advancement (Currie-Alder, 2016, p. 6). It was generally accepted that development emerged on January 20, 1949 when the then President of the United States (US) Harry S. Truman made a distinction between the “underdeveloped” and “prosperous” areas of the world in his inaugural address—also widely known as “the Point Four speech”—and declared that

[W]e must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. ... More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. ... For the first time in history, humanity

possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people (Rist, 2008, p. 71).

Even though this idea primarily served the interest of the US, development was introduced as “a set of technical measures outside the realm of political debate” that concerned the common good of all (p. 78). The idea that development was necessary and desirable was so strong that the superpowers of the Cold War period—the US and the Soviet Union—agreed almost only on this issue and attached more importance to the “underdeveloped” parts of the world—also known as the Third World—to promote development together with international organizations (Rist, 2010, p. 20). It should be noted that this period was also the period of decolonization. Therefore, one strong motivation for the states to take an interest in development was also to address the question as to how the economies of the colonies of Britain, France, Portugal, and other European powers that comprised almost one-third of the world’s population could be transformed and made more productive (Leys, 1996, p. 5). In relation to this, development became a code word for the belief that the South could develop itself instead of being developed by the North and the assumption that the South could become as modern and wealthy as the North one day provided that it followed the right policies (Wallerstein, 2005, p. 1264). Development disciplines and theories began to emerge in this context to meet the demands of this new, post-World War II development thinking. Also, development projects began to emerge in different colors, shapes, and sizes as mechanisms that bridged “the trainers” and their knowledge and expertise to individuals who lacked that specific knowledge and expertise (DuBois, 1991, p. 19). These projects were generally expected to be innovative, replicable, technical, and predictive models with large effects, especially in order to sell solutions to problems and widen the appeal (Mosse, 2005, pp. 36-37).

Indeed, post-World War II development thinking was not monolithic. On the contrary, as Bull and Bøås (2012, p. 320) note, there were discontinuities among different development theories and approaches. Roughly speaking, there were ruptures between modernization theories of the 1950s and 1960s⁵ and structuralist theories of the 1960s and 1970s; economic growth approach and alternative approaches critique of environmentalists, local developers, and others; and post-modern, post-colonial, and post-development theories and the whole idea of development itself. To note a caveat, even though I elaborate on each

⁵ By the term modernization theories, I primary refer to classical modernization and neo-modernization theories. Multiple modernities paradigm that emerged in the 1990s as a challenge against classical and neo-modernization theories and saw the possibility of many possible modernities, moved beyond equating modernity to Westernization, and rejected the necessity of secularization as a requisite for modernity (Göksel, 2016, p. 249) was not included in this category.

theory below, I allocate more space for discussions on modernization theories for two major reasons. First, as Kothari and Minogue (2002, p. 7) put, “the modernization project continues to underlie any apparent change in the development project.” Also, the most influential—or hegemonic—development thinking is still within the contours of neoclassical economics and major tenets of modernization theories. Second, by being either the target of harsh criticisms or the source of inspiration for other theories with its major tenets, modernization theories contributed to flourishing of new development theories and approaches. For these reasons, modernization theories are *primus inter pares* among other development theories in this conceptual framework.

2.1.2.1. Development from the perspective of modernization theories

Modernization theories were the first development theories, specifically popular during the 1950s and early 1960s. They became the reference point for the majority of development projects run by the US and the United Nations (UN). Given the hegemonic position of the discipline of economics in this period, it was hardly surprising that the primary objectives of development were to assist underdeveloped countries with Western capital and technology, ensure their economic growth, and promote democracy in these geographies. Especially economic growth was considered as an antidote of underdevelopment and “backwardness.” The discourse on growth was so dominant that it was generally conflated with development based on the idea that the wealth that was acquired by the rich through growth would trickle down and provide benefits to the poor (Cannon & Müller-Mahn, 2010). In accordance with Keynesian economic thinking, states played a direct and active role in processes such as creation of industrial capacity, extraction of natural resources, improvement of agricultural efficiency through introduction of technology, and implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 30; Rudnyckyj & Schwittay, 2014, p. 3). Also, planning was playing a crucial role in the steering of development; five-year development plans and development agencies were introduced in many developing and newly established post-colonial countries to facilitate their development process (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 296). In that sense, development according to modernization theories was heavily economic growth-oriented and state-led.

Modernist interpretation of development was based on the dichotomy of traditional and modern. Leys (1996, p. 65) indicates that this dichotomy was derived from Max Weber via Talcott Parsons, one of the main proponents of modernization theories. According to this dichotomous thinking, traditional societies were characterized as communities marked by status- and emotion-based relationships, low level of division of labor, low rate of

production, and high level of dependence on agriculture while modern societies were characterized as just the opposite (p. 65). For Huntington (1971, p. 286), the essential difference between modern and traditional society lay in the greater control which modern man [sic] had over his natural and social environment. Traditional man expected continuity in nature and society and did not believe in his capacity to change or control. In contrast, modern man believed in the possibility of change and had confidence in his ability to control change to accomplish his purposes (p. 286). The underlying argument was that tradition, culture, and values played a key role in the process of development; they could facilitate development, but at the same time constitute a barrier against it. To illustrate this point, Huntington (2000, as cited in Andrews & Bawa, 2014, p. 927) justified different levels of development between Ghana and South Korea on the grounds that Ghanaians had different values compared to hardworking, diligent, and disciplined Koreans. For such reasons, the view that tradition and culture were obstacles in the process of development necessitated taking a radical break with all the preceding historical conditions and abandoning the so-called detrimental traditional practices as a precondition to become modern or developed.

Modernization theories were social evolutionist paradigms whose intellectual roots could be found in the works of the 19th century sociologists such as Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. They also drew their works on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in the natural world in their search to explain the shift from traditional to modern economies as well as change in social and cultural institutions (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 27. See also Wuketits & Antweiler, 2004 for more detailed information on the evolution of human societies and cultures). Accordingly, development required a process of transition from traditional to modern principles of social organization. Also, it was always a positive and irreversible process through which all societies eventually passed in a unilinear and uniform fashion (p. 27). According to this logic, regardless of its level of advancement, every society could achieve economic development provided that they followed specific guidelines and passed through the stages of traditional society, pre-take-off society, take-off, road to maturity, and mass consumption (Rostow, 1971). For this reason, development was also conceived as a temporal problem (e.g., "Country X is 20 years ahead of country Y" or "X Region is 20 years behind Y Region"); the source of differences and inequalities between developed and underdeveloped countries, regions, or societies was considered to be different times they embarked on their development efforts (Pınarcıoğlu & Işık, 2004, p. 20). Modernization theories were not the only evolutionist approach, though. Different theoretical perspectives also shared evolutionist presuppositions about historical progress from homogeneity to

differentiation, savagery to civilization, and static to economically growing societies (Crewe & Harrison, 1998, p. 27).

According to modernization theories, development has always been associated with the West and always had Western-centric or Eurocentric implications (Eriksson Baaz, 1999). Accordingly, the destiny of non-Western geographies was considered to be following or mimicking the historical development trajectory of the West and adopting Western political institutions and values. This was considered as a precondition to become modern and developed in the fields of economy, politics, culture, and so on (Mitchell, 2000, p. xi, 1). Indeed, such an understanding was highly monocultural and ethnocentric. It conceived development, modernization, and Westernization as identical concepts. The most significant outcomes of Western-centric approach of modernization theories were the construction of non-Western societies as supposedly traditional, inferior, primitive, indigenous, backward, the other, corrupt, uneducated, different, and deficient in a homogenizing manner and justification of development interventions of the Western countries and institutions on the grounds that only they could help non-Westerners catch up with them, just as they did during the colonial period (Crewe & Harrison, 1998, p. 28). The Eurocentric forms of knowledge production and colonialism in this regard also engendered “a sense of inferiority in themselves and their own people and a sense of confidence in European people and things” in the colonized populations (Chandra, 1992, as cited in Kothari, 2002, p. 37).

Modernization theories attached great importance to scientific and technological advancements. They were considered as necessary elements for the transition from traditional to modern conditions. The level of development was even equated to the level of advancement in science and technology; it was a significant indicator of superiority. As Mitchell (2002, p. 15) explains, development “was a politics of techno-science, which claimed to bring the expertise of modern engineering, technology, and social science to improve the defects of nature, to transform peasant agriculture, to repair the ills of society, and to fix the economy.” Similarly, Scott (1998, p. 4) notes that modernization—or high-modernist ideology—was based on a strong self-confidence about scientific and technical progress to have mastery over physical and human nature as well as design social order rationally according to scientific laws. For this reason, for instance, gigantic—even utopian—infrastructure, energy, and transportation projects were designed and implemented all around the world for the sake of both development and nation-building, even though they provided more benefits to states and governments than they did to people.

In relation to the point above, according to modernist interpretation of development,

the elites were the key actors and agents of change in the development process with their “relative autonomy from non-elite forces” or the mass in classical elite terminology (Parry, 2005, p. 2), especially in “developmental” states “whose politics have concentrated sufficient power, autonomy and capacity at the center to shape, pursue, and encourage the achievement of explicit developmental objectives” (Leftwich, 1995, p. 401).⁶ I should briefly note that the introduction of the term elite dates back to the 17th century. The study of the elites, however, was established as a part of social sciences in the 19th century thanks primarily to the works of Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and Roberto Michels (see Parry, 2005 for a detailed discussion on their works). The common argument in their doctrine was that in every society there existed a small, influential, and dominant group of people who held power, controlled the key resources, and made the major decisions (Daloz, 2010, p. 1). To briefly elaborate on the views of each thinker, Pareto (1935, as cited in Zannoni, 1978, p. 16) divided society into two basic strata according to personal qualities: a lower stratum of less talented non-elites and a higher stratum of the most talented elites. Elites were further divided into two as governing and non-governing elites. The idea behind the elite-non-elite distinction was that only the most talented could assure the most efficient use of resources and that society could benefit from the inequality in the distribution of talents among its members only through the rule of elites (Pareto, 1971, as cited in Zannoni, 1978, p. 16). Mosca (1939, as cited in Zuckerman, 1977, p. 332) also argued that in societies there was always a class that ruled and a class that was ruled. The ruling class consisting of a small, excellent, and cohesive group of people who were conscious of their positions performed all political functions, monopolized power, and enjoyed the advantages power brought (p. 332). Michels (1915, as cited in Brezis, 2012, p. 6) also emphasized that power was always concentrated in the hands of a few—the oligarchy—who had control over resources, information flows, and other aspects of organizational functioning. He coined the term “iron law of oligarchy” to claim that being ruled by an elite group was inevitable within any organization due to tactical and technical necessities (p. 6). The distinguishing characteristics of the elites were, therefore, their excellence (being selected individuals), number (being a minority group), criteria of distinction (criteria to separate minority and majority), and sources of power (origin of few’s position) (Zannoni, 1978, p. 20). Indeed, elites varied in power and type. For instance, there

⁶ Leftwich (1995, p. 405) also identifies six major features of developmental states, which are (1) determined developmental elites, (2) relative autonomy, (3) a powerful, competent, and insulated economic bureaucracy, (4) a weak and subordinated civil society, (5) the effective management of non-state economic interests, and (6) repression, legitimacy, and performance.

could exist a few very powerful figures in a decision-making setting and process, whom Etzioni-Halevy (1990, p. 320) designates as “the elites of elites.” Also, there existed elites of government, bureaucracy, non-government, labor movement, economy, the media, and intellectual-academic sphere (p. 323). In a more recent typology, Reed (2012, p. 211) divided elites into coercive elites (in military/industrial complex, law enforcement, and security), allocative elites (in business, finance, and industry sectors), expert elites (in the media, academia, and professional and service firms), and authoritative elites (in central and local government and bureaucracy). In this light, by the term elites, I imply actors who are powerful enough to have control over both material and symbolic resources at governmental, non-governmental, economic, civil society, cultural, and similar institutions to initiate political, economic, or social goals and actors who differ within their own and between other elite groups in terms of power and type depending on the context. Having noted that, there existed a “modernizing cadre” or “modernizing elites” who initiated the forces of self-conscious transition in any modernization attempt (Frey, 1965, p. 5). To put it differently, a small knowledgeable and skillful group within modern state and its rational and bureaucratic apparatus were the principle agents to design the conditions that were supposedly the best for the population’s well-being (Yılmaz, 2003a, p. 31). This cadre often comprised developmentally-determined senior politicians and bureaucrats who were usually close to heads of government or state for their power to put the idea of developmentalism into practice (Leftwich, 1995, p. 405). In relation to this, this small group of people—specifically development experts and planners—enjoyed their “demigod statuses,” as it was widely accepted that only they were equipped with the right and sufficient knowledge to solve the complexities regarding the order and structure of nature and societies as well as to build a legible and predictable future (Pınarcıoğlu & Işık, 2004, p. 20). In the words of Scott (1998, p. 342), “the visionary intellectuals and planners behind [large-scale modernization projects] were guilty of hubris, of forgetting that they were mortals and acting as if they were gods.” In addition, modernization theorists assumed that the elites—often educated and trained in the West—in periphery countries would play a key role in diffusing modern values out from the center (Leys, 1996, p. 10). The idea was that, even though the external forces could speed up the modernization process, the primary impetus had to come from within.

In brief, modernization theories attached great importance to economic growth and rapid process of industrialization through state intervention. They put great emphasis on scientific domination of nature, strong belief in linear progress, necessity to break with history and tradition, absolute truths, and rational planning of ideal social orders liberated

from the irrationalities of myth, religion, and superstition under standardized conditions of knowledge and production (Harvey, 1989, pp. 10-38). Also, they included elements of elite-driven social engineering and ambition to shape economies and societies in an interventionist and managerialist fashion through dictating other people what to do in the name of modernization, nation-building, progress, and mobilization (Pieterse, 2000, p. 182). For this reason, society was conceived as if it were a “raw material” to be transformed into a better product and individuals were conceived as if they were “tabula rasa” to be transformed into “normalized” or “governable” subjects. Due to such characteristics, modernization theories or national developmentalism—understood as the normative belief in development policies directed towards achieving national development goals—were subjected to severe criticism from the 1970s onwards (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 293).

2.1.2.2. Development according to structuralism and dependency theories

The disappointment with the failure of modernization projects to bring about the expected development to a large number of people and pull them out of poverty led to the emergence of the perspective known as structuralism. Even though modernization theories continued to be the dominant approach of international institutions, structuralism was the dominant approach among Third World countries in the 1970s. Generally speaking, while the contributions in the 1960s and 1970s that were discussed under the banner of structuralism and dependency theories were quite diverse, actually they had one common concern, which was “a focus on different aspects of relationships of dominance and subordination between rich and poor countries as the very backbone of the condition of underdevelopment” (Bull & Bøås, 2012, p. 323). To put briefly, structuralist approach criticized modernization theories primarily for their positivist orthodoxy, neutrality, ahistoricity, traditional vs. modern dichotomy, silence on inequality, and Western-centrism (Andrews & Bawa, 2014, p. 925). Based on the works of Karl Marx, this approach saw underdevelopment as a structural condition of global capitalism fraught with inequality and exploitation imposed from outside (Bennett, 2012, p. 975). In this paradigm, export-oriented policies were considered harmful for the periphery countries. Instead, industrialization for domestic consumption and imposition of import tariffs were deemed necessary for their development. For this reason, import substitution industrialization had to be preferred over export-oriented investment. The convergence of Marxism/Neo-Marxism and structuralism brought about the emergence of dependency theories (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 32). Dependency theorists moved further away from modernization theories and aimed at overturning their tenets from the perspective of the South in general and Latin America in particular. They emphasized that the genuine

reasons behind the lack of development and widespread poverty in the Global South were actually the exploitative influence of the industrialized nations and their imperialist policies (p. 32). On this matter, the father of dependency Paul Baran (1957, as cited in Bull & Bøås, 2012, p. 324) argued that colonization prevented the colonial countries from developing their industries, as the profits that would contribute to their growth were instead siphoned to the center of the colonial power. For this reason, exploitation between a capitalist and a worker bore a resemblance to the relationship between the First World and the Third World, developed and underdeveloped, or center and periphery. Building on Baran's arguments, André Gunder Frank put forward that since the development of the core—the West—was linked to the exploitation and constant underdevelopment of the periphery, this process was maintained through “development of underdevelopment” (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 293). He conceptualized this process as “metropolis-satellite” relations based on the hypotheses that (1) there existed a chain of metropolitan-satellite relations within and between states in which resources and profits were channeled from the latter to the former, (2) satellites had a better economic performance when their links with the metropolis were cut, and (3) the most underdeveloped regions were the ones that had close links with the metropolis (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, pp. 34-35). In a context where the whole world was encapsulated in a global capitalist system that created obstacles for developing countries to improve their conditions, development was considered as something that was impossible to attain within the global monopoly capitalist system (Frank, 1966, as cited in Bull & Bøås, 2012, p. 324) or somewhat possible if the states could have full autonomy to steer the development process by themselves (p. 324). Given this, even though former colonies became independent, they continued to be exploited through a neocolonialism process in which former colonial states as well as large multinational corporations and international finance institutions continued to steer the direction of their development paths (Thomas, 2000, as cited in Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 33). Dependency theories were also subjected to criticism for, *inter alia*, their overgeneralizing, oversimplifying, and overly economics-focused approach and lost their allure after the abandonment of new economic world order and the emergence of neoliberalism as the hegemonic development thinking in the 1980s.

2.1.2.3. Neoliberal interpretation of development and its global expansion

Since its inception, neoliberalism has radically shaped national and international development policies and practices. Actually, neoliberalism derived from modernization theories despite their divergent stances regarding the relationship between the state and the market. To elaborate, especially after the oil crisis in 1973 and global recession in 1974, many countries

in the South—except oil-exporting countries—suffered from the rise of costs of imports and decline in the value of exports due to stagnated world economy marked by acute balance of payment difficulties (Wallerstein, 2005, p. 1264). It also became difficult for the governments in the West to pursue full employment and welfare policies. Also, a debt crisis erupted after many countries in the South failed to repay their debts to the banks in the North in the early 1980s. Due to such developments, there emerged a tendency to perceive developmentalism as detrimental; import substitution industrialization as corrupt protectionism; state-building as a source of more bureaucracy; financial aid as money spent in vain; and government and quasi-government institutions as barrier against entrepreneurship (p. 1265). Such perceptions decreased trust in government interventions and increased the belief and expectations in the market (Herath, 2009, p. 1454). To illustrate, the reports published by the World Bank between 1981 and 1989 were totally unambiguous and passionate about exalting market-oriented policies and denigrating the state intervention while remaining silent on the issues of inequality (Ziai, 2016, p. 136). This trend that challenged the interventionist approach and put great emphasis on the need for the markets to operate freely was entitled “neoliberalism.” Thanks to the generous support especially from the then US President Ronald Reagan and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (UK) Margaret Thatcher, neoliberal thought became more widespread in the 1980s; many countries followed neoliberal policies and embraced privatization, deregulation, free trade, and foreign investment (Herath, 2009, p. 1454). In this period, major international development institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed neoliberal reforms onto developing countries fraught with debt and socio-economic crises through forcing them to pursue coercive structural adjustment programs (SAPs) within the framework of the so-called Washington Consensus. In a way, SAPs that required strict austerity measures and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers replaced five-year development plans (FYDPs) in this period (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 296).

Indeed, outcomes of neoliberal reforms varied. In some countries, cuts in government expenditure, privatization of public enterprises, trade and domestic market liberalization yielded favorable results and allowed these countries to achieve steady growth rates, low inflation rate, and low level of unemployment. In some countries, however, the same policies created severe unemployment crises, decreasing income levels, and declining socio-economic conditions (Herath, 2009, p. 1454). Despite this, specifically after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet Union, neoliberalism not only expanded to new territories over time, but also evolved from its market version in the 1980s into institutionally embedded

versions in the 1990s and 2000s. For this reason, the importance of “getting the institutions right” was widely emphasized under the umbrella term of “good governance,” which led to the introduction of a long and expanding list of institutional imperatives to achieve successful development at a universal scale (Buch-Hansen & Lauridsen, 2012, p. 296). Therefore, more recently concepts such as capacity-building, public-private partnership, community involvement, and public responsibility were also considered inherent in neoliberal development paradigm (Larner, 2014, pp. 191-192).

2.1.2.4. Impasse in development theory and searches for alternatives

It is widely accepted that the idea of development reached an impasse and the practice of development reached a crisis in the 1980s on the grounds that states and international development institutions failed to eliminate poverty and deprivation in underdeveloped countries and reduce economic inequalities between rich and poor countries despite their concerted efforts. The reason behind this failure was that development knowledge, models, and practices were biased in nature, exogenously imposed in a “one-size-fits-all” manner, indifferent to the poor, insensitive to social forces, destructive to the environment, and technocratic rather than participatory (Pottier, 2003, p. 13). Also, until the emergence of “women and development” approach, women were largely neglected and were not viewed as active participants of the development process. There was a tendency to believe that women were always benefiting from development and women and men were affected by development strategies evenly, while they were actually not (Kothari, 2002, p. 43). In order to overcome these deficiencies without breaking away from mainstream development approaches, there emerged attempts to find alternatives *of* development especially from the 1980s onwards. In the words of Pieterse (1991, p. 5), while developmentalism was challenged by new social movements and post-modern approaches in the West, its limits were also tested by alternative development strategies in the South. Intensification of feminist critiques towards modernist development paradigm since the 1970s and increased influence of Gender and Development perspective in the 1980s; introduction of sustainable development concept after the UN-sponsored Brundtland Commission’s report in 1987; incorporation of the concepts of human development, empowerment, and quality of life into “economic-focused” development and formulation of the first Human Development Report by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990; shift towards “people-driven” development against the domination of experts and introduction of participatory and bottom-up approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning and Action, Community Based Needs Assessment, and Stakeholder Analysis into development

discourse and practice in the 1990s were among the major alternative development perspectives (Andrews & Bawa, 2014, pp. 926-927; Leal, 2010, p. 89; Nustad, 1997, p. 163). In this period, there were also attempts to find alternatives outside mainstream development approaches; the idea was not to find alternatives *of* development, but to find alternatives *to* development. These critical insights on development and calls for a radical change in the field later on came to be known as post-development approach.

2.1.2.5. Post-development approach and searches for alternatives *to* development

While there was a wide range of different ideas regarding what development was (e.g., economic growth or improved living standards), how it should be attained (e.g., industrialization or good governance), or how it should be measured (e.g., national statistics or UNDP's Human Development Index [HDI]), there was only limited discussion about the content and desirability of development until post-development approach emerged and contested the meaning of development itself in the 1990s (Rapley, 2004, p. 350). As Pieterse (2000, p. 176) noted, while *anti*-development referred to rejectionism due to frustration with development business-as-usual and *beyond* development referred to "looking over the fence," post-development referred to combination of these two approaches influenced by the works of Michel Foucault, linguistic turn in social sciences, and post-structuralism. Post-development approach conceptualized development as a discourse and as a modernist regime of knowledge and disciplinary power (Crush, 1995, p. xii). Development project was a product of Cold War politics, powered by the unlimited faith in Western science, technology, and progress (Bennett, 2012, p. 976). It was "a top-down, ethnocentric, and technocratic approach, which treated people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of 'progress'" (Escobar, 1995a, p. 44). Instead of solving the problems of Third World countries, development became an instrument of economic control over them as well as a mechanism through which they were imagined and marginalized. The discourses and practices of development actors made it difficult for people to define their own interests and created abnormalities that allowed them to take action against (Escobar, 1995b, pp. 206-208). Accordingly, discourses of development had been power-laden and allowed Western countries to portray themselves as developed, civilized, and advanced while portraying the non-Western countries as underdeveloped, savage, uneducated, ignorant, backward, and primitive (Bennett, 2012, p. 977). They also allowed Western countries to assign themselves a mission as educator and savior and shape societies in their own imagery. Given these characteristics, the genuine goal of development was not human improvement, but human control and domination instead (Rapley, 2004, p. 352).

There was no way and no need to “do” development better. For post-development approach, [t]he idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures and crime have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story: it did not work. Moreover, the historical conditions which catapulted the idea into prominence have vanished: development has become outdated (Sachs, 2010, p. xv).

For this reason, the idea of development had to be either abandoned or left to itself to fade away and disappear in its natural trajectory.

Indeed, post-development approach was not without criticism. To mention a few, it was criticized for being reactionary and overly romantic, turning a blind eye to the diversity of development approaches and projects, selectively focusing on failures to bolster its arguments in a biased manner, denying the successful cases where development actually worked, completely ignoring the existence of laypeople who demand development and favor development interventions in some geographies, denying the agency of the Third World, engaging in “criticism for the sake of criticism” and offering no concrete or constructive solutions and alternatives, leaving everything in the hands of the self-organizing capacity of the poor, and neglecting the sense that development community also takes lessons and adapts (Bennett, 2012, p. 980; Corbridge, 2007, p. 189; Pieterse, 2000). Another important yet overlooked line of critique associated with post-development approach was how development has depoliticized social life and turned the social, political, cultural into technical problems to be rationally and neutrally managed by experts. Accordingly, the idea of development was considered post-political for its overly optimistic and promising nature that disregarded conflict, contestation, dissensus, and controversy, while these were actually constitutive elements of the concept of the political. As Schuurman (2009, pp. 834-839) notes, for instance, depoliticized notions such as multiculturalism, civil society, good governance, social capital, or even UN Millennium Development Goals gradually took hegemonic positions in the “globalized” and mainstream development debate especially from the early 1990s onwards. They led development debate and research away from critical theory and towards neoliberal globalization discourses through an “academic governmentality” (see Table 1 below for a rough summary of the historical trajectory of development since the 19th century). Before discussing how development and depoliticization relate to each other further, in the following section I explain the concepts of the political, politics, depoliticization, and different forms depoliticization can take in greater detail.

Table 1: Changing meanings, explanations, and hegemony of development since the 19th century

Period	Approach	Meanings of development	Explanation	Hegemony
1850s >	Colonial economics	Resource management, trusteeship	Colonial anthropology, Social Darwinism	British Empire
1870s >	Latecomers	Industrialization, catching up	Classical political economy	Latecomers, Colonialism
1940s >	Development economics	Economic growth through industrialization	Growth theory, structural functionalism	The US
1950s >	Modernization theories	Growth, political and social modernization		
1960s >	Dependency theories	Accumulation through self-reliance and auto-centrism	Neo-Marxism	Third World nationalism, Non-Aligned Movement, G77 at the UN
1970s >	Alternative development	Human flourishing	Basic needs approach, fulfillment of human potential in non-economics terms	Feminism, environmentalism, Gandhian thinking
1980s >	Human development	Capacitation, enlargement of people's choices	Capabilities, developmental state	Rise of Asian and Pacific Rim, large emerging markets
1980s >	Neoliberalism	Economic growth through structural reform, deregulation, liberalization, privatization	Neoclassical economics, monetarism	Globalization, finance and corporate capital, international development and finance institutions
1990s >	Post-development	Authoritarian and technocratic engineering, catastrophe, failure	Post-modernism, post-colonialism, post-structuralism	Hegemonic development discourse, the idea of development itself

Source: Adapted from Pieterse, 2001, p. 7, 9.

2.2. The Concepts of the Political, Politics, and Depoliticization

Just as development, the concepts of the political, politics, and depoliticization are difficult to define in exact terms. To illustrate this fluidity in reverse order, depoliticization is often understood as post-politics, post-democracy, and post-political (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 6). Politics no more refers only to elections, participation in a political party, policy-making, and legislative activities of government. Newly emerged forms of politics and more participatory and inclusive approaches of democracy heightened the sense that there is a need

to distinguish between “routine politics” and the activities that define what falls into the category of routine politics (Barnett, 2004, p. 3). The political is no different; for some theorists the political is a space of convergence, consensus, freedom, and public deliberation. For some theorists, however, it is a space of power relations, interminable conflict, contestation, dissensus, and antagonism (Mouffe, 2005, p. 9). In this study, I examine the political, politics, and depoliticization in the light of the latter approach that sees the political as a space of contestation and agonistic confrontation. I will explain each concept and their interrelationship in greater detail below.

2.2.1. Carl Schmitt’s Conception of the Political and Depoliticization

Discussions on the concept of the political and political contestation often refer to Carl Schmitt’s distinction between friend and enemy as the starting point (Meyer, Schetter, & Prinz, 2012, p. 687). To elaborate, in his (in)famous work *The Concept of the Political*, Schmitt (1929/2007, p. 26) claims that just as there is a distinction between good and evil in the realm of morality, beautiful and ugly in aesthetics, and profitable and unprofitable in economics, there is also a specific distinction between friend and enemy in the context of the political. Schmitt considers the distinction between friend and enemy as the motor of history. This distinction refers to “the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or dissociation” (p. 26). Also, regardless of his or her moral or aesthetic qualities, the political enemy in this distinction must be the other, the stranger, the different, and the alien so that the conflict can occur in extreme cases (p. 27). In this formulation, friend and enemy should not be understood by their metaphorical or symbolic meanings and conceptualized as economic competitors or debating adversaries from economic and intellectual perspectives. On the contrary, they should be conceptualized as fighting collectivities of people who confront each other in a combat, in which there is a real possibility of physical killing (p. 28, 33). For Schmitt, in case the possibility of combat or war disappears, this pacified condition would translate into a world without the distinction between friend and enemy or a world without politics (p. 35). A world without politics would be shallow and meaningless; people would lack a higher purpose such as sacrificing their lives and instead prefer enjoying the frolics of modern entertainment in a depoliticized manner in this depoliticized life (Vinx, 2016). Therefore, for Schmitt (1929/2007, p. 35), the political should be understood “only in the context of the ever present possibility of the friend-and-enemy grouping, regardless of the aspects which this possibility implies for morality, aesthetics, and economics.”

Schmitt criticizes liberalism on this matter for negating the political and the state, diffusing the political into economics and ethics, regarding political entities as economic competitors or debating adversaries, and reducing political problems to organizational-technical and economic-sociological ones (İnce, 2009, p. 8). In other words, liberalism fails to draw a line between friend and enemy and, instead, embraces a sort of “political romanticism” where there is no last word on anything (Schmitt, 1929/2007, pp. xiii-xiv). For instance, the liberal vision that sees the possibility of an overarching state that embraces all other states and all humankind has depoliticizing implications. So does the depiction of the world as a universe. The explanation for this is, if all different states, governments, religions, classes, identities become unified to this degree, eventually the conflict among them and the distinction between friend and enemy disappear (p. 53). Instead, culture, civilization, economics, morality, law, art, and joy remain behind. For this reason, liberal projects that emphasize universality and all-encompassing approaches are associated with total depoliticization, dehumanization, neutralization, and the non-existence of states (p. xvi, 55, 61, 69). Also, according to Schmitt’s theological perspective, a universal world state must be rejected, as it represents the paradise or the kingdom to come, which is doomed to fail in this life (Meyer, Schetter, & Prinz, 2012, p. 689). In short, Schmitt underlines that there must always be room for the distinction between friend and enemy and dichotomous spaces that are clearly separated from each other for the political to take place (p. 689).

In relation to depoliticization, Schmitt (1929/2007, p. 89) also notes that in history there has been a series of attempts to reach a neutral domain that can constitute a ground for society. A neutral domain was necessary to avoid conflict and controversy, reach a common agreement through debate and exchange of opinions, and eventually make security, clarity, prudence, and peace possible. Accordingly, there were five major domains of thought in which the Western mind passed since the Renaissance. The world was structured around theology in the 16th century, metaphysics and scientific/rational research in the 17th century, ethical humanism in the 18th century, economics in the 19th century, and finally technicity in the 20th century (pp. xxvii-xxviii, 81-82). Specific concepts received their meanings in accordance with the context of the central domains. As one domain of thought rose to centrality, the problems in other domains were defined and solved in terms of the central domain. Schmitt describes the era of technology and technological progress as the age of neutralization and depoliticization on the grounds that technology was often considered as the absolute and ultimate neutral ground that could bring universal peace. In Schmitt’s words,

[u]nlike theological, metaphysical, moral, and even economic questions, which are

forever debatable, purely technical problems have something refreshingly factual about them. They are easy to solve, and it is easily understandable why there is a tendency to take refuge in technicity from the inextricable problems of all other domains (pp. 90-91).

Technology, then, contributes to leveling of conflictual aspects of religious, national, and social problems into a neutral domain, which is conceptualized as a domain of peace, mutual understanding, and reconciliation (p. 91). Technology has depoliticizing implications also in the sense that it transforms the state into a huge industrial complex that can run automatically. Such a transformation carries the risk of eliminating the need for human agency (pp. xxvii-xxviii). It should be noted that, though, each attempt to reach a neutral domain inevitably loses its neutrality and becomes contested in time, leading to a new search for a new neutral domain. Accordingly, sources of depoliticization such as science and technology, bureaucracy and administration, market individualism can also lose their neutrality in time and become politicized (Reynolds & Szerszynski, 2014, p. 52).

2.2.2. Chantal Mouffe's Conception of the Political and Depoliticization

Chantal Mouffe is one of the most prominent scholars who built her major arguments on Schmitt's conceptualization of the political. However, as İnce (2009, p. 2) underlines, political positions and theoretical focuses of Mouffe and Schmitt are actually quite divergent. As widely known, Schmitt is a controversial figure for his conservative stance, thoughts on sovereign power and dictatorship, and significant role in the formulation of National Socialism. On the contrary, Mouffe is a supporter of radical pluralist democracy, the brain behind social indeterminacy and discursivity, and the co-author of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*—one of the most influential post-Marxist works in the literature—along with Ernesto Laclau. Still, opposing positions of both figures did not prevent Mouffe from engaging with the works of Schmitt and build arguments similar to his on the necessity of antagonism for a social order to come into being, impossibility of liberal universalism, optimism of consensus-building efforts, and so on (Meyer, Schetter, & Prinz, 2012, p. 688).

In her famous and concise work *On the Political*, Mouffe (2005, p. 8) makes a distinction between politics and the political. In this distinction, politics refers to the ontic level and the political refers to the ontological level. Here, the ontic deals with the practices of conventional politics, whereas the ontological deals with how society is instituted (p. 8). Accordingly, Mouffe defines politics as “the set of practices and institutions through which an order is created” and the political as “the dimension of antagonism ... constitutive of human societies” (p. 9). Understood this way, she opposes to the idea that political can be

reduced to technical to be addressed by expert knowledge on the grounds that the political always requires making a choice between conflicting alternatives (p. 10). Mouffe criticizes liberal thought on this matter. For her, liberal thought negates antagonism, attaches great importance to rationalist and individualist approaches that disregard the nature of collective identities, and emphasizes the so-called harmonious and pacified characteristic of the world (p. 10). However, she underlines that rather than such liberal values, the ever-present possibility of the distinction between friend and enemy and the conflictual nature of politics constitute the genuine basis of democratic politics (p. 14).

Mouffe also claims that the distinction between “us vs. them” can be constructed in forms other than antagonistic dimension and puts agonism forward as a new type of relationship between “us vs. them” (p. 16, 20). While antagonism refers to an “us vs. them” relation where neither side has a common ground and both sides aim to annihilate each other, agonism refers to a situation where conflicting sides recognize each other’s legitimacy and engage in an adversarial relationship (p. 20). The primary objective of democracy is to tame antagonism and transform antagonistic relations into agonistic ones. Once an “us vs. them” relationship becomes agonistic or adversarial, it does not signify that antagonism is totally eliminated, though. It signifies that antagonism is rather “sublimated” (p. 21). While liberal thought sees adversary merely as a competitor and disregards questions regarding hegemony and power relations, agonistic struggle deals with configuration of power relations and struggles between opposing hegemonic projects that cannot be solved through rationality (p. 21). In that sense, agonism also opposes to the possibility of a non-adversarial, technical, and neutral understanding of the political (p. 34).

Mouffe criticizes concepts such as partisan-free democracy, dialogic democracy, good governance, and global civil society for their anti-political character that aims to obtain a world beyond ideologies, hegemony, and antagonism (p. 2). To be more specific, she criticizes the post-political views of sociologists Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens who argue that the model of politics structured around collective identities has become a thing of the past due to the increased level of individualism and therefore needs to be abandoned (p. 35). According to these thinkers, in time modernity has taken the shape of “reflexive modernity” and societies have evolved towards a post-traditional condition. For instance, Beck sees politics around left and right as obsolete and inadequate to interpret and understand the conflicts of reflexive modernity, as he believes that ideological and political conflicts can be better characterized by the dichotomies of safe and unsafe, inside and outside, political and unpolitical in a risk society (p. 38). Giddens also sees the divide between left and right

obsolete, as he believes that an alternative to capitalism is unthinkable and newly arisen problems cannot be expressed by the vocabulary of politics around left and right anymore (pp. 44-45). However, post-political announcements that point to the end of history, politics, and left and right ideologies and emphasize that “there is no alternative [to neoliberalism]” are far from ending conflictual relations. Instead, in case the channels of expression for dissenting voices are closed and no room is left in the arena of democratic contestation, there emerges a grave risk that the repressed returns and antagonism takes violent and radical forms such as xenophobic populism, right-wing nationalism, and religious fundamentalism (pp. 64-72). In that sense, post-political is a hegemonic order in which antagonism is not transformed into agonism, but repressed instead.

In addition, Mouffe draws attention to another weakening factor of the political, which is moralization of politics. It refers to the construction of the distinction between “us vs. them” in moral terms such as “good vs. evil.” In this configuration, the distinction between friend and enemy is still out there, but expressed in a different language of morality (p. 75). The struggle is not defined between right and left, but between right and wrong. However, the exercise of politics in moral register prevents the transformation of antagonism into agonism because opponents cannot be depicted as adversaries, but only as enemies to be annihilated (p. 76). In the light of these arguments, Mouffe follows Schmitt and emphasizes that the liberal attempt to eradicate the political has no chance but to fail on the grounds that the source of the political originates from various human activities and any antithesis can transform itself into a political one if it is powerful enough to sort human beings into the camps of friend and enemy (p. 12).

2.2.3. Jacques Rancière’s Conception of the Political and Depoliticization

Just as Mouffe makes a distinction between politics and the political, Jacques Rancière makes a distinction among the political, politics, and the police. From his perspective, the political can be understood as a meeting ground where the process of governance—the police—and process of emancipation—politics—encounter each other (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 128). In this formulation, the police refers to the existing order of things, activities of the state that contribute to the creation of the order, and institutions that reproduce a given social hierarchy (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 12). Rancière (2001) notes that the essence of the police is not to repress people or control the aspects of life. Rather, it is partition or distribution of the sensible, which can be understood as “a general law that defines the forms of part-taking by first defining the modes of perception in which they are inscribed.” Accordingly,

[t]he police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise (Rancière, 1999, p. 29).

Having noted this, in contrast to Schmitt and Mouffe who believe that social relations are defined by antagonism, Rancière claims that they are defined by equality. The police or the distribution of the sensible operates through organizing the inequalities and excluding one part of society that is given no part in society (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 12). In the words of Rancière (2001), “there is politics inasmuch as ‘the people’ refers to subjects inscribed as a supplement to the count of the parts of society, a specific figure of ‘the part of those who have no-part.’” In this context, the political is about articulating dissent and discomfort to obtain a place in the order of things. It can be conceived as a sphere in which “the rabble”—the part of no part—becomes “people” and their “anarchic noise” becomes the recognized voice of the people (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 129). The political is not about making demands to the ruling elites to address inequalities. Rather, it is the demand of those who are voiceless and not counted to be heard, counted, named, and recognized (p. 129). Politics or democracy, therefore, is exercised when those who are part of no part make their presence visible in accordance with the equality (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 12).

Rancière (2001) claims that consensus cannot be at the heart of politics because it is just another way of expressing “the end of politics” and another form of returning to the normal state of things as they were during the non-existence of politics. For Rancière, post-political or post-democracy operates not through repression but through disavowal (p. 13). Accordingly, the police neutralizes the political agency of those who are part of no part through three types of disavowal of politics: archi-politics, para-politics, and meta-politics. To briefly explain each, archi-politics disavows politics through establishing a police order on the basis of the idea that society is composed of a harmonious, peaceful, and undivided whole (Van Puymbroeck & Oosterlynck, 2014, p. 97). Populist and anti-immigrant nationalist political movements or the political ideology of Big Society that flourished in the UK in the 2000s can be given as an example to this type of disavowal. Para-politics, in contrast, views society not as a homogenous entity that lives in harmony, but as an entity that is differentiated along multiple lines (p. 98). Still, para-politics disavows politics through reducing hierarchical differentiations to institutionalized competition between different opinions and parties for places and setting rules and barriers as to where, when, and how this

competition can be actualized (p. 98). Representative democracy is an example to this type. Finally, meta-politics disavows politics through subordinating politics to a deeper essence and pointing to one specific phenomenon as the source of all societal inequalities (Van Puymbroeck & Oosterlynck, 2014, p. 98). Neoliberal thought that holds the state interference in the market and personal freedoms responsible for all imperfections and inequalities constitutes an example to this type. It is also noteworthy that, building on Rancière's three-fold typology, Slavoj Žižek adds a fourth type of depoliticization which he calls ultra-politics (p. 98). Ultra-politics refers to the establishment of a distinction between "us vs. them" in absolute and radical terms as well as denial of any kind of shared symbolic space between sides. This configuration leaves no chance of engagement apart from violence (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 14). Far-right politics, terrorism, and the so-called "War on Terror" exemplify this type. While Mouffe and Rancière define post-political by repression and disavowal respectively, Žižek argues that post-political operates through foreclosure (p. 14). In the light of these, post-politics can be broadly understood as a combination of

(1) para-politics in the form of governance-mediated searches for consensus around specific issues amongst a plethora of different stakeholders, (2) a meta-political reduction of the social order to the mere product of atomizing market-based relations of competition, and (3) ultra-political projection of any ideological alternative to a capitalist free market society beyond the boundaries of the present into a failed past, often backed up by (4) an archi-political appeal to a harmonious and undivided national, regional or local community of supposedly equals (Van Puymbroeck & Oosterlynck, 2014, p. 98).

2.2.4. Recent Perspectives on Depoliticization Since the 2000s

In addition to three perspectives above, there are also recent noteworthy perspectives on depoliticization that have been flourishing since the late 1990s and early 2000s. To elaborate, Burnham (2001, p. 128) argues that, in the context of British politics in the late 1990s, the New Labour government introduced a new form of statecraft or governing strategy that was designed to depoliticize various important political issues. In this light, he defines depoliticization as "the process of placing at one remove the political character of decision-making" (p. 128). This governing strategy serves two ends. First, depoliticization plays a role in changing the expectations of the market about how credible and reliable policy-making is, especially in a context where "neutral" and independent experts are considered more trustworthy and skillful than politicians in the eyes of the public (Buller & Flinders, 2005, p. 526). Second, depoliticization allows politicians—who must ensure electoral support—to

insulate themselves from the results of controversial policy decisions, negative consequences of a policy failure, and blame (p. 526). Similarly, based on Burnham's definition, Flinders and Buller (2006) define depoliticization as

the range of tools, mechanisms and institutions through which politicians can attempt to move to an indirect governing relationship and/or seek to persuade the demos that they can no longer be reasonably held responsible for a certain issue, policy field or specific decision (pp. 295-296).

It should be noted that, though, depoliticization is actually an inherently political act. It should not be conceived as the direct removal of politics from social and economic spheres or disappearance of political power (Burnham, 2001, p. 136). Policy-making is always political, regardless of who is responsible for making it. Also, politics remains intact while the arena or process through which decisions are made is changed in depoliticization. For this reason, this process can also be referred to as "arena-shifting" (Flinders & Buller, 2006, p. 296).

Flinders and Buller identify three distinct tactics of depoliticization. The first tactic, institutional depoliticization, refers to the establishment of a principal-agent relationship between an elected politician or minister and an appointed administrator or independent agency (p. 298). Formation of committees, commissions, or executive agencies regarding policy issues and transferring of powers and responsibilities to these institutions on the basis of the need to depoliticize decision-making can be given as an example to this tactic. The second tactic, rule-based depoliticization, refers to the implementation of a policy that sets neutral, universally accepted, and non-discriminatory rules that limit political discretion in the decision-making process and leave little or no need for political negotiation (pp. 303-304). Adoption of exchange rate mechanism in Britain to cope with the problem of high inflation in the 1970s is an example to this tactic. The third tactic, preference-shaping depoliticization, corresponds to giving reference to an ideological claim, employing a certain discourse, and constructing a new reality to present a policy issue as if it is beyond the control of politicians, primarily to justify policy decisions (p. 307). The idea that neoliberalism is without alternative or that globalization necessitates people to behave in a certain way exemplifies this tactic. Indeed, these tactics provide only a rough picture of modern governance, which in fact is highly complex. Also, they are not mutually exclusive; a government can employ different depoliticization tactics at the same time at different levels (p. 310). In the guidance of the arguments of Burnham, Flinders, and Buller, depoliticization—defined and understood as a form of governing tool—is primarily concerned with transferring

of blame, responsibility, transaction costs, and critique of policy-making to other institutions as well as abstract phenomena that are beyond human control.

The more expansive definition of depoliticization does not reduce the concept merely to a governing strategy. Instead, depoliticization stands in opposition of politicization process—defined as opening up of political space—and refers to the closing off public deliberation on a number of issues (Foster, Kerr, & Byrne, 2014, p. 3). In other words, depoliticization is concerned with the removal or insertion of choice, deliberation, contingency, and agency around issues. In this regard, Hay’s conceptualization of politicization and depoliticization in *Why We Hate Politics?* deserves a special focus. Defining politics as “the realm of contingency and deliberation,” Hay (2007, p. 79) makes a distinction between the political realm—the realm of contingency—and non-political realm—the realm of necessity—as shown in Table 2 below. Accordingly, the political realm includes both governmental and non-governmental spheres. These two spheres further spawn into three subspheres of public and governmental sphere, public but non-governmental sphere, and private sphere. Non-political realm includes fate and necessity.

Table 2: Political and non-political realms

Political			Non-political
Realm of contingency and deliberation			Realm of necessity
Governmental sphere	Non-governmental sphere		
Public and governmental	Public and non-governmental	Private sphere	

Source: Hay, 2007, p. 79.

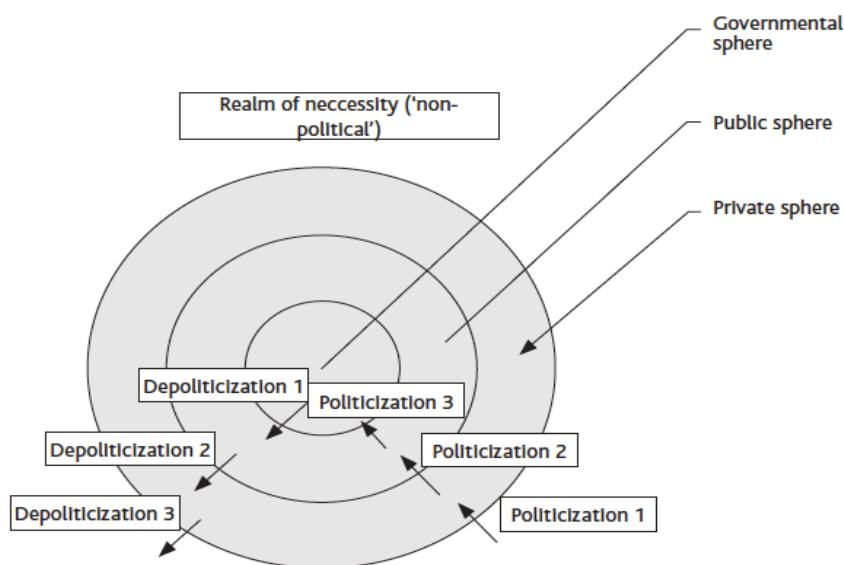


Figure 1: Politicization and depoliticization processes

Source: Hay, 2007, p. 80, as cited in Wood and Flinders, 2014, p. 154.

Accordingly, as illustrated in Figure 1 above, Hay (2007, pp. 79-80) claims that an issue can be politicized if it is promoted from (a) the realm of necessity to the private sphere (Type 1), (b) private sphere to the public sphere (Type 2), and (c) public sphere to the governmental sphere (Type 3). To provide examples for each type, secularization of a state in which the authority of the ruler was previously believed to originate from divine sources signifies a shift from the realm of necessity to the realm of contingency and constitutes an example to Type 1 politicization (p. 81). The development of personal issues such as abortion, sexual harassment, and environmental sensitivity into collective issues after consciousness- and awareness-raising campaigns signifies a shift from private sphere to public sphere and constitutes an example to Type 2 politicization (p. 81). Finally, entrance of concerns such as public health into legislative debates or governmental processes signifies a shift from public sphere to governmental sphere and constitutes an example to Type 3 politicization (p. 82).

In a reverse logic, an issue can be depoliticized if it is demoted from (a) governmental sphere to public sphere (Type 1), (b) public sphere to private sphere (Type 2), and (c) from private sphere to the realm of necessity (Type 3). For instance, transferring of responsibility from governments to public authorities or independent organizations such as independent central banks or trans-national institutions signifies a shift from governmental sphere to public sphere and provides an example to Type 1 depoliticization (p. 82). Representation of environmental degradation or unemployment as the (ir)responsibility of consumers but not of governments and businesses signifies a shift from public sphere to private sphere and provides an example to Type 2 depoliticization (p. 85). Finally, characterization of neoliberalism or globalization as the “only game in town” and, hence, the denial of agency and choice as well as justification of policies through such discourses signifies a shift from the realm of contingency to the realm of necessity/fate and presents an example to Type 3 depoliticization (p. 87).

Indeed, issues are not the only subjects of politicization and depoliticization processes; people and social organizations can also become politicized and depoliticized (Blühdorn, 2007, as cited in Mishra, 2010, p. 92). For instance, citizens who were previously engaged in politics may over time become indifferent and uninterested in engaging in political debates and activities. Turnout rates in elections and referenda may be very low. It may even be the case that “the extent of public apathy, anger, and frustration with the operation of democratic politics [can even go] beyond healthy scepticism and into the sphere of corrosive cynicism, even fatalism and about democratic politics’ capacity to resolve major social challenges” (Flinders, 2012, p. 640). Similarly, organizations may over time stop

embracing and promoting specific political agendas. Politically motivated religious organizations may over time evolve into purely religious and philanthropic organizations.

Summing up these different but interrelated perspectives on depoliticization, the concept can be understood as a condition in which all ideological battles come to an end and eventually consensus prevails, a set of institutional mechanisms and practices employed to reduce politics to consensual management of economic necessity, and the disappearance of political differences between “the established institutional arrangements of a given social order, and the establishment of that social order on an always absent ground” (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 7). Some of the mechanisms that prevent agonism from coming to surface and contribute to the formation of these conditions can be identified as

[m]anagement, administration, and bureaucracy; science and technical reasoning; a consensual socio-economic order in which the questions of eudaimonia—of the nature of human flourishing—seem to have been settled once and for all; the elevation of consumption and market choice as the vehicle of human fulfillment and the distribution of goods; the canvassing of public opinion, and mechanisms of conflict resolution and mediation (Swyngedouw, 2011, pp. 371-372, as cited in Reynolds & Szerszynski, 2014, pp. 50-51).

Also, depoliticization can be governmental and refer to the demotion of issues from governmental sphere to public sphere through passing these issues from the hands of politicians to neutral and technocratic bodies. It can be societal and refer to the demotion of issues from public sphere to private sphere through a transition from collective to individual responses to socio-political challenges. Finally, it can be discursive and refer to the demotion of issues from private sphere to realm of necessity through discursive practices and ideas to construct a reality without contingency (Wood & Flinders, 2014, p. 165). I will explain how development and depoliticization relate to each other in the following section.

2.3. Interlinkages Between Development and Depoliticization

2.3.1. Concealment of Conflictual Relations

Development and depoliticization are interrelated for a number of reasons. Ziai (2016, p. 60) notes that development blurs injustice, inequalities, and conflictual relations at both national and international levels. Conclusions about how much countries or populations have developed based purely on quantitative data regarding gross domestic product, per capita income, growth rate often overlook socio-economic inequalities and ignore the heterogeneity of development beneficiaries and stakeholders (pp. 60-61). Thus, political and contested issues are reframed and concealed through hiding behind numbers, statistics, and figures,

which can supposedly fully reflect development levels of states, regions, or people. Similarly, Mosse (2005, p. 21) explains that development projects often “involve a special kind of writing that, while preserving the appearance of technical planning, accomplish the social tasks of legitimation, persuasion and enrolment, becoming richly encoded with institutional and individual interests and ambitions and optimisms.”

At the other end of the equation, politics has been considered as an obstacle to neutral and objective decision-making (Beveridge, 2012, p. 53). To illustrate, Hout (2012, p. 417) notes that development professionals often put a distance between their work and politics for several reasons. For him, development professionals share somewhat similar set of values and norms regarding eradicating poverty and “bringing” development to the countries they are assigned to. These values and norms also lead them to take a more pragmatic approach in implementing development projects and pay little or no attention to political struggles and power dynamics in and around development projects. They often do not take a side with a part of the population. From their perspective, “doing development” is not about engaging in political debates or struggle, but rather about management and implementation of projects and disbursing funds to governmental and non-governmental partners to obtain quick, painless, and concrete results (p. 418). The depoliticized approach protects them from the difficulties of power struggles and conflictual relations in the environment they are in and allows them to concentrate on their work without being disturbed (p. 418).

2.3.2. Rendering Technical

As Li (2007, p. 7) argues, problematization—spotting deficiencies for correction—and “rendering technical” are required in order to translate development into the form of projects. These two elements are not separate from each other. On the contrary, together they form the basis of how development is practiced in a depoliticized manner. To elaborate on rendering technical, arguably one of the most influential works in this regard is *The Anti-Politics Machine* by Ferguson. One of the points of departure of Ferguson’s work is the question why and how development projects can still be implemented while development “clearly” does not work, specifically in Lesotho where “failure appears to be the norm” (Ferguson, 1994, p. 8). Even though it is an anthropological study, it primarily focuses not on the people as the target of development, but on the apparatus as the provider of development (p. 17). In this light, Ferguson takes a Foucauldian approach and focuses on the relationship among discourses, power, and governmentality (see Foucault, 1991). Through this framework, he examines how a number of development projects implemented in Lesotho between 1975 and 1984 failed to meet their promises and how development operates in a given context.

Ferguson notes that while development projects may fail, their powerful and extensive—as well as unintended and unforeseen—consequences should not be overlooked. To elaborate, the institutions that form the development industry are not neutral. For this reason, development projects are not neutral either and are explicitly designed in accordance with the existing political and institutional context (Nadasdy, 2005, p. 218). For Ferguson (1994, p. xiv), development institutions employ their own form of discourses that construct a certain target as a kind of object of knowledge and create a structure of knowledge around that object. For instance, international development institutions represented Lesotho as an underdeveloped, isolated, and backward country with an isolated, traditional, aboriginal, and peasant society. In return, development interventions were designed and implemented based on this created structure of knowledge. However, it is often the case that development institutions consider development as a straightforward exercise and offer technical solutions to essentially non-technical problems. For instance, in the case of Lesotho,

[a]t the end of this involved process of theoretical construction, Lesotho [is] represented in development discourse as a nation of farmers, not wage laborers; a country with a geography, but no history; with people, but no classes; values, but no structures; administrators, but no rulers; bureaucracy, but no politics. Political and structural causes of poverty in Lesotho are systematically erased and replaced with technical ones, and the modern, capitalist, industrialized nature of the society is systematically understated or concealed (p. 66).

Through this process, development discourse or apparatus transforms the imperfections of the country into easy-to-solve problems and creates a suitable object for development institutions to intervene in a non-political and technical manner (p. 87). This is favorable on behalf of the intervener because initiating political change, supporting revolutionary struggles for change, or dealing with crucial political questions such as gendered distribution of land, winners and losers of the development process, and push factors of migration and poverty are always more difficult than formulating and implementing technical and supposedly neutral solutions. For this reason, depoliticization is considered as an unavoidable result of development. In Ferguson's oft-cited words,

[b]y uncompromisingly reducing poverty to a technical problem, and by promising technical solutions to the sufferings of powerless and oppressed people, the hegemonic problematic of “development” is the principle means through which the question of poverty is depoliticized in the world today. At the same time, by making the intentional blueprints for “development” so highly visible, a “development”

project can end up performing extremely sensitive political operations involving the extension and expansion of institutional state power almost invisibly, under the cover of a neutral technical mission to which no one can object (p. 256).

In other words, while development functions as an “anti-politics machine” and depoliticizes “everything it touches” (p. xv), it also causes the extension of bureaucratic state power as another unforeseen consequence. The logic here is that if development institutions consider development problems as technical problems, their solutions necessitate the application of expert knowledge and provision of government services (Nadasdy, 2005, p. 219). Depoliticized form of development, then, requires the creation of new bodies that deal with the bureaucratic aspect of development, construction of new infrastructure for development purposes, and consolidation of state power. It might change power dynamics and transfer power from the local population to development experts and state officials. Such a large expansion of the state and bureaucratic power may end up shaping almost all aspects of life as an irreversible legacy of development interventions (Ferguson, 1994, pp. 266-267).

In a more recent anthropological work, *The Will to Improve*, Li (2007) examines the governmental and non-governmental efforts to improve the lives of the local population in Java and Central Sulawesi in Indonesia in the past two centuries in the guidance of the works of Foucault, Gramsci, and Marx. According to Doner (2010, p. 644), Foucauldian, Gramscian, and Marxian perspectives allowed Li to highlight the tensions between the technocratic sterility of development projects initiated by governments and the messiness of politics, grasp how and why new identities emerge during the struggle, and recognize the power of the market and how displacement and impoverishment follow growth. Based on historical accounts, interviews, participant observation, and meticulous readings of planning documents of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international development institutions, she *inter alia* draws attention to how NGOs and international development institutions systematically render everything technical through excluding power relations in their approaches and programs. In other words, her main concern is how development attempts have overlooked socio-political and politico-economic causes of poverty and rendered genuinely political processes of development technical. In Li’s (2007) words,

[q]uestions that are rendered technical are simultaneously rendered nonpolitical. For the most part, experts tasked with improvement exclude the structure of political-economic relations from their diagnoses and prescriptions. They focus more on the capacities of the poor than on the practices through which one social group impoverishes another (p. 7).

Accordingly, even though development interventions have changed throughout the years and put more emphasis on community, participation, and empowerment, they continued to contribute to depoliticization in many ways. They still generally aim to contain a challenge to the status quo, ignore the character of the ruling governments and turn a blind eye to their unacceptable practices for the sake of partnership, disregard power relations and power imbalance between the “developer” and “to be developed” or experts and non-experts, and ignore the structural causes of inequality and instead assume that properly instructed individuals are responsible for the unfavorable conditions they live in, in accordance with the neoliberal development paradigm (p. 8, 275).

In this context, *Cultivating Development*, the ethnographic work in which Mosse examines the relationship between development policy and practice is also worth mentioning. Having served as a consultant to the project, Mosse focuses closely on Indo-British Rainfed Farming Project (IBRFP) funded by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) in the 1990s and *inter alia* asks “[w]hat if the practices of development are in fact concealed rather than produced by policy” and “[w]hat if, instead of policy producing practice, practices produce policy, in the sense that actors in development devote their energies to maintaining coherent representations regardless of events” (Mosse, 2005, p. 2). From his perspective, development interventions have to be—or at least appear as—technical and based on empirical facts, science, and profession to be persuasive, appealing, and legitimate. Technicity of the project and technical expertise of consultants and experts contribute to the concealment of the political nature of project choices and objectives or criticisms regarding development programs. Therefore, the language of international development consensus has never been political, but technical (p. 37). Mosse also discusses how development interventions at times remain indifferent to power dynamics among beneficiaries. For instance, as Corbridge (2007, p. 188) notes, Mosse demonstrates that while community organizers of the project were already competent in participatory development and PRA techniques, in the field they had to rely on the mediation of more powerful villagers to reach out poor villagers as their real targets. However, it was unknown and unexpected that, as opposed to poor—and dependent—villagers, powerful villagers could actually understand the specifics of the project quicker and better and present themselves as poor to enjoy most of the benefits of the project instead of the target group (p. 188). Despite this situation, the privileged position of the powerful village elite remained untouched in order not to spoil the long days of hard labor. Thus, local power structures were not undermined,

but instead reproduced as an unintended consequence of the project, which was indeed designed and initiated with good intentions.

2.3.3. Neoliberalism, Governmentality, and Biopolitics

Just as modernist interpretation of development tends to devalue or banish politics (Scott, 1998, p. 94), neoliberalism can also be considered as post-political or depoliticized because it is widely dominated by techno-managerial structures, associated with consensus-based decision making, and interpreted as a supra-political phenomenon which is above and beyond ideologies (Wilson, 2013, p. 220). Kamat (2014, p. 69) also underlines that neoliberalism has contributed to depoliticization in the field of development through dissolving the distinctions between public and private, state and market, individual and community in favor of a post-political growth and democracy agenda. States, governments, NGOs, and corporations have shared the same vision of development that avoids political contestation and instead prioritizes politics of consensus and attaches great importance to harmonization of conflictual relations (p. 69). Neoliberalism, then, cannot be confined to a theory or model, as it “reaches from the soul of the citizen-subject” and “involves extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social action” (Brown, 2003, as cited in Kamat, 2014, p. 67). In this process, neoliberalism is concerned with the management and control of different aspects of life both at individual and population levels. These points require a closer examination of the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and biopolitics.

The meaning of governmentality ranges from “governing the self” to “governing the others.” It refers to a specific relation of power that aims at the “conduct of conduct.” In this context, “to govern” refers to structuring the field of possible action of others in the spheres of political, economic, social, and so on (Foucault, 1982, p. 221, as cited in Ziai, 2016, p. 17). This relation of power indeed influences and governs individuals, but does not coerce them to act in a certain way. The art of governmentality is about guiding the usage individuals make of their freedom (p. 17). Development can be located in the field of power of governmentality, as it aims at shaping human conduct through calculation and securing the well-being and living conditions at the level of populations without referring to discipline and coercion (Li, 2007, p. 5). Also, development is so expansive that it infiltrates almost every aspect of life (p. 6). For this reason, it is fair to argue that development can be associated with biopolitics and considered as a biopolitical process.

Biopolitics derives from governmentality. Even though the invention of the term goes back as early as the 1920s, Foucault introduced his idea of biopolitics in the second half of the 1970s to explain how social and political power was exercised to have control over

human life and analyze the effects of liberal governance practices (Liesen & Walsh, 2012, p. 4). In his widely known three-fold conceptualization of power, Foucault makes a distinction between sovereign and disciplinary power. Sovereign or pre-modern power in classical age was dealing with the state, sovereignty, violence, and rights. It was primarily juridical, negative, and prohibitive (p. 6). In this configuration, the state and society were distinct entities and the former had a higher status than the latter. This position allowed the state or the sovereign to decide over life and death through laws that determine the boundaries of acceptable behavior and prohibit whatever is unacceptable. Punishment was the successful employment of a judiciary and technical *dispositif* of enforcement (Gambetti, 2011, p. 5).

Beginning in the 17th century, the power over life evolved in two forms. The first form was disciplinary power. In contrast with sovereign power, disciplinary power arranged the social field through various sets of techniques such as surveillance, categorization, systematic selection, and rationalization of bodies at various venues such as prison, school, factory, hospital, and barracks. In this context, the state or any other institution by itself ceased to be the only locus of power (p. 6). The second form, which emerged from the mid-18th century onwards, was regulatory power. In the light of his lectures between 1975 and 1976, Foucault claimed that the major difference between disciplinary and regulatory powers was that while the former was concerned with the control of individual bodies, the latter was concerned with the management of life at the level of population (p. 6).

Biopower is a derivative of these regulatory mechanisms. Foucault notes that governing technologies of modern political power swing between two ends in the context of managing life (Dillon & Lobo-Guerrero, 2008, p. 271). Accordingly, one end sees human body “as a machine” to be disciplined, optimized of its capabilities, and integrated into efficiency and economic control. This end is called anatomo-politics. The other end sees human body “as a species,” filled with the mechanics and biological processes of life such as birth, death, health, and longevity (p. 271). This end is called biopolitics. Together, anatomo-politics and biopolitics constitute biopower. Biopower differs from sovereign power that claims the right to kill by its primary concern “to make live.” Contrary to sovereign power that punishes, biopower aims to improve the populations’ mental and physical well-being, longevity, productivity, and efficiency (De Larrinaga & Doucet, 2008, p. 520). In Foucault’s (1991) words, in opposition to sovereignty,

government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc. ... [I]t is the population itself on which government will act either directly

through large-scale campaigns, or indirectly through techniques that will make possible, without the full awareness of the people, the stimulation of birth rates, the directing of the flow of population into certain regions or activities, etc (p. 100).

Also, as opposed to other types of power, biopower spreads through society and infiltrates everywhere in the depths of the social. Its reach is so extensive that it can normalize social acts and manage a wide range of social fields (De Larrinaga & Doucet, 2008, p. 520). In other words, biopower is invisible, plural, discursive, pervasive, and exercised through complex power relationships and therefore carries the risk of ending up in an omnipresent and overarching government in which nothing can escape (Liesen & Walsh, 2012, p. 7). It is a positive or productive force that aimed to produce “docile bodies” and “normalized subjects” (DuBois, 1991, p. 5). In this setting, every issue can become a subject of analysis and calculation to serve economic and political goals. Individuals can be judged in technical sense and compared upon certain standards (p. 18). For this reason, biopolitics relies heavily on forecasts, statistics, calculations, and various measures to be able to intervene and make arrangements through programmes and activities in the areas of health, education, environment, population control, and migration (Buur, Jensen, & Stepputat, 2007, p. 14; Duffield, 2006, p. 16).

In the light of these, it can be concluded that biopolitics or placement of life at the center of every theory and practice is linked to liberal thought, which has always aimed to depoliticize the public sphere—the key locus of the political (Koljević, 2008, p. 73). With its different practices, techniques, and rationalities, neoliberal governmentality contributes to the production of self-governed and self-sufficient individuals and shapes their behavior to ensure their “voluntary” involvement in biopolitical processes (p. 76). In this context, neoliberalism employs indirect governing methods to manage and control individuals and populations without being responsible for their actions. Instead, the responsibility for risks regarding the aspects of life such as sickness, joblessness, underdevelopment is shifted to the individual and collectives and such problems are rendered as problems to be handled by “the self” or individual as a responsible and rational (economic) actor (Lemke, 2001, p. 201).

2.4. Summary

Even though the origins of the idea of development date back to as early as the 18th century, development emerged as a political project and a field of study in the aftermath of the World War II. After the reclassification of the countries as underdeveloped and developed, development disciplines and theories began to emerge in the 1950s. Modernization theories were the first development theories and became widespread in the 1950s and early 1960s.

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Structuralism and dependency theories rose to prominence in the 1970s. Neoliberalism emerged as the hegemonic development paradigm in the 1980s. Based on the idea that development reached an impasse and a crisis, searches for alternatives *of* development intensified also in this period. In the 1990s, post-development approach emerged after its harsh critique on the concept of development itself and calls to find alternatives *to* development. Given that each theory or approach was built on the imperfections and deficiencies of the previous one, development was subjected to criticism on many grounds from different perspectives in different time periods for more than half a century. At the expense of generalizing, development was often criticized *inter alia* for its dichotomous thinking; ethnocentrism or Western-centrism; portrayal of non-Western societies as underdeveloped, savage, traditional, uneducated, ignorant, backward, primitive, and the other in a hierarchical manner; social evolutionism; overemphasis on the role of experts; overemphasis on scientific and technological advancement; top-down, interventionist, and one-size-fits-all approach; failure to eliminate poverty and deprivation; indifference to inequalities; indifference to destruction; and indifference to power relations. In relation to the last point, development was also widely criticized for its depoliticizing implications.

Considering that the political is a space of power relations, interminable conflict, contestation, dissensus, and antagonism, depoliticization refers to a wide range of phenomena including, but not limited to, a condition in which the distinction between friend and enemy no longer exists; a condition in which there is no longer any ideological or political struggle; diffusion of the political into economics and ethics; redefinition of political adversaries as economic competitors or debating adversaries; reduction of political problems to technical, organizational, socio-economic problems to be rationally and neutrally managed; disavowal of politics through various means; transfer of issues from the hands of politicians to neutral and technocratic bodies to offload blame and responsibility; and construction of a reality without agency and contingency.

Understood this way, development and depoliticization can be interlinked for a number of reasons. With its optimistic and promising nature, development often disregards conflict, contestation, and controversy. It has the power to conceal injustices, inequalities, and conflictual relations both at national and international levels. Also, in the context of development practice, politics is often viewed as a barrier against neutral and objective decision-making. Furthermore, development renders political issues technical or non-political through disregarding power relations in its approaches and projects. Finally, it is concerned with the management and control of life. In relation to this, it is related to the field of power

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of (neoliberal) governmentality and biopolitics, as it aims to shape human conduct and behavior through improving populations' quality of life without using coercion. Development, then, has been far from being neutral and power-free. On the contrary, with its authoritarian and depoliticizing implications, it has contributed, *inter alia*, to the legitimization of even the most controversial development schemes, homogenization of different groups and identities, reconfiguration of power dynamics among populations and between elites and non-elites, and redefinition of political issues that require engagement in conflictual relations and risk taking as neutral, easy-to-solve issues.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I explain the methodology of the study. The chapter comprises three sections. In the first section, I explain through which data collection techniques and what kind of processes I collected data. In the second section, I explain how I interpreted and analyzed the collected data and provide details on the stages of the analysis process. In the third section, I reflect on my position throughout research and discuss what kind of advantages and challenges I faced during the process.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the primary focus of the study is on discursive constructions. Alfini and Chambers (2010, p. 30) note that words have the capacity to “frame our perceptions and thoughts, and affect our mind-sets, ways of ordering our world, and actions.” They are by no means neutral and value-free representations of the world. As Hajer (2006, p. 67) argues, language has the power to make politics, influence power dynamics, define some issues as contentious and some others as uncontentious, and alleviate or create political conflicts. A discourse is indeed broader than words, discussion, or everyday speeches. It can be conceptualized as “a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities” (Hajer, 1995, p. 44). Just as words and the language, discourses are not neutral, either. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp. 271-280, as cited in Van Dijk, 2001, p. 353) note, a discourse concerns power relations, constitutes society and culture, relates to ideologies, and represents a form of social action. To put it differently, discourses are “virtual arenas in which actors meet to carry out controversies over a particular object in order to gain influence over the way the object is going to be transformed or managed (Cannon & Müller-Mahn, 2010). Discourses also have the power to have a direct or indirect impact on the decision- and policy-making processes. On this point, Ünver (2015, p. 141) underlines that even though a single utterance can have little or no impact on the policy-making process, discourses that are sustained for a long period of time do affect policy and influence action. In specific to development, Alfini and Chambers (2010, p. 30) underline that the use and repetition of a certain language influences policy and practice of development; therefore, focusing on the language [discourses] of development provides valuable insights about the historical shifts in development thinking and priorities, the future directions in the field, and power dynamics embedded in its theory and practice. Based on these postulations, I asked through what kind of discursive and material practices the political, bureaucratic, and expert elite actors of the Turkish state have shaped the design and implementation of GAP, along with related minor research questions

(see Chapter 1). Data collection and analysis processes were conducted in accordance with a coherent combination of major and minor research questions, as will be explained below.

3.1. Data Collection Techniques

Even though there is a plethora of literature on GAP (see Chapter 4), a discerning eye can recognize that the majority of these studies are based on data drawn from governmental organizations and only a small number of studies are based on primary and original data. In this study, I combined both primary and secondary data sources as well as different data collection techniques such as literature review, archival research, and field interviews to diversify my data sources and triangulate the data for more robust findings. To elaborate, first and foremost, I conducted literature review to have an in-depth understanding of the previous research and key theoretical and empirical issues about my research topic. I searched for available primary, secondary, anecdotal, and theoretical sources to gather and synthesize information. Initially, I focused primarily on the broad topics of development theories, the history of modernization in Turkey, and GAP. Later on, within these broad topics, I narrowed down my focus to more specific topics such as critical approaches to development; the concept of depoliticization, its different forms, and their relation to development theories; continuities, ruptures, and transformations in Turkey's modernization process since the 19th century and the role of the elites as modernization agents in this process; and the history, prospects, challenges, and critiques in regard to GAP. This comprehensive review allowed me to acquire a theoretical and empirical awareness regarding my research topic as well as research gaps in the literature. It also allowed me to build and present my main arguments in Chapter 2 and 4 where I discussed the theoretical framework of the study and provided a background and literature review of the topic respectively.

In addition to literature review, I collected significant portion of the data through archival research between May and August 2013 in Ankara and Şanlıurfa provinces of Turkey (see below for a detailed explanation regarding the criteria of site selection). In this process, I relied on two major sources. The first one was proceedings of GAP-related debates at Turkish Grand National Assembly (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TBMM) between 1975 and 2014, archived in the Journal of Proceedings (*Tutanak Dergisi*). In other words, I focused on legislative discourses, described as “the arguments and speeches made during a legislative session, including the primary speaker and the response of other legislators, often determined by their agenda and ideology (party affiliation) during the debate” (Ünver, 2015, p. 4). In order to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant proceedings, starting from 1975, I searched the archives of TBMM through using the following keywords: *Aşağı Fırat* (Lower

Euphrates), *Aşağı Fırat ve Dicle* (Lower Euphrates and Tigris), *Güneydoğu Anadolu* (Southeastern Anatolia), *Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi* (Southeastern Anatolia Project), and GAP. Furthermore, in order to double-check the relevance of the identified proceedings and not to miss out any relevant sessions, I made references to *Kürt sorunu* (Kurdish question), *Güneydoğu sorunu* (Southeastern problem), *terör* (terror), *güvenlik* (security), *kalkınma* (development) and *gelişme* (growth), as GAP has been widely discussed in relation to these themes over the years. These criteria provided me with 568 relevant proceedings (see Appendix A for the complete list of proceedings). Upon the initial examination of these proceedings, I omitted texts in which GAP was not the main focus, GAP was mentioned out of context, and merely technical and descriptive information on GAP was copied from existing government sources word by word and provided without any change. Thus, the number of proceedings to be examined was reduced to 189. Later on, I refined the text material into a separate document without taking the discourses out of their context and sorted them in chronological order for analysis.

Indeed, using parliamentary proceedings as a data source and unit of analysis has certain advantages. TBMM has been one of the most significant venues that reflected inter- and intra-elite power dynamics in the Turkish political system to a great extent (Loizides, 2009, p. 282). Also, in contrast to interviews, proceedings of parliamentary debates are generally maintained unrefined and unedited by third parties (p. 282). Ünver (2015, pp. 4-5) also notes that examining legislative discourses provides certain benefits in comparison to examining polls and interviews, as in a legislative setting (1) legislative discourses demonstrate the ideological position of the legislators as well as a clear political cross-section of a country's electorate, (2) legislative discourses are political and initiated to have an impact on the decision-making and legislative mechanisms, (3) there is room for challenging counter-discourses to emerge immediately even against hegemonic discourses, and (4) legislators are ideally better informed on a given topic and better equipped with opportunities to make their points compared to the electorate.

While examining proceedings provided me with such benefits, it would indeed be one-sided and superficial to solely rely on the archives of TBMM. For this reason, the second and complementary source was the archives of GAP Regional Development Administration (*GAP Bölgesel Kalkınma İdaresi*, GAP-BKİ). I followed a similar procedure and initially explored 315 scanned documents I obtained from GAP-BKİ's archive in Şanlıurfa that included, but not limited to, GAP-related action plans, final situation reports, sectoral reports, province profiles, magazines, public relations documents, third-party research reports on

specific topics, and proceedings of various seminars, workshops, and meetings. Based on their relevance to my research questions, I identified 86 documents and drew on them in Chapter 4, 5, 6, and 7 (see Appendix B for the complete list of included documents).

While these texts were important, it would be inadequate to consider them as the sole representations of discourse and “read them at face value without reference to the arguments, interests and divergent points of view that they encode and to which they allude” (Mosse, 2005, p. 15). Therefore, in order to facilitate their “interpretation backwards to reveal the social relations that produced them” (p. 15) as well as diversify my sources further, I conducted 64 semi-structured interviews with a wide range of active and retired politicians, bureaucrats, experts, consultants, and intellectuals from various political parties, governmental and non-governmental organizations, universities, and the media between March and May 2014 in Ankara and Şanlıurfa.⁷ These participants would be qualified as elites on the grounds that they were “influential, prominent, and/or well-informed” in their organizations or communities with their high level of expertise in relation to the research (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 105). Elite interviewing has certain advantages, too. As the leaders of their social groups and institutions, elites have exclusive access to and control over public discourse and communication and, thus, possess knowledge and information as a symbolic resource (Van Dijk, 2001, pp. 355-356). For this reason, I could collect such valuable and “insider” information on GAP, GAP-related issues, and the policies and positions of involved governmental and non-governmental institutions only from the elites, thanks to their high level of experience and expertise, easy access to knowledge, and often privileged positions in their organizations.

To elaborate on how I selected my participants, instead of determining a sample size in advance, I used non-probability or non-random sampling and combined purposive, snowball, and sequential sampling techniques. The aim was to reach all possible, unique, and informative participants that fit particular criteria; identify and contact other difficult-to-reach participants in the networks of the elites; and collect data until no new and original information is collected (Neuman, 2007, pp. 141-145). Accordingly, I prepared two sets of criteria to select participants. Using the first set, I short-listed politicians among 548 MPs at TBMM as of 2014 who fulfilled one or more criteria of (1) having served as a representative from Southeastern Anatolia Region, (2) having previous experience in the areas of

⁷ I stopped interviewing more participants after the 64th interview as the data obtained from the interviews has over time become almost identical to data obtained from previous interviews and reached a saturation point (see Creswell, 2013 for more information on saturation).

development or planning in government or private sector, (3) having a documented interest in and/or previous information on GAP, and (4) being accessible and available during my stay in the field. Thus, I narrowed down the list and interviewed 28 politicians from four different political parties represented at TBMM as of 2014: 17 politicians from the ruling Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), four politicians from the main opposition Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), four politicians from the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*, BDP), and three politicians from the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP)⁸ (see Appendix C.1. for more information on the participants from TBMM). These interviews lasted from 5 to 45 minutes. Except the interviews of four politicians who refused to be voice-recorded, I voice-recorded all of the interviews and transcribed them verbatim.

Using the second set, I looked for participants who fulfilled one or more criteria of (1) having served as an expert, consultant, coordinator, director, researcher and such in the design and implementation process of GAP at General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (*Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü*, DSİ), State Planning Organization (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*, DPT) or current Ministry of Development (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Kalkınma Bakanlığı*),⁹ GAP-BKİ, and universities, (2) having conducted academic or policy-oriented research on GAP, (3) descending from a reputable and well-known large landowner family in GAP region, and (4) being accessible and available during my stay in the field. Thus, I identified and interviewed 36 active and retired experts, bureaucrats, and intellectuals: 18 employees from GAP-BKİ, six employees from DPT/Ministry of Development, five professors and researchers from the academia and think-tank industry, four employees from DSİ, two large landowners, and one director from TRT (see Appendix C.2. for more information on the participants from these governmental and non-governmental institutions). These interviews lasted from 15 to 120 minutes. Except the interviews of four participants who refused to be voice-recorded, I voice-recorded all of the interviews and transcribed them verbatim. At the end of the interviewing process, I also cross-checked them with secondary archival and media sources for triangulation purposes. Overall, the number of participants as well as the variety of participants in terms of their backgrounds, political party and

⁸ Around the time I interviewed MPs, AKP had 314, CHP had 131, MHP had 52, and BDP had 21 seats at TBMM (“İşte son sandalye dağılımı”, 2014).

⁹ DPT was dissolved in 2011 and incorporated into the then newly established Ministry of Development in the same year. A long-time employee explained the difference between DPT and the Ministry of Development as follows: “Only the sign outside the building changed ... Organizational structure remained the same; the same people are working only under a different title” (Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey).

institutional affiliations, and worldviews indicate that the utmost importance was given to obtain credible and multiple perspectives from diverse sources.

I should note that 25% of 64 participants were female. This ratio was lower among the participants from TBMM; only 7% of them were female. Even though admittedly I could have paid more attention to find a balance between male and female participants, it should be kept in mind that around the time I was in the field, in Turkey the rate of female participation in the workforce was 30.8%, the rate of female executives in public sector was 9.4% (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2015), the rate of female MPs at TBMM was 14.3% (Tahaoğlu, 2015), and the rate of female employees at GAP-BKİ was 30% (GAP-BKİ, 2017b, p. 11). Therefore, structural factors also had an impact as to why women's voice could not be included in the study at a higher and a desired degree.

To explain why I selected Ankara and Şanlıurfa as the research sites, I chose Ankara on the grounds that it was the capital city where crucial data sources such as ministries, headquarters or liaison offices of governmental institutions, the archives of TBMM, National Library of Turkey, and some of the largest university libraries in Turkey were all located due to the country's centralist administrative system. Also, it was a highly accessible and suitable site given the limited time and resources I had in the field. Similarly, I chose Şanlıurfa on the grounds that (1) arguably it has been the *de facto* center of GAP as most of the infrastructure investments and social projects were concentrated within its close vicinity, (2) the headquarters of GAP-BKİ was relocated from Ankara to Şanlıurfa in 2009, (3) the large landowner families were easier to reach, and (4) making interactions and observations to grasp the bottom-up perspectives of the local population on GAP and enrich the analysis was possible. Briefly, the high potential of both provinces to provide rich data and their relatively easy accessibility and suitability were the decisive factors in the site selection.

As for the ethical considerations of the study, I fulfilled the requirements of *Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung* (ZEF) Research Ethics Committee and successfully received ethical clearance prior to leaving for the research sites. In the field, I also received clearance from the Office of Press and Public Relations at TBMM as a requirement of law to enter TBMM with a voice-recording device. Throughout the whole interviewing process, I took the oral informed consent from all the participants before I started the interviews and voice-recording the conversations. Also, before the interview, I provided the participants with a brief text to inform them about who I was, what my research was about, what kind of questions they would be asked, and their rights to withdraw from the interview anytime they wanted to. I provided this information orally, too. In addition, I took the utmost precautions

in order to ensure the privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of the participants. In order not to disclose their identity, I concealed their name, gender, age, ethnic origin, and exact positions at their institutions in all notes and records. Also, I did not offer and give any incentive to any of the participants in the data collection process.

3.2. Data Analysis Techniques

Based on the research questions and the quality of collected data, the data analysis was driven by a post-positivist approach that challenged the positivist principles of hypotheses testing, objectivism, empiricism, and naturalism. In this guidance, I adopted a two-dimensional approach to examine data both horizontally and vertically to capture its width and depth and move beyond mere description of what was supposedly “out there.” Therefore, I employed qualitative content analysis (QCA) and discourse analysis (DA) as primary analytical approaches to describe, explain, understand, and interpret my material. To explicate, even though content analysis is generally associated with quantitative analysis and positivist approaches and perceived as an “objective” and “neutral” way to obtain a quantitative description of texts, it also includes other forms that are associated with qualitative research techniques, such as QCA. In contrast to quantitative content analysis, QCA is not limited to counting words; it involves subjective interpretation of the meaning of qualitative material and examination of language to classify large amounts of text into an efficient and manageable number of categories that represent similar meanings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). It is based on decontextualization of the texts from their source and their recontextualization. On the other side, based on the assumption that language intensely shapes how one sees the reality rather than it neutrally reflects the reality as it is, DA involves “the examination of argumentative structure in documents and other written or spoken statements as well as practices through which these utterances are made” (Hajer, 2006, p. 66). It also reveals the latent frictions, trends, and transformations in society and demonstrates why certain issues are handled the way they are (Cannon & Müller-Mahn, 2010). The analysis is especially inspired by critical discourse analysis, as the study covers topics that involve socio-political problems and questions as to how power relations, dominance, inequality are produced, reproduced, legitimized, or challenged by discourse structures in socio-political contexts (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). For this reason, the analysis is made through an interpretative and explanatory lens.

At first sight, QCA and DA might appear as contradictory approaches. As mentioned above, while content analysis generally aims to understand or interpret social reality as it is, DA aims to uncover the way that reality is produced. Similarly, while content analysis

focuses more on “what” is in the text, DA focuses more on “how” the text is produced. Even though one might posit that these differences would lead to methodological incompatibilities, it can also be argued that combining both approaches would provide a more detailed and systematic description of the text material and a richer examination of socially constructed meanings and power relations. Furthermore, qualitative forms of content analysis bear more resemblance to DA with their focus less on frequency and more on the usage of words and the context in which they are used. They reject the idea that meaning is stable and countable in an objective sense (Hardy, Harley, & Phillips, 2004, p. 20). Also, both content analysis and DA aim to draw conclusions about some aspect of human communication from a selected set of messages. Even though the way they do it is different, there is no reason why their findings do not fit together nicely (Neuendorf, 2004, p. 33). For these reasons, QCA and DA do not contradict, but rather complement each other in this study.

To proceed with the analysis, with the assistance of NVivo data analysis software, I formulated three different but interrelated coding frames. As the unit of analysis, I used (1) proceedings of TBMM, (2) transcripts of the interviews with the politicians, and (3) transcripts of the interviews with experts, bureaucrats, and intellectuals respectively. Also, I combined inductive and deductive techniques in this process. Employing a mixed approach allowed me to remain focused on the theoretical framework of the study and my preexisting knowledge of the research topic and, at the same time, be attentive and open to new categories that emerged from the data to include in the analysis. As it is generally considered difficult to handle more than around 40 categories and subcategories (Schreier, 2012, p. 79), I also reduced this number to around 40 in all frames. Also, in all frames, each category captured only one aspect of the text material, each unit of coding was assigned to one of the subcategories only, each unit of coding was assigned to at least one subcategory, and each subcategory was used at least once. In other words, all frames fulfilled the requirements of unidimensionality, mutually exclusiveness, exhaustiveness, and saturation (pp. 71-77). Later on, I merged three frames to formulate an overarching frame with clear and detailed explanations regarding the label, definition, indicators, and examples of each category and subcategory (see Appendix D for the complete coding frame). As the final step, I took a closer look inside each category and subcategory to identify power-loaded arguments, descriptions, narratives, metaphors, and expressions for critical interpretation and analysis.

3.3. Reflections on My Positionality in the Research Process

Indeed, my position in terms of my area of study; theoretical lens; ethnical, cultural, and educational background; personal experience; status in society; gender; and worldview

influenced how I collected and analyzed data in this study. To put it differently, power relations were embedded in almost every aspect of the research process, as neither researchers nor participants are mechanic tools without histories, emotions, or values. On the contrary, they both have agency and own motivations, interests, and agendas. Therefore, I should note that conducting this study in a totally objective, neutral, and detached fashion was almost impossible. I was aware that my implicit knowledge and past experiences would influence how I saw the reality and interpreted my material. I paid the utmost attention to prevent my subjectivity from prejudging the study and leading to bias and worked towards detaching my “ordinary” identity from my “researcher” identity to the extent possible.

As I expected, my position as a Turkish male who was conducting a PhD level research in Germany on a relatively sensitive topic that involved interviews with politicians and high-level bureaucrats in a tense and at times dangerous political atmosphere and field research in a region that could be qualified as insecure due to the ongoing Kurdish question and its proximity to Syria led to some challenges. To begin with, generally gaining access to elites through direct contact involves difficulties. My experience was not an exception. Most of the time, I could contact bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals through the recommendation or request of other persons in their networks such as supervisors of lower level bureaucrats in governmental institutions or experts who worked in the same project in non-governmental institutions. Arranging interviews with politicians at TBMM was more difficult for several reasons. The security regulations necessitated an employee within TBMM to inform the main reception and give my name in advance every time I visited the complex. In other words, it would have been almost impossible to get inside and move freely as a researcher without my gatekeepers. Challenges continued inside TBMM, as it was equally difficult to adjust to the tight schedules of politicians and make an appointment accordingly. Most politicians were present at TBMM only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. During their presence, they were extremely busy with attending various sessions and meetings as expected. They were also occupied with listening to the problems and demands of their constituents when in their offices. To put it differently, speaking to a researcher even for a few minutes had a very low priority on behalf of politicians unless they had personal or party interests—in the senses of both curiosity and benefit—in the topic. For this reason, I had to be present at TBMM during working hours every day to “catch” politicians for an interview or constantly check with their secretaries or advisors about their availability. Given this aspect, interviews with politicians were conducted in a formal, stressful, and “now-or-never” atmosphere.

Another challenge was the mistrust and suspicion of some participants during the research process. As I anticipated, it was difficult to obtain the consent of some participants for a voice-recorded interview due to their suspicion that “someone might hear” and fear of “leaving a trace.” Also, some participants—specifically politicians—greeted me with suspicion on the grounds that I was a Turkish researcher whose institution was located in Germany. It was noteworthy that participants of Turkish origin questioned my motivation to carry out this research because, in their eyes, there had to be a “real” reason why I came all the way from “there” to “here.” Similarly, participants of Kurdish origin questioned my motives because, in their eyes, there had to be a “real” reason why as a Turk I would want to learn more about “them” and “their” geography. In that sense, I sometimes felt like I was in limbo because sometimes I was not considered “Turkish enough” for living abroad and sometimes I was considered “too Turkish” for my background. Arguably, in addition to the low level of trust in society in general, this situation was linked to the fact that GAP was widely and almost automatically associated with water dispute among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq and the Kurdish question. As will be discussed in Chapter 6 and 7, there has been a widespread belief that “dark foreign powers” outside and their “collaborators” inside have always been behind the emergence and complication of both issues. For this reason, conducting this research as a Turkish researcher in Germany sometimes raised eyebrows. To illustrate with three examples, in one occasion, after I used the label “Kurdish political movement” in a conversation on the Kurdish question, one of the deputy chairpersons of a political party refused to talk to me further and asked whether it was “how we were ‘taught’ in Germany” before terminating the interview.¹⁰ In another occasion, at the end of our interview, a planner asked what I was going to do with the “sensitive” information he provided me and advised me to make sure my research would differ from previously conducted “malicious researches on GAP” and serve the interest of Turkey only, not the others.¹¹ Finally, a university professor concluded the interview session by stating that “I don’t normally give credit to conspiracy theories but some actors may stir this water problem in the future. For instance, Germany. Germany is so interested in this region; your research may be part of this, too.”¹² Due to this atmosphere, I spent more time than I thought I would on constantly (re-)introducing myself, stating my goals, and assuring the participants that I was not representing any government or institution, I was not paid by a third party to carry out this

¹⁰ Personal interview, May 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹ Personal interview, April 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹² Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

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research, I was interested in hearing their opinions for the purposes of research only, and I was keeping the data safe and inaccessible by the others. Even though it is difficult to know for sure, I cannot conclude that mistrust and suspicion issues spoiled the quality of the collected data and had a detrimental impact on the data collection process except slowing down the research process.

There were also occasions where asymmetrical power relations between me—as the researcher—and the participants—as the elites—constituted challenges. To elaborate, it was sometimes difficult for me to take control of the interview and have the participants answer my questions instead of talking about topics of their choices. Especially some politicians had the tendency to use the interviews as an opportunity to praise their own parties and leaders and criticize their opponents. Also in terms of power relations, being as educated as—in some cases more educated than—the participants provided certain advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, my “PhD researcher” title aroused respect and encouraged certain participants to be more open to “deep” discussions and even exchange ideas based on the assumption that I was their somewhat equivalent in terms of education and expertise. On the other hand, I felt that the same title made certain participants feel insecure and discouraged them to provide their perspectives based on the assumption that I was “outsmarting” and “belittling” them, which was indeed not true at all. During these moments, I felt like I was in another limbo because while I was considering the person I was interviewing was an elite, actually that person was considering that I was the elite in the room. Both to overcome this challenge and keep the conversation going, at the expense of experiencing an inner conflict and ethical dilemma, sometimes I had to pretend as if I were totally ignorant of what the participant was speaking of or as if I were in full agreement with the participant on certain—generally political—topics, despite my stance was exactly the opposite. The presentation of myself as if I were “one of them” admittedly worked in terms of breaking the ice and making the participants feel more comfortable and eager to pour in their thoughts and opinions.

As for challenges regarding safety and security in the field, I have always felt secure during my stay in Turkey. One important factor behind this was that, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, a peace process to solve the Kurdish question was initiated by the Turkish state in 2013 and a ceasefire was declared by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*, the PKK) in the same year. For this reason, there was no armed conflict between the Turkish security forces and the PKK in southeastern Turkey during my visits in 2013 and 2014. However, following the civil war in Syria that broke out in 2011, the newly emerged violent non-state actor Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) gradually became more active

especially in Southeastern Anatolia Region after May 2013. Even though I did not feel the presence of ISIS or insecurity due to its growing activities during my stay in Şanlıurfa, I learnt how active and dangerous it actually was the hard way in somewhere else. To explicate, on March 20, 2014, I took a bus from Mersin to go to Ankara to settle and start the interviews. When my bus was stopped for a routine security check in the town of Ulukışla in Niğde province in Central Anatolia Region, three ISIS militants who were going from Syria to İstanbul got out of their vehicle and opened fire to security officials on the checkpoint. The bullets also hit my bus and broke its glasses, causing panic and awe among passengers including myself. Unfortunately, two security officials and one civilian were killed and seven security officials and one passenger on my bus were wounded (see İdiz, 2014). It took me some time to get over the traumatizing impacts of what I witnessed there that day. Still, the incident changed my perception about security in the field and led me to take a more “fatalist” stance throughout the research process, as it was proven that totally unexpected security situations—an ISIS attack in Turkey in 2014—could emerge in totally unexpected locations—a small town in Central Anatolia where I passed through maybe hundreds of times since my childhood. Overall, I can confidently state that security conditions did not influence the research process.

Finally, admittedly my previous knowledge and disciplinary background initially led me to take a more narrow perspective to study GAP, its political dimension, and its position in Turkey’s overall development vision. Arguably due to my background in international relations and international security studies before I started studying development, I had a tendency to conceive GAP as a technical national development project that would provide benefits for all, overemphasize its contribution to state security against state actors in the Middle East, and conceptualize the state as a “black box” or monolithic entity. However, the more I became interested in critical approaches to both security and development, the more I distanced myself from technocratic, realist, and state-centric approaches and questioned whose security or development was actually at stake in mainstream and supposedly neutral approaches. Also, the discrepancy between how development was presented in textbooks and most of national and international policy documents and how it was understood, interpreted, and put into practice by different elites and local actors in the field was so striking that I became almost fully convinced that the concept of development itself had to be questioned and problematized. My conception of power and interpretation of power relations also dramatically changed. This critical self-assessment also led me to rethink my focus and reformulate some additional (sub-)research questions during the research. Overall, the

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awareness I gained regarding how narrow and reductionist my initial focus was after familiarizing myself with critical approaches to development expanded my theoretical, methodological, and analytical knowledge and strongly influenced how I formulated the research questions of the study and collected and analyzed data throughout the research.

PART II: BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

4. TURKEY'S DEVELOPMENT PATH AND PATH TO GAP'S INITIATION

In this chapter, I provide a background of the design and implementation of GAP and a comprehensive review of GAP-related literature to explain the long process behind the crystallization of the idea of GAP and illustrate how this study fills the gap in the literature with its distinct theoretical and methodological approach. The chapter comprises four sections. In the first section, I examine the history of how the idea of modernizing Turkey and providing development through plans and projects in different forms and scales emerged and developed since the 19th century. In the second section, I discuss the distinct characteristics of Southeastern Anatolia Region in terms of its natural resources, socio-economic indicators, and ethnic composition to illustrate why specifically this region was chosen as the locus of GAP. In the third section, I discuss the relevant scholarly works as well as government documents on GAP in a systematic fashion to present both the existing literature in different thematic categories and subcategories and under-researched areas in the literature. In the fourth and final section, I provide a brief summary of the background and explain the originality, contribution, and position of the study in the literature.

4.1. The Origins of Turkey's Will for Modernization and Development

4.1.1. Efforts to "Catch up" with the West and Maintain the State (19th century-1923)

Turkey's modernization process dates back to as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the Ottoman Empire made its initial attempts to catch up with the European powers after a series of humiliating military defeats that reinforced the idea that the empire had fallen behind the West. To elaborate, in the early 19th century, the Ottoman state enlisted experts, trainers, and teachers from Europe and sent students to various European capitals to understand Western modernity and enable a channel to transfer modern ideas and social systems to the empire (Kavas, 2015, p. 518). Even though modernization efforts were initially concentrated on reforming the military along European lines, later on they were expanded to include remodeling the state based on modern political, administrative, educational, and legal systems (Mango, 2008, p. 151). These political and administrative reforms were also significant in terms of their contribution to the emergence of the "first elites" (Göle, 1998, p. 65). The widespread idea of the period was that the Western way of life and mode of thought—*alla franca*—were progressive and positive while the Ottoman-Turkish practices—*alla turca*—were conservative, negative, and even backward (Kavas, 2015, p. 519). In this context, the Ottoman state undertook a wide range of modernizing reforms across the major periods of the Reorganization (*Tanzimat*) Era (1839-1876), the Hamidian Era (1876-1908), and Second Constitutional Era (1908-1918) until *the Armistice of Mudros*

was concluded between the Ottoman Empire and the Allies at the end of the World War I in 1918, which also terminated the empire.

Indeed, it is beyond the scope and purpose of this study to discuss these reforms and their implications individually (see Göle, 1998, pp. 61-85). Still, some reforms that were carried out after 1839 deserve a special focus for arguably constituting the first examples of economic and social improvement schemes that would be implemented in modern Turkey later on. Tekeli (2009, p. 138) notes that the primary reason for the proclamation of *the Imperial Edict of Reorganization (Tanzimat Fermanı)* in 1839 was to “improve property and people.” In that sense, it was the first time that the Ottoman concept of development (*imar*) was widened to include the welfare of the empire's people (p. 138). Around the same period, Council of Public Works (*Meclis-i Umur-u Nafia*) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established to discuss issues concerning the state of agriculture, trade, industries, education, and health in the empire (p. 138). After the dissatisfaction with the pace and results of the reforms, Development Councils (*İmar Meclisleri*) were established in 1845 and sent to different states (*eyalet*) to conduct explorations regarding their development potentials and problems. The reports prepared by the Councils after almost a year-long exploration were then discussed in Supreme Council of Justice (*Meclis-i Vâlâ-yi Ahkâm-i Adliye*). Based on these reports, various programs that included demands regarding bridges, roads, water needs, and infrastructure were prepared to be put into action in states. Even though the application of these programs were quite limited, they were still significant in terms of introducing the idea that the provision of infrastructure and development was one of the fundamental duties of the state (pp. 138-139). The regional organization of the empire was also altered in the modernization process. While the empire was administered on the basis of the state system, a more centralized structure known as province system was adopted after the 1860s for a more effective supervision of rural areas (Ecemiş Kılıç, 2009, p. 1285). In relation to this, considering that provision of infrastructure was crucial to extend the reach and control of the state, the state began to view infrastructure building as a subject of comprehensive and countrywide planning in the 1880s. In this context, *Plan for Public Works in Anatolia (Anadolu'da İmalat-ı Umumiye Dair Lâyiha)* was the first public works program, which envisaged navigation on rivers, draining of swamps, irrigation, and construction of roads, railways, and seaports (Tekeli, 2009, p. 140).

Neither such modernization reforms nor Ottomanist, pan-Islamist, or pan-Turkist attempts worked in terms of maintaining the state and ensuring its integration. The World War I not only terminated the empire, but also devastated its political, social, and economic

structures, as three to four million people were killed in Anatolia alone, physical infrastructure of the country and morale of the population were destroyed, and the lands were occupied by British, French, and Italian troops (Kayalı, 2008, p. 113). In 1919, Mustafa Kemal (later named as Atatürk) initiated the War of Independence against the Allied occupation to at least keep the basic Turkish homeland and develop a homogeneous Turkish element in Anatolia (Okyar, 1984, p. 47). After four years of national struggle in which around 13,000 killed and 35,000 wounded, the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923.

4.1.2. National Integration Efforts in between Liberalism and Statism (1923-1960)

Indeed, the establishment of modern Turkey was a fresh start after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and a rupture from its Ottoman past. Still, since the new republic inherited many features of the old empire, there were also continuities between two entities. According to Keyder (1993, p. 144), the Ottoman Empire did not actually collapse, but continued to exist in the guise of the Republic of Turkey. A significant continuity was regarding the characteristics of the late Ottoman and early republican elites. To elaborate, 93% of the Ottoman staff officers and 85% of the civil servants remained in modern Turkey after the collapse of the empire (Rustow, 1964, as cited in Turan, 1984, p. 103). This well-defined group of people were predominantly young, urban military officers who were born or raised in İstanbul or Rumelia,¹³ educated in the modern establishments created in the *Tanzimat* Era in the 19th century, and involved in politics as members of Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Zürcher, 2007, p. 102). They were sure of their cultural superiority due to their formal education and adherence to the West and distinct from the rest in terms of their language, appearance, manners, and customs (Szyliowicz, 1971, p. 391). To illustrate this point, Ziya Gökalp (1959, p. 278, as cited in Frey, 1965), the intellectual father of Turkish nationalism, observed that in Turkey

there [were] three layers of people differing from each other in civilization and education: the common people, the men educated in *medreses*, the men educated in (modern) secular schools. The first still [were] not freed from the effects of Far Eastern civilization; the second [were] still living in Eastern civilization; it [was] only the third group which [had] had some benefits from Western civilization. ... [O]ne portion of our nation [was] living in an ancient, another in a medieval, and a third in a modern age (p. 39).

Similarly, from the perspective of Şevket Süreyya Aydemir (1958, p. 58, as cited in Gürpınar,

¹³ Rumelia refers to the possessions of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Peninsula.

2012), a prominent intellectual of the republican period, people in Anatolia were pious, ignorant, superstitious, and needed to be educated. In his own words,

[W]e knew Anatolia only from the privates sent from there. These privates were scared of running into crowds which they had never seen before and which filled the courtyards of big mosques ... we, children, encircled and made fun of them. We used to laugh at them. In Rumelia, Anatolia was associated with these scared privates and famines, poverty, and brigands ... no, Anatolia was not a place that could satisfy the dreams of the sons of Rumelia (pp. 904-905).

Given these social characteristics and the inherited gap between the elites and non-elites, it was hardly surprising that the republican elites placed principles such as positivism, militarism, nationalism, and strong state tradition at the center of their modernization vision without necessarily taking the needs or demands of the non-elites into consideration. In a sense, modernization was “for the people, in the name of the people, and despite the people” at the same time (Somer, 2015, p. 147).

In relation to this, the patriarchal characteristic of the Ottoman Empire remained intact to a certain degree in modern Turkey. It was telling, for instance, that Mustafa Kemal adopted the surname Atatürk (Father of the Turks) and saw himself as the *pater patriae* and the teacher of the nation (Mango, 2008, p. 165). Also, one of the main tenets of Atatürk's ideas and principles—also known as Kemalism—was *etatism*,¹⁴ which in a broad sense referred to a paternalistic approach in which the state was the sole responsible entity to intervene in social, economic, cultural, and education activities and organize life (Dumont, 1984, p. 39). People, in return, were conceived as “subjects whose prime duty was obedience to their benevolent rulers” (Turan, 1984, pp. 103-104). In that sense, the Turkish state has borne resemblance to a father-state (*devlet baba*) that existed to protect its subjects, but at the same time suppress and punish them when and if necessary. Its “sacredness” and prestige had to be preserved and enhanced under any circumstances.

The modernization efforts of the modern Turkish state began in this context in the early 1920s. The overarching goals of the state were concentrated around nation-building and transformation of society, economy, and culture in accordance with Western norms and standards on the grounds that the West was the representative of the “level of contemporary civilization.” To put it differently, the goal was to “change the Turkish people's outlook and

¹⁴ Kemalist ideology was distilled into six principles also known as “Six Arrows,” which were republicanism, nationalism, populism, revolutionism, secularism, and etatism. These principles were included in the constitution in 1937 (Göle, 1998, p. 91).

behavior from inward-looking, passive and shaped by collective religious and institutional values to active, outward-looking and more realistic in terms of the economic and materialistic values of the modern world” (Okyar, 1984, p. 50). As Atatürk made it clear in a speech in İnebolu in 1925, each and every citizen had to prove that they were civilized through their ideas, mentality, family life, way of life, and outward aspect (Kavas, 2015, pp. 531-532). In that sense, from the perspective of the state elites, modernization or social change was a linear process through which the entire nation would simultaneously and uniformly experience. Also, it was a necessity to abandon the “Oriental” aspects of the Ottoman Empire and mimic all that was progressive and good according to the West (Hanioğlu, 2011, p. 229; Harris, 2008a, p. 1702).

The reforms carried out in the political, cultural, and legal spheres to achieve these goals included, but not limited to, the creation of a modern state structure with a constitution, an elected parliament, and other Western-type institutions; recruitment of a modern bureaucracy; abolition of the Caliphate and secularization of the state, education, and the legal system; granting women voting rights; adoption of the Latin alphabet and reformation of the Turkish language; and urging men and women to adopt Western clothing (Landau, 1984, p. xii). Also, the People's Houses (*Halkevleri*) were established in the early 1930s to disseminate these newly introduced modern norms in the depths of society for indoctrination and close the wide gap between the state elites and the non-elites (Gürpınar, 2012, p. 909). In addition to these predominantly political and cultural reforms, the state further carried out a wide range of reforms in the economic sphere primarily to create an independent and national economy and, thus, to ensure national integration and homogenization within the country. National integration–reorganization of the economic and social relations of individuals within the geographical boundaries of the newly founded state–was a prerequisite to ensure national loyalty and the failure of absorbing one specific ethnic or regional group to the entire nation would be a compromise of the project (Keyder, 1993, p. 62).

To elaborate on the state of economy and the need for integration in this period, the incessant wars since the Balkan Wars in 1912 had caused around two million casualties, deportation of the Armenian population from Anatolia in 1915 caused around 1.5 million casualties, and the population exchange in 1923 brought about the departure of around 1.2 million Orthodox Greeks and arrival of around half a million Muslims from Greece and the Balkans in return (Pamuk, 2008, p. 275). Amidst such destruction, the newly established Turkey inherited a predominantly agricultural economy marked by low living standards, low production and productivity levels, and low number of industrial plants, majority of which

were owned and run by foreign businesses. Also, the intensified interaction between certain regions in the Ottoman Empire and the European markets in the 19th century led to the growth of port cities while it decreased the significance of the cities in Central and Eastern Anatolia (Tekeli, 2009, p. 51). Prior to the World War I, 55% and 22% of around 300 industrial firms were located in İstanbul and İzmir respectively (Jafar, 1976, p. 52). Such disparities persisted in the early years of modern Turkey, too. The industry was almost non-existent and the investments were concentrated in more suitable regions due to their climatic and geographical conditions, leaving some other regions marginalized and deprived of scientific and technological benefits (p. 52).¹⁵ To address this issue, the state aimed to deconcentrate the population and disperse them to different regions as a part of its regional policy (Göymen, 2008). The most significant policies toward this end were (1) the relocation of the capital from the former imperial capital İstanbul to a then small town Ankara in 1923 to initiate a “genuine” modernization process from scratch, (2) creation of modern cities that would spread social change in their surrounding regions, (3) extension of a railroad system to connect different regions of the country and have control over society, and (4) creation of new industries in small and remote cities in Central Anatolia (Tekeli, 2008, pp. 53-54).

The creation of an independent and self-sufficient economy that would be controlled by a national bourgeoisie was a remarkable part of the modernization and nation-building process. Since the state adhered to a liberal economic approach in the 1920s, it encouraged the private sector to invest in industrialization. In this context, Industry Incentive Law (*Teşvik-i Sanayi Kanunu*) was enacted in 1927 to provide support for businesses and facilitate the development of industries with state incentives. However, due to the lack of private capital and entrepreneurs as well as the conditions brought by the Great Depression in the late 1920s, the state had to act as the leading entrepreneur and pursue import substitution industrialization later in the 1930s. It is noteworthy that in this period *Sümerbank* was established to finance textile industry in 1933, *First Five-Year Industrialization Plan (Birinci Beş Yıllık Sanayi Planı)* was formulated with the assistance of the Soviet Union in 1934, Mineral Research and Exploration Institute (*Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü*) was

¹⁵ Turkey was divided into seven geographical regions according to their distinct characteristics regarding climate, flora, fauna, topography, and transportation after the First Geography Congress convened in Ankara in 1941. These regions were defined as: Aegean Region, Black Sea Region, Central Anatolia Region, Eastern Anatolia Region, Marmara Region, Mediterranean Region, and Southeastern Anatolia Region. According to Jongerden (2009, pp. 8-9), Turkey “was asocially dehistoricized” by this division as the old names of Ottoman states such as Eastern Rumelia, Pontus, and Kurdistan were replaced with Marmara, Black Sea, and Southeastern Anatolia regions respectively following “the initial assumption of the ethnically-based, European name for the new nation.”

established in 1935, *Etibank* was established to finance electricity sector in 1935, and Electrical Power Resources Survey and Development Administration (*Elektrik İşleri Etüt İdaresi*) was established for water resources development and energy planning purposes in 1935 (Tekeli, 2009, p. 147). In the late 1930s, even though Turkey did not participate in the World War II, the approaching war prevented the state from investing in industrialization, as public funds were primarily allocated for security purposes.

Even though *etatism* had to be abandoned in the early 1940s, the significance of industrialization for the economy remained intact. For instance, a *Development Plan and Program After the War (Savaş Sonrası Kalkınma Plan ve Programı)* was formulated between 1944 and 1946 to further extend the role of the state in industrialization (Yılmaz, 2003a, p. 183). However, this plan could not be implemented for a number of reasons. To name a few, due to the growing dissatisfaction of the single-party regime and state intervention especially during wartime, Turkey made a transition to multiparty politics in 1945. Also, the emergence of the US as a superpower after the war contributed to the spread of more open political systems and liberal economic models worldwide and influenced the policies of Turkey (Pamuk, 2008, p. 281). In this context, Turkey signed the Bretton Woods agreement and received Marshall aid from the US after the war in 1947. These developments necessitated the state not only to change its *etatist* policies in order to integrate with the post-war international economy reconstructed by the US, but also attach more importance to agricultural and infrastructural development rather than industrialization in accordance with the interests of the US and/or global trends. This policy shift led to the mechanization of agriculture and increased the share of road construction as opposed to railway construction thanks to the support of the US Public Road Administration (Tekeli, 2008, p. 57).

In the 1950s, liberalization of the economy engendered the belief that “there would be a millionaire in every neighborhood” and “Turkey would become a small America,” which later on became the slogan of the government at that time (İnsel, 1996, p. 143). However, contrary to the expectations, the mechanization of agriculture and increased extension of roads caused rural unemployment and triggered a migration wave from rural to urban areas, which later on led to the increase in urban population, slum settlements, land speculations, and urban unemployment (Tekeli, 2008, p. 58). Also, the primacy of the private sector accelerated the growth of large cities in Marmara and Aegean regions but had little impact on the growth and urbanization of eastern and southeastern Turkey. In addition to these, based on the model of the US Bureau of Reclamation, DSI was established in 1954 to plan and manage Turkey's water resources due to the primacy of infrastructural development along

with agricultural development. The fact that almost 60% of DSI's budget was spent on dams between 1953 and 1962 was emblematic in this regard (Tekeli, 2008, p. 58).

4.1.3. The Period of Planned Economy and National Developmentalism (1960-1980)

The first military coup staged in Turkey on May 27, 1960 terminated the liberalization of the economy and initiated the period of national developmentalism, rapid industrialization, and strong protectionism of the domestic market through import substitution. One of the most significant changes in this period was the establishment of DPT through Law No. 91 in 1960 primarily to help governments formulate economic and social policies, coordinate the activities of various ministries, formulate FYDPs to address regional development problems and monitor their implementation, and mold private sector activities in accordance with the objectives of the plans (Türk, 2012, pp. 113-114). Even though the debate on planned vs. unplanned economy was a source of contestation among planners and the political elites, eventually planning, industrial growth, and urban universalism were preferred to patronage, populism, and rural parochialism (Heper & Keyman, 1998, p. 264). "Science" and "calculation" were attached great importance on the grounds that the policies pursued by politicians in the 1950s were against the scientific and "undeniable" rules of economics (Küçük, 1978, p. 272, as cited in Yılmaz, 2003a, pp. 192-193).

According to Tekeli (2008, p. 69), one strong motivation behind the shift to planned economy was the junta's awareness and concern of the regional disparities between western and eastern Turkey. A study conducted by DPT in the early 1960s also indicated that the level of living standards and availability of services in all provinces in eastern and southeastern Turkey were lower than the rest of the country (Jafar, 1976, p. 124). In this context, FYDPs were considered as effective tools to reduce regional disparities and elevate the socio-economic status of regions that lagged behind, specifically Eastern Anatolia Region. In this period, just as the Fund for the South (*Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*) was initiated in Italy, the Narmada Valley Project was initiated in India, and the Aswan Dam Project was initiated in Egypt in the aftermath of the World War II, projects such as Antalya Project (1959), Eastern Marmara Planning Project (1960-1964), Zonguldak Project (1961-1963), and Çukurova Region Project (1962) were introduced in different regions of Turkey.¹⁶ Also, the first FYDP (1963-1967) was formulated in 1963. After the junta ordered DPT to formulate

¹⁶ Other similar projects included, but not limited to, Zonguldak-Bartın-Karabük Regional Development Project (1995-1996), Eastern Anatolia Project (1999-2000), Eastern Black Sea Regional Development Plan (1999-2000), and Yeşilirmak Basin Development Project (2005-2007) (GAP-BKİ, 2008a, p. 3).

another plan on eastern Turkey, DPT began to work on a plan that focused on Keban region consisted of Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, and Bingöl provinces. This project was considered as the first step towards developing water and land resources of the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin and basis of the project which would be later on called GAP (Tekeli, 2013, pp. 46-47).

On May 12, 1971, the military once again took power into its hands through a communiqué. Also, the oil crisis in 1973 and global recession in 1974 caused political and economic turmoil in the country. Given such developments, import substitution industrialization policies and development of various industries throughout the country did not reduce regional disparities as expected. On the contrary, the capital-intensive nature of investments led to unemployment and triggered migration from rural areas to urban centers. For this reason, the gap between western and eastern Turkey was further widened (Eraydın, 2001, as cited in Göymen, 2008). In this context, during the second FYDP (1968-1972) period, some localities—specifically the ones in southeastern and eastern Turkey—were designated as “Priority Localities in Development” (*Kalkınmada Öncelikli Yörelere*) in 1971 with the aim to reduce regional inequalities through primarily providing industrial investments and incentives (Akpınar, 2011, p. 123). These localities were chosen based on eight socio-economic indicators in the areas of (1) industrialization and mining, (2) trade and finance, (3) agricultural growth and modernization, (4) social and culture, (5) health, (6) education, (7) demographics, and (8) communication and transportation (Eşiyok, 2009, p. 125). It is noteworthy that the terms *çevre* (periphery/sphere) and *yöre* (locality) were employed instead of *bölge* (region) based on the idea that *bölge* supposedly had political and separatist connotations and could provoke a Kurdish insurgency (Millî Güvenlik Kurulu Genel Sekreterliği [MGK], 1993, p. 74. See following sections for more information on the Kurdish question in Turkey).

It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss each FYDP individually (see MGK, 1993 for a detailed analysis of the first six FYDPs). It is sufficient to indicate that while the first two FYDPs aimed to eliminate regional disparities and attain a “balanced” development through regional planning, the third FYDP (1973-1977) emphasized the need to develop the priority localities. All three plans acknowledged regional development within national planning (MGK, 1993, p. 133). This tendency, however, changed in the fourth FYDP (1979-1983) after the significance of regional planning was once again recognized by the state (Ecemiş Kılıç, 2009, p. 1286). Also in this period, the works on Tigris-Euphrates River Basin were attached more importance and accelerated to the extent possible after the completion of Keban Dam in 1974 (Tekeli, 2013, p. 47). Still, combined with the political turmoil, the

culmination of economic policies of the 1970s was severe balance of payment crisis, high inflation, oil scarcity, and shortage of basic items (Pamuk, 2008, p. 285).

4.1.4. Neoliberal Restructuring of the Economy (1980 onwards)

Amidst economic and political crises, a comprehensive stabilization package—also known as *the 24 January Decisions (24 Ocak Kararları)*—was announced in 1980. *The 24 January Decisions* marked the encounter of the Turkish state with neoliberalism and the Washington Consensus and shift from the state-led, inward-oriented development strategy to private sector-led, market-based, and outward-oriented development strategy. As expected, the World Bank, IMF, and international banks contributed to this package in different ways to ensure its success (Pamuk, 2008, p. 287). Even though another military coup was staged on September 12, 1980, the junta also embraced the neoliberal restructuring of the economy and its massive crackdown on the political opposition, labor unions, and leftist student movements facilitated and accelerated this process. The overarching goal was to integrate the country's economy to the global markets. Tekeli (2009, pp. 129-130) notes that especially the adoption of export-led growth strategy, attachment of great importance to infrastructure and telecommunication investments, and creation of new institutions such as capital market, free trade zones, and reformed banking sector were crucial policy choices for integration purposes (see Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion on the neoliberalization of the Turkish economy).

The neoliberalization of the economy had indeed implications for regional policies and development. For instance, trade liberalization and elimination of foreign exchange controls and quotas on imports favored provinces and regions that were already considered as developed rather than the ones with limited capacities. In this period, the private sector continued to invest primarily in western Turkey and refrained from investing in less developed regions. Thus, neoliberal policies further widened the gap between the developed and less developed regions in western and eastern Turkey (Eşiyok, 2009, p. 104). Still, some provinces outside Marmara Region such as Eskişehir, Denizli, Kayseri, and Gaziantep could manage to increase their manufacture and export capacities and emerged as challengers to Marmara- or İstanbul-based industries (Pamuk, 2008, p. 298).

Also, the neoliberal shift not only decreased the functionality of FYDPs, but also changed their contents significantly. For instance, contrary to previous FYDPs, the fifth FYDP (1985-1989) envisaged export-led growth, integration to the global markets, increased private sector involvement, and limited state intervention (Eşiyok, 2009, p. 109). It also emphasized the significance of regional plans to accelerate development and ensure the efficient use of resources in developing regions. GAP was the first and most comprehensive

project in this regard (Ecemiş Kılıç, 2009, p. 1289). As discussed in Chapter 5 in greater detail, DPT became the responsible organization to administer and manage GAP in 1986 and GAP-BKİ was established in 1989 to assume this role. In relation to this, while the share of economic and social infrastructure investments in the overall public sector investments was around 55% in 1980, it increased to 80% in the early 1990s (Yılmaz, 2003a, p. 239).

From the 1990s onwards, the idea that private sector had to be involved in the finance of infrastructure projects specifically in energy and transportation sectors gradually became widespread (p. 241). Also, the state aimed to develop its regional policy in line with the standards necessitated by the European Union (EU) and therefore became obliged to introduce structural reforms to reduce regional disparities (Göymen, 2008). In this regard, regional policies of the EU were taken into consideration for the first time in the sixth FYDP (1990-1994), which constituted a model for the following FYDPs (Eşiyok, 2009, p. 110). To illustrate, the concept of sustainability was injected into the seventh FYDP (1996-2000) and the concepts of integrity, balance of social and economic development, betterment in quality of life, participation, and such were injected into the eighth FYDP (2001-2005) as the principles of regional development. In *the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013)*, concepts such as development based on local dynamics and local potential, building and strengthening institutional capacity at local level, competitiveness, and human development were further injected into the overall regional development framework of the state (Türk, 2012, p. 113). Arguably, *the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018)* was a continuation of this approach, as the main objectives of the plan were designated as (1) qualified people, strong society, (2) innovative production, high and stable growth, (3) livable places, sustainable environment, and (4) international cooperation for development in a sustainable, participatory, and human-focused approach (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Development, 2014, p. 2). In that sense, the final stage of Turkish economy's development can be associated with the regulatory phase of neoliberalism within which more emphasis was put on regulatory institutions and more importance was attached to social protection (Öniş, 2010, p. 48).

Despite the strong and idealistic will of the Turkish state to modernize the country and eliminate regional disparities to ensure national integration and homogenization through various development plans, projects, and policies, striking inter- and intra-regional differences within the country still persist. To illustrate, leaving aside the discussion regarding how reliable and able HDI is in "measuring" development, while the top ten high-income provinces in western and northwestern Turkey were at the development level of Eastern and Central European countries according to HDI in 2002, the ten lowest-income

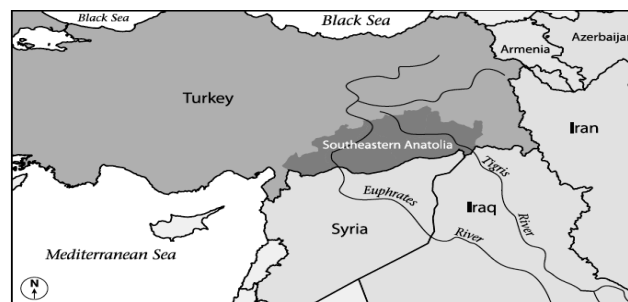
provinces—which were primarily located in southeastern Turkey—were at the level of Morocco or India in the same year (UNDP, 2004, as cited in Pamuk, 2008, p. 297). In this context, Southeastern Anatolia Region deserves a closer examination both to discuss its distinct characteristics and better illustrate how and why the idea of implementing GAP in southeastern Turkey emerged.

4.2. Southeastern Anatolia Region

In the words of Kolars and Mitchell (1991),

Southeastern Anatolia presents something of an anomaly. It contains proportionately a third again as much good land as the national average in Turkey and is watered by two world-class river systems: the Tigris and the Euphrates. Yet it has for countless centuries been a remote backwater. It is sparsely populated, lacks the infrastructure one finds in other parts of Turkey, has less industry, and is less mechanized in agriculture (p. 46).

To elaborate on these points, Southeastern Anatolia Region (henceforth GAP region) is bordered by Mediterranean Region to the west, Eastern Anatolia Region to the north, Syria to the south, and Iraq to the southeast, as shown below in Map 1. The region covers around 10% of Turkey's total surface area and total population and comprises the provinces of Adıyaman, Batman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa, and Şırnak, as illustrated below in Map 2 and Table 3.



Map 1: GAP region and its location in the Middle East

Source: University of Minnesota Cartography Lab, n.d., as cited in Harris, 2006, p. 189.



Map 2: Provinces of GAP region

Source: GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 14.

Table 3: Surface area and population of GAP provinces

Provinces	Surface area (square kilometer [km ²])	Population
Adiyaman	7,337	602,774
Batman	4,477	566,633
Diyarbakır	15,168	1,654,196
Gaziantep	6,803	1,931,836
Kilis	1,412	130,655
Mardin	8,780	796,591
Siirt	5,717	320,351
Şanlıurfa	19,242	1,892,320
Şırnak	7,078	490,184
GAP region	76,014	8,385,540
Turkey	780,043	78,741,053
GAP region/Turkey (%)	9.7	10.6

Sources: Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015, p. 3, 2016, p. 10.

GAP region is also known for its lowlands and large plains such as Harran, Suruç, Ceylanpınar, and Mardin. Even though it is the hottest and most arid region with high rate of evaporation and low rate of rainfall, Euphrates and Tigris flow through the region. Euphrates and Tigris are among the longest—around 3,000 and 1,900 km long respectively—and most pivotal rivers in the Middle East. Both rivers rise in Turkey, flow through Syria and Iraq, and join together to form the Shatt-al-Arab waterway in Iraq before discharging into the Persian Gulf. As illustrated in Figure 2 below, around 41% of Euphrates flows within Turkey, while the remaining 23% and 36% flow within Syria and Iraq respectively. Similarly, around 28% of Tigris flows within Turkey, while the remaining 2.1% and 70.3% flow within Syria and Iraq respectively (Tomanbay, 2000, p. 91). Also, contribution of Turkey, Syria, and Iraq to the annual flow of Euphrates is respectively 89%, 11%, and zero and of Tigris is respectively 52%, zero, and 48% (p. 91). As for demand for water, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq demand 52%, 32%, and 65% of Euphrates water and 14.1%, 5.4%, and 92.5% of Tigris water respectively (p. 92). Thanks to both rivers, approximately 20% of total irrigable lands in Turkey and 28% of its energy potential are located in GAP region (Altınbilek & Tortajada, 2012, p. 174).

In terms of socio-economic characteristics of GAP region, official figures indicate that the population density, annual population growth rate, fertility rate, average household size, infant mortality rate, average number of students per class in primary school, and unemployment rate in GAP region have been above Turkey's average. Also, the rate of urbanization, number of beds per 10,000 population, and average gross value added per

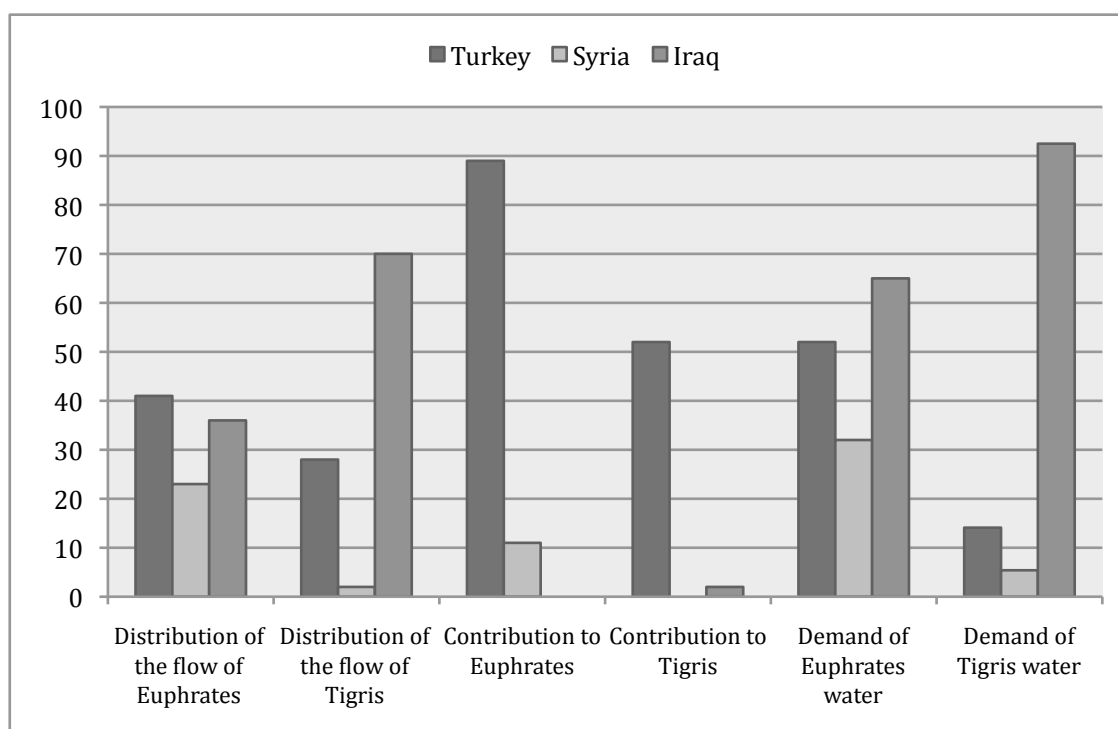


Figure 2: Distribution, contribution, and demand issues regarding Euphrates and Tigris among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq

Source: Adapted from Tomanbay, 2000, pp. 91-93.

capita in the region have been below the country's average. Furthermore, the net migration rate has been negative. More details are given on these disparities in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Selected socio-economic disparities in GAP region as of 2015

Indicators	GAP region	Turkey	Year
Population density (person/km ²)	112	102	2015
Rate of urbanization (%)	92.04	92.10	2015
Annual population growth rate (per thousand)	16.21	13.36	2015
Fertility rate	3.55	2.14	2015
Net migration	-70,530	-	2015
Average household size	5.35	3.6	2014
Infant mortality rate (per thousand)	16.5	11.1	2014
Average number of students per class in primary school	39	29	2014
Unemployment rate (%)	14.5	9.7	2013
Average number of beds per 10,000 population	19.70	26.45	2012
Average gross value added per capita (\$)	4,641	9,244	2011

Source: Adapted from GAP-BKİ, 2014a, pp. 22-26, 2016a, 2016c; Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015, 2016.

In terms of economic activities, agricultural sector occupies a significant position in GAP region's economy, as nearly two-thirds of economic activities are based on agriculture (Ünal, 2008, p. 75). While the region contributes to around 5% and 4.5% of value-added in industrial and service sectors respectively in the overall Turkish economy, its contribution is as high as 10% in agriculture (GAP-BKİ, 2016c, p. 5). The agricultural activities are mostly concentrated around the production of wheat, barley, cotton, lentils, pistachios, and grapes.

Another distinct characteristic of GAP region is the continuing existence of tribal social organizations especially in some rural settings. Even though processes such as migration, urbanization, improvement of socio-economic conditions, and transformation of large landowners into capitalist farmers gradually erode tribal relations, tribal organization and codes are not completely dissolved (Mutlu, 1996, p. 65). For instance, a study conducted in GAP region in 2004 indicates that 42.3% of Şanlıurfa's population, 36.2% of Mardin's population, and 23.1% of GAP region's overall population described themselves as members of a tribe (Erkan, 2005, as cited in Karasu, 2014, p. 181). Gökçe (2009, pp. 518-519) notes that blood-based traditional family, relative, tribe, and village structures or "feudal" relations that are widespread in GAP region prevent people from acting individually and, instead, compel them to abide by the strict rules of their communities.

In relation to the factors above, GAP region has been widely associated with unequal land ownership. More than 40% of rural households in GAP region were landless in 1980 (Mutlu, 1996, p. 63). In addition, according to general agricultural census conducted in 1970, even though 61% of the total agricultural enterprises possessed less than five hectares (ha) of land, they had control over only 6% of the total lands in GAP region. However, while 5% of the agricultural enterprises possessed more than 50 ha of land, they had control over 60% of the total lands in the same region (Tekelioğlu, 2010, p. 43). Özer (1998, p. 147) also notes that while 65% of the farmers own around 10% of lands, 5-10% of large landowners own 65% of lands in GAP region. More recently, Gülçubuk (2005, as cited in Görgü, 2006) also underlines that the skewed land ownership and the number of landless farmers remained almost intact even after the implementation of GAP. Accordingly, the project would allow 61.4% of small agricultural enterprises to cultivate only 10.5% of lands while 6.2% of large agricultural enterprises would cultivate almost 50% of lands. Still, just as tribal social structure is in the process of dissolving, arguably large lands are also in the process of disintegration (see Kaymak & Teoman, 2016 for the origins of agrarian structures in GAP region and Ünal, 2008, pp. 38-71 for the history of attempted land reforms and agrarian transformation in Turkey).

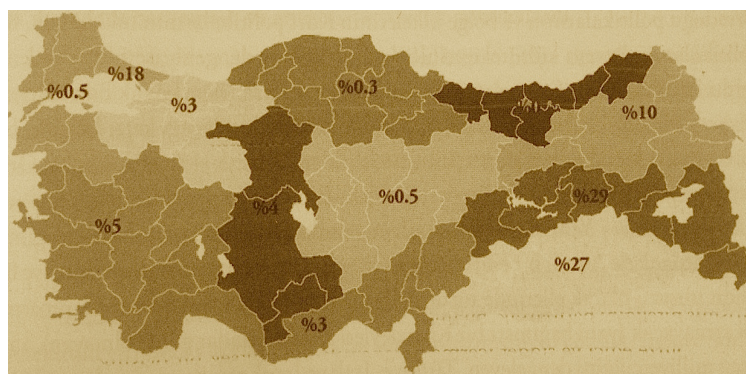
Chapter 4: Turkey's development path and path to GAP's initiation

Another distinct characteristic of GAP region is its ethnic configuration, as the region is far from being ethnically homogenous as opposed to other regions with the possible exception of Eastern Anatolia Region. Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, and some other minor ethnic groups dwell in the region (Mutlu, 1996, p. 65). Even though it is difficult to estimate the exact number of each group, one study indicates that 70.6% of the local population in villages consider Kurdish as their native language while the remaining 20.6% and 8.8% consider Turkish and Arabic as their native language respectively (Gökçe, Kasapoğlu, Kaya, & Güler, 2010, p. 37). In the overall region, 50.9% of the population speaks Kurdish, 34.2% speaks Turkish, 9.4% speaks Arabic, and 5.5% speaks Zazaki while 73.5% of the overall local population speaks Turkish (p. 38). As Map 3, 4, and 5 below illustrate, 26.7% of Kurds in Turkey—estimated to be around 15 million—are located in GAP region and 64.1% of GAP region's population is Kurdish, according to a recent study (KONDA, 2011).



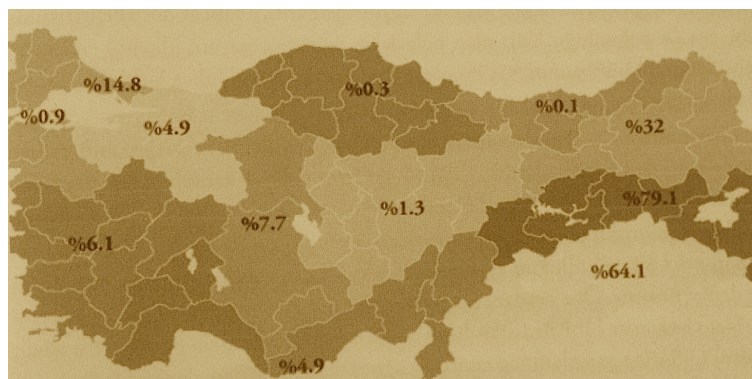
Map 3: Concentration of the Kurdish population in the Middle East

Source: Dahlman, 2002, p. 272.



Map 4: Distribution of the Kurdish population in 12 territorial units for statistics

Source: Somer, 2015, p. 39.



Map 5: Ratio of the Kurdish population to population in each territorial unit for statistics

Source: Somer, 2015, p. 37.

Given the state's strong will for development and modernization and long-established integration ideal on the one hand and distinct characteristics of Southeastern Anatolia Region on the other hand, initiation of GAP in this region was hardly surprising. In this context, GAP was designed and implemented initially as a water and land resources development project for energy production and irrigation purposes, but later on social, sustainable, and human development goals were also included in the overall project framework. Since the historical trajectory of GAP will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, it would be sufficient to highlight some notable goals of the project at this point. In simple terms, through the initiation of GAP, the state aimed to initiate radical social, economic, and inevitably political transformations in GAP region and reduce the long-standing disparities between the region and the rest of the country. The idea was that the introduction of irrigation would turn the region into a food and agricultural export base and, thus, lead to an increase in economic activities, employment opportunities, living standards, and the number of people contained in the region. As will be discussed in the following section, the state also aimed to have control over the flow of Euphrates and Tigris and secure strategic gains over downstream states. In addition, as Çarkoğlu and Eder (2001, p. 42) note, GAP allowed the political elites to use the project as a propaganda tool to garner political and electoral support for their parties both in GAP region and in Turkey in general. Also, it was widely acknowledged that the state conceived GAP as a security project and aimed to address the Kurdish question through eliminating the socio-economic causes of the Kurdish insurgency and transforming the ethno-political nature of the conflict (see Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion in this regard). The wide range of project goals and objectives indicate that the architects of GAP aimed to ensure improvement and transformation in multiple spheres and conceived GAP as a significant means to achieve their ambitious modernization and development goals. Due to its multiple

goals, enormous scale, and decades-long span, over time there emerged a plethora of literature on GAP and its numerous aspects, as will be discussed below.

4.3. GAP(s) in the Literature

Indeed, it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss each and every GAP-related work. Instead, scholarly works as well as government documents of high relevance are included and sorted by their themes to provide a more systematic review of the literature and illustrate the gaps (or GAPS) in the literature. To begin with, descriptive overview of GAP (Altınbilek & Tortajada, 2012; Bağış, 1989; Benek, 2009; Mutlu, 1996; Taraklı, 1989; Ünver, 1997b), its human development dimension (Fazlıoğlu, 2007; Mıhçı, 2012), its sustainable development dimension (Akyol, 2013; Dinçsoy & Ichiminami, 2006; Ünver, 1997a), its institutional framework (Beleli, 2005), its evaluation from “new developmentalism” perspective (Pınarcıoğlu & Işık, 2004), and the administrative structure, policies, and strategies of GAP-BKİ (GAP-BKİ, 2008b; Polatoğlu, 1995) were discussed from different perspectives in different periods. A more thorough examination of the literature indicates that GAP has been discussed in three broad categories under which its (1) technical aspects, (2) socio-economic aspects, (3) and political aspects are highlighted. These broad categories and their more specific subcategories under which a wide range of topics are discussed are provided below.

4.3.1. GAP and its Technical Aspects

4.3.1.1. Energy

GAP's energy potential and actual and future contribution to Turkey's overall energy production has been widely discussed under this category. For instance, in his short and highly descriptive article, Kaygusuz (1999) provided an overview of the energy and water potential of GAP region and discussed its climate, oil reserves, and solar, wind, and hydraulic energy potential in the light of data drawn from public sources such as DSİ, State Meteorological Institute, and Turkish Petroleum Corporation (see Akpınar & Kaygusuz, 2012; Yüksel, 2012, 2015 for highly similar and more up-to-date versions of this work from an engineering perspective). Around the same period, Özel (2001) examined the geology as well as mining and energy resources of each province in GAP region based on the idea that documenting and utilizing these dormant resources would yield immense economic benefits and enhance energy production. In addition to these scholarly works, it is noteworthy that GAP-BKİ (2012c) published a comprehensive report entitled “*GAP and Energy*” (*GAP ve Enerji*), in which the status of oil, natural gas, coal, hydropower, and renewable resources in the world, Turkey, and in GAP region was discussed. Similarly, GAP-BKİ and UNDP (2012) published another comprehensive study and action plan entitled “*Utilization of Renewable*

Energy Resources in Southeastern Anatolia Region and Enhancement of Energy Efficiency” (Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi'nde Yenilenebilir Enerji Kaynaklarının Kullanımı ve Enerji Veriminin Artırılması) that focuses on ways to better utilize GAP region's water and photovoltaic resources to generate renewable energy and ensure energy efficiency.

4.3.1.2. Irrigation

Irrigation has also been widely discussed in the literature, mostly from a technical and engineering perspective. To illustrate, Ünver, Voron, and Aküzüm (1993) discussed different ways of improving field water distribution and analyzed different applications of equipment and management combinations through technical, economic, and operational merits (see also Ünver & Voron, 1993 for a similar study on the improvement of canal regulation techniques for minimal water loss and economic and operational costs). Around the same period, Altınbilek and Akçakoca (1997), as DSİ and GAP-BKİ employees respectively, examined the implemented approaches for sustainable water resources development within GAP such as the use of unsteady flow simulation models, use of improved canal regulation, water users' groups, reuse of drainage water, and management, operation, and maintenance (MOM) model (see Akçakoca, 1997; Kulga & Çakmak, 1997; Yenigün & Aydoğdu, 2008 for similar studies on water resources development and management in GAP region and Turkey and Kibaroglu, 2002 for a detailed discussion on MOM model). In this regard, Freeman and Angin (1999) critically assessed the proposed approaches to deliver water to farmers and offered a different organizational perspective that would bring irrigators and GAP managers together for a more productive, sustainable, and participatory irrigation process. In addition, a more recent study conducted by Yenikale and Yenikale (2012) through GAP-BKİ's support also provided detailed technical and instructional information about irrigation and planning of irrigation systems for farmers and farmer organizations from the angle of agricultural engineering.

4.3.1.3. Agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry

In close relation to irrigation, agriculture—along with forestry and animal husbandry—received extensive scholarly attention. Especially GAP-BKİ published dozens of agricultural research reports on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, the adaptation of feed crops, development of fruit and vegetables farming, marketing of cash crops, and establishment of plant protection clinics in the early 1990s. It is also noteworthy that a very comprehensive study was conducted in 1992 by the joint efforts of GAP-BKİ, TİPAŞ in Ankara, and Agriculture and Food International Consulting (AFC) in Bonn on marketing of agricultural commodities and planning of crop patterns (TİPAŞ & AFC, 1992). A similar study was conducted by GAP-BKİ (2002a) with the support of UNDP on the climate of GAP region,

ecological needs of plants that were widely grown in GAP region, and designation of zones to grow certain plants (see also Karlı, 1999 for a brief analysis of factors that influenced cropping patterns in GAP region). In similar regard, GAP-BKİ (2005) published a more up-to-date study on the status of agriculture in the world, in Turkey, and in GAP region.

In addition to these GAP-BKİ-affiliated works, Morvaridi (1990) discussed how an agrarian land reform would influence GAP and underlined the need for land consolidation, land reform, and agrarian subsidy policy in GAP region in order for the project to operate at its full potential. Agricultural mechanization in GAP region was also widely discussed. For instance, with the support of GAP-BKİ, Foundation of Agricultural Energy and Mechanization Research and Training (*Tarımsal Enerji ve Mekanizasyon Araştırma ve Eğitim Vakfı*, TEMAV) published a detailed technical study about the needs of agricultural mechanization in GAP region in 1996. More recently, Türker, Avcıoğlu, and Eliçin (2011) also investigated the trends in agricultural mechanization between 1991 and 2007 and found that, even though the mechanization level in GAP region was still lower than Turkey's average, there was a significant increase in the number of tractors, average tractor power, and power and number of tractors per unit area (see Tobi, Sağlam, Küp, & Çevik, 2012 for a similar and more comprehensive study). In addition, from the perspective of agricultural economists, Çakmak and Akder (2012) critically assessed the future trajectories of agriculture policies in Turkey and the world and underlined that a competitive or globalized understanding of agriculture would benefit agricultural businesses the most in GAP's context.

Apart from these, Odabaşı and Boydak (1984) and Hızal (1989) examined the habitat, geology, climate, and flora of GAP region along with and forestry activities therein in the initial stages of GAP and discussed how the project could contribute to the rehabilitation of forests (see also Yenigün & Yıldırım, 1999 for the state of forestry in GAP region and activities of GAP-BKİ in this regard). Also, Tüzün and Yenigün (1999) discussed the state of animal husbandry in GAP region and examined the problems as well as potential changes in the sector following the implementation of the project (see Sakarya, Aral, & Aydın, 2008 for a similar study). In their more recent, comprehensive, and qualitative work, Selli, Eraslan, Chowdhury, and Sukumar (2010) examined Turkey's animal husbandry sector with specific focus on GAP region in terms of its international competitiveness level and reached the conclusion that the sector has been weak and vulnerable in terms of its national and international competitive power, which would create problems of exploitation in the future.

4.3.2. GAP and its Socio-Economic Aspects

4.3.2.1. Socio-economic structure and change

In general, social and economic impacts of GAP were widely discussed under this category. To mention some notable works, a number of studies were conducted between 1992 and 1994 with the support of GAP-BKİ on various issues that ranged from social change trends to population movements in GAP region to better understand the social fabric of society therein and formulate policies accordingly (see Chapter 5 for more details on these studies). For instance, the Union of the Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (*Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odaları Birliği*, TMMOB) profiled the social structure, tangible assets, and physical conditions of urban and rural communities in GAP region and determined how GAP would change this structure (TMMOB Ziraat Mühendisleri Odası, 1993). Based on the survey data of these studies, Akşit and Akçay (1997) focused on village types, class structure, power relations in decision-making, areas of conflict, and irrigation and water management practices and discussed how irrigation practices in rural settlements had an impact on transforming the socio-cultural structures and social habits of agricultural communities in GAP region (see also Erhan, 1997 and Özer, 1998 for detailed examinations of GAP region's social structure). Also, it is noteworthy that Kalaycıoğlu (2001) examined the views and expectations of local people from different segments of society in GAP region on social, cultural, and economic change induced by the project through qualitative methods. In a parallel manner, in the guidance of qualitative data and archival research, Bakırcı (2001) focused on development challenges and prospects of rural settlements that fell outside the areas to be irrigated and drew attention to the risk of an increase in intra-regional inequalities in case these areas remained neglected. In addition to these, even though a large number of studies regarding how GAP has brought or would bring social and economic change were conducted in geography, civil engineering, sociology, and economics from the 2000s onwards, the majority of them heavily relied on statistics and quantitative approaches (see Arslan & Pulan, 2014; Benek, 2005; Dereli, 2008; Erçin, 2006; Miyata & Fujii, 2007; Toybıyık, 2003; Yıldız, 2008). It was remarkable that these studies almost unanimously indicated that, even though GAP improved the socio-economic conditions of the local population, the project was far from bringing the expected benefits and the region continued to lag behind on many fronts. The comprehensive study conducted by Gökçe, Kasapoğlu, Kaya, and Güler (2010) with the support of GAP-BKİ and the Turkish Sociology Association was exceptional in this regard, as the authors examined change in GAP region's social and economic structure in a period as long as 15 years through employing a comparative approach and mixing qualitative and

quantitative research methods.

It should also be noted that more specific topics under this subcategory did not go unnoticed. Yıldız and Bayram (2008) and Kayan (2013) discussed the historical trajectory of urbanization process in GAP region and urbanization-induced problems such as the emergence of slums and the lack of infrastructure (see also GAP-BKİ, 2012a for descriptive information on the level of urbanization and urban infrastructure in each GAP province). On education, Demirbolat (1998) discussed the need to attach more importance to formal and informal education in GAP region to achieve a higher level of education and social development. Similarly, Gündüz and Kaya (2009) discussed the gap between GAP region and the rest of the country in terms of the level of education, training, and human capital and underlined their significance to achieve designated industrialization goals in the overall GAP framework (see also Karlı, Bilgiç, Şimşek, & Eren, 2010 for an analysis of human capital and institutional training needs of local administrations in GAP region). On health, Aksoy et al. (1995) discussed the health-related risks and consequences of infectious diseases that would follow the introduction of new irrigation systems and emphasized the need for preventive measures against future epidemics. Similarly, Bozdemir (1998) discussed the factors behind high morbidity and mortality of diseases in GAP region and identified potential health problems that could emerge after GAP's implementation such as increase in sexually transmitted diseases due to the high level of circulation or in other diseases due to misuse of insecticides (see also Diyarbakır Tabip Odası, 2011 and Türkiye Parazitoloji Derneği, 2003 for the state of health sector and public health in GAP region respectively).

4.3.2.2. Gender and status of women

The works that focused on GAP and gender issues began to mushroom in the early 1990s. To illustrate, with the support of GAP-BKİ, Development Foundation of Turkey (1994) conducted an influential study to scientifically define social, economic, and cultural conditions of women in GAP region and formulate policies to integrate them into the development process in accordance with the findings (see also Erhan, 1998 for a concise work on the same issue). Following the establishment of Multi-Purpose Community Centers (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri*, ÇATOM) in 1995, gender issues in GAP region began to be largely discussed through—or even became synonymous with—ÇATOM (see Chapter 5 for more details on ÇATOM). For instance, as a then GAP-BKİ employee and a sociologist by training, Fazlıoğlu (2002) examined the content of programs and activities of ÇATOM and their impact on different segments of society. In relation to this, in her qualitative work, Genel (2002) focused on ÇATOM from a different perspective and evaluated the interactions

and conflicts among the local population as the participants of ÇATOM programs, various state organizations such as governorships or “rival” social services providers, and NGOs that operated at national level (see also Güven, 2010 for the interaction between international organizations and ÇATOM). Around the same period, Harris and Atalan (2002) evaluated the position of ÇATOM in the context of the relationship among gender, development, state policies, and space from the perspective of feminist geography. It is also noteworthy that Kaya (2010) focused on the question as to whether or how ÇATOM created gender awareness among women in GAP region and reached the conclusion that, even though ÇATOM failed to empower women to a great extent, they undeniably contributed to their psycho-social development and increased gender awareness. Women entrepreneurship also attracted scholarly attention. For example, in her quantitative study, Elmas (2004) discussed how GAP had an impact on the socio-economic status of women and their empowerment and indicated that GAP and the urbanization process it triggered actually caused the deterioration of social and economic lives of women. In relation to this, Harris (2006, 2008b) similarly examined the gender-differentiated impacts of irrigated farming in GAP region and how women or certain segments of women were negatively affected by the process (see also Konak, 2013 for an ecofeminist critique of how GAP-induced development–or maldevelopment–led to ecological and social costs and strengthened the male domination and patriarchal development understanding). Also, in her empirical work, Clark (2013) discussed the experiences of Kurdish migrant women in GAP region in terms of encountering security and insecurity in their daily lives in classroom, courtroom, and home settings from the perspective of feminist geography and underlined that the (human) security of women was not absolute, but rather embodied and relational.

4.3.2.3. Environment

The environmental features of GAP region and how GAP had or would have an impact on the environment also received wide scholarly attention. In the 1990s, GAP-BKİ supported and conducted various studies to examine the region's flora, fauna, and water, air, soil, solid waste, and noise pollution such as *GAP Region Environment Study Dicle Basin* (Dicle University, 1993) and *GAP and Environment (GAP ve Çevre)* (GAP-BKİ, 1994b). About a decade later, with the support of UNDP, World Wide Fund for Nature Turkey, and GAP-BKİ, Welch (2004) edited a comprehensive report on the biological diversity in GAP region in which the biological diversity hotspots were designated and natural values were methodologically and systematically documented. As for the environmental impacts of GAP, in the relatively early stages of the project, Beaumont (1996) examined how “a number of

large irrigation projects” would bring about agricultural and environmental changes and have political and economic implications in the upper Euphrates catchment of Turkey and Syria through satellite data. Similarly, Tortajada (2000) briefly evaluated the direct and indirect social, economic, and environmental impacts of Atatürk Dam after eight years of its construction and attracted attention to the environmental problems that could arise in the long term if necessary precautions were not taken (see Akyürek, 2005 for a more comprehensive study on the same topic from a civil engineering perspective). Similarly, Berkun (2010) examined social, economic, and environmental impacts of GAP from an engineering perspective and underlined that, despite its positive contributions, the project also had negative impacts in terms of displacement, changes in land use pattern, salinization, soil erosion, changes in local climate, pollution, increase of greenhouse gases, and decrease of air and water quality in GAP region. The problem of salinization was discussed extensively especially from the 2000s onwards. For instance, Aygüney (2002) examined salinization and socio-cultural disruption in GAP region and pointed out that the primary reason behind the increase in salt concentrations in soil was not the “ignorance” or the lack of education of the farmers, but rather the modernization philosophy behind GAP (see Kendirli, Çakmak, & Uçar, 2005 and Tekinel, Ünlü, Topaloğlu, & Kanber, 2002 for further discussions on the irrigation-induced salinity problems from a technical and engineering perspective). More recently, Çullu (2011) discussed different aspects of salinization and provided informative guidelines for farmers to raise awareness about the problem in his comprehensive and practical study supported by GAP-BKİ.

4.3.2.4. Historical and cultural heritage

The historical and cultural heritage in GAP region and GAP's potential or actual negative impacts on this heritage were also widely discussed. For instance, based on consultation meetings and interviews with various governmental and non-governmental organizations and experts in GAP provinces, Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey (*Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı*, 2000) prepared a comprehensive report on how to conserve and utilize the historical and cultural heritage in GAP region. Even though the ancient sites of Birecik, Halfeti, Suruç, Bozova, and Rumkale attracted scholarly attention (see Durukan, 1999), arguably the destructive effects of Birecik and Ilısu dams on the ancient sites of Zeugma and Hasankeyf respectively attracted more attention beginning from the late 1990s. Especially the effects of Ilısu Dam on Hasankeyf, which has been home to around 600 human-made caves and 300 monuments for at least 12,000 years in the Tigris Valley and a significant town within the Kurdish culture, were highly politicized and almost became the

sole symbol of resistance against the construction of Ilisu Dam in particular and implementation of GAP in general (Ayboğa, 2009). To mention some works in this regard, Kömürcü (2001) focused on large dam projects that could endanger the historical and cultural heritage from the perspective of international law and discussed the threats to Zeugma and Hasankeyf as well as legal instruments and responsibility of the international community to protect such heritages (see GAP-RDA, 2001 and Uluçam, 2008 for detailed information on the heritage and rescue excavations in Zeugma and Hasankeyf respectively). About a decade later, Yalçın (2010) examined the water potential of Tigris and Ilisu Dam from the perspective of civil engineering and proposed the construction of five small dams instead of a mega dam to save Hasankeyf from flooding with minor economic losses. Similarly, Kocabaş (2013) discussed the state's practices towards fragile sites with a special focus on Hasankeyf and emphasized that the state's lack of sensitivity towards natural and cultural values had negative impacts on conservation areas not only in Hasankeyf, but also throughout Turkey. More recently, Girard and Scalbert-Yücel (2015) critically examined how different conceptualization of heritage in the context of GAP by different governmental and non-governmental actors became a site of contestation among "heritage actors" and how the heritage action led to implications such as redeployment of state power, normalization of government methods, and standardization in GAP region.

4.3.2.5. Migration and resettlement

In addition to these, a vast number of works were published on how GAP brought about or would bring about migration and internal displacement. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the studies of the Department of Sociology at Middle East Technical University (METU) to document the geographical and sociological structure of population movements in GAP region (METU, 1994) and the Sociology Association (1994) to find out about human resources, problems, and expectations of the local population for a smooth resettlement process were significant works supported by GAP-BKİ. The findings of the latter was also used in the project run by GAP-BKİ with the support of UNDP and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) between 1997 and 2000 to ensure participatory and sustainable resettlement and employment processes for the local population affected by the construction of Birecik Dam (GAP-BKİ, 1998. See also Miyata, 2002 for a survey on how the living conditions of households changed after resettlement and Polat & Olgun, 2004 for an analysis of rural dwellings in new residential areas built for displaced people). Especially Ilisu Dam was widely discussed in the context of resettlement. For instance, Morvaridi (2004) discussed the processes of the construction of Ilisu Dam and displacement and resettlement of the local

population and critically assessed the state's approach towards local communities specifically in relation to the Kurdish question (see Eberlein, Drillisch, Ayboğa, & Wenidoppler, 2010 for the analysis of the roles of export credit agencies and NGOs in changing the consequences of Ilisu Dam and Warner, 2012 for an analysis of how Ilisu Dam was politicized and securitized). As for more recent works, Erkan and Aydın (2010) examined migration trends between GAP region and other regions in Turkey and within GAP region and indicated that GAP failed to transform the migration trends given the rate of migration from the region and high rates of population growth and fertility (see Günal, 2012 for a similar study that examined the direction of migration from GAP region to Turkey between 1975 and 2011). Around the same period, Güler and Savaş (2011) compared the socio-economic gains and losses and integration problems of people who were displaced after the construction of Karakaya Dam and concluded that displaced people unwillingly obliged by state's decisions, lost their important sources of income and authority, and felt that their community was disintegrated and cultural identity was changed after the resettlement. More recently, in her qualitative research, Kurt (2013) explored the social impacts of GAP on internally displaced families in Halfeti from a gendered perspective and specifically focused on how resettlement influenced the status, roles, daily routines, relations, and life patterns of women and men as well as their interaction vis-à-vis each other.

4.3.3. GAP and its Political Aspects

4.3.3.1. Hydropolitics of Euphrates and Tigris

Given the problem of water scarcity and risk of resource conflicts in the Middle East, it was hardly surprising that a large volume of academic and policy-oriented works were produced on the water dispute among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, especially after the initiation of GAP. Turkey's water policies have been driven by the country's population growth and distribution of population in rural and urban areas, growth and transformation of its economy, and its relations with Syria and Iraq (Mutlu, 2011, p. 219). The objective of being independent from imported energy sources can also be considered as a driver. Even though the use of Euphrates and Tigris waters has been a site of contestation among three countries since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the tensions first heightened in the 1950s when each country made attempts to implement large-scale and ambitious water development projects for energy and irrigation purposes (Kut, 1993, pp. 3-4). Also, there existed a disagreement among three countries regarding the legal definition of Euphrates and Tigris from the perspective of international water law. It was unclear whether two rivers formed a single hydrological system; were international rivers; or formed a transboundary river. For this reason, it was also

unclear whether their waters should be shared based on declared needs or objective criteria (see Hakkı, 2007; İnan, 2000; Kibaroglu, 2013 for detailed legal explanations of the water issue). In this context, when the construction of Keban Dam in Turkey and Tabqa Dam in Syria temporarily deprived Iraq of some of Euphrates' flow, Iraq threatened Syria with war in the 1970s (Gruen, 2000, p. 566). Relations were further strained after Turkey decided to initiate GAP. Despite this, three countries could manage to establish a Joint Technical Committee for general discussions regarding the project and exchange of hydrological and meteorological data in the early 1980s (Bağış, 1997, p. 575). Also, in 1987, Turkey and Syria signed *the Protocol of Economic Cooperation*, according to which Turkey guaranteed to release 500 cubic meters of water per second from Euphrates with deficiencies in any month to be compensated the next month (Mutlu, 2011, p. 221). A significant feature of this protocol was that the Kurdish question and water dispute were linked for the first time, as Syria would stop harboring the PKK in return for water (Çarkoğlu & Eder, 2001, p. 60). A crisis among three countries erupted in 1990 when Turkey diverted the water of Euphrates for a month to fill the reservoir of Atatürk Dam and Syria and Iraq demanded more Euphrates water. The crisis was solved after Syria and Iraq agreed to receive respectively 42% and 58% of Euphrates water that reached the border between Turkey and Syria (Williams, 2001, p. 30). In this period, Turkey also offered Syria and Iraq a *Three Stage Plan* to ensure optimum, equitable, and reasonable utilization of the basin waters on the grounds that establishing a joint body to collect and exchange data regarding water and land resources would facilitate estimations and allocations (Kibaroglu, 2012, p. 75). This plan was not welcomed by Syria and Iraq. Moreover, two countries joined forces and not only sent official notes to Turkish government, but also dispatched threatening letters to funding companies in the mid-1990s to stop Turkey from constructing Birecik and Ilisu dams (Warner, 2012, p. 237). As Turkey's relations with Syria significantly improved in the 2000s especially after the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999, GAP-BKİ and General Organization for Land Development in Syria agreed to carry out joint projects and technological exchange in 2001. However, considering the deterioration of Turkish-Syrian relations after the breakout of the civil war in Syria in 2011; the ongoing political instability in Iraq since the US invasion in 2003; the rise of violent non-state actors such as Free Syrian Army, Kurdish groups Democratic Union Party (*Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat*) and People's Protection Units (*Yekîneyên Parastina Gel*), and jihadist ISIS; the involvement of external actors such as Turkey, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar, and the US in the ongoing political turmoil in Syria, it appears difficult for Turkey, Syria, and Iraq to reach an agreement on water sharing

or allocation in the near future (see Kibaroglu & Scheumann, 2013 for a detailed analysis of the historical evolution of transboundary water policies in Tigris-Euphrates River Basin).

To mention some notable works on the position of GAP in the water dispute among three countries, in their seminal study, Kolars and Mitchell (1991) examined the northern part of Euphrates in terms of its average annual discharge, river depletion, water quality, and similar characteristics in relation to hydropolitical practices of three countries from a multidisciplinary perspective and discussed how GAP would have an impact on Syria and Iraq in terms of depleting both the amount and quality of the Euphrates water and continue to be a source of dispute. Turan (1993) also discussed the problem of scarce water resources in the Middle East and Turkey's position in this context and indicated that addressing the demand-driven causes and changing the patterns of agricultural and industrial production, water consumption, and birth rates were imperative for a genuine and long-term solution (see Kut, 1993 for a similar work on hydropolitics of the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin with more attention given to GAP). Similarly, Kukk and Deese (1996) focused on how water scarcity might cause or aggravate conflict in Jordan River Basin, the Nile River Basin, and the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin and emphasized that GAP would reduce the water flow into Syria by 40% and Iraq by almost 90%, yet also noted that the conflict was not necessarily inevitable. Around the same period, Lorenz and Erickson (1999) examined the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin from the perspective of the US (military) interests in the Middle East and discussed how GAP would influence political, legal, and economic relations among three riparian countries and lead to political, social, and environmental implications for Turkey. Arguably, the works that were produced in the 2000s and more recently in the 2010s were not critically distinct from the above-mentioned works; they presented more up-to-date information on the same topic with similar approaches and reached almost the same conclusions. Analyses of Korkutan (2001) and Yilmaz (2003b) as Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) staff, the follow-up study of Lorenz and Erickson (2013) with more focus given to Iraq, and (re-)examination of GAP's position in hydropolitical relations among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq by Dohrmann and Hatem (2014) can be given as examples to these works.

4.3.3.2. The Kurdish question

GAP was widely discussed in the context of the Kurdish question, too. To provide a brief history of the Kurdish question, it has been one of the most complex, challenging, and sensitive problems of modern Turkey since its inception in 1923. The Kurds held a semi-autonomous status during the Ottoman Empire that was built on religious, ethnic, and linguistic heterogeneity. Under the *millet* (nation) system, religion was the only criterion for

the definition of a minority group. *Millet* had a different meaning then, as “nationality” under the Ottoman rule referred to people's membership in a religious community. For this reason, Muslims formed the Islamic community under the rule of the sultan and caliph (Kirişçi, 1998, p. 228). Accordingly, Kurdish feudal lords and leaders were also part of this community and identified themselves as Muslims regardless of their ethnicity.

In the 19th century, the intra-tribal conflicts among the Kurds and Ottoman state's efforts to extend its rule and control throughout the empire for a more modernized and centralized state structure led to unrest and revolts among the Kurds (Özçelik, 2006, p. 135). This reaction was not entirely surprising given that the rural areas were often perceived as a threat to a state's orderliness due to their confusing variety of types and denominations as opposed to urban areas and that (re-)ordering of the rural areas was often considered as imperative to break the power of influential landlords and autonomous communities in the state-building processes (Mielke & Schetter, 2007, p. 73). Following the World War I, *the Treaty of Sèvres* between the Allied powers and the Ottoman Empire partitioned the empire and granted the Kurds an autonomous Kurdistan in 1920. However, this treaty was never implemented and led to the War of Independence that would eventually establish modern and unitary Turkish state. According to *the Treaty of Lausanne*—signed after the War of Independence and became the legal basis of Turkey's international recognition as an independent state—only Armenians, Greeks, and Jews as non-Muslims were granted special minority and cultural rights (p. 136). In contrast to theocratic and cosmopolitan Ottoman society, “Turkishness” was defined as an ethnic category in this state- and nation-building process. In the words of Atatürk, the form of government in the new republic “has changed the nature of the common ties among the members of the nation that persisted for centuries; instead of religious and sectarian ties, it now assembles the members of our nation through the bond of Turkish nationality” (Parla & Davison, 2004, p. 71, as cited in Heper, 2007, p. 83). For this reason, modernizing reforms based primarily on secularism and Turkish ethnic identity were met with backlash from the Kurds; there were 18 revolts between 1923 and 1938, among which the revolts of Sheikh Said in 1925, Ağrı between 1926 to 1930, and Dersim (renamed Tunceli) in 1937 were significantly serious. These revolts were brutally suppressed and the expression of Kurdish identity was heavily restricted afterwards (Barkey & Fuller, 1997, p. 63). In the words of Ekinçi (2011, p. 54), the period between 1938 and 1950 represents “the years when the political life was crippled and the history was silent in Kurdistan.”

Beginning from the 1950s, the Kurdish identity was gradually revived due to various factors such as the transition to multiparty politics, population movements, and political and economic liberalization. Also, the emerging Kurdish movement allied itself with the left-wing political movement in Turkish politics, especially with the Turkish Labor Party that openly recognized the existence of the Kurds in Turkish political landscape and supported pro-Kurdish policies (Heper, 2007, pp. 155-156). Towards the mid-1970s, Kurdish leftist groups began to distance themselves from Turkish leftist groups on the grounds that their conception of the Kurdish problem was different and their policy of socialist revolution was poor (p. 157). The PKK was established in this context as a Marxist-Leninist organization under the leadership of Abdullah Öcalan in 1978. Its primary goal was to fight against feudalism and colonialism and establish an independent and unified Kurdistan carved out of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey through a radical revolution and the use of violence (p. 157). However, since the first attack of the PKK in 1984, the demands of the Kurdish political movement changed in accordance with domestic and international context. For instance, an independent Kurdistan, democratic republic, democratic confederalism, democratic autonomy in general and strengthening of local administrations, equal citizenship, and recognition of cultural and language rights in particular were demanded in different times and contexts (see also Uluğ, 2016 for subjective understandings of and conflict resolution suggestions for the Kurdish question).

In the 1980s and early 1990s, (1) repressive and inhumane policies towards the Kurds under the junta regime following the military coup in 1980, (2) violent and sensational activities of the PKK that further encouraged insurgency, (3) the influx of Kurdish refugees into Turkey due to the Iran-Iraq War between 1980 and 1988, (4) the rise of identity politics worldwide in the post-Cold War period, and (5) the establishment of a semi-autonomous Kurdish regional government in northern Iraq that would resemble a model for Kurds in Turkey significantly increased the degree of Kurdish nationalism and visibility of the Kurdish question (Özçelik, 2006, p. 137). Following the capture of Öcalan in 1999, the conflict deescalated due to the PKK's ceasefire declaration until 2004 (Gunter, 2008, pp. 59-93). To conclude a peaceful solution to the conflict, the "Kurdish Initiative" or "Kurdish Opening" was initiated in 2009 to grant Kurds more cultural rights and freedoms. In addition, several high-level meetings were held between the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (*Millî İstihbarat Teşkilatı*) and PKK leadership in Europe between 2009 and 2011 in Oslo to discuss the demands of each party and negotiate peace. Even though the "Oslo Process" collapsed in 2011, direct talks between the state and Öcalan continued and a ceasefire was declared in

2013. In this process—also known as the “Peace Process,” “Solution Process,” or “İmralı Process”—the state and Öcalan negotiated on a roadmap to end the conflict according to which the PKK would disarm and withdraw from Turkey and the Turkish state would make constitutional changes to grant the Kurds political and cultural autonomy and improve the detention conditions of Öcalan. However, the peace process officially collapsed after, *inter alia*, the intensification of reciprocal distrust, hostilities, and violence in 2015. The re-escalation of the conflict once again led to killing of hundreds of civilians, TAF and police personnel, and PKK members; jailing of activists, journalists, and scholars; closure of newspapers, radios, and television channels; and similar human rights abuses in 2016. Even though numbers vary, it is generally accepted that the low-intensity war between the PKK and Turkish state caused the death of more than 40,000 civilians and soldiers, extrajudicial killing of around 5,000 people, displacement of one to four million people, annihilation of around 4,000 villages, and weakening of the Turkish democracy, economy, society, and foreign policy for decades (Clark, 2013, p. 841; Somer, 2015, p. 188).

Indeed, the definitions of the Kurdish question vary. Yeğen (1999, p. 555) argues that while the Kurdish question was actually an ethno-political problem, it was instead defined as a problem of political reaction, tribal resistance, and regional backwardness in the official Turkish state discourse. Özçelik (2006, p. 134) notes that the question was often defined as a problem of international and domestic terrorism, economic and social underdevelopment, or ethnic and identity conflict. More recently, in his analysis of discursive practices in the European Parliament, US Congress, and TBMM between 1990 and 1999, Ünver (2015, pp. 9-10) demonstrates that the Kurdish question was defined as (1) a human rights problem, (2) a democratization problem, (3) an excessive force problem, (4) an ethnic-identity conflict, (5) a conflict intensified by TAF, and (6) a PKK terrorism problem. At TBMM, the Kurdish question was further defined as a problem (7) intentionally created by the “dark foreign powers,” (8) fueled by the poor application of law or lawlessness, (9) exacerbated due to the mismanagement of the security forces in the region, and (10) emerged due to the lack of education, infrastructure, jobs, and poor living standards (see also Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017b for more on the MPs' understandings of the Kurdish question and Uluğ & Cohrs, 2016, 2017a for laypersons' conflict frames and representations of the Kurdish question). Given the multiplicity of perceptions and definitions, there has been more than one measure taken by the state to address the problem. According to Heper (2007, p. 180), these measures included (1) the maintenance of law and order for security and socio-economic reasons, (2) the policy of non-recognition to suppress the Kurdish identity, (3) creation of a modern state structure to

rid the Kurds from the influence of sheikhs and tribal leaders, (4) "taming" of the Kurds to prevent future revolts and integrate them into socio-economic and political life, and (5) creation of an effective public administration to provide goods and services in GAP region.

In this context, the question as to how GAP contributed or would contribute to address the Kurdish question was widely discussed in the literature. In the 1990s, in his comprehensive and two-part study, Nestor (1996) focused on the link between the Kurdish question and GAP and empirically examined the potential of GAP in terms of ensuring the socio-economic integration of the Kurds into the mainstream of Turkish state system and escalating or deescalating the conflict in the future. Later in the 2000s, from an international relations perspective, Çarkoğlu and Eder (2001) emphasized that GAP-related domestic political concerns were in fact linked to Turkey's relations with Syria and Iraq and discussed how the Kurdish question was a such concern to be addressed by eliminating the economic causes of the conflict. Towards the mid-2000s, in the guidance of critical approaches to development, Özok-Gündoğan (2005) indicated that, along with changing development discourses and practices at global level, the escalating conflict between the state and the PKK played a significant role in the appearance of social development in the overall GAP framework in the 1990s as a complementary means of counterinsurgency and a social control mechanism in GAP region (see also Özok, 2004 for the extended version of this article and Harris, 2002 for a similar work claiming that GAP was a novel and less violent means to manage populations and address conflict). Similarly, in his concise and strongly-worded article, Jongerden (2010) argued that the construction of dams in GAP region were utilized as a means to fight against the PKK in various ways including (1) using Euphrates and Tigris as a bargaining chip to force Syria and Iraq to cut their support to the PKK, (2) providing economic and social development to transform the Kurdish population, (3) wiping out the history and culture of Kurds, and (4) using dams against physical barriers against the mobility of the PKK. In a highly similar manner, Hatem and Dohrmann (2013) argued that GAP actually "erased" the Kurds, as the Turkish state has employed GAP as a tool to enable "assimilation and government control over an area that is notorious throughout Turkish history for being difficult to dominate" and "permanent displacement of Kurdish populations and the destruction of Kurdish culture." More recently in 2014, I discussed that linking security and development in the context of GAP might not always lead to positive and expected outcomes and the link between two broad concepts as well as GAP and the Kurdish question should be conceptualized in relative, not absolute terms (Bilgen, 2014).

4.3.3.3. State practices and their implications

In addition to a handful of above-mentioned critical works, a small number of studies that could be qualified as critical discussed how development was implemented in the overall GAP framework and focused primarily on the state practices and their implications. For instance, in his qualitative study, Öktem (2002) discussed to what extent GAP has (1) become successful in terms of providing solutions to economic, social, and political problems in GAP region, (2) led to unforeseen consequences and even worsened social and economic inequalities, and (3) been an extension of past development policies towards GAP region. Çarkoğlu and Eder (2005) evaluated GAP in the theoretical guidance of “developmentalism” and discussed the top-down and bottom-up approaches taken so far in the project framework. Around the same period, Pool and Grover (2006) focused on conceptions and arguments of different governmental and non-governmental actors who were involved in the decision-making process in the overall GAP framework and examined how they had an impact on the power dynamics and governance of GAP in the context of the Kurdish question in the partial guidance of depoliticization. Similarly, in her ethnographic studies, Harris (2009, 2012) examined how the introduction of irrigated farming in GAP region had an impact on the reach of the state, perception and understandings of the state practices in the eyes of rural population, and interaction between rural population and the state.

4.4. Conclusion

A strong will and idealistic ambition for progress and development have been indispensable features of Turkey's modernization process since the inception of the country in 1923 or even the 19th century Ottoman Empire period. This will was built primarily on the principles of elevating the nation to the level of contemporary—also understood as the Western—standards and ensuring integration and homogenization at national level in political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. For this reason, dispersing the population and services throughout the country and reducing the long-standing and inherited disparities between the coastal and inner regions as well as western and eastern Turkey regions have been of utmost importance for the Turkish state to achieve its regional policy and modernization goals and objectives. However, despite the intense efforts to achieve these goals through various development plans, projects, and policies and relative success of the state's socio-economic performance, inter- and intra-regional differences within the country persisted. Especially since the 1960s, with its distinct characteristics in terms of its rich natural resources, socio-economic indicators that have lagged behind the rest of the country, and heterogeneous ethnic composition, Southeastern Anatolia Region has been considered and designated as a space of

intervention by the Turkish state. In this context, GAP was designed and implemented as an ambitious project to develop long “underdeveloped” Southeastern Anatolia in the 1970s. Even though the project's primary focus was on energy production and irrigation at this initial stage, as will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, its focus, scope, and character have undergone significant changes over time and also led to confusion, controversy, and contestation regarding the project on many fronts.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the review of GAP-related literature indicates that the project and its wide range of different aspects have been subjected to examination and analysis from the perspectives of various disciplines over the years. The review also indicates that, despite an increase in the quantity and quality of critical studies since the early 2000s, studies that take GAP and the concept of development for granted and examine the project and its different aspects from a “neutral” perspective still dominate the literature. Even critical studies rarely go beyond mainstream development approaches and problematize development. Power relations embedded in the overall GAP framework and politics—and non-politics—of the project are often neglected in the analyses. Also, only few studies focus on and analyze GAP-related discursive constructions and practices, how and by whom they are employed, and what kind of implications they led to. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 3, the data used in most of the analyses is generally quantitative and obtained from secondary sources, especially government publications and statistics released by the state institutions. Given these circumstances, this study aims to fill an important gap in the literature with its reliance on critical and post-positivist theoretical and methodological approaches and a balanced combination of primary and secondary data. Also, the study stands out with its originality in terms of making an attempt at examining the *what*, *why*, and *how* of GAP all together or “seeing GAP like a state” and, more importantly, being the most comprehensive study that has examined the depoliticizing implications of the project so far.

PART III: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

5. FROM A SINGLE GAP TO MULTIPLE GAPS: THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF GAP AND OSCILLATIONS IN ITS GOVERNANCE

In this chapter, I examine the historical trajectory of GAP and oscillations in its governance since its initiation in the 1970s up until 2015 in the guidance of the historical trajectory of the idea and practice of development. In this examination, I focus on how designers and implementers of GAP have envisaged the project in their discursive practices, policy practices, conceptions, and arguments. With this, I aim to illustrate how the focus and scope of GAP have undergone changes over time; how continuities and discontinuities in the modes of project's governance have taken variety of forms; how various concepts, norms, and values have gained prominence or lost their significance in the overall project framework in different periods; and how various national, regional, and global processes have influenced the course of the project throughout the years.

The chapter comprises eight sections. In the first six sections, I examine six broad and interrelated—and often overlapping—periods of GAP and discuss the most significant developments, policy issues, and discourses within each period. I identify these periods as (1) GAP as a water and land resources development project, (2) GAP as a multi-sectoral and integrated project, (3) GAP in limbo, (4) GAP as a sustainable human development project, (5) GAP as a market-based project, and (6) GAP as “new GAP.” In the seventh section, I provide a holistic and systematic analysis of the state of GAP as of 2015 from the perspective of politicians, bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals. In the eight and final section, I provide a brief summary of the chapter and discuss what the decades-long trajectory of GAP reveals about the project in particular and the concept of development in general.

5.1. GAP as a Water and Land Resources Development Project (1970s-mid-1980s)

GAP was originally planned by DSI as a combination of 13 project schemes on Euphrates and Tigris primarily for the purposes of water resources development, irrigation, and hydropower generation. Indeed, the construction of water use systems in Anatolia is not a recent phenomenon. Since the Hittites and Urartu periods—as early as the 30th century BC—many urban waterworks have been built. In more recent periods, Greeks, Persians, and Romans built complicated aqueducts and cisterns in Asia (Kolars & Mitchell, 1991, p. 8). Especially Seljuk and Ottoman Turks built “hundreds of fountains and diversion dams for domestic use in towns and villages and for watering animals on common pastures” (p. 9). Based on the belief or “law” that “water was Allah’s gift and no one had an ownership claim to it,” Ottomans constructed irrigation projects along caravan routes and dams such as Topuz, Büyük, Valide, Kirazlı, and Elmalı in İstanbul between the 17th and 19th centuries (p. 9). Even

though such dams and waterworks were present before the inception of modern Turkey, the idea of constructing a dam and a HPP on the upper Euphrates dates back to the 1930s. It was generally accepted that it was Atatürk who envisaged diverting Euphrates and Tigris to western Turkey for irrigation purposes and laid the foundation of developing water resources of southeast Turkey after he was fascinated by the Dnieper development plan in the Soviet Union (Turgut, 2000, p. 47). Still, even though Electrical Power Resources Survey and Development Administration conducted various studies and collected data on Euphrates and Tigris in the 1930s and 1940s, it was not until the establishment of DSİ in 1954 that the idea could be translated into concrete plans and feasibility studies. With the establishment of Euphrates Planning Authority (*Fırat Planlama Amirliği*) under DSİ in 1961, greater importance was attached to the construction of Keban Dam and utilizing the rest of Euphrates' water potential. In 1966, the construction of Keban Dam and HPP with a total power production capacity of 1,330 megawatts (MW) was initiated by an international consortium after the World Bank refused to fund the project due to the failure of Turkey and Syria to reach a settlement regarding water sharing (Öktem, 2002, p. 315). In the meantime, DSİ formulated *Reconnaissance Report for the Euphrates Basin (Fırat Havzası İstikşaf Raporu)* in 1964 and projected to build two dams and two HPPs on the river mouth of Keban Dam with a total power production capacity of 1,900 MW to produce 8,100 gigawatt-hours (GWh) per year and irrigate 480,000 ha of land (DSİ, 2012, p. 2). DSİ further formulated *Reconnaissance Report for the Tigris Basin (Dicle Havzası İstikşaf Raporu)* in 1968 and projected to build 20 dams and 16 HPPs in various sizes with total power production capacity of 770 MW to produce 3,900 GWh/year and irrigate 190,000 ha of land (p. 3). After assessing the feasibility of these projects in 1970, DSİ decided to increase the power production capacity of the dams on the river mouth of Keban Dam from 1,900 MW to 2,700 MW and power production out of the same dams from 8,100 GWh/year to 14,800 GWh/year. Also, the size of lands to be irrigated was increased from 480,000 ha to 700,000 ha (p. 3). In 1974, DSİ had to make further modifications to increase the energy production capacities of Karakaya, Karababa, and Gököy dams due to the 1973 oil crisis. The then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel¹⁷ described “Southeastern Anatolia irrigation” plan as one of the “special plans to develop eastern and southeastern regions” as follows in 1975:

¹⁷ Demirel received his degree in civil engineering from İstanbul Technical University. He was also granted the Eisenhower Exchange Fellowship in the US. Before entering the politics in 1962, he served as the Head of Department of Dams at DSİ between 1954 and 1955 and Director General of DSİ between 1955 and 1960. For this reason, he was also widely referred to as “King of Dams” (Kolars & Mitchell, 1991, p. 25).

This project was actually about building four dams to generate 20 billion kilowatt hour (kWh) electricity in the 200-km-long zone between Keban and Birecik on Euphrates and transferring nine billion kWh of this 20 billion kWh to a 21-km-long tunnel through a pumping station to be built in Bozova in Urfa to reach Harran Plain over Urfa.¹⁸ The diameter of this tunnel [would] be 10 meters and there [would] be two canals at the end of this tunnel. ... 10 million ha of land [would] be irrigated there, the outlines of the project are ready. Karakaya and Karababa dams are the second and third stages of this project (TBMM, 1975b, p. 418).

In 1980, DSİ added two dozen dams and half a dozen of HPPs to be built on Euphrates, modified some projects on Tigris, and merged all projects on Lower Euphrates and Western and Middle Tigris basins together under the name of Southeastern Anatolia Project (DSİ (2012, p. 3).¹⁹ Below, Figure 3 and 4 illustrate major dams to be built on Euphrates and Tigris and Table 5 and Map 6 provide detailed information about the main components of GAP.

A careful examination of the archives indicates that GAP was conceived as a project with a potential to bring remedy to socio-economic and socio-political problems of GAP region even when it had a purely technical character. To illustrate this tendency in legislative discourses of the period, in 1975, Ömer Naimi Barım, an MP who represented Elazığ, underlined the need to accelerate “public investments and implementation of infrastructural, industrial, husbandry, and irrigation projects” to “save these regions from backwardness immediately” and drew attention to the potential of Lower Euphrates Project to provide economic development to families through the irrigation of one million ha of land (TBMM, 1975a, p. 590). In the same year, the then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel similarly mentioned “Southeastern Anatolia irrigations” for it would “accelerate development” and “bring transportation opportunities, communication opportunities, education, health, everything regarding infrastructure, job opportunities, income opportunities” (TBMM, 1975b, p. 418).

Arguably, the tendency to evaluate GAP and its potential impacts in a narrow framework that prioritized economic and infrastructural development remained intact in the early 1980s. To illustrate this continuity with two examples, in 1984, the importance of irrigation was explained by Ayhan Fırat, an MP who represented Malatya, as follows:

¹⁸ Urfa is used interchangeably with Şanlıurfa.

¹⁹ Some sources also indicate that 13 projects were merged under the banner of GAP in 1977 (see Turgut, 2000, p. 106).

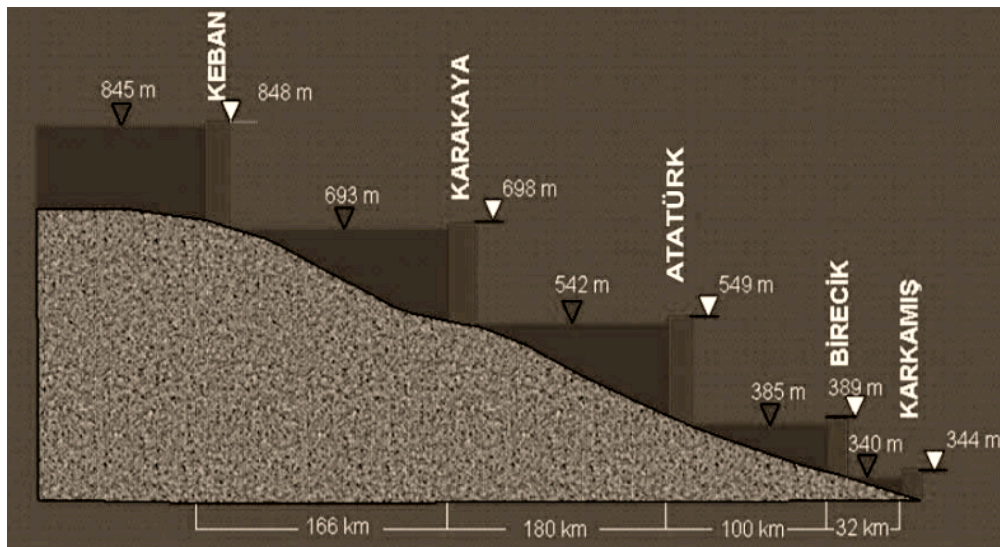


Figure 3: Major dams on Euphrates²⁰

Source: DSİ, 2013, p. 12.

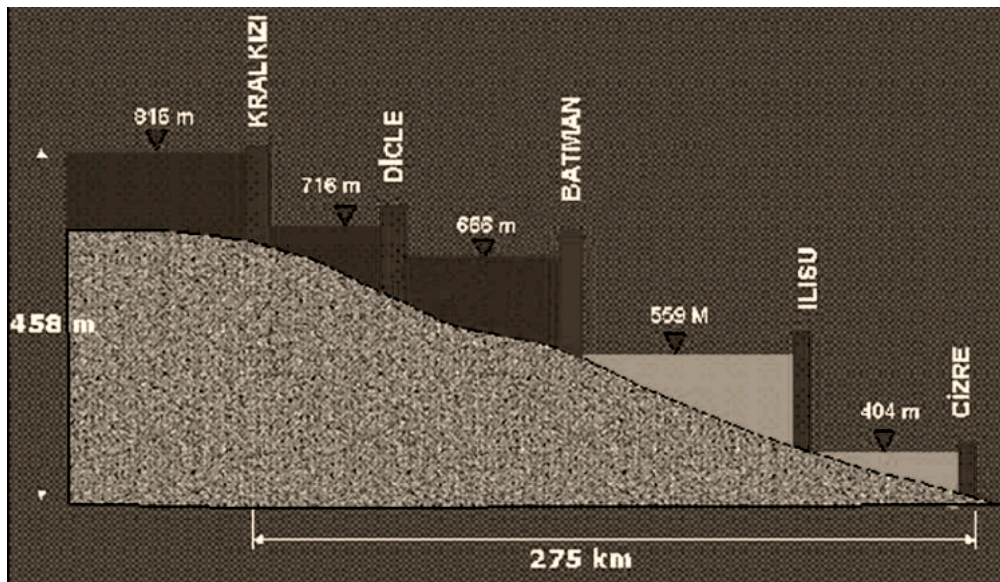


Figure 4: Major dams on Tigris²¹

Source: DSİ, 2013, p. 14.

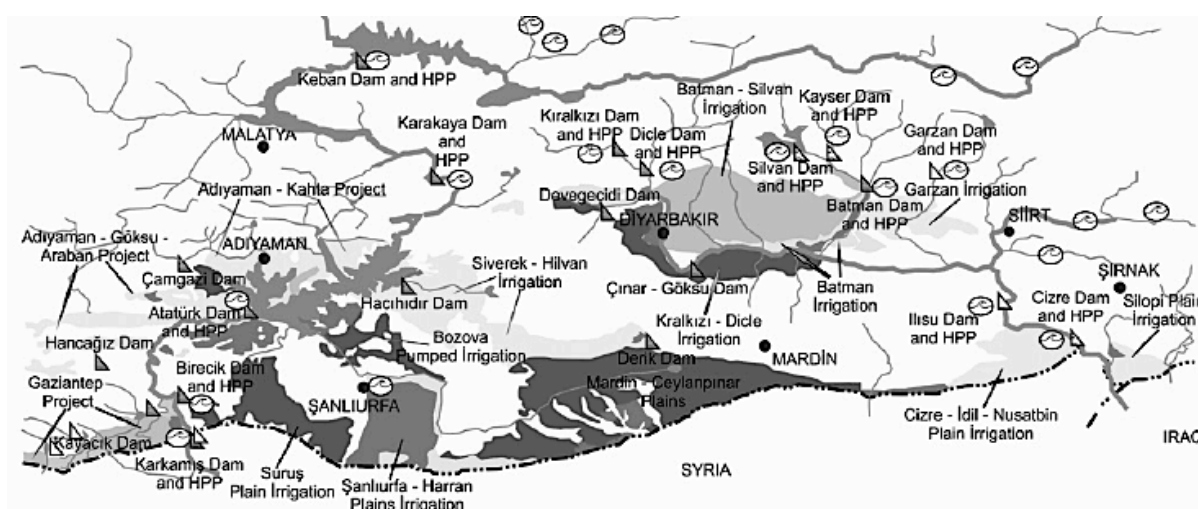
²⁰ Keban, Karakaya, Atatürk, Birecik, and Karkamış dams became operational respectively in 1974, 1987, 1993, 2000, and 1999.

²¹ Kralkızı, Dicle, and Batman dams became operational respectively in 1998, 1999, and 2003. The construction of Ilisu Dam and design of Cizre Dam continue as of 2017.

Table 5: Main components of GAP as of 1989

	Projects and units	Irrigation area (ha)	Power capacity (MW)	Power production (GWh/year)	Province(s)
Euphrates River					
1	Lower Euphrates Project				
1.1	Atatürk Dam and HPP	-	2,400	8,100	Adıyaman/Şanlıurfa
1.2	Şanlıurfa Tunnel and HPP	-	48	124	Şanlıurfa
1.3	Şanlıurfa-Harran irrigation	141,535	-	-	Şanlıurfa
1.4	Mardin-Ceylanpınar irrigation				
1.4.1	First stage	230,130	-	-	Mardin/Şanlıurfa
1.4.2	Second stage	104,809	-	-	Mardin/Şanlıurfa
1.5	Siverek-Hilvan pumped irrigation	160,105	-	-	Şanlıurfa
1.6	Bozova pumped irrigation	69,702	6	16	Şanlıurfa
2	Karakaya Dam and HPP Project				
		-	1,800	7,354	Diyarbakır/Şanlıurfa
3	Border Euphrates Project				
3.1	Birecik Dam and HPP	-	672	1,797	Gaziantep/Şanlıurfa
3.2	Karkamış Dam and HPP	-	180	470	Gaziantep/Şanlıurfa
4	Suruç-Baziki Project				
		146,500	44	107	Şanlıurfa
5	Adıyaman-Kahta Project				
5.1	5 HPP projects	-	196	509	Adıyaman
5.2	5 irrigation projects	77,409	-	-	Adıyaman
6	Adıyaman-Göksu-Araban Project				
		71,598	-	-	Adıyaman/Gaziantep
7	Gaziantep Project				
		81,670	-	-	Gaziantep
	Subtotal for Euphrates River Basin	1,083,458	5,346	18,477	
Tigris River					
8	Dicle-Kralkızı Project				
8.1	Kralkızı Dam and HPP	-	90	142	Diyarbakır
8.2	Dicle Dam and HPP	-	110	118	Diyarbakır
8.3	Dicle Right Bank irrigation	52,033	-	-	Diyarbakır
8.4	Dicle Right Bank Pumped irrigation	74,047	-	-	Diyarbakır
9	Batman Project				
9.1	Batman Dam and HPP	-	185	483	Diyarbakır/Siirt
9.2	Batman Right Bank irrigation	18,758	-	-	Diyarbakır
9.3	Batman Left Bank irrigation	18,986	-	-	Siirt
10	Batman-Silvan Project				
		213,000	300	1,500	Diyarbakır
11	Garzan Project				
		60,000	90	315	Bitlis/Siirt
12	Ilisu Dam and HPP				
		-	1,200	3,028	Mardin/Siirt
13	Cizre Project				
13.1	Cizre Dam and HPP	-	240	940	Mardin
13.2	Silopi irrigation	32,000	-	-	Mardin
13.3	Nusaybin-Cizre-İdil pumped irrigation	89,000	-	-	Mardin
	Subtotal for Tigris River Basin	557,824	2,215	6,526	
	TOTAL FOR GAP	1,641,282	7,561	25,003	

Source: SPO, 1989a, p. 5.25.



Map 6: Locations of the main components of GAP

Source: Akpınar and Kaygusuz, 2012, p. 1149.

If we bring irrigation to villages, it is possible to spread welfare benefits through helping the improvement of farmers' and villagers' economic situation. In this case, rural-urban migration will be prevented and hundred thousands of unemployed will be provided job opportunities in their own villages and regions. National economy will be relaxed, national income will be increased, agro-based industries will be developed (TBMM, 1984a, p. 37).

Similarly, the future prospects of GAP were expressed in the same year by Saffet Sert, an MP who represented Konya, as follows:

When GAP is completed, large amount of lands in Southeastern Anatolia will become fertile as they are in Çukurova.²² ... 16 billion kilowatt/hour of energy, which is equal to half of Turkey's production today, will be produced from Atatürk and Karakaya dams. ... It is a fact that putting these projects into operation will change the face of Turkey. It is the biggest step towards realizing the legend of the economically "strong Turkey" we have long dreamed of (TBMM, 1984b, p. 518).

Beginning in the mid-1980s, however, the sole focus of GAP on water and land resources development began to change. Other sectors were gradually included in the overall project framework. In the words of a former deputy undersecretary from DPT, GAP's focus and scope were widened primarily to "transform the sectoral planning into a multi-sectoral and spatial planning and link it with a regional plan" on the grounds that "the socio-economic

²² Çukurova is a geographical, economic, and cultural region that covers Mersin, Adana, Osmaniye, and Hatay provinces in southern Turkey and known for its fertile lands, high agricultural productivity, and large and diverse agricultural production.

structure of the region would change after technical infrastructural investments.”²³ I will provide a detailed account of this widening process in the following section.

5.2. GAP as a Multi-Sectoral and Integrated Project (Mid-1980s-1989)

5.2.1. Moving beyond DSİ’s Technical and Engineering Focus

One of the outcomes of the growing awareness about social and humanitarian impacts of GAP was the increased role and significance of DPT in the overall project framework. In 1986, DPT replaced DSİ as the new coordinator of GAP and carried out some institutional changes to better manage the project. For instance, the Research and Project Promotion Group (*Müşteşarlık Araştırma Grubu*, MAG) was established with responsibilities such as determining priorities of required infrastructure establishments, using financial resources efficiently for plans and programs, and enhancing the rate of returns on investments (SPO, 1989a, p. 1.1). Also, a unit entitled Project Management Unit (*Proje Yönetim Birimi*, PYB) was established under the coordination and supervision of MAG in 1986 to facilitate planning and implementation of regional development through employing local and foreign expertise. Following this, apart and separate from MAG, another unit entitled Southeastern Anatolia Project Group (*DPT Müşteşarlık Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Grup Başkanlığı*, DPT-MGAP) was also established. In parallel with these institutional changes, industrial sector, transportation sector, social sector, and similar sectors were included in the overall project framework. The widening of GAP’s focus and scope was a concrete step towards transforming the project into a multi-sectoral and integrated project. An expert from GAP-BKİ explained the need for GAP to have an integrated nature as follows:

Irrigation automatically triples farmers’ income. First, they expand their cropping patterns and start producing agro-industrial goods. Their market share increases. Second, industries flourish thanks to these goods and raw materials and, therefore, labor requirements arise. ... While emigration stops, the region starts receiving migrants. Urban transformation occurs. [Therefore], individual, societal, and urban capacities should be expanded to avoid infrastructural and social problems.²⁴

Towards the end of the 1980s, political elites also began to acknowledge the growing multi-sectoral and integrated character of GAP. To illustrate, Hikmet Çetin, an MP who represented Diyarbakır, underlined in 1988 that his party conceived GAP not “solely as an engineering project” but as “an integrated, wide regional project that [could] change the

²³ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

²⁴ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

destiny of the whole region.” Therefore, he added, “with its roads, airports, residential areas, land distribution problems, industrialization, and everything, it [had to] be handled as a huge project” (TBMM, 1988a, p. 624). Similarly, Erdal İnönü, an MP who represented İzmir, emphasized also in 1988 that GAP “[was] not solely an energy production and irrigation project. This project [had to] be evaluated as a whole with its economic, social, and cultural contributions. GAP, as the largest project of our republican history, [had to] primarily benefit the local community” (TBMM, 1988d, pp. 96-97). The multi-sectoral and integrated nature of GAP was further strengthened by the formulation of *GAP Master Plan* and establishment of GAP-BKİ in 1989, as will be discussed below.

5.2.2. The Formulation of *GAP Master Plan* (April 1989)

GAP Master Plan was prepared by the joint venture team of *Nippon Koei* from Japan and *Yüksel Proje* from Turkey with the support of PYB between 1988 and 1989 (SPO, 1989a, p. 1.2). Even a cursory inspection of the range of working papers that were prepared by DPT to support *GAP Master Plan* indicated that the technical nature of GAP was gradually changing. Transportation sector, land use patterns, agronomic evaluation of cropping patterns, municipal and regional planning, livestock sector, changing socio-cultural structures and land tenure system, tourism sector, manufacturing sector, fishery sector, social needs, migration within GAP region, and similar topics had been thoroughly examined (pp. 1.4-1.5). Therefore, the plan was novel in terms of identifying environmental, human, and financial resources as “critical” resources to be developed in addition to water and land resources (pp. 5.1-5.24). In line with this, GAP’s objectives were designated and divided as agricultural, industrial, and overall objectives, as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: GAP’s development objectives according to *GAP Master Plan* as of 1989

Agricultural		Industrial		Overall	
Increasing the income level in rural areas	Increasing agricultural productivity	Ensuring economic development	Increasing demand for education and technology	Increasing the income level to address regional income disparities	Utilizing regional resources efficiently
Diversifying farming activities	Providing inputs to agro-based industries	Enhancing the region’s image, social welfare, and local population’s motivation	Reducing regional income inequalities	Creating job opportunities in rural areas	Increasing the assimilative capacity of large cities in the region
Increasing job opportunities to curb migration	Producing exportable surplus	Promoting exports	Accumulating foreign currency	Increasing productivity in rural areas	Contributing to national economic growth, export promotion, and social stability

Source: Adapted from SPO, 1990, p. 3.

In the light of these objectives, the fundamental development scenario was to transform GAP region into an “agro-related export base” in three phases; (1) the period between 1989 and 1994 would be dedicated to preparation for take-off, (2) the period between 1995 and 2004 would be dedicated to economic restructuring and accelerated growth, and (3) the years from 2005 onwards would be dedicated to achieve stable and sustained growth (SPO, 1990, p. 5). The culmination of this process would be “an open society with an open economy directly linked to many countries as well as other regions of Turkey” (p. 5). Thus, GAP region would be “one of the growth and industrialization centers of not only Turkey, but also the whole Middle East” (MGK, 1993, p. 226). Also, three different development alternatives were presented in the plan. Alternative A was based on irrigation and prioritized irrigating all initially planned areas by 2005. Alternative B was based on energy production and prioritized maximizing power generation together with the realization of priority irrigation projects. Alternative C was based on implementing only priority irrigation and hydropower schemes by 2005 (Bağış, 1989, pp. 219-220). Eventually, Alternative C had to be adopted as a development framework due to constraints on public finance in Turkey during that period. Accordingly, GAP would be fully completed by 2005 at a total cost of \$32 billion including the past investments made in agriculture and energy sectors before 1980 (Kut, 1993, p. 6).

While *GAP Master Plan* widened the focus and scope of GAP, the multiplicity and complexity of project objectives and alternative scenarios also led to some intra- and inter-institutional conflicts over time. It became clear that a project of this scale necessitated better coordination and organization. It was therefore envisaged that establishing a new and separate organization with a certain degree of autonomy would prevent further institutional and organizational conflicts and facilitate project’s implementation. GAP-BKİ was established in such a context to fill this vacuum, as will be discussed below.

5.2.3. The Establishment of GAP-BKİ (November 1989)

GAP-BKİ was established on November 6, 1989 for a period of 15 years²⁵ upon the Government Law Decree No. 388 to operate directly under the Prime Ministry as a separate public legal entity, whose director was also directly appointed by the prime minister (Polatoğlu, 1995, p. 199). According to Abdülkadir Aksu, the then Minister of Interior, GAP-BKİ was established in order to

²⁵ The mandate of GAP-BKİ was extended for three years in 2004, for five years in 2007, for another five years in 2012, and again for three years in 2016. Accordingly, its mandate expires on December 31, 2019.

rapidly develop territories under GAP's coverage; deliver planning, infrastructure, licensing, housing, industry, mining, agriculture, energy, transportation, and other services to realize investments or have them delivered; take required measures to raise the education level of the local population or have them taken; and ensure coordination among agencies and organizations (TBMM, 1990a, p. 432).

As illustrated in Figure 5 below, GAP-BKİ was composed of the High Council of GAP, Directorate of GAP-BKİ, and GAP Coordination Council. The High Council was the political body of the administration, chaired by the prime minister and composed of the state minister in charge of GAP, the state minister in charge of planning, and the minister of public works and settlement (Ünver, 1997b, p. 463). Directorate of GAP-BKİ was the technical body with its headquarters in Ankara and regional directorate in Şanlıurfa, composed of experts with engineering, economics, social sciences, and urban and regional planning backgrounds (p. 464). Finally, GAP Coordination Council was the forum to exchange ideas and critique, chaired by state minister in charge of GAP and composed of various related government agencies, NGOs, local governments, and similar bodies (p. 464).

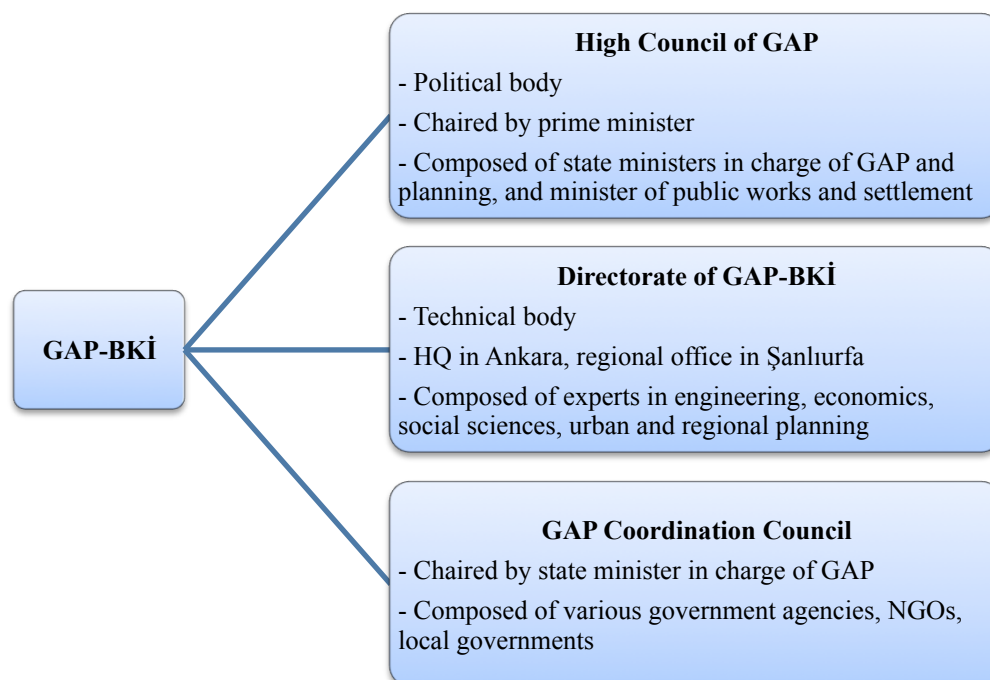


Figure 5: Organization of GAP-BKİ as of 1989

Source: Adapted from Ünver, 1997b, pp. 463-464.

As mentioned before, an important reason behind the establishment of GAP-BKİ was the intensification of intra-institutional conflicts. Especially the organization of DPT and its internal dynamics raised the need to manage and coordinate GAP in a different mode. To

elaborate, DPT was operating at undersecretary level under the direct supervision of the Prime Ministry. There were three bodies that operated at deputy undersecretary level under the supervision of the undersecretary. These bodies were concerned with (1) social and economic planning, (2) coordination among different sectors, and (3) implementation of investments. However, MAG was also under the supervision of the undersecretary and responsible to conduct research on critical sectors and provide consultancy to the undersecretary. In addition, DPT had a top-down and three-staged planning approach that involved macro, sectoral, and project levels (Yılmaz, 2003a, p. 202). Accordingly, a macro model was designed in the guidance of macro variables regarding population, income, and so on at the first stage; sectoral targets were designated through macro variables and an input-output analysis for different sectors in the country at the second stage; and solid projects were then selected for evaluation for each sector at the third stage (p. 202). For this reason, DPT lacked regional or local organizations elsewhere in other regions in Turkey.

Given this organization, a number of incompatibilities emerged after DPT took over DSI's responsibility regarding GAP's management and coordination. Since GAP was not merely a technical and economic project anymore after its focus and scope were widened, it was unfeasible to administer it under economic planning only. It was equally unfeasible to administer it under social planning only. It was also unfeasible to administer GAP through DPT's institutionalized sectoral planning and centralist approach, as the project required regional planning and integrated approach. For such reasons, as a former deputy undersecretary from DPT explains, GAP was conceived as a research topic by itself that would be of interest for MAG and, therefore, placed under the responsibility of this research group. However, over time "experts from DSI, mining engineers, chemical engineers, city planners, sociologists started to join [the research group] and participated in the project"²⁶ and created an obscurity regarding project's administration. Another incompatibility was regarding where to locate GAP within the overall governance structure in Turkey. Even though the undersecretary of DPT was directly responsible to the Prime Minister, there was already a state minister in charge of GAP in the cabinet. Furthermore, another ministerial position entitled "state minister in charge of DPT" was created later on. This complex structure further blurred under whose supervision MAG was supposed to operate and GAP was supposed to be administered. The establishment of DPT-MGAP to operate at the deputy undersecretary level to address this problem also failed to solve the conflict. Finally, the

²⁶ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

solution was found in the establishment of GAP-BKİ as a separate administration from DPT.

The establishment of GAP-BKİ marked a significant shift from central planning to regional planning, from sectoral planning to multi-sectoral and spatial planning, from a centralized organization to a more decentralized and regional organization, and from a technical focus to a widened focus. However, a complete transformation could not be achieved as immediately as it was expected. The period of transition in which GAP swayed between the old and new project approaches will be explained in the following section.

5.3. GAP in Limbo: Vacillation Between Technical and Integrated Focuses (1989-1993)

From 1989 onwards, GAP came to be defined as a multi-sectoral and integrated regional development project that included “dams and hydro-electric power plants, irrigation facilities, agriculture and transportation infrastructure facilities, urban and rural infrastructures, investments in industry, commerce, health, education, housing, and services” (GAP-RDA, 1993, p. 2). However, many politicians, bureaucrats, and experts were doubtful that this was actually the case. For instance, a former deputy undersecretary from DPT emphasized that “even though DSİ’s former engineering, infrastructure, energy and irrigation project became an integrated project, [the government] poured every dime into Atatürk Dam. Irrigation investments were going very slow. ... The planning project once again became an engineering implementation project.”²⁷ This regression was linked to the political and administrative problems in the overall GAP framework. To exemplify, it was generally the minister of public works and settlement who had the upper hand in decision-making among the ministers within the High Council of GAP. Since DSİ was operating under the supervision of that ministry, more importance was given to dam and infrastructure construction than to investments in the agricultural sector.²⁸

Political elites also raised their concerns regarding how GAP overlooked social and humanitarian factors with its predominantly technical focus despite a series of change. To illustrate, in 1990, Erdal İnönü, an MP who represented İzmir, criticized the then government for perceiving GAP not as a project that would directly contribute to socio-economic development of the local population, but rather as a project that would have macro-level contributions (TBMM, 1990b, p. 94). He underlined that “human dimension [had to] be added to the project” and “the project [had to] be redesigned in such a way to have a direct

²⁷ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

²⁸ According to an alternative assessment, the reason for the duality between dam construction and investments in agriculture—or between hydropower and irrigation development—was not specifically the strong position of the minister of public works and settlement within the High Council, but rather a broader national policy that was pushed by DPT and approved by the government.

impact on the economy and social life of the local population” (p. 94). In 1991, İsmail Köse, an MP who represented Erzurum, drew attention to a similar problem and stated that

dams [would] be built, energy [would] be generated, canals [would] be built, irrigation [would] be utilized in agriculture, new products [would] be produced and our citizens [would] find great opportunities, however, while plains [were] irrigated, energy [was] generated, our citizens whose places were submerged under the reservoirs [were] forgotten (TBMM, 1991a, p. 149).

Celal Kürkoğlu, an MP who represented Adıyaman, also criticized GAP for being far from an integrated project on the grounds that the “preparation of irrigation infrastructure and irrigation canals was neglected” and “GAP was handled with its economic and technical aspects but not with its social aspect” (TBMM, 1992a, pp. 738-739).

Amidst criticisms and concerns regarding GAP’s trajectory, GAP-BKİ prepared two studies arguably to rectify the missing details of *GAP Master Plan* and reverse the project’s vacillation back towards technical approach. The first study was *GAP Region Action Plan (1993-1997)*, which was prepared in April 1993. Its primary objectives were to (1) at maximum level increase the investments that would foster economic development and increase income in the region, (2) raise the standards of health and education services to the national average, (3) increase employment opportunities, (4) improve infrastructure and increase livability of cities to contemporary conditions to attract qualified personnel and create a healthier urban environment, (5) complete deficient infrastructure in rural areas, (6) increase accessibility within the region and between regions, and (7) fulfill the infrastructure need of the existing and future industrial complexes (GAP-BKİ, 1993a, p. 2). The second study was *GAP Regional Transportation and Infrastructure Development Study*, which was prepared in July 1993. It was concerned with issues of spatial and transportation planning, development plans and infrastructure projects for expanding settlement areas, detailed water supply project, and special transportation projects (GAP-RDA, 1993, pp. 3-4).

The efforts to institutionalize GAP as a multi-sectoral and integrated project coincided with a period in which new development theories, approaches, and concepts gradually spread and influenced development policy and practice worldwide (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). GAP was not immune to these new debates and trends. As a result, a number of new concepts were injected into the overall GAP framework to redefine the project as a sustainable and human-centered project, as will be shown below.

5.4. GAP as a Sustainable Human Development Project (1993 onwards)

5.4.1. Moving Towards Sustainable, Participatory, Social, and Human Development

The concepts such as sustainability, community participation, public-private partnership, empowerment of women, efficient use of resources, environmental protection, and provision of education, health, and social services entered into the lexicon of designers and implementers of GAP in the early 1990s (Pool & Grover, 2006, p. 381). According to a coordinator from GAP-BKİ, “sustainable development, participation, social development, and human-centered development became the essential principles of the project” especially after “the Seminar on Sustainable Development and GAP,” which was organized jointly by GAP-BKİ and UNDP in Şanlıurfa in 1995.²⁹ Also, some global events such as the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992; International Conference on Population and Development coordinated by the UN in Cairo in 1994; the 4th World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace convened by the UN in Beijing in 1995; World Summit for Social Development convened by the UN in Copenhagen in 1995; Habitat II on Human Settlements convened by the UN in İstanbul in 1996; and the 2nd World Water Forum convened by the World Water Council in the Hague in 2000 played a significant role in the inclusion of these concepts in the overall project framework (GAP-BKİ, 2002b, p. 2).

Sustainability has been understood in various ways in GAP. After all, it was one of the most widely used (buzz)words of the period and almost everything could be described as “sustainable” and hyphenated or paired with the term, such as sustainable cities, growth, livelihoods, and indeed development (Scoones, 2001, p. 153). The oft-cited definition of sustainable development was “development that [met] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Ünver (1997b, p. 467), the then President of GAP-BKİ, noted that even though social, economic, cultural, gender, educational, health, physical planning, agricultural, environmental, and institutional issues could be considered under this broad definition, “human” was always at the center of all these issues either as an object or an agent, or both. Therefore, human development has been considered inherent in sustainability as well as GAP. In relation to this, equity and fairness, participation, and human resources development were also considered as essential elements of sustainability within GAP framework (Kut, 1999, p. 29). Equity and fairness referred to the inclusion of the poor into

²⁹ Personal interview, May 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

the development process and improvement of their health, education, employment, and social security levels (p. 29). Participation referred to active participation of the local population, local administrations, and voluntary organizations in decision-making processes at all levels (p. 29). Participation was also defined as a creative, directive, and adaptive process initiated by organized, informed, conscious, and mentally self-sufficient people where they could be no longer conceived as passive objects, but instead considered as active subjects (GAP-BKİ & UNDP, 1995, p. 7). Finally, human resources development referred to ensuring social welfare and improving the quality of life to provide everyone minimum standards to live a humane and secure life (Kut, 1999, p. 29). Given these definitions, sustainable development implied a shift from “production-centered” approach to “human-centered” approach in which the objective was to create a society made up of healthy, educated, and employed individuals with sufficient income (GAP-BKİ & UNDP, 1995, p. 24).

With the rise of “human” to a central position in the project framework, there emerged a need to “on the one hand produce knowledge about socio-cultural structure of the region and expectations and inclinations of people and, on the other hand, develop concrete action plans in the light of this knowledge to be shared with implementer institutions” (Ertürk, 1993, p. 20). It is noteworthy that the lack of sufficient knowledge about the local population and their socio-cultural backgrounds was already emphasized in *GAP Master Plan* in 1989. For instance, it was indicated that

[e]stimates of the number and the socio-economic characteristics of migrants by origin and destination have not been documented ... Since the expected number of seasonal migrants, return migrants and new migrants to the region [would] be considerable, past census records and current population movements [had to] be studied and upcoming/planned surveys [had to] be prepared to accommodate these information needs to determine (a) origins and destinations, (b) sex/age structures, (c) household characteristics, (d) educational levels, (e) occupations, (f) human relation/connection within the region and outside the region, (g) intention/preference on value-added activities in the region (SPO, 1989b, p. G-6).

In this context, as mentioned in Chapter 4, various studies were conducted between 1992 and 1994 to produce knowledge about GAP region and its local population and formulate sound social policies based on this data. After all, communities had to be “investigated, mapped, classified, documented, interpreted” or “rendered technical” through specialized techniques such as surveys, focus group discussions, and PRA for the facilitation of their governance (Li, 2007, p. 234). The nation state had a natural interest and tendency to “map the land

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owned by the state and its citizens exactly” and bind “each citizen to the smallest fixed territorial unit possible in order to identify and localize him/her whenever it [felt] this [was] necessary” to achieve a high degree of control over its territory and population (Mielke & Schetter, 2007, p. 72). Brief information about when, where, why, and by whom each study was conducted is provided in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Studies on GAP’s social dimension conducted between 1992 and 1994

<i>Management, Operation and Maintenance (MOM) Project Socio-Economic Studies (1993)</i>
This study was conducted by Department of Sociology at METU in 12 different irrigation areas to determine social variables in order to pinpoint the most viable, accepted, and appropriate MOM model for irrigation systems within GAP framework as well as to discover ways to ensure farmer participation in this process.
<i>Survey on the Trends of Social Change in the GAP Region (1993)</i>
This study was conducted by TMMOB the Chamber of Agricultural Engineers in Adiyaman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Mardin, and Şanlıurfa to discover and profile the social structure, tangible assets, and physical conditions of urban and rural communities in GAP region and determine how GAP would change this structure.
<i>Population Movements in GAP Region (1994)</i>
This study was conducted by Department of Sociology at METU in Adiyaman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Adana, İzmir, and İstanbul to find out about the existing migration patterns and characteristics of migration-giving and migration-receiving settlements as well as of migrants, determine how GAP would influence reverse migration, and make projections about future trends.
<i>Survey on the Problems of Employment and Resettlement in Areas Affected by Dam Lakes in GAP Region (1994)</i>
This study was conducted by the Sociology Association in the areas where Karakaya, Hancıoğlu, Hacıhıdır, Atatürk, Dicle, Kralkızı, and Batman dams had affected the local population to find the most viable solution to relocate the affected population with minimum losses and encourage those who received their expropriated price to make smart and productive investments.
<i>Women’s Status in the GAP Region and Their Integration to the Process of Development (1994)</i>
This study was conducted by Development Foundation of Turkey in 13 urban and 81 rural settlements in Adiyaman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Mardin, and Şanlıurfa to determine social, economic, and cultural conditions in which women in the region lived, pinpoint structural and individual problems they faced, find out about their expectations and needs, and formulate policies, strategies, and measures to elevate their status and integrate them into the development process.

Source: Adapted from GAP-BKİ, 1996, pp. 6-7; Çabuk and Turan, 1999, pp. 280-283.

Following these studies, GAP Social Research and Action Committee—consisted of scholars and experts from METU, Ankara University, Hacettepe University, DPT, Development Foundation of Turkey, Sociology Association, and GAP-BKİ—formulated *GAP Social Action Plan* in late 1994 to ensure social development based on participatory approaches, strike a balance between technical and economic projects and human resources, and include disadvantaged groups—women, children, unemployed youth, street children,

migrants, those whose settlements were submerged due to dam construction, and farmers whose lands were out of the reach of irrigation networks—into the development process (GAP-BKİ, 1996, p. 28; GAP-RDA, 1999, pp. 3-4; Ünver, 1999, p. 32). An expert from GAP-BKİ evaluates the formulation of *GAP Social Action Plan* as follows: “it [was] easier to solve problems in engineering because it [was] possible to get the same results with the same practices. Social events [were] different. Social intervention [was] mandatory to equalize different levels.”³⁰ The plan was novel in the sense that, in the words of a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ, “the social aspect of GAP was missing in *GAP Master Plan* but the following plans, especially *GAP Social Action Plan*, always included a social aspect and touched people’s lives somehow.”³¹ The plan was also novel in terms of being participatory, as the same coordinator underlines that GAP-BKİ “was probably the first institution to adopt participatory planning approach in Turkey” and they “went into the field, moved door to door, and conducted focus group discussions to find out about people’s expectations, priorities, and potentials.”

The increasing circulation of new concepts also influenced how political elites conceived the project. To illustrate, Abdülkadir Aksu, the then State Minister in charge of GAP, underlined in 1996 that GAP did not consist “only of dams, energy facilities, and irrigation networks. GAP [was] an integrated development project whose focus [was] human. It [was] our national project that gained worldwide reputation with its integrated structure, sustainable development philosophy, and human-oriented goal” (TBMM, 1996, p. 135). Similarly, Algan Hacaloğlu, an MP who represented İstanbul, underlined in 1997 that in order for GAP to succeed, factors such as economic, natural, and societal dynamics; efficient use of human, water, and land resources; participation of the local population; protection of nature and environment; and sustainable economic development had to be considered as integral parts of the project (TBMM, 1997, p. 402).

Throughout this period, various studies and projects on the reuse of irrigation return water, land consolidation and extension activities, participatory resettlement and regional development, rehabilitation of street children, re-relocation of displaced people back to their villages,³² public health, biodiversity, environmental education, and research, excavation, and

³⁰ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

³¹ Personal interview, May 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

³² An *East and Southeast Anatolia Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project Sub-Regional Development Plan (Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi Köye Dönüş ve Rehabilitasyon Projesi Alt Bölge Gelişme Planı)* was announced in 2001 to reconstruct around 3,000 evacuated and destroyed villages and resettle around one to three million displaced people in southeastern Turkey (Jongerden, 2009, p. 6). GAP-BKİ was given the

rescue of archeological sites were carried out in the light of sustainability, participation, social development, and human-centered development concepts (Kibaroglu, 2006, p. 179). In this context, especially the establishment of ÇATOM, increasing environmental and cultural sensitivity, increasing emphasis on private sector investments, and formulation of *GAP Regional Development Plan* deserve a special focus arguably for encapsulating the newly injected concepts and constituting four pillars that facilitated GAP's transformation into a sustainable human development project.

5.4.2. The Establishment of ÇATOM (November 1995)

ÇATOM were established according to the principles of participatory development with the support United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in November 1995 (Turgut, 2000, p. 489). According to a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ who took an active role in their design, ÇATOM were established "for women and target groups of high priority to participate more in social and economic life in development."³³ They were "modeled on community centers all around the world, but of course adjusted to the context of Turkey and the region."³⁴ The objectives of ÇATOM were raising women's awareness about their own problems and their capability to address them, increasing their participation in the public sphere, enhancing their employment and entrepreneurship, and empowering them towards a gender-balanced development (GAP-RDA, 2015b). To achieve these objectives, numerous programs on training, health, education, entrepreneurship, social support, and culture were carried out at ÇATOM. Some notable examples include the provision of courses on literacy, legal rights, home economics, nutrition, computer skills, environmental protection, personal hygiene, maternal and child health, handicraft, machine-knitting, stone works, soap making, hairdressing, and cooking; provision of marketing support, grants, scholarships, and cash assistance; and organization of seminars, exhibitions, and interactive meetings (2015b).

In the original model, ÇATOM would be established in not only urban, but also rural areas. Also, different institutions in charge of agriculture, education, and health would

responsibility to execute this plan. However, the pilot projects of the plan failed after it received serious opposition from other state institutions as well as displaced people (p. 7). Even though this plan could not be implemented as it was after AKP came to power in 2002 (p. 8), many different "return to village" projects have been implemented ever since and large amounts of grants have been disbursed to this end up until today.

³³ Even though women are the primary target group of ÇATOM, children, adult males, or all household members are also occasionally included into ÇATOM programs. As of 2017, there are 44 ÇATOM in GAP region. In addition, there are 24 other centers to provide support and services for different disadvantaged groups including children, youth, disabled, and elders (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 28). The latest figures indicate that around 25,000 women and children attend the programs offered by ÇATOM each year and more than one million people benefited from various ÇATOM programs, activities, and services between November 1995 and December 2016 (GAP-BKİ, 2017b, p. 56).

³⁴ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

operate in coordination to provide services. However, difficulties regarding access, transportation, and coordination and the lack of qualified staff and financial resources prevented the realization of the initial model. For such reasons, GAP-BKİ had to cooperate with Development Foundation of Turkey to run ÇATOM in a more independent and decentralized manner. Accordingly, ÇATOM were run by ÇATOM committees, which comprised trainers from the local population and five to seven elected members. An expert from GAP-BKİ explained that, instead of bringing experts or trainers from larger cities in the region or Turkey, they found “promising women with high leadership skills from the region,” as they “knew about local dynamics and social fabric.”³⁵ A former consultant from GAP-BKİ underlined that “ÇATOM was about ensuring voluntary participation of people in [development] process. It [was] not social engineering. It [was] mobilizing some dynamics. ... Values in planning [were] determined by their participation.”³⁶ Also, “if ÇATOM were under the heavy control of the state,” said a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ, “they would not be that popular and effective. Such mechanisms allowed even the use of local languages. That [was] because employees [were] not government clerks. They [were] entirely locals.”³⁷

Indeed, ÇATOM were also subjected to criticism from both development experts and scholars for failing to ensure women’s participation in labor force, equip them with necessary entrepreneurial skills to start their own businesses, and empower them in general. The comments of a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ on this matter are as follows:

Today [in 2014] we face difficulties in finding technical support due to either financial or bureaucratic problems. Thanks to an established system and infrastructure, things somehow work. But we cannot move beyond. We cannot quite ensure women’s participation in the economy and income generating activities and raise their awareness. Our efforts are more limited to some courses such as literacy, computer usage, sewing, hairdressing. Marketing, empowerment, organization... We could not achieve much of them.³⁸

Similarly, a professor from Ankara University lamented that

it would be better if women and men were equally included. ... ÇATOM were transformed into a structure where the focus [was] always on women’s household labor. That justified the gender roles. From a gender perspective, they [were] far from

³⁵ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

³⁶ Personal interview, March 27, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

³⁷ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

³⁸ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

being community centers as we [understood] in Western standards ... Still, they at least taught women how to read and write, handicraft, and stuff. Some women became small entrepreneurs. These [were] gains, but small gains in terms of women empowerment. Women from other politicized NGOs and associations in the East [were] more powerful and conscious than the ones at ÇATOM.³⁹

In addition, Girard and Scalbert-Yücel (2015, p. 202) note that, contrary to the widespread belief, the economic benefits of handicraft production at ÇATOM are actually minimal because women producers are paid piece rates and generally only when the piece is sold. Also, even when large companies work with ÇATOM and buy handicrafts in high quantities, ÇATOM provide the labor market with cheap and unqualified workforce more than they lead to economic liberation and empowerment of women (p. 202).

5.4.3. Increased Emphasis on Environmental and Cultural Sensitivity

Another outcome of GAP's exposure to new development concepts was the increase in environmental and cultural sensitivity in the overall project framework from the mid-1990s onwards. Indeed, it would be wrong to claim that sustainability was totally neglected in the initial stages of the project. Arguably, sustainability was actually embedded in the project framework before the 1990s; however, it was not as overt and prevalent as it was in the mid-1990s. On this point, a former deputy undersecretary from DPT stated that

the buzzword was sustainable development. Its birth date[d] back to the 1980s. I was against this concept because sustainability [was] inherent in planning anyway. If you neglect[ed] sustainability, you fail[ed] in planning. Planning [had] principles: rationality, functionality, integrity, sustainability, continuity... It [was] a cyclical process. Sustainability [was] not a principle by itself.⁴⁰

Also, it was acknowledged in *GAP Master Plan* that “economic growth in any region, especially under severe natural conditions, [could not] be sustained without having concomitantly proper management of the environment” (SPO, 1989a, p. 5.12). It was further acknowledged that GAP “[would] have significant effects on the environment” and “change the land and water regimes in the Region substantially [and] ... affect fauna and flora as well as human beings” (p. 5.12). To counter these effects, it was proposed that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be initiated and efforts to address soil erosion, waterlogging, salinization, climactic changes, and water-borne diseases through agricultural extension,

³⁹ Personal interview, April 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁴⁰ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

demonstration, and monitoring would be intensified (p. 5.14) (see Değirmenci & Evcimen, 2013 for an analysis of EIA and Social Impact Assessment in Turkey). In other words, contrary to the widespread perception, sustainability and environmental and cultural sensitivity were not entirely unknown to designers and implementers of GAP before the 1990s or in the early 1990s.

As a coordinator from GAP-BKİ indicates, while “economic objectives were prioritized in planning” in the first half of the 1990s, “environmental sensitivities and concerns regarding the conservation of cultural heritages were really taken into consideration” in the second half of the decade.⁴¹ In this period, GAP-BKİ not only implemented various projects on environment, biological diversity, climate change, and culture, but also urged other state institutions to embrace sustainability. In the words of a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ,

we were telling other institutions that we should not look at [GAP] solely from a technical lens, that there [was] a social aspect, an environmental aspect. ... We were telling them not to destroy the environment. Sustainability. We imposed such values to many governmental institutions and changed their visions. At first they resisted, but trends in the world also forced them to adopt these values.⁴²

As for the increase in cultural sensitivity, especially the manner how the state responded to the problems of people who were negatively affected by dams significantly changed after the mid-1990s.⁴³ In the 1960s and 1970s, Keban Dam and the physical and livelihood displacement it brought “deprived the local communities of their means of production and dislocated them from their former socio-cultural milieu. While compensation was paid, it hardly reached the ones most in need” (Öktem, 2002, p. 316). Similarly, during the construction of Atatürk Dam in the 1980s, three towns, four townships, and 135 villages were submerged or semi-submerged and 55,000 people were forcefully displaced (Turgut, 2000, p. 170). Around 25,000 parcels that roughly equaled to 45,000 ha of lands were expropriated. The values of these assets were assessed by DSİ. Even though compensation was paid to those who opted for self-resettlement in installments over a period of five years, compensation payments were below market prices. The reason behind this gap was that the

⁴¹ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁴² Personal interview, April 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁴³ According to the estimated figures of 2001, the dams that were constructed under GAP in Tigris-Euphrates River Basin affected around 200,000 people who lived in 382 villages and settlements (Sahan, Zogg, Mason, & Gilli, 2001, as cited in Terminski, 2015, p. 102). The figures of Export Credits Guarantees Department (2002, as cited in Kurt, 2013, p. 71), however, indicated that the total number of displaced population was 162,271.

assessed values were calculated according to the real estate tax statements of those affected (Scheumann et al., 2014, p. 155). As many victims filed lawsuits to receive more compensation and the court decided in favor of the plaintiffs in most cases, DSİ had to spend 30% more for expropriation costs (p. 155). On this matter, a former project consultant from GAP-BKİ regretted that

very large amount of lands were expropriated and submerged due to Atatürk Dam. A lot of villages were submerged. Affected people became scattered. They lived in miserable conditions. A law has already been enacted to help and resettle those people but everything was so unprecedented for us; we were taken aback.⁴⁴

In contrast, in the late 1990s, when nine villages were submerged, three villages were semi-submerged, and around 30,000 people were affected by the impoundment of Birecik Dam, GAP-BKİ prepared a Resettlement Action Plan for the first time in order to provide timely and accurate information to those who would be affected (Scheumann et al., 2014, p. 160). In this context, social surveys were conducted in 13 most affected villages and more than a thousand families were interviewed. An information and advisory center was established in Halfeti to inform people about their rights and options in public gatherings (p. 160). Also, GAP-BKİ ran a project between 1997 and 2000 with the support of UNDP and FAO regarding the resettlement of affected people and their employment and economic investment opportunities. This project was also based on participatory development. A professor from Hacettepe University who was involved in the project explained that they “moved a whole town to the new location upon the requests of the local population” as they “discussed with them, lived together with them for a year, talked to them, asked them what they wanted, and presented them different alternatives.”⁴⁵ Combined together, these examples indicate a growing awareness regarding environmental and cultural issues as well as a shift in how development was practiced in the overall GAP framework.

5.4.4. Increased Emphasis on Private Sector Investments

From a neoliberal perspective, a governance approach that involves the mobilization of crucial private actors through business elites or public-private partnerships is widely supported for allegedly being more technically efficient, flexible, collaborative, and participatory (Jessop, 1997, as cited in Vento, 2017, p. 70). The idea that private sector investments, public investments, and public participation should complement each other for

⁴⁴ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁴⁵ Personal interview, April 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

the successful implementation of sustainable development within GAP framework became prevalent after the mid-1990s (Ünver, 1999, p. 32). It should be noted that similar ideas that emphasized the need to attract private sector investments and foreign capital to realize project goals had been emphasized numerous times in the late 1980s and early 1990s. To illustrate, in 1989, Melih Araz, the then Chief Executive Officer of İnterbank in Turkey emphasized that “GAP [would] create a myriad of business opportunities which in turn [would] necessitate a wide range of financial services. The full potential of GAP [could] only be realized through foreign and local investment” (Bağış, 1989). In 1991, it was proposed that an Economic Development Agency that would support industrialization based on private entrepreneurship, enhance the skills of industrial labor force, improve the region’s business and investment environment, and increase the level of management, technology, efficiency, and competitiveness of the regional industry had to be established in accordance with free market principles (GAP-BKİ, 1996, p. 13, 35). Similarly, in 1993, it was recommended that “Investment Consultancy Services” and “Information Offices” that would provide information and services to entrepreneurs had to be developed (GAP-RDA, 1993, p. 13). Such ideas gained more currency in the second half of the 1990s. For instance, Olcay Ünver, the then President of GAP-BKİ, defined this period as follows:

We approach a period in which the role of the state gradually diminishes in the development process in Southeastern Anatolia. Entrepreneurs (investors) [sic] have reached a level they are supposed to be at both regional and national levels. Private investments must be the real engine of development. GAP region, which is becoming a center of attention even for international capital, is a favorable area of investments for Turkish entrepreneurs in every sense ... (GAP-BKİ, 1996).

A concrete outcome of the orientation towards private sector was the establishment of GAP Entrepreneur Support Centers (*GAP Girişimci Destekleme ve Yönlendirme Merkezleri*, GAP-GİDEM) in 1997 with the cooperation of GAP-BKİ, Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (*Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği*, TOBB), and Chambers of Industry and Trade in five provinces to provide consultancy services to potential foreign and domestic entrepreneurs and investors (Ünver, 1999, p. 32). GAP-GİDEM were established also to prevent the capital from flowing outside GAP region. A former coordinator from GAP-BKİ explained this point as follows:

Irrigation systems in Urfa had a terrific impact on the change. ... [People] made huge amounts of money. First, they experienced a “richness crisis.” They married to their second, third wives. They went to nightclubs in Antep.⁴⁶ They bought cars. The money was spent for nothing. That was the reason for us to establish GİDEM: Was it possible to use this capital for investment? ... We thought about channeling this capital for investment and we succeeded.⁴⁷

5.4.5. The Formulation of *GAP Regional Development Plan* (November 2002)

The culmination of the above-mentioned changes within GAP was arguably the formulation of *GAP Regional Development Plan* with UNDP’s support in 2002. To elaborate on its formulation process, GAP-BKİ and UNDP cooperated and initiated Sustainable Development Programme in GAP Region in 1997 in order to minimize the region’s socio-economic inequalities with 33 subprojects. In 1998, it became clear that GAP would not be completed by 2005 as planned. The main factors that prevented the completion of the project as scheduled were specified as difficulties in public finance, economic crises, activities of the PKK, changing balances in the Middle East, and changing socio-political landscape of GAP region in the 1990s (GAP-BKİ, 2002b, p. 12). In this context, the Committee of Inter-Ministerial Implementation and Coordination made a decision to complete the project by 2010 and the idea of formulating a new plan towards this end emerged then.

It was expressed in the plan that “globalization, new development approaches, and international relations” heavily influenced its formulation (GAP-BKİ, 2002b, p. 2). Also, in the words of Vedat Özbilen, the project coordinator of the plan, another factor was that “the projects that looked so right from an engineer’s perspective totally changed in reality when we discussed with people and took their social and cultural structures into consideration. We realized some mistakes as technicians” (GAP-BKİ, 2000a, p. 15). Accordingly, the primary goals of the plan were to “increase income and welfare through protecting and enhancing environment and resources based on the principles of equity and fairness, consider and integrate disadvantaged groups into development, and ensure sustainability and private sector and public participation at all stages” (GAP-BKİ, 2002b, p. 13). This plan was also based on participatory development; a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ explained that

for the first time the plan was prepared dominantly through consulting the public. ... We delegated the study directly to NGOs. ... For instance, something about health.

⁴⁶ Antep is used interchangeably with Gaziantep.

⁴⁷ Personal interview, April 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

We went to Diyarbakır. We told the Chamber of Doctors that, “We withdraw now. You formulate GAP’s health policy. Then we carry your framework through working with the technical group and the state.” ... These were nice, bottom-up works.⁴⁸

GAP Regional Development Plan was never implemented and became a null and void document due to political and inter- and intra-institutional conflicts in the early 2000s. In the same period, there emerged the need for the government to carry out certain reforms as a condition of Turkey’s membership to the EU. The changes necessitated by the EU had a significant impact on the governance of GAP, too, as will be discussed below.

5.5. GAP as a Market-Based Project (2002 onwards)

5.5.1. Initial Financial and Administrative Impacts of Turkey’s EU Candidacy on GAP

After Turkey assumed a candidate status during the Summit of Heads of State and Government in Helsinki in 1999, the state became obliged to, *inter alia*, change its conception of regional development and develop a national policy to redress intra-country disparities to become a full EU member. A subsidiary reason for Turkey to carry out these changes was its motivation to benefit from financial assistance, incentives, and funds provided by the EU for regional development purposes (Mengi, 2001, p. 33). Large portion of the financial assistance would be allocated to economic and social harmonization projects and local administrations would greatly benefit from these funds. To illustrate how the EU funds were used to support regional policy, in 2001, GAP Regional Development Programme was initiated by GAP-BKİ and the EU through the EU’s financial support that amounted to €47 million. Some of its objectives included enhancing the entrepreneurship, management, and administration capacities of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); supporting local and foreign entrepreneurs and investors; enhancing and diversifying rural-based income generating activities; and establishing a Cultural Heritage Fund and preparing a Cultural Heritage Strategy to reveal GAP region’s tourism capacity (Açıkgöz, 2005, pp. 11-12). A former coordinator from GAP-BKİ explained that thanks to the EU funds they could create a conceptual awareness on production techniques, markets, material values of production and stuff. These [were] crucial for development. ... There need[ed] to be an integration. The government prepare[d] the budget but the private sector hardly [made] investment. ... As long as the EU funds were used in this process, it worked.

⁴⁸ Personal interview, April 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Projects were based on participation, sustainability. They emphasized environment and women. EU grants and credit supports made a significant difference.⁴⁹

Another change necessitated by the EU accession process was the adoption of NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) classification in 2002. NUTS classification provides a framework to formulate regional development policies, collect regional data, and enable the creation of a comparable statistical database in accordance with the EU regional statistics system (Altınbilek & Tortajada, 2012, p. 175). Also, planning and incentive decisions are made in respect to the status of regions in terms of NUTS classification. Accordingly, while Turkey's seven geographical regions and 81 provinces remained intact, the country was divided into 12 regions (NUTS 1 level), 26 subregions (NUTS 2 level), and 81 provinces (NUTS 3 level) as a parallel classification. GAP region was defined as a region at NUTS 1 level and divided into three subregions at NUTS 2 level and nine provinces at NUTS 3 level, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Turkey and GAP region according to NUTS classification

NUTS in Turkey		
NUTS 1 level	NUTS 2 level	NUTS 3 level
12 regions	26 subregions	81 provinces
GAP Region		
Region (NUTS 1)	Subregion (NUTS 2)	Province (NUTS 3)
Southeast Anatolia (TRC)	Gaziantep (TRC1)	Gaziantep (TRC11)
		Adıyaman (TRC12)
		Kilis (TRC13)
	Şanlıurfa (TRC2)	Şanlıurfa (TRC21)
		Diyarbakır (TRC22)
	Mardin (TRC3)	Mardin (TRC31)
		Batman (TRC32)
		Şırnak (TRC33)
		Siirt (TRC34)

Source: Adapted from Altınbilek and Tortajada, 2012, p. 175.

5.5.2. Increased Emphasis on Local Potentials and Competitiveness

Another outcome of Turkey's EU accession process was that the idea of utilizing local potentials and making them the engine of development gained currency. For this reason, instead of concentrating only on GAP region, it was widely proposed that development projects had to be equally spread throughout the country to increase welfare in every region and province. The following quotation by Abdüllatif Şener, the then Deputy Prime Minister, better illustrates this point:

⁴⁹ Personal interview, March 27, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

[We] have 81 provinces and GAP-BKİ was established to cover only nine provinces in Southeastern Anatolia Region. ... However, all countries are in international competition. Countries that fail to compete, ... mobilize country's all potential at maximum level will be on decline and drift away from competition. For this reason, all development potentials of the whole country should be mobilized ... GAP-BKİ is the only regional development administration in Turkey,⁵⁰ but in today's world no country can make progress in global competition only though considering one region as special and mobilizing its potential (TBMM, 2004b, pp. 171-172).

A professor from METU explains this point as follows:

Between 2002 and 2007, GAP was not a priority for the government. The priority was development agencies. ... GAP experience was considered as a handicap while they were working on development agencies, local authorities. ... The logic in Turkey was like, "Why would we block private sector? Let them do. We need to take risk to develop."⁵¹

In this context, the Law no. 5449 on the Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies entered into force in 2006 to establish regional development agencies in subregions at NUTS 2 level. These agencies were expected to operate under the coordination of DPT and contribute to achieve regional development, attract financial support for regional development projects, function as a bridge between public and private sectors, and include NGOs into the development process (Altınbilek & Tortajada, 2012, p. 177). In the words of an expert from GAP-BKİ, "local entrepreneurs [could] reach agencies more easily. Agencies [had] a chance to use the EU funds. ... Their establishment was very useful for the region in terms of utilizing foreign funds."⁵² According to Abdüllatif Şener, the then Deputy Prime Minister, agencies represented a model within which "the logic of private sector came into play" (TBMM, 2004b, p. 172). The establishment of GAP Development Platform in 2006 can also be given as an example to the increased influence of private sector within the project. In this platform, businesspersons, presidents of chambers of commerce and industry, general director of the Development Bank, president of GAP-BKİ, governors, mayors, and MPs convened to discuss ways to encourage entrepreneurship, stimulate local dynamics, attract investors, and activate the region's potential (TBMM, 2007a, p. 97).

⁵⁰ GAP-BKİ is no longer the only regional development administration in Turkey. More information on the other administrations is provided in the following sections.

⁵¹ Personal interview, April 10, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁵² Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Competitiveness also rose to prominence during the EU accession process. For instance, a study entitled “*Competitiveness Agenda for the GAP Region*” was prepared in 2007 through the cooperation of GAP-BKİ, Delegation of the EU Commission to Turkey, UNDP, and GAP-GİDEM. The primary goal of the study was to transform GAP region into “a new, value-added economy” based on a redefined identity of “the cradle of sustainable civilization,” rebranded international positive image, and “a dynamic mix of sustainable agriculture, productive and ‘clean tech’ manufacturing, and innovative service industries that create jobs and a rising standard of living for all its people” (GAP-GİDEM, 2007, p. 12). Strategies such as sustainable production, entrepreneurship development, internationalization program, applied technology, and clustering and networking were proposed to achieve these goals (pp. 12-13). In a sense, the study redefined GAP around principles such as competitiveness, risk-taking behavior, high productivity, added value, regional distinctiveness, and multi-level partnership. Arguably, the accumulation of the above-mentioned changes necessitated by the EU accession process eventually influenced and brought about the formulation of *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)*, as will be discussed below.

5.5.3. The Formulation of *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)* (May 2008)

GAP Action Plan (2008-2012) was formulated by the joint efforts of GAP-BKİ and DPT in 2008 to accelerate the project schedule and complete the project in 2012. According to a coordinator from GAP-BKİ, the plan was “a comprehensive project package with a budget of 27 billion TL,⁵³ within which 21 billion would be spent from the public funds and the rest from other mechanisms such as build-operate-transfer (BOT). Almost half of the budget was allocated to irrigation investments of DSI.”⁵⁴ The increase in the share of public investments allocated to GAP after *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)* is illustrated in Figure 6 below.

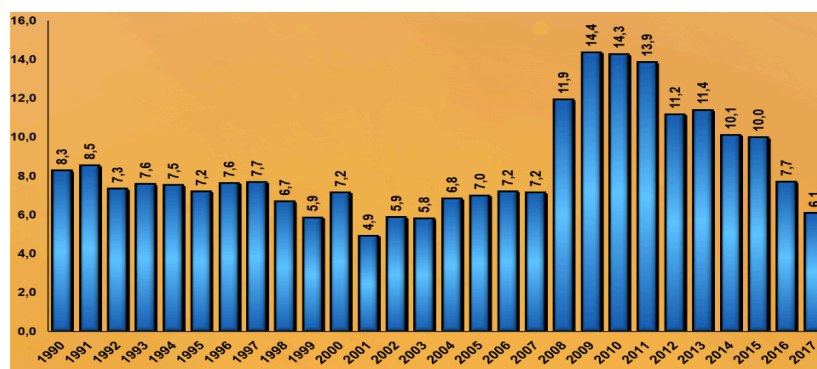


Figure 6: The share of public investments allocated to GAP between 1990 and 2017 (%)

Source: GAP-BKİ, 2017a.

⁵³ 27,000,000,000 TL roughly equals €7,000,000,000 as of 2017.

⁵⁴ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

GAP Action Plan (2008-2012) was also based on participatory development in the sense that government officials in the region, representatives of local professional associations and NGOs, and MPs of the region provided their views at Economic and Social Council meetings held in each province in GAP region and GAP Development Platform meetings (GAP-BKİ, 2008a, p. 9). In this regard, one of the vice presidents of GAP-BKİ stated that “we bureaucrats prepared this action plan in a purely participatory approach. We visited all provinces with our minister. ... Our minister gave us a clear instruction to list and determine all the needs uttered by the local representatives.”⁵⁵ The plan also encapsulated other concepts such as competitiveness, growth based on local dynamics and endogenous potential, institutional capacity, as it was heavily influenced by the above-mentioned *Competitiveness Agenda* study and *the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013)*. Accordingly, (1) economic development, (2) social development, (3) infrastructure building, and (4) institutional capacity building were designated as four development axes of the plan (p. 9). The goals under these four axes included, but not limited to, creating job opportunities, diversifying production, increasing access and integration to international markets, creating city-based “centers of attraction” and promoting tourism (p. 21); improving health, education, employment, and social protection indicators and enhancing human capital through Social Support Programme (*Sosyal Destek Programı*, SODES) (p. 35); improving electric, gas, transportation, industrial, and commercial infrastructure services and completing the irrigation projects on 1,060,000 ha of land through public-private partnership (p. 57); and improving institutional capacity and human resources, establishing three regional development agencies, providing support to professional associations and NGOs, and strengthening GAP-BKİ’s institutional capacity (p. 71).

To explain some novelties, initiated for the first time, SODES was designed to enhance human capital and ensure social cohesion based on various projects that improve employability, enable participation of disadvantaged groups into social and economic life, and integrate youth and women into society through cultural, artistic, and sport activities (GAP-RDA, 2015a). One of the deputy undersecretaries from the Ministry of Development explained the logic behind SODES as follows:

The then government was using an expression like “social restoration.” Even though there was no such expression in the literature, we interpreted what was meant by it and prepared a program towards this goal. ... Economic and social development [had

⁵⁵ Personal interview, May 29, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

to] go hand in hand. SODES was prepared to achieve this, to improve social development in the region. It was a program designed to bring mobility and vitality by giving support to social inclusion, culture, art, sport, and employment projects.⁵⁶

It should be noted that SODES was also subjected to criticism in terms of its motives and perception in the eyes of the local population (see Kurtipek, 2012 for a critical analysis of the programme). For instance, a professor from METU explained the idea of SODES as follows:

The state actors think like: “Why do they [Kurds] go to mountains? Because they don’t have jobs and bread. So let’s find them jobs and bread. Let’s initiate SODES and find them income generating jobs. Let’s embrace social inclusion and try to include them.” ... However, [the local population] does not care about women empowerment or inclusion. Everybody thinks like: “the state is giving money for free, let’s go get our share.” Projects, SME projects, SODES, all of them are seen this way. They think it is their money by right; they don’t think it is an abuse.⁵⁷

Other novelties were the establishment of Dicle, Karacadağ, and İpekyolu development agencies respectively in Mardin, Diyarbakır, and Gaziantep in 2008 and relocation of GAP-BKİ’s headquarters from Ankara to Şanlıurfa in 2009.⁵⁸ Especially the relocation of GAP-BKİ was highly controversial and led to conflicting opinions among politicians, bureaucrats, and experts. To exemplify, according to a former deputy undersecretary from the Ministry of Development,

it [was] not a wrong decision considering the logic behind *GAP Action Plan* because the plan was prepared through carefully selecting and updating the prioritized projects in *GAP Master Plan*. ... The goals to be achieved in five years were very ambitious, too. ... Therefore, these had to be followed in their local environment, own place.⁵⁹

Similarly, an MP who represents Şanlıurfa proudly expressed that the relocation had been “their suggestion for a long time” because

local organizations, municipalities, governorships, subgovernorships, most importantly our citizens had to contact GAP-BKİ frequently for various businesses

⁵⁶ Personal interview, April 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁵⁷ Personal interview, April 10, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁵⁸ In addition, beginning from 2011, GAP-BKİ ceased to operate under the Prime Ministry and began to operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Development. In relation to this change, the High Council of GAP was abolished and two new bodies, the High Council of Regional Growth and Regional Growth Committee, were established and assigned similar duties and responsibilities to ensure cooperation and coordination among responsible institutions involved in the overall GAP framework (GAP-BKİ, 2016b). Also, GAP-BKİ’s liaison office in Ankara was completely shut down at the end of 2016.

⁵⁹ Personal interview, May 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

and projects. Some had to obtain approval. Because GAP-BKİ was like the sole authority for giving permission to all kinds of works within nine provinces, decision of relocation contributed to our national economy a lot. Nobody [had] to come to Ankara from GAP region just for a signature anymore.⁶⁰

In contrast to these positive views, an expert from GAP-BKİ described the relocation as “a disaster for the administration, for the region, and for employees” on the grounds that GAP was part of a centralist system and we had a regional directorate in Urfa. All ministries [were] in Ankara. We were organizing meetings, intervening in investment programs, setting priorities. Regional directorate was doing its job there. Coordination meetings were really systematic. GAP’s relocation did not provide any benefits. The decision was political anyway. GAP suffered a lot after the relocation.⁶¹

In a parallel manner, a coordinator from GAP-BKİ lamented the decision and explained that we were suddenly told to go to Urfa. After we went there, our families were split apart. We experienced a “staff slaughter.” We lost at least 70 regional development experts. The new staff we hired there [were] dominantly new graduates; they [did] not even have experience in their own fields, let alone regional development. How [could] you run a project of this scale under these conditions?⁶²

Finally, another former coordinator from GAP-BKİ underlined that the relocation reduced the project’s scale and localized it. Even though regional development was the primary goal, GAP had an international dimension. This dimension [was] lost. In Urfa, it [was] also more difficult to establish relationship with private sector. The project [was] totally localized and productivity and synergy [were] gone.⁶³

It is also noteworthy that three additional regional development administrations were established in 2011 based on GAP-BKİ’s model and past applications (GAP-BKİ, 2017b, p. 17). These administrations were Eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration that focused on Ağrı, Ardahan, Bingöl, Bitlis, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Hakkâri, Iğdır, Kars, Malatya, Muş, Tunceli, and Van in eastern Turkey; Eastern Black Sea Project Regional Development Administration that focused on Artvin, Bayburt, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize, Samsun, and Trabzon in northeastern Turkey; and Konya Plains

⁶⁰ Personal interview, May 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁶¹ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁶² Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁶³ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Project Regional Development Administration that focused on Aksaray, Karaman, Konya, and Niğde in central Turkey.

Despite GAP's transformation into a market-based project thanks primarily to the EU norms and ambitious goals—and budget—of *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)*, the project could not be completed as scheduled in 2012 and the efforts to complete GAP continued after 2012. However, it was almost evident in legislative and elite discourses that a sharp distinction was made between GAP(s) in pre- and post-2012 periods. While GAP until 2012 was widely declared as “old” and in a way “dead” in official statements, GAP after 2012 was hailed as “new” and somehow “reanimated” in this period, as will be discussed below.

5.6. GAP as “New GAP”: The “End” of GAP in its Classical Sense (2012 onwards)

In 2012, Cevdet Yılmaz, the then Minister of Development described the post-2012 period as “the period in which the old GAP [was] closed and new GAP [was] opened” (TBMM, 2012a, p. 60). It was also emphasized that “in the classical sense, GAP [was] in the process of finalization” in this period after 2012 (GAP-BKİ, 2014b, p. 7). In relation to these, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa compared pre- and post-2012 periods as, “so far, money was spent on dams or large canals and buried in the ground without getting any returns. Next five years [would] be the years that GAP [would] provide returns and citizens [would] feel GAP directly.”⁶⁴ Namely, there was an emerging tendency specifically among political elites of the ruling party, a group of government officials, and GAP-BKİ administration to consider GAP in the post-2012 period as a project different than what it was in the past.

The latest *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* was formulated in this context in 2014. Even though it was a “new” plan that was formulated for “new GAP” through a “new” perspective, actually there were numerous similarities between the old and new action plans. The overarching goal of *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* was to complete the incomplete projects and investments that were proposed in *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)*. Just as the previous plan, new action plan was prepared based on participatory development. Also, just as the previous plan was heavily shaped by *the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013)*, the new plan was heavily influenced by *the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018)*, which was prepared by the Ministry of Development to attach more importance to local dynamics, enhance institutional capacity at local level, ensure rural development, and put more emphasis on livability in spaces and sustainable environment (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2014, p. 282). The new plan was further influenced by *National*

⁶⁴ Personal interview, May 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Strategy for Regional Development (2014-2023), which was also prepared by the Ministry of Development around the principles of sustainability, productivity, participation, localization, and subsidiarity to fulfill the requirements to close Chapter 22 on Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments in the EU accession process (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2013). Given these, it was not entirely surprising that the primary goals of *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* were improving the citizens' welfare and living standards and ensuring their peace and happiness through economic expansion, social growth, and employment creation in accordance with the principles of human-centeredness, participation, inclusion, accountability, and transparency (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 36).⁶⁵ In line with these goals, in addition to four development axes in the previous plan, "increasing the livability of cities" was added as a new development axis due to the "placement of urbanization into the focus of growth, increasing dominance of urban economies and lifestyles, and important role cities with knowledge-based economies, financial and professional services, qualified workforce, research and development, and innovation capacities play in global competitiveness" (p. 15). Similarly, an expert from GAP-BKİ explained that this axis was included in the plan because GAP

became dominantly human-focused as transportation or infrastructure investments [were] almost completed. The conditions of roads [were] better than the ones here [in Ankara]. Irrigation networks [were] almost completed. Plains [would] be irrigated. Dams on Euphrates [were] completed; only two more left on Tigris. Therefore, our goal now [was] more human-focused: clean cities, culture, tourism, socio-economic development, women...etc. All of them [had] a humanitarian, social aspect.⁶⁶

The content of *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* and the trajectory of GAP indicate that despite the claim that there was a clean break between the so-called old and new GAPs, there was a continuity rather than a discontinuity between two project constructs. As for "the end" of GAP in actuality, official figures indicated that 74% of energy and 23.6% of irrigation projects were completed as of 2014 (GAP-BKİ, 2015, pp. 33-37). Given the official figures

⁶⁵ The plan also focuses on the problems of Syrian refugees and aims to take necessary cautions to fulfill their food, housing, health, education, and similar needs (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 15). In line with this goal, different projects such as "Mitigating the Impact of Syrian Crisis on Southeast Anatolia Region" through the support of the EU, "Strengthening Social Stability in Southeast Anatolia" through the support of the Government of Japan, "Support to Adaptation of Syrian Women Living in Southeast Anatolia to Social and Economic Life" through the support of the Government of Kuwait and Unilever, and "Informal Education Programme for Syrian Refugee Children and Turkish Adolescents in Turkey" through the support of UNICEF were implemented between 2015 and 2017 (GAP-BKİ, 2017b, p. 95).

⁶⁶ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

and slow rate of past policy implementations, it is difficult to reach the conclusion that GAP is near completion soon. It is equally difficult to conclude that there is a completed GAP on the one hand and a separate GAP to be completed on the other hand. Due to its size, focus, scope, significance, and decades-long span, the project defies easy labels and simple distinctions between the old and new, classical and unconventional, or complete and incomplete. For this reason, a comprehensive analysis of how the architects of GAP have perceived the project over four decades better illustrates the state of the project as of 2015 and reveals its complexities and multifaceted features, as will be discussed below.

5.7. The State of GAP as of 2015: The Perception of GAP in the Eyes of its Designers and Implementers

The systematic analysis of GAP-related legislative and elite discourses between 1975 and 2014 indicates that there are six major categories as to how GAP was narrated among its designers and implementers: (1) *characteristics of GAP region*, (2) *characteristics of GAP*, (3) *objectives of GAP*, (4) *drawbacks of GAP*, (5) *factors behind GAP's delay and incompleteness*, and (6) *factors behind GAP's popularity loss* (see Appendix D for the complete coding frame that displays all main and subcategories with detailed information).

To briefly explain each category, in terms of its historical and more recent physical, political, socio-economic, and cultural characteristics, GAP region was perceived and characterized as a region that was *arid and barren, backward and underdeveloped, discriminated and neglected, feudal and unjust*, but at the same time *resourceful, diverse, and full of potential*. In other words, the region was associated with low rainfall and extreme temperatures, low socio-economic standards, low educational level, discrimination against the Kurds, and inequalities in land ownership. It was, however, at the same time associated with abundant land, water, and human resources and potential to be utilized and developed.

GAP itself was perceived and characterized in many diverse ways. In terms of its size, focus, scope, and significance, it was viewed as *a long-established, huge and vital, multi-sectoral, integrated, sustainable, participatory, and human-focused* development project. It was also viewed as a *non-political* project for its technical character, but at the same time as a *political* project for its function to attract votes from GAP region and potential to exert political influence on people and institutions. In addition, it was seen as a *supra-political, national security and peace* project for supposedly representing Turkish nation's strength and playing a strategic role in Turkey's international relations with the countries in the Middle East. Also, it was seen as a *transformative, exploitative, and assimilative* project for allegedly

transforming and assimilating the Kurds as well as transferring the resources of eastern Turkey to western Turkey.

Objectives and contributions of GAP were as diverse as its perceived characteristics. On the one hand, GAP was perceived as a project with technical objectives such as *improving agricultural and industrial production and efficiency, irrigating agricultural lands, producing energy, raising the infrastructural standards, and rationally utilizing and efficiently developing natural resources* of GAP region. On the other hand, it was perceived as a project with socio-economic objectives such as *eliminating regional disparities between GAP region and the rest of the country, generating national income and providing added value, raising the socio-economic standards of the local population, and changing the destiny and face of Turkey*. It was also perceived as a project with political objectives such as *preventing migration and containing the local population in GAP region, eliminating the remnants of feudalism and land ownership inequality, and contributing to the efforts to fight against the PKK* to solve the Kurdish question.

Indeed, the perception of GAP was not always positive. The project's past, recent, and potential future negative impacts as well as unintended and unforeseen consequences were also widely discussed. Accordingly, GAP was perceived and criticized as a project with various social and environmental drawbacks such as *harming the environment* through causing soil salinization and desertification, *harming cultural and historical heritages* through flooding historical sites and monuments, and *causing internal displacement, income inequality, and social degeneration*. GAP was further criticized for its administrative drawbacks, as the project was perceived as a *delayed and incomplete* project that *deviated from its integrated approach* with its prioritization of energy projects, *detached from the local population* for its failure to trickle down and bring the expected benefits, and *lacked scientific focus* due to limited partnership between the academia and public institutions and limited high-quality and practical scientific research on a wide range of GAP-related topics.

There were different explanations as to why GAP had such drawbacks and lingered for so long. Accordingly, it was perceived that GAP was incomplete due to administrative factors such as *strong centralized governance structure* in Turkey, *cumbersome bureaucracy and the lack of coordination among state agencies, the lack of qualified personnel at national level, poor and insufficient planning, and GAP-BKİ's ambiguous tenure, relocation, insufficient capacity, and lack of authority*. It was also perceived that economic factors such as *the lack of financial resources, public funds, and public and private investments* played a significant role in delays. In addition, political factors such as *foreign powers* for allegedly

preventing Turkey from implementing the project, *the PKK* for sabotaging the project and preventing private sector investments, and *the lack of political will, stability, and competence* were also counted as factors behind the drawbacks of GAP and its incompleteness.

Finally, it was perceived that GAP lost its popularity over the years due to global processes such as *changing development paradigms and practices* and domestic processes such as *implementation of various huge, ambitious, sensational* and thus *vote-garnering projects* such as Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, the Third Airport, and Channel İstanbul (see Doğan & Stupar, 2017 for a recent analysis of these megaprojects), *disappointment and loss of excitement of the local population* due to broken promises and unmet goals, and *indifference of society* to the project in general (see Figure 7 below for a bird's eye view of GAP as of 2015).

5.8. Conclusion

Even though the idea of using Euphrates and Tigris waters for energy production and irrigation purposes dates back to the 1930s, GAP was initiated in the 1970s as a technical and engineering project to develop the water and land resources of Southeastern Anatolia Region. In the 1980s, the project was redefined as a multi-sectoral and integrated project after its focus and scope were widened. In the 1990s, a new set of development concepts such as sustainability, participation, human development, and social development were injected into the overall project framework. Following this, in addition to its multi-sectoral and integrated character, GAP came to be defined as a sustainable human development project. In the 2000s, GAP became a highly market-oriented and market-friendly project thanks to the spread and domination of the EU norms such as utilization of local potentials, prioritization of private sector investments, and competitiveness in the project. In the 2010s, a group of politicians, bureaucrats, and experts announced “the end of GAP in its classical sense” and redefined and rebranded the project as “new GAP.” However, a careful analysis indicates that there was a continuity rather than discontinuity between the so-called old and new GAPs and the project has over time become too complex and multifaceted to be reduced to such simple conceptions and binaries. Given that a wide range of associated or disassociated development activities such as dam construction, energy production, irrigation, sustainability, women's empowerment, entrepreneurship are conflated under GAP and a wide range of—even opposite—terms such as political and non-political, exploitative and sustainable, human-focused and national security are simultaneously employed to define the project, it would be more accurate to conceive GAP at its current state as a conglomerate and accumulation of multiple GAPs of different size, focus, and scope rather than a new and separate project.

Chapter 5: The historical trajectory of GAP

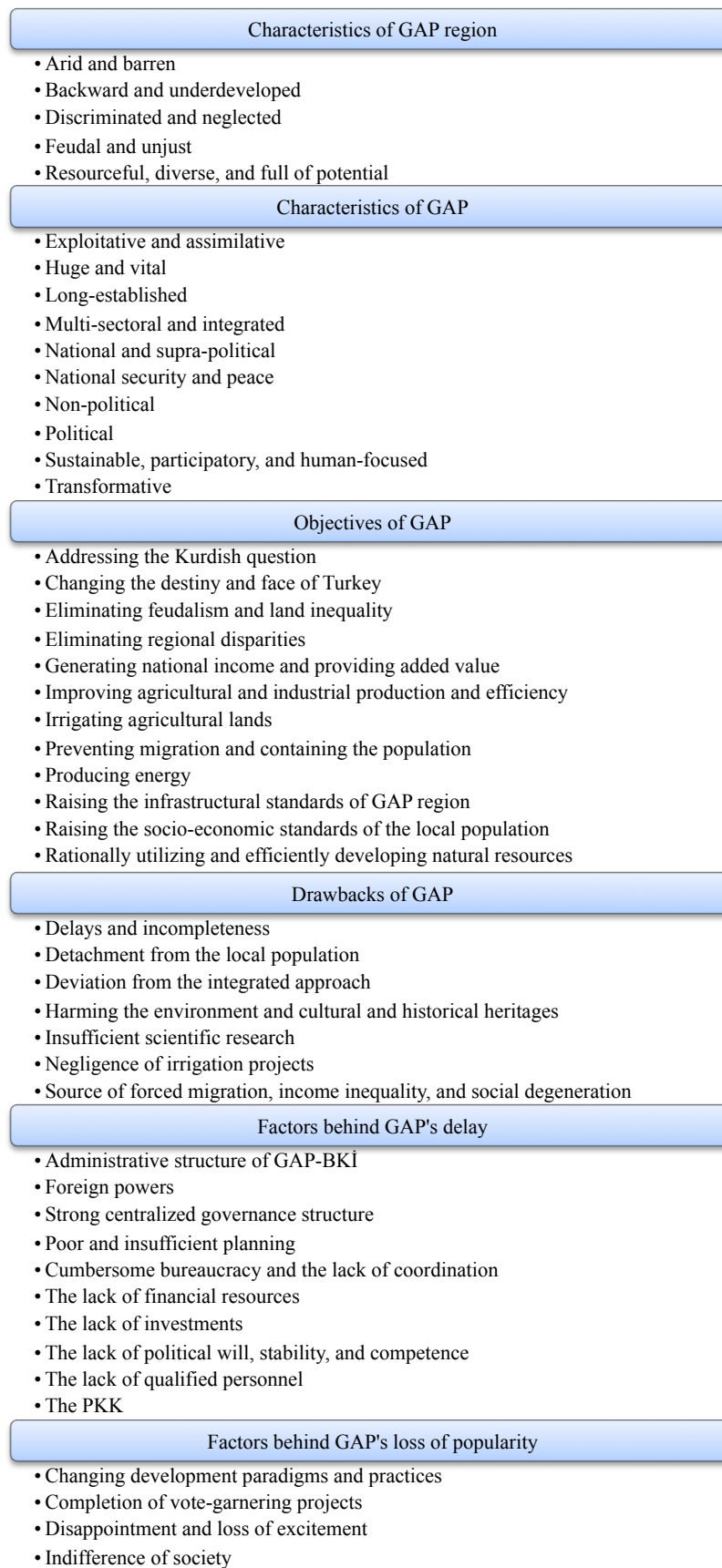


Figure 7: The state of GAP as of 2015 in the eyes of its designers and implementers

The oscillations in the governance of GAP were not independent from the unstable meaning of development and changing development paradigms that influenced how development was interpreted and practiced worldwide. GAP's gradual shift from its state-led, purely technical, purely engineering, purely infrastructure-based, purely economic development-oriented character to its market-friendly, sustainable, participatory, human-centered, social development-oriented character did not happen automatically. The historical trajectory of development theory and practice and continuities and discontinuities within them had a decisive role in this shift. The prevailing words and expressions in development discourse have been changing as well. As Alfini and Chambers (2010, p. 29) indicate, words and expressions such as poverty, gender, sustainability, and livelihood were the long-term survivors year after year; terms such as scheme and integrated rural development had their days and faded away; and some others such as liberalization, privatization, and globalization marked major shifts in ideology, policy, and reality. The shift in the governance of GAP should not necessarily be understood as the total abandonment of a development approach and its replacement with another approach in the overall project framework, though. The erosion of the project's technical character that prioritizes infrastructure building or economic development does not indicate that GAP no longer embodies a modernist interpretation of development. Similarly, the gradual injection of concepts that prioritize sustainability or entrepreneurship does not indicate that GAP embraces a fully neoliberal development paradigm. Likewise, the adoption of participatory and bottom-up development approaches or human development does not indicate that from now on only alternatives *of* development are sought in GAP framework. While all the various characteristics that define GAP remained intact in the project framework, their degree of dominance increases or decreases in accordance with the changes as to how development was understood and practiced primarily on a global scale and secondarily on a national scale. Accordingly, global development discourse often shaped how politicians, bureaucrats, and experts as the key drivers of the project conceived development and how they conceived development shaped how they steered the trajectory of GAP. Implementation of GAP according to certain theories or approaches further shaped the conduct and behavior of the local population, as the roles prescribed to people and what is expected from them differ in modernization theories, structuralism, neoliberalism, and post-development approach. In that sense, GAP was a product of a set of norms, values, concepts, and standards that were borrowed, imported, and to a certain extent adjusted to local context rather than a product of original and homegrown ones that were based on the sensitivities and demands of the local population.

The oscillations in the governance of GAP also indicated that the project resembled a flexible and adaptive structure that was constantly redefined, redesigned, and rebranded in accordance with contextual necessities, conditions, and interests. Given its malleability, different actors at the elite level attached different meanings and attributions to the project and the concept of development in accordance with their own set of beliefs, worldviews, and institutional and personal interests. In that sense, the project resembled an empty signifier-like container,⁶⁷ into which different—even opposite—meanings could be placed in different contexts. To put it differently, while as a signifier GAP remained intact for more than four decades, what GAP signified has been under the process of constant change and reproduction. Therefore, at the current stage of its historical trajectory, there is no more one, precise, and well-defined GAP as it was once implemented in the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin. Rather, there are multiple, amorphous, and loosely-defined GAPs that are loaded with infinite number of meanings and attributions and that permeated almost every aspect of life in the whole GAP region in an omnipresent manner. This fluid structure has strengthened and sustained the “mystique” of GAP and facilitated the maintenance of its “special,” “untouchable,” and “sanctified” status, as it enabled (1) the justification of the project’s imperfections and drawbacks caused by the project at all times and in all contexts, (2) the concealment of project-related discontents and their implications which were in fact political in nature, and (3) the insulation of the project from a rigorous problematization and investigation to the extent possible.

⁶⁷ According to Laclau (1996, as cited in Ziai, 2009, p. 196), empty-signifier “has no content, because it only exists in the various forms in which it is actually realized ... [it] is present as that which is absent; it becomes an empty signifier, as the signifier of that absence. In this sense, various political forces can compete in their efforts to present their particular objectives as those which carry out the filling of that lack.”

6. “GAP HAD TO BE INITIATED BECAUSE...”: SOURCES OF IMPETUS AND RATIONALIZATION OF GAP’S DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

In this chapter, I examine what kind of sources gave impetus to the design and implementation of GAP and through what kind of sources the project has been rationalized. As mentioned in Chapter 5, GAP has included a wide range of associated and disassociated development goals and objectives in the fields of agriculture, energy, infrastructure, politics, economy, social, and culture. They vary from irrigating arid lands to producing energy, from providing job opportunities to preventing migration, from improving socio-economic conditions in GAP region to eliminating the remnants of feudalism and land ownership inequality therein. While achieving these goals and objectives was indeed crucial for the state in terms of performing its duties and functions, it is simplistic and reductionist to claim that they alone formed the basis of the design and implementation of GAP. Given the size, scope, significance, and forty years-long span of GAP, the question as to why the project was initiated needs to be answered by taking into consideration more complex and more genuine factors that are more latent than the ones widely and explicitly presented in written and spoken texts. Accordingly, through a careful analysis of legislative and elite discourses, I identified the major rationales of GAP as (1) the rectification of differences of GAP region, (2) the admiration of the West and Western development trajectory, and (3) the pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction.

To briefly clarify how and why I identified these broad rationales and focused specifically on them instead of other project goals and objectives, the individual goals and objectives implicitly or explicitly prescribed progress, change, and transformation of GAP region and its local population in different spheres and in varying degrees. The question as to what aspect(s) of the region and population were considered problematic became clear when dominantly negative and derogatory representation of GAP region as arid, barren, backward, and underdeveloped were taken into account. Accordingly, when the categories of perceived characteristics of GAP region and objectives of GAP were interpreted and analyzed as interrelated and even interlinked, rectification of differences crystallized as a broader objective in the overall project framework. Similarly, even though goals and objectives imposed development and change, the questions as to towards which direction these processes had to be diverted to and how the culmination of these processes would appear were more implicit. When the implicit meanings and arguments were discovered and evaluated in the light of the historical trajectory of Turkey’s modernization and the crucial and special position of the West in this process, the admiration of the West and Western

development trajectory came to the fore as another broader objective within GAP framework. Finally, even though project goals and objectives exclusively pointed to a future direction, they alone revealed very little regarding the consequences of the development process. However, when these goals and objectives were interpreted and analyzed in conjunction with the category of perceived drawbacks of GAP such as harming the ecology and causing involuntary displacement, the pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction emerged as the other broader objective within GAP. In short, I focused on these broad rationales for they comprehensively cover the wide range of different project goals and objectives, better reflect the depth and complexity of the project, and better illustrate the interrelatedness of different categories and subcategories of the analysis of legislative and elite discourses.

The chapter comprises four sections. In the first three sections, I discuss the above-mentioned rationales in greater detail and also thoroughly examine the various implications of each rationale in each section. In the fourth and final section, I provide a brief summary of the chapter and concisely discuss the overall implications of these rationales.

6.1. The Rectification of Differences of GAP Region

6.1.1. Differences of GAP Region and its Local Population

Development interventions are generally made in order to overcome a “problem” or correct an “anomaly,” which are pinpointed and constructed by certain discourses (DuBois, 1991, p. 19). Accordingly, one of the most significant goals of a development project is arguably “rectification,” defined as “the ‘objective’ assessment of a situation in which there is a ‘need’ and the ‘scientific’ prescription of a set of actions intended to remedy said need” (p. 19). In line with this argument, GAP region has been widely characterized as “different” on many grounds. It would not be far-fetched to argue that even the words “East” or “Southeast” have often provided a negative image of poverty, misery, tradition, ignorance, and a sense of otherness in the eyes of Turkish society. To illustrate this long tendency, some of GAP region’s differences that were at the same time framed as problems included, but not limited to, its low level of income, migration patterns, unsuitable topographical and climatic conditions, maldistribution of water resources, arid lands, insufficient social services, and distorted land ownership (SPO, 1989a, p. 2.4). Also, as a former project consultant from GAP-BKİ explained, when she was appointed to Southeastern Anatolia Region due to a development project in the 1960s, “society [she] found there was beyond [her] imagination.

... It was so different, so different than all other regions. ... The language, culture, and ethnicity were different. Lifestyles were very different.”⁶⁸ A detailed analysis of legislative and elite discourses indicates that GAP region and its population were characterized as different specifically along the lines of (1) GAP region’s ancient past, (2) local population’s “ignorance,” and (3) local population’s traditional lifestyle and that the last two lines were problematized and considered as obstacles for development of GAP region. Each will be discussed below to illustrate how rectification of GAP region’s differences constituted one significant rationale of GAP.

6.1.1.1. GAP region as the continuation of ancient Mesopotamian civilization

Apparently, designers and implementers of GAP have had a tendency to imagine GAP region as the continuation of ancient Mesopotamian civilization and exalt its once glorious past. According to this narrative, Mesopotamia, which meant “between two rivers” in Greek, used to be “the cradle of civilization” for being home to the invention of city, writing, wheel, animal domestication, agriculture, irrigation, and similar groundbreaking developments. Also, it used to be the home to Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Persians in history with its fertile lands, mild climate, and abundant water resources. GAP region, the narrative goes, was the continuation and representative of this rich civilization. It was widely emphasized both in policy documents and anecdotal resources that GAP aimed to “reanimate” the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin, which was once described by the famous traveler Evliya Çelebi in the 17th century as a huge oasis which he could not even see the sun “all the way to Baghdad due to citrus trees” (Bağış, 1989, p. 7; Turgut, 2000, p. 95). Similarly, according to Muammer Yaşar Özgül, the then President of GAP-BKİ in 2006,

GAP region has been home of civilization, science, culture, and humanity for thousands of years. Today, this region in some way contributed to progress and accumulation all around the world, from east to west, from north to south. The region fed by Tigris and Euphrates rivers, or Mesopotamia, [was] also known as the most fertile and abundant lands where agriculture first took root. Also, this region [was] at the heart of the most dynamic and strategic geography (Türkiye Genç İşadamları Derneği, 2006).

The political elites have also had a similar tendency to associate GAP region with the Mesopotamian civilization. Numerous times GAP was considered as a project to ensure the “rebirth of the prosperity which Mesopotamia enjoyed thousands of years ago, accompanied

⁶⁸ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

by modern technology” (Bağış, 1989, p. 5); “restore peace and abundance in Mesopotamia where God brought divine peace and abundance to humanity” (TBMM, 2003, p. 344); and “create a new and brighter civilization in Upper Mesopotamia, the home of first civilizations” (TBMM, 2006a, p. 149). Even though these examples suggest that the supposed link between GAP region and Mesopotamian civilization was romanticized rather than problematized, they indicate that this link was seen as a crucial character which made GAP region unique among other regions in Turkey. Unlike this distinct characteristic, however, local population’s “ignorance” as the other line of difference was quite derogatory, as will be explained below.

6.1.1.2. “Ignorance” of the local population in GAP region

Since ignorance is an elusive term, different meanings were attached to ignorance in the context of GAP. In legislative and elite discourses, it was often reduced to the total absence or lack of formal education or proper communication skills, especially in Turkish language. For instance, according to a coordinator from GAP-BKİ, “the region [was] still very backward in education because it [was] impossible to equalize the birth rate and education investments. In Urfa, everyone [had] ten children.”⁶⁹ Similarly, an expert from the same institution underlined that “if women [were] kept ignorant, kids continue[d] to be ignorant” and explained that “to prevent this, [they] organized agriculture camps, ... trained farmers’ kids about irrigation, taught them how to swim, use computer ... and speak proper, not broken Turkish.”⁷⁰ A professor from Ankara University also underlined that in GAP region “women [had to] be included in education because education [was] important. Schooling [was] required. Population [had to] learn Turkish. This [was] necessary when information [was] given about health, birth control, injection...etc.”⁷¹

The “ignorance” was also reduced to the local population’s supposed lack of self-sufficiency, capability, consciousness, and responsibility in comparison to people in other regions of Turkey. For instance, “local entrepreneurs” in GAP region were found extremely prudent, reluctant and scared for cooperation, narrow-minded and short-sighted, and inexperienced in a survey conducted in 1996 to reveal the investment potential of GAP region (GAP-BKİ, 1996, p. 18). Similarly, based on her belief that people were the decisive factor that made a difference in the development process, an expert from GAP-BKİ compared provinces and people of western and eastern Turkey and made the following explanation:

⁶⁹ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷⁰ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷¹ Personal interview, April 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Have you ever been to Çanakkale?⁷² What's there anyway? There are more things to do in Urfa. Çanakkale also needs to be developed, but its people are more intellectual and more conscious. This is one of the disadvantages of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia; they expect everything from the state while others do it themselves.⁷³

In a parallel manner, a deputy undersecretary from the Ministry of Development underlined that working with the local population was extremely difficult due to their “different” business etiquette that stemmed from their “different” social backgrounds. According to his observation, they were “psychologically used to transfers. They [did] not say ‘I should be the one to produce, make money, become richer, become an entrepreneur, and have a stable job.’ Instead, they said ‘the state [had to] make social transfer payments to me.’”⁷⁴

The examples indicate that although there are different interpretations of ignorance, they all contribute to the characterization of GAP region and its people as different from their equivalents. They also reveal how “ignorance” has been viewed as a problem to be rectified and a barrier against the development of GAP region. The local population’s traditional lifestyle as the other problematized line of difference will be discussed below.

6.1.1.3. Traditional lifestyle of the local population in GAP region

Traditional lifestyle is also an elusive term. In the context of GAP, it was often conceived along the lines of feudalism, tribalism, and large land ownership,⁷⁵ which could be hardly observed in other regions in Turkey with the possible exception of Eastern Anatolia Region. To illustrate this linkage, according to *GAP Social Action Plan*, in GAP region

a traditional social and cultural structure [was] still predominant. A semi-feudal structure in agriculture, traditional ways in animal husbandry and semi or even full nomadism [were] predominant socio-economic forms of organization in the Region. As a natural consequence of this centuries-old forms of organization, traditional institutions such as landlords, sheikhs and tribal chiefs still survive[d] and maintain[ed] their influence to a considerable extent (GAP-RDA, 1999, p. 4).

The analysis revealed that designers and implementers of GAP problematized these traditional social and cultural structures as well as actors, traditions, customs, and morals that were inherent in these structures on the grounds that they had detrimental effects on the local population, represented the “wrong” and obsolete way of life in a modern setting, and

⁷² It is a province located on the Dardanelles Strait in Marmara Region in the northwestern part of Turkey.

⁷³ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷⁴ Personal interview, May 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷⁵ The analysis points to a general tendency among designers and implementers of GAP to consider feudalism, tribalism, and large landownership as the same phenomena and use them interchangeably.

constituted an obstacle for the development of GAP region. According to an expert from GAP-BKİ, these structures “sabotaged development” and “allowed feudal lords to keep the local population under their patronage ‘uneducated’ and ‘unconscious’ about the unjust system they lived in.”⁷⁶ It was also noted in *GAP Social Action Plan* that

there [were] serious barriers to the process of development of the Region embedded in its structural characteristics. The first of these [was] the introversion or the closed character of an important section of even the urban communities, let alone the rural societies. Second [was] the dependence of local people on an intricate system of ancient institutions such as tribes, sheiks and landlords which predominate[d] relations of production and social organization. Although these structural characteristics [were] in the process of dissolution, they [were] still strong enough to influence social developments (GAP-RDA, 1999, p. 6).

At this point, it is apt to briefly discuss how the role of GAP in terms of changing the traditional structures was perceived. The analysis points to two competing narratives in this regard. The first narrative emphasized that the introduction of irrigated farming and modern agricultural techniques had a decisive impact on both weakening feudalism and changing land ownership patterns dramatically. Indeed, except a few extreme cases, it was no more possible to claim the dominance of feudalism in GAP region. In addition to the initiation of GAP, rural population flow to the cities, increased symbolic and material exchange between the region and national centers, transformation of relations of production, and Turkey’s modernization process in general weakened this structure. It was equally difficult to claim the dominance of tribalism in GAP region in the post-GAP period. As a professor from METU also argued, even though some people still identified themselves with their tribes, it was only at a symbolic level. Processes of urbanization, demographic transformation, and social change dissolved and disintegrated tribalism.⁷⁷ Large land ownership was no exception to this trend, either. After GAP, almost all large lands were shared among relatives or heirs in smaller surface areas and the ownership pattern changed over time. To illustrate, a planner who worked with GAP-BKİ on ad-hoc basis explained that there used to be local people who owned lands as large as 300,000 to 500,000 acres in the late 1980s.⁷⁸ A wealthy landowner in Şanlıurfa, however, explained in 2014 that “contrary to the common belief, no large landowner was left here. Whom to call a large landowner anyway? The ones who owned 100

⁷⁶ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷⁷ Personal interview, April 10, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁷⁸ Personal interview, April 3, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

acres? 1,000? 5,000? ... Irrigation eliminated feudal relations and GAP had a decisive effect on this.”⁷⁹

The second narrative emphasized that GAP had little or no impact on weakening the traditional structures and claimed that it even strengthened these structures further. According to this narrative, GAP initiated social change only at a superficial level and even worsened the existing inequalities and power imbalances in some cases. On this matter, a professor from Ankara University rejected the idea that GAP dissolved tribal relations and underlined that GAP-induced social change was far from being genuine. Her explanation was as follows:

My husband is from [GAP] region and he is a member of a tribe. He studied in İstanbul, but they still live with those values. So different than people in the West. They don't change. Tribalism may not work in economic terms, but it is still alive culturally. Changes are very minor. You see a man moving to a modern apartment, buying a jeep, living a modern life, but at the same time getting five women, dominating them, beating his daughters, involving in armed fights.⁸⁰

The other claim that GAP worsened the existing inequalities and power imbalances was based on the idea that the project provided wealthy people with ample opportunities to generate more income from irrigated farming and modern agricultural techniques and exert more influence (see Harris, 2005 for a discussion on this matter). A caveat is necessary here before elaborating further. There were two significant changes in the irrigation management and practice in Turkey in the last two decades. The first change was the shift from small-scale irrigation with groundwater to large-scale irrigation with surface water. The second change was the shift to participatory irrigation management to include farmers into the management process (Özerol, 2013, p. 78), as it was widely acknowledged—and also advocated by the World Bank—that active community participation in the water sector would empower the target groups and lead to more transparency and sustainability of development projects (Eguavoen & Youkhana, 2008). As a result of these shifts, irrigation associations were formed under the auspices of DSI in 1994. These associations gained the right to manage irrigation systems and became responsible for distributing water to farmers, operating and maintaining canals, and collecting irrigation fees. The associations were operating based on participation and cooperation among local authorities, farmer representatives, and farmers, at least on paper (p. 78). However, they failed to yield the expected development outcomes.

⁷⁹ Personal interview, May 30, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

⁸⁰ Personal interview, April 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Also, in the words of a professor from Ankara University, over time “the associations engaged in politics” and began to “act like a political or industrial union.”⁸¹ Combined with this imperfect and malfunctioning model of irrigation associations, it was hardly surprising that GAP served the interest of those who were already wealthy and influential in GAP region. In this regard, a professor from METU underlined that it was large landowners who benefited from GAP and irrigation associations because “small landowners [could] not afford to pay the amount determined by the associations anyway. For this reason, associations actually worsened the inequality.”⁸² Another indicator of the worsening inequality was that, even though irrigation associations were ideally designed as participatory and democratic institutions, their heads and administrators were often chosen among the wealthiest and most influential people in their districts; skills or merit did not play any role. As a head of a division from DSI explained, the heads of associations were “very ignorant” and “chosen for their influence, not for their quality.”⁸³ Still, arguably these drawbacks were not entirely unexpected given that factors such as the heavy focus of projects on technical and financial issues, the lack of human capacities and technical means, and complex but overlooked political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural realities of communities have long made it difficult for water projects to yield successful results (Eguavoen & Youkhana, 2008). It was also not entirely unexpected as issues regarding power such as the redistribution of property rights, transfer of authority as well as the reallocation of natural and social resources might lead to a reassertion of powerful interest groups and to resource capture by different elite groups (Kothari, 2001, as cited in Hauck & Youkhana, 2008).

Regardless of whether GAP was successful or unsuccessful to eliminating traditional social and cultural structures in GAP region, examples indicate that just as the local population’s “ignorance,” being traditional—however it was defined—was perceived as a difference, a problem, and an obstacle for development to flourish. Still, characterization of GAP region as different and problematization of its differences were not without implications, as will be discussed in the following section.

6.1.2. Implications of Rectifying the Differences of GAP Region

6.1.2.1. Otherization of the local population

One of the outcomes of the problematization of differences was the otherization of the local population in GAP region. Constant utterance of differences in legislative and elite discourses

⁸¹ Personal interview, April 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁸² Personal interview, April 10, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁸³ Personal interview, April 1, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

led to the emergence and/or consolidation of dichotomies of ignorant and educated, traditional and modern, and different and normal. According to this dichotomous thinking, GAP region and its population represented an aberrance or deviance from the norm due to their socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics. As Ziai (2016, p. 220) notes, the naturalization of “the self” brings about problematization of “the other,” and this problematization brings about the construction of “the self” as superior and normal and construction of “the other” as inferior and deviant. In this process, GAP-related discourses played a significant role in producing and reproducing norms and ideal standards. For this reason, they directly or indirectly defined who or what “normal,” “abnormal” or “other” was, and why. Also, otherization based on differences indicated that the motor of development inherent in the overall project framework was spotting an “abnormality” and then fixing it in accordance with the self-defined standards of normality. Given the power imbalance between “the self” and “the other,” it was not entirely surprising that the will to rectify differences also brought about infantilization of the local population, as will be discussed below.

6.1.2.2. Infantilization of the local population

Constant characterization of the local population as miserable, incapable, passive, helpless, and inferior constructed a reality in which they had to be controlled, shaped, and elevated to the level of self-sufficiency. As a strictly top-down condition, infantilization signified a power imbalance between the local population as “the infant” and designers and implementers of GAP as “the caregiver.” This hierarchy elevated the latter to a level where they could be perceived—or perceived themselves—as the benevolent providers of development and the sole authority to decide on the lives of the “infantilized” population. For instance, their grandiose and even utopian objectives such as “overcoming the ill-fate of the East” (TBMM, 1985, p. 303), “changing the destiny of history and geography” (TBMM, 1988b, p. 75), “drilling not only the mountains but also epochs,” and “placing another great civilization on top of all the past civilizations in Anatolia” (Turgut, 2000, p. 146) disclosed their strong self-confidence. Although in a slightly different context, Zeydanlıoğlu (2008) defined this self-assigned task of the (Turkish) elites to carry out a “civilizing” mission on the supposedly ignorant and traditional non-elite populations as “white Turkish man’s burden.” Such ambitious objectives also indicated their belief in the omnipotential of science and technology in reshaping concrete phenomena such as physical nature and abstract phenomena such as human nature, destiny, and fate (see Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion on the dominance of experts and expert knowledge in the overall GAP framework).

Infantilization of the local population further signified their reduction to “academic objects” to be studied and researched from outside in a supposedly controlled environment. For instance, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ explicitly considered GAP “as a laboratory where especially sociologists, anthropologist, and social workers [could] find and learn a lot.”⁸⁴ Similarly, a professor from Ankara University engaged in self-criticism as to how little researchers engaged with the local population and admitted that they “enter[ed] and exit[ed] the field quickly. ... It [made] no sense to spend two days with women in a village. ... Community meetings, focus groups, quick interviews [were] not really helpful.”⁸⁵ In relation to this point, one of the former presidents of GAP-BKİ complained that while he then needed talented sociologists who could understand “sociology of the masses, sociologists worked as if they were social researchers there. They tried to make analyses out of people’s group affiliations.”⁸⁶ The perception of GAP region and its local population as such also facilitated the legitimization of interventions from outside, as will be discussed below.

6.1.2.3. Legitimization of development interventions

Problematization of differences engendered the need of their rectification. Arguably, this alleged need formed one of the most important bases of how politicians, bureaucrats, and experts could legitimize their policy decisions with less difficulty. To explicate, GAP region was often imagined as a different geography and characterized as a chaotic and disorderly space. As Crush (1995, p. 9) notes, “the language of crisis and disintegration creates a logical need for external intervention and management.” A similar language was employed at the elite level to make a case for intervention to change GAP region into the opposite of what it actually was. To illustrate a few peaceful and orderly images of GAP region, in the mid-1990s, GAP region in its ideal shape was as follows from the perspective of the then President Süleyman Demirel:

When we look from here in ten years, we will see a sea down there. This sea will be a green sea. In it, there will be bread, abundance, pearl-like cities, pearl-like villages, pearl-like towns, and bright people. That corner of our Turkey will be decorated like a garden (Turgut, 2000, pp. 154-155).

Similarly, the ideal GAP region in the early 2010s from the perspective of Cevdet Yılmaz, the then Minister of Development was as follows:

⁸⁴ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁸⁵ Personal interview, April 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁸⁶ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

There are bright days ahead in GAP's future. We march towards a GAP in which we use our potential at maximum level; we build richer and better cities; we have a more diverse and colorful environment with universities, civil society, the media, and activities of culture and arts; and our people, specifically our youth and women, participate much more in social and economic life (GAP-BKİ, 2012b, p. 7).

Reaching such an advanced stage of development and attaining a “difference-free” environment in GAP region required intervention. Also, this intervention had to be as radical and irrevocable as possible. For instance, a researcher in water politics explained this need with an analogy and underlined that “instead of peeling one layer of an onion one at a time, it had to be cut at once” because “no piecemeal approach ever worked in the region before.”⁸⁷

Also, characterization of GAP region as a static geography that supposedly remained unchanged for decades—or even for millennia if its links to Mesopotamian civilization are taken for granted—also legitimized intervention on the grounds that the region's rich, but dormant and underused potential had to be activated. In this regard, the then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel openly expressed in 1993 that development policies aimed to “activate a country's resources and channel them to welfare of the population” because “[n]othing [came] out of dormancy. Resources always existed. The important thing [was] to pair them with knowledge, science, and technology as the products of human intellect” (GAP-BKİ, 1993b, p. 4). Similarly in 1998, Demirel explained the motivation behind GAP and legitimized its implementation on the grounds that

Euphrates took many lives, prevented passage ... spread fear, became a source of threat and danger, inflicted damage, and flowed to deserts in vain for years. It was not Euphrates' fault. Putting it into the service of civilization, making it serve for welfare and happiness of humanity, making it contribute to our country's wealth, making it the main pillar of region's development was the job of knowledge, science, technicity, and finally determination (Turgut, 2000, p. 244).

The examples suggest that the urge to rectify the differences of GAP region and its local population was not only a strong motivation for the architects of GAP, but also a means to legitimize their interventions, which were at times against the will of the target groups.

6.1.3. Summary

GAP region and its local population have long been considered as “different” due to the ancient past of GAP region, “ignorance” of its local population, and their traditional lifestyle.

⁸⁷ Personal interview, May 5, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

In the context of GAP, ignorance—generally understood as the lack of education, communication skills, self-sufficiency, and self-consciousness—and traditional lifestyle—generally understood as feudalism, tribalism, and large land ownership—were problematized and viewed as barriers against the development of GAP region and its population. For the architects of GAP, rectifying these differences and transforming both GAP region and its local population—often radically and in a top-down manner—in accordance with modern standards and principles were strong sources of GAP’s rationalization.

However, rationalization of GAP as such led to certain implications. The outcome was that the local population became otherized and infantilized vis-à-vis both the architects of the project and people who lived outside GAP region. Also, development interventions could be legitimized with more convenience and less opposition. These implications suggest that GAP and the manner it was rationalized were far from being neutral. On the contrary, they had a significant influence on the reconfiguration of power dynamics between GAP region and the rest of Turkey, the local population and the rest of the nation, elites and non-elites, experts and non-experts, the Turks and Kurds, and the self and the other. The perceived differences in the context of GAP, then, were not simply technical and easy-to-solve problems to be addressed in a sterile manner; they were rather deep-rooted and contested problems that were resistant against rational calculations. In the next section, I will examine the admiration of the West and Western development trajectory as another rationale of GAP and discuss its various implications.

6.2. The Admiration of the West and Western Development Trajectory

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the condition of being modern and developed has long been associated with the West. Underdevelopment was conceived as an inadequacy in the quest to become a “complete” Western society in a context where societies were classified as underdeveloped, less developed, developing, and developed (DuBois, 1991, p. 2). As emphasized in Chapter 4, the founding elites of the modern Turkey wholeheartedly believed in the supposed superiority of the West in many domains. In the following years, even though the degree of sympathy and antipathy towards the West varied depending on the political and ideological leanings of the governments, arguably the West remained as the ideal to reach in terms of its science and technology as well as political, social, and economic institutions and standards. For this reason, it was not entirely surprising that the initiation of GAP was rationalized based on the supposed need to follow and emulate the Western development trajectory for the sake of “catching up.” Different forms of this admiration and Western-centrism in the overall GAP framework will be discussed below.

6.2.1. The Perception of the West in the Overall GAP Framework

Arguably, Western standards have been guiding for designers and implementers of GAP since the early years of the project. This orientation was not without reason, though. To briefly explain, Turkey has been under the heavy political, military, economic, social, and cultural influence of the West—specifically the US—since the end of the World War II and the beginning of development as a political goal. In the words of Keyder (1993, p. 123), “the political platform of the period [post-1945] took a very clear anti-communist stance and appropriated Americanism as a shallow and mimetic modernization model without any critique.” The fact that Süleyman Demirel and Turgut Özal,⁸⁸ the then top level political elites who put immense effort into GAP as technicians and politicians and who would later on claim credit for the project, both studied and worked in the US as engineers for limited periods of time and internalized a US-oriented way of thinking and policy approach also had a decisive impact on the project’s orientation. Also, such bold modernization schemes and grand development interventions were often drawn and combined together from an already existing accumulated repertoire (Li, 2007, p. 6). The architects of GAP, too, borrowed and adopted some components of developmentalist state model that was popular between the 1950s and 1980s where the state played the primary role in capital accumulation, resource allocation, direction of (mainly economic) development, and stimulating industrial growth through large engineering and infrastructure projects (Reyes-Gaskin, 2005, p. 70).

To illustrate this admiration and Western-centrism in the initial stages of GAP, the then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel often compared Turkey with Western European countries and the US and expressed his vision to elevate Turkey to their level of development. For instance, he enthusiastically stated that “[Southeastern Anatolia Region was] Turkey’s California. It [would] become Turkey’s Ruhr with its future industrial plants” (TBMM, 1975b, p. 418). Demirel made a similar comparison in 1985 and openly expressed his admiration to how the US managed to develop its water and land resources. In his words,

I [was] the first Turkish engineer who was sent to western states in the US by the state in 1949 to enhance my knowledge and skills. There, I saw a lot and had the opportunity to apply them in my country. When I saw Boulder Dam⁸⁹ on Colorado

⁸⁸ Just as Demirel, Özal also went to İstanbul Technical University. He received his degree in electrical engineering and completed graduate work in economics in the US. Before entering the politics in 1977, he served as General Deputy Director of Electrical Power Resources Survey and Development Administration in the late 1950s and as Undersecretary of DPT in the 1960s (Kolars & Mitchell, 1991, p. 25).

⁸⁹ Boulder Dam is also known as Hoover Dam, named after the 31st President of the US Herbert Hoover. The construction of the dam started in 1931 and finished in 1936. According to the Bureau of Reclamation, Hoover

River in Nevada with its reservoir capacity of 30 billion cubic meters and power to generate 2 million kilowatts of energy, I sat on a rock and watched it for three days. I just watched and watched (Turgut, 2000, p. 288).

Despite the fluctuations in the relationship between Turkey and the West over the years, more recent GAP-related legislative and elite discourses also characterized the West as an ideal to reach and underlined the need to emulate its development trajectory. To illustrate, a coordinator from GAP-BKİ emphasized in 2014 that “since the establishment of the republic [in 1923], even during the Ottoman times, [Turkey] ha[s] always faced the West. [Turkey] should have never turned [its] face away from the West” and that the goal of GAP was, from the beginning, to become like the West in terms of “providing opportunities for all people to enjoy the same rights and same economic and social benefits.”⁹⁰ Similarly, in the same year, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa underlined the need to catch up with the West and explained GAP’s primary objective as “to elevate the level of the local population to the level of the West, Germany, France or more advanced countries there.”⁹¹

It was also common among politicians, bureaucrats, and experts occasionally to equate the West with the redundant notion of “the whole world” and use them interchangeably. Apparently, they especially conflated these two to justify their policy decisions and their consequences through referring to elusive notions such as “conditions of the world today,” “necessities of our time,” “requirements of the changing world,” and “policy applications worldwide.” To illustrate this tendency, Erkan Alemdaroğlu, the then Regional Director of GAP-BKİ in Şanlıurfa, explained the reasons behind the shift(s) in the coordination and administration of GAP over the years as follows:

The particularist approach of the 1960s and 1970s gave way to integrated approach in the 1980s. ... These approaches were right in their time. But now the approach has changed worldwide since the 1990s. This is human-focused approach, approaches based solely on growth and integration gave way to human-centered concepts. Therefore, we shift our paradigm concurrently with the world. ... We are in computer and internet age. People can easily access information in this age and these informed and interested people can be very well included in decision-making processes (GAP-BKİ, 2000c, p. 70).

Dam is a “testimony to a country’s ability to construct monolithic projects in the midst of adverse conditions [the Great Depression]. ... It took less than five years, in a harsh and barren land, to build the largest dam of its time” (US Bureau of Reclamation, 2005, as cited in Kornfeld, 2007, pp. 7-8).

⁹⁰ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁹¹ Personal interview, May 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Similarly, a coordinator from GAP-BKİ more recently justified the implementation of GAP on the grounds that “the world was changing. When you look[ed] around the world, regional development agencies were founded during that period. ... Just like Hokkaido Development Agency in Japan or Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the US ... to eliminate inter-regional differences.”⁹² The establishment of Dicle, Karacadağ, and İpekyolu regional development agencies in GAP region in 2008 was also justified on the grounds that

the process of globalization and socio-economic developments of our time [were] reshaping regional development policies and tools. ... In order to formulate regional policies in coordination with the central units and put them into practice at a local level, there emerged a need to establish new and region-specific institutional structures (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, pp. 10-11).

6.2.1.1. “The American dream” and TVA

The analysis points to a strong tendency to praise especially the development trajectory of the US and draw similarities between GAP and TVA. TVA was the US government agency established in the 1930s to control the floods, generate energy, and improve the local population’s quality of life along the Tennessee River. To show how the US has been perceived in the context of GAP, in 2014 a deputy undersecretary from the Ministry of Development favored “the US model” and explained the reason as follows:

The US is larger than Turkey, it is a continent. There, wherever you go, you feel like you are in the US. How do they achieve this? With vending machine, with McDonalds. ... We must also transform Turkey into such a country where no one feels different or feels like lacking something.⁹³

Similarly in the same year, one of the former presidents of GAP-BKİ compared Turkish and American experiences in development practice and recounted his observations as follows:

What I witnessed in GAP is this: if you ensure economic development, socio-cultural integration follows itself. ... There are countless number of folks there, what is their common ground? Think about the American dream. It is based on money. Money is based on economy. It is not even an image; it is a dream! But, it still stands. Why? Because of economic activity, opportunity, dynamism...⁹⁴

Given the admiration of the American way of development, it is hardly surprising that TVA has been the most referenced international development project in legislative and elite

⁹² Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁹³ Personal interview, April 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

⁹⁴ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

discourses (see Table 9 below for a simplified comparison of TVA and GAP). Turkey was not the only country that had the intention to emulate TVA, though. As Bochenski and Diamond (1950, p. 55) put decades ago, TVA was not simply a name of an ordinary development project in the US, but rather a “symbol of what [could] be done to raise the standard of living of an entire region by taming and using water efficiently,” especially among the countries in the Middle East. Mitchell (2002, p. 44) similarly notes that TVA “epitomize[d] the new possibilities of development and planning, especially in arid regions such as the Middle East. Large dams offered a way to build not just irrigation and power systems, but nation-states themselves.” In Turkey, TVA inspired politicians, bureaucrats, and experts so deeply that there were even explicit calls inside the parliament to adopt its administration model which operated “under the US President by a special statute and had every kind of authorization and political authority” and to “establish an integrated administration that could regulate resource allocation and scheduling by its high authority and authorization” (TBMM, 1988a, pp. 626-627).

Table 9: Comparison of TVA and GAP at a glance

TVA	GAP
Main purposes	
Control floods	Irrigation
Generate power	Generate power
Rural electrification	Rural electrification
Improve navigation	N/A
Number of dams built or to be built	
23	22
Power capacity	
Around 2,500 MW	Around 7,500 MW
Main rivers	
Tennessee River	Euphrates River
Cumberland River	Tigris River
Tributaries	Tributaries

Source: Adapted from van Fleet, 1987 & SPO, 1990, as cited in Nestor, 1996, p. 71.

Eventually, in the words of an expert from GAP-BKİ, GAP-BKİ “was established on TVA’s model through the guidance of Turgut Özal on the basis of the need of an authority on GAP” in 1989.⁹⁵ However, while TVA’s model that granted the administration vast authority was compatible with the federal structure of the US, it was not fully compatible with the highly centralized administrative structure of Turkey. For this reason, GAP-BKİ had a hybridized model that was modified in accordance with the administrative structure of

⁹⁵ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Turkey and coordination-based agency models of Europe. The idea of the need to emulate TVA remained intact even in the 1990s. For instance, İsmail Cem, an MP who represented İstanbul compared “Southern Italy Project, expressed as ‘the key to Italian miracle,’” with TVA and asked whether it was possible for Turkey to implement TVA, as it was “the greatest example ever in this scale.” For him, “TVA [was] awesome. In less than no time, it transform[ed] a large geography from desert into a paradise not just physically, but with educational institutions, cultural establishments, and new cities” (TBMM, 1992b, p. 289). It should be noted that GAP-BKİ was not the only government institution within GAP framework that was modeled upon the US institutions. In the words of one of the former heads of GAP Regional Directorate at DSİ in Şanlıurfa, “DSİ [was] an American institution. We got our whole system from the US. We did exactly the same as what Bureau of Reclamation did. Even the blueprints of our headquarters [were] the same as their building in Denver.”⁹⁶ Idealization of the West was not solely confined to calls for following the footsteps of Western countries and emulating their institutions, though. The west of Turkey was idealized within Turkey as well, as will be explained below.

6.2.1.2. The dichotomy of east and west within Turkey

The examination of legislative and elite discourses indicates that higher socio-economic conditions of subregions and provinces that were geographically located in western (and also southern) Turkey including Marmara, Aegean, and Mediterranean regions were perceived as the ideal level to be reached by Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia regions. As explained in Chapter 4, the east-west divide within Turkey was not a recent phenomenon; its origins went back to as early as the early years of the republic and even Ottoman times. To illustrate, during a visit to Diyarbakır and Elazığ provinces in southeastern and eastern Turkey in 1931, Atatürk, as the then President, stated that he wanted to “see factories, irrigated farming, roads, electrified villages, houses with healthy dwellers, and evergreen forests” there and underlined that “the civilization and life in İstanbul [had to] be brought [t]here, too” (GAP-BKİ, 2012b, p. 14).

It is remarkable that the political elites absorbed almost the same idea more than half a century later and put forward that in Turkey “east-west divide should not exist in the 20th century anymore. Whatever we [had] in the west also [had to] exist in the east” on the grounds that “people living there [were] also our people; services [had to] be brought to them, too” (TBMM, 1988e, p. 64). Bureaucrats and experts also employed a similar narrative

⁹⁶ Personal interview, May 20, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

in this regard. For instance, an expert from GAP-BKİ argued in 2014 that just as “investors [made] investment and open[ed] factories in Ankara, İstanbul, and Bursa today, they [would] consider doing so in Mardin, Şırnak, Diyarbakır, Batman in the future” and tacitly pointed out that western Turkey has always surpassed eastern Turkey in many respects.⁹⁷ According to this vision, western regions and their subregions, provinces, towns, and also people were accepted as superior, modern, wealthy, and developed while their counterparts in eastern and southeastern Turkey were accepted as inferior, primitive, poor, and underdeveloped. In this context, GAP was associated with the Western norms, values, and standards and implemented with the expectation to elevate “the rest” to the level of western Turkey.

The examples suggest that politicians, bureaucrats, and experts have had a tendency to perceive the West as if it were a homogenous and overarching entity that was above and totally distinct from other countries and cultures. They also suggest that the admiration of the West was in the guise not only of the will to follow the development trajectory of certain countries in the West and emulate a similar model, but also of a vision that makes a stark east-west division within Turkey. Indeed, this vision led to some implications, as will be discussed in the following section.

6.2.2. Implications of Admiring the West and Western Development Trajectory

6.2.2.1. Otherization of the non-Western

The admiration of the West and its development experience was based on a sharp and oversimplified dichotomy between Western and Eastern geographies, cultures, and worldviews. Just as the will to rectify differences led to the otherization of the local population in GAP region, the admiration of the West led to the otherization of whoever or whatever did not represent Western norms, values, and standards. Being non-Western, then, was accepted as an abnormality. The idea that postulated the supposed Western superiority contributed to the emergence and consolidation of hierarchies at multiple levels; between Western and Eastern civilizations, development practices, behavior patterns, and so on.

It is noteworthy that the source of the perceived superiority of the West in the overall GAP framework has been its science, technology, and material and human capital rather than its cultural and moral values. Designers and implementers of GAP were eager to utilize Western science and technology without any inquisition, but reluctant and suspicious to borrow Western culture arguably for its “dangerous” potential to spoil the national culture, values, and identities. In any case, their Western-inspired techno-scientific perspective

⁹⁷ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

devalued traditional irrigation methods, traditional production techniques, and traditional societal relations of the local population in GAP region and characterized them as inferior, as they were alien to the Western interpretation and practice of development. Interestingly, however, the perception of the West as the ideal to reach at the same time fueled ethnocentric or Turco-centric sentiments, as will be discussed below.

6.2.2.2. Characterization of GAP as the embodiment of “Turkishness”

A careful analysis of legislative and elite discourses indicates that the admiration of the West and Western development experience ironically engendered the perception that the West was a rival to compete with and eventually “beat” in many respects. In this context, GAP was widely conceived as the manifestation of Turkey’s level of development vis-à-vis the West and the symbol of Turkish nation’s capability and greatness vis-à-vis other nations.

The relationship between ethnocentrism and dam construction has been long acknowledged. Water engineering was closely associated with colonial projects and development programs in the 19th and 20th centuries (Aggestam & Sundell, 2016). Especially from the 1930s to the mid-1970s, large-scale development projects that attached importance to dam construction were highly popular worldwide and perceived positively for their crucial role in boosting agricultural production and productivity, producing energy, and irrigating agricultural lands (Güler & Savaş, 2011, p. 184). The quality and quantity of dams significantly increased in this period thanks to the advancements in science and technology; there were around 45,000 large dams—the majority of which were constructed between 1950 and 1980—worldwide by the end of the 20th century (WCD, 2000, as cited in Öktem, 2002, p. 311). Dams have been useful for many governments in terms of allowing them to change the distribution of resources spatially and temporally among communities and ecosystems. Also, in addition to their contribution to agricultural development and technical advancement, many governments have considered dams as symbols of their state’s technological and economic power (Mitchell, 2002, p. 21). Turkey was no exception in this regard. The analysis indicates that having the capability to build and operate dams and other components of GAP exclusively by Turkish capital, contractors, engineers, technicians, and labor has been a source of national pride. This was especially in line with the claim that specifically Turkish engineers aimed at putting their technical abilities into the service of the nation or national interests and receiving recognition as the one and only technical labor force instead of foreign engineers in the name of “national professionalism” (Göle, 1998, p. 116).

This sense of pride was expressed in many different ways. For instance, it was telling that the name of the largest dam of GAP was changed from Karababa Dam to Atatürk Dam

on the basis of the idea that its mammoth size represented the greatness of the Turkish nation and its founding father.⁹⁸ Just as many other similar—especially urban—megaprojects, it was an example of an “iconic architecture” that signified the image of development, economic growth, regeneration that was presented to the public (Vento, 2017, p. 72). The pride was also expressed by top-level political elites at various occasions. To illustrate, in a legislative session in 1991, the then President Turgut Özal boasted about how “Turkey [was] implementing the huge GAP that cover[ed] an area that equal[ed] the size of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg combined in a record speed” entirely through its “own Turkish finance, contractors, engineers, and labor without any assistance today” (TBMM, 1991b, p. 5). Similarly, in 1994, the then President Süleyman Demirel also stated in a proud and challenging tone that “Turkish nation [was] proving its constructive ability to the whole world by implementing this project step by step. GAP became the manifestation of not only Turkish engineering, Turkish technicity and labor, but also the determination of our nation” (GAP-BKİ, 1994a, p. 3). Bureaucrats and experts, too, widely boasted about the “Turkishness” of GAP. To exemplify, when asked about the hydropolitics in the Middle East, one of the former heads of GAP Regional Directorate at DSI in Şanlıurfa explained that Syria and Iraq were still “under the influence of feudalism and tribalism.” For this reason, he continued, “Turkey does not care about them. We are not a small country. We are Turkey, we just do. Our engineers are among the best in the world, we are not behind any other nation.”⁹⁹ Similarly, Kenan Mortan, a former consultant to GAP-BKİ, found it shameful that *GAP Master Plan* was formulated “by a handful of [Japanese] people who [had] no idea about our local population on the 112th floor of a building in Tokyo” (see Chapter 5) but felt thankful that “now [Turkey had] a new way out” for being able to formulate plans without external support (GAP-BKİ, 2000c, p. 31).

In relation to the “Turkishness” of GAP, the analysis illustrates that both individual dams and GAP as a whole were often characterized as “monuments” or “monuments of triumph.” Just as Jawaharlal Nehru emphasized the significance of large hydrological infrastructure projects and described dams as “the temples of modern India” following the independence of India (Roy, 1999, p. 56, as cited in Woodhouse, 2002, p. 141), for the then President Turgut Özal, GAP was “constituting a magnificent example of the Turkish people’s diligence and success, [and] a huge monument displaying the level of Turkey’s development”

⁹⁸ Some sources also mention that the dam was given the name Atatürk because its foundation was laid in 1981, the centennial of Atatürk’s birth.

⁹⁹ Personal interview, May 20, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

(Bağış, 1989, p. 3). Indeed, it was obscure what kind of a “battle” was fought against what or whom and afterwards a triumph was won. A possible explanation for the employment of this metaphor would be that especially military and sports metaphors helped politicians explain their positions more easily and establish a bond with their electorate (Howe, 1988, p. 89). Another explanation would be that the “battle” was against the advanced Western countries and, therefore, indicated a sense of inferiority against the West. To illustrate this sentiment, according to Kâmran İnan, the former Minister of State in charge of GAP between 1987 and 1991, the most significant aspect of GAP was giving confidence to Turkish nation. In his words, “in the past it was said, ‘we cannot do it, let foreigners do it. Our technology is insufficient, our capital accumulation is insufficient.’ We proved the opposite: We can do it and we did it” (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Merkez Bankası [TCMB], 2000, p. 11). Similarly, a former State Minister in charge of GAP in the 1990s explained that “the Europeans were telling us that we could not build the dam with our own resources and saying ‘you [were] not capable of implementing such a large project.’” However, as he continued and proudly said, “we achieved it, as the whole world saw.”¹⁰⁰ Arguably, this perceived sense of inferiority and mistrust also engendered a national concern regarding how other countries have perceived GAP, as will be explained below.

6.2.2.3. Characterization of GAP as a target of “dark foreign powers”

The analysis also shows that some of GAP’s architects have long carried the concern that “dark foreign powers” supposedly perceived GAP as a threat to their national interests and national security and, therefore, directly or indirectly engaged in malevolent activities to prevent Turkey from fully implementing the project. To illustrate such concerns, in the initial stages of GAP, Recep Orhan Ergun, an MP who represented Kayseri, underlined that “GAP attracted others’ ambition, others’ jealousy, other countries’ hostility” and, for this reason, “there [would] be intrusions to our political liaisons” (TBMM, 1989, p. 217). In the early 1990s, Iraq—or the then President Saddam Hussein himself—and Syria were often blamed for supporting “terrorists [the PKK] in southeast to prevent GAP” and providing them training and refuge (TBMM, 1991c, p. 118). Israel was also widely blamed for “having designs on Turkey and [its] water resources” on the grounds that “Turkey [had] the richest water resources in the Middle East” and that the Promised Land, mentioned in Torah, covered the area between Nile and Euphrates as well as GAP region (TBMM, 1994, p. 436). In addition, the West was generally blamed especially for preventing Turkey from finding financial

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview, May 12, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

support for dam construction. In the words of a freelance consultant who worked within GAP, “whenever Turkey pursue[d] policies that serve[d] Western interests, the West generously provide[d] credit. When Turkey [did] not do so, the West start[ed] crying about how dams destroy[ed] culture, environment, this and that.”¹⁰¹ Another source of concern was the belief that the control of the Tigris-Euphrates River Basin would be transferred to an international body as a precondition of Turkey’s accession to the EU. For instance, Mehmet Vedat Melik, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa raised his concerns in 2004 on this possibility and asked whether the state was waiting for “the decision of an international administration that [would control] water resources in GAP region” to open new lands to irrigation, as allegedly mentioned in *Turkey Progress Report* (TBMM, 2004a, p. 216). The similar concerns of a former project consultant from GAP-BKİ in 2014 were as follows:

Euphrates became a lake now. Water is under state’s control. After Ilisu and Cizre dams are completed, Tigris will also be under state’s control. But *EU Accession Partnership Document* has four points and the fourth is about putting Euphrates and Tigris under international supervision.¹⁰²

It is noteworthy that while Syria, Iraq, Greece, Israel, and Western European countries were perceived as the most dangerous countries for GAP in the 1990s, Syria, Iraq, and Greece were not perceived as serious threats for the project from the 2000s onwards. However, the belief that the US, Israel, and the EU countries have aimed to take Turkey’s sovereignty rights on water resources remained prevalent and even became more widespread in the past decade. Also, the examples suggest that the admiration of the West and its development trajectory and adherence to nationalist and Turco-centric sentiments coexisted; they were not mutually exclusive. One possible explanation to this situation would be that the elites were careful and selective in terms of praising and borrowing only specific aspects of the West—science and technology—and denigrating and leaving out its some other aspects—cultural and moral values. For this reason, the conception of the West concurrently as an ideal, a model to emulate, a rival, a menace, and a threat could become possible and effective.

6.2.3. Summary

The idea of the West and its development trajectory, norms, values, and standards were highly admired in the overall GAP framework. Past policy applications and development experiences of the Western countries—specifically the US—were considered as potential

¹⁰¹ Personal interview, April 3, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁰² Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

models to emulate and apply within GAP. The broad objective in this context was to “catch up” with the West and surpass it whenever, wherever, and however possible. In this process, politicians, bureaucrats, and experts were often prudent and selective in terms of borrowing specifically scientific and technical elements of the West and showing little interest in borrowing its culture and values. The West, as a signifier of geographical location, was highly admired within Turkey as well. Regions, subregions, provinces, and local populations located in western Turkey were considered superior to those located in eastern and southeastern Turkey on many fronts. Given these perspectives, the admiration of the West and the will to catch up necessitated elevating Turkey to the level of modern, contemporary, and advanced Western world at a global level and eastern and southeastern regions to the level of western regions at a national level. These bifurcated goals were among the significant rationales behind GAP’s design and implementation.

Indeed, the admiration of the West and its development experience had certain implications. Taking the West as the reference point in a hierarchical manner in a wide range of topics contributed to the exclusion and otherization of those who did not fit to norms and standards defined in accordance with those of the West. Also, somewhat unexpectedly, the admiration of the West led to its conceptualization as a rival and at times even as an enemy. For this reason, there emerged—and persisted—a tendency to perceive GAP as the symbol of Turkish nation’s strength and proof of Turkey’s level of development vis-à-vis the West. This perception was so strong that specific countries were perceived as threats for GAP and barriers against its implementation. These implications suggest that in a way GAP was initiated “to look at the West, to look like the West, despite the West” and rationalized through this discourse. I will examine the pursuit of betterment and development at the expense of destruction as another rationale behind GAP in the following section.

6.3. The Pursuit of Betterment and Development at the Expense of Destruction

6.3.1. The Perception of Destruction in the Overall GAP Framework

Arguably, development is based on a commitment to provide betterment in people’s physical, material, social, and humanitarian conditions and create a transformed future with less risks, unknowns, and uncertainties. As Cannon and Müller-Mahn (2010) also put, development “involves a promise of improvement, of some kind of progress towards better living conditions, higher incomes or longer lives.” In that sense, development is expected to have a future orientation and bring about a positive change in people’s lives regardless of time and space. However, development practice has also carried the risk of high amount of destruction, discrediting, and subordination of localized understandings, techniques, practices, and

lifestyles (DuBois, 1991, p. 23). As Rist (2010, p. 23) also underlines, “the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations in order to increase the production of commodities (goods and services) geared, by means of market exchange, to effective demand” has been at the core of development. Also, from a biopolitical perspective, the power to “make live” cannot be operated without the practice of “letting die” (Gambetti, 2011, p. 4). When biopower takes “life” as its primary objective, a portion of the population should be taken as a threat to that life. Therefore, those who are considered to be outside the norms and abnormal can be qualified as surplus population and sacrificed (p. 4). These arguments imply that development has had a Janus-faced character, as there have been many occasions and contexts in which betterment and development were pursued at the expense of destruction.

Large-scale development projects and especially dam projects deserve a special focus in this regard for not only their huge scale and requirement of large amounts of capital and technical expertise, but also their destructive impacts to make way for the dam reservoir (Reyes-Gaskin, 2005, p. 70). As mentioned before, while dams have allowed the states to control floods, improve agricultural productivity through irrigation networks, and generate cheaper energy to be used in electrification and industrialization, they have at the same time led to negative impacts on geographies, environment, societies, and cultures (Öktem, 2002, p. 311). The devastating environmental, social, and humanitarian impacts of dams began to come to surface in the mid-1970s and became a source of serious debate and controversy especially with the introduction of sustainable development concept in the early 1980s (Güler & Savaş, 2011, p. 184). Just as many other development projects that included large dams or a large number of dams, GAP also created controversy due to its destructive impacts. Below, I will examine different narratives on these impacts to illustrate how the architects of GAP perceived destruction and how the pursuit of betterment and development at the expense of destruction or any cost was another rationale behind GAP.

6.3.1.1. Narrative 1: Destruction is targeted and malicious

According to the first narrative, GAP was strategically initiated to exploit the natural resources of GAP region, transfer these resources to western Turkey, destroy GAP region’s ecology, annihilate Kurdish culture and history, and assimilate the Kurds (see Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion on this issue). As expected, this narrative was highly prevalent among the Kurdish political elites and intellectuals. To illustrate, a Kurdish MP who represented Şanlıurfa claimed that the Turkish state intentionally destroyed the cultural and historical sites such as Samsat, Halfeti, and Hasankeyf through constructing large dams.

According to his explanation, “the state destroy[ed] the whole thing, the history of [Hasankeyf] just to produce a few more kilowatts of electricity” but “the losses outweigh[ed] the gains of electricity production.”¹⁰³ Similarly, another Kurdish MP who represented Muş considered GAP “as a reflection of the state’s approach to Kurdistan” and explained that the state “aim[ed] to render the region inhabitable through building large dams and HPPs and killing plant and animal diversity there.”¹⁰⁴

6.3.1.2. Narrative 2: There is a loose trade-off between destruction and development

According to the second narrative, destructive impacts of GAP should not be exaggerated because there is a loose trade-off between development and destruction and state and government institutions are doing whatever necessary to minimize these impacts. In a way, in the words of Doğan Altınbilek, the former General Director of DSİ, dam construction is not a matter of “yes” or “no,” but a matter of “wise planning and implementation” (Scheumann et al., 2014, p. 132). In this context, potential dangers of misusing water resources were occasionally uttered in legislative discourses. For instance, Necati Uzdil, an MP who represented Osmaniye and an agricultural engineer by training, explained these dangers as follows: “Water is like a double-edged sword. If you use this sword well, you provide many benefits. If you cannot use it well or do not know how to use it, you injure yourself ... and get stuck in a difficult situation” (TBMM, 2006b, p. 489). A former coordinator from GAP-BKİ attracted attention to the same issue and stated that “development [was] like cortisone” because “while it heal[ed] you, it also harm[ed] you.”¹⁰⁵ For this reason, as one of the vice presidents of GAP-BKİ underlined, even though “each development project [had] negative impacts on a certain area and segment of society, tons of precautions [were] being taken and ... a cost-benefit analysis [was] always made before a project to keep losses at minimum.”¹⁰⁶

6.3.1.3. Narrative 3: Destruction is inevitable and inherent in development

According to the third narrative, destructive impacts of development interventions—including GAP—are inevitable and destruction is an inherent and natural part of development on the simple ground that there can be no gain without sacrifice. To demonstrate, when asked about the controversies of dams in 2014, an inspector from DSİ emphasized that he was not against environmental monitoring, but was in favor of a balanced way to do it. In his words,

¹⁰³ Personal interview, May 6, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview, May 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview, April 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview, May 26, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

[e]nvironmentalists are against everything. I mean, come on, give us a break! You see Tarkan¹⁰⁷ saying “no” to Ilisu Dam and singing about Hasankeyf today. I wonder, has he ever forgone his soapy Jacuzzi baths? Has he ever lived without water and electricity even for one day? Where does he think the water comes from? Water and electricity are not God-given. Therefore, sacrifice is a must in some cases. When you cut one tree, you can plant two, cannot you?¹⁰⁸

Apparently, DSI was not the only institution where sacrifice was perceived as a precondition to have gains and destruction was perceived as a reversible condition. A former coordinator from GAP-BKI also acknowledged that “development might be painful and have disproportionate impacts on each group. ... Some lost their lands, trees, graveyards due to submersion. People suffered from depression.” However, she also underlined that “these [were] inevitable. This [was] not specific to Turkey, only. Every development project [had] similar impacts. ... Since the aim was to increase their quality of life, it [was] quite normal to lose a generation in similar development projects.”¹⁰⁹ Another former coordinator from the same institution supported this argument and stated that “whatever humankind [did], it [had] a negative impact on environment. Even when you plow[ed] a field, there [was] a negative impact because it [was] an intervention, too.”¹¹⁰ Similarly, a freelance consultant explained that it was beyond his responsibility to make a judgment on GAP-induced destruction and underlined that “some [said] the history [was] gone. Who decide[d]? How [did] you measure? What [were] the criteria? ... Think about the mighty Euphrates, it [was] preposterous to lose its flow rate. It [was] not easy to lose such a resource.”¹¹¹ The implications of these narratives will be discussed in the following section.

6.3.2. Implications of the Pursuit of Betterment and Development at the Expense of Destruction

6.3.2.1. Normalization of development-induced destruction

The narratives above indicate that the architects of GAP had the tendency to conceive destruction as a “price to be paid” or “requisite” to obtain betterment in the context of GAP. This indicates normalization of development-induced destruction. This process is in line with the argument that the promise or guarantee of enhancing the lives of “less-developed”

¹⁰⁷ Tarkan is one of the most famous pop singers in Turkey. As an environmental activist, he has been actively involved in the campaign to save Hasankeyf.

¹⁰⁸ Personal interview, May 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁰⁹ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹⁰ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹¹ Personal interview, April 3, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

populations, eradicating their poverty, and rectifying their “deficiencies” through development interventions legitimizes and rationalizes these interventions regardless of their nature and yielded outcomes (Ziai, 2016, p. 221). Also, from a different angle, the tendency to normalize destruction can be evaluated as avoidance from the contested nature and outcomes of destruction and associated with a motion to take a less thorny and risky short-cut to offload blame and responsibility. It is also noteworthy that normalization of destruction is closely linked to the modernist interpretation of development that claimed the necessity of a radical break from the past to create new and perform progress. Accordingly, development had to be based on “creative destruction.” Without destroying the old order, a new order would not be created; breaking the eggs was necessary to make an omelet (Harvey, 1989, p. 16). In the context of GAP, the narratives also emphasize the need to destroy old structures and even the environment in GAP region for the sake of obtaining a better future. The term “better,” however, was widely defined in material terms, as will be explained below.

6.3.2.2. Materialization of development

The pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction contributed to materialization of development, which I define as reducing development only to an increase in material and/or monetary benefits while disregarding its non-material costs, benefits, and aspects from a narrow and limited perspective. Accordingly, in a context where development is understood from a materialistic perspective, environmental destruction can be legitimized on grounds of economic gains out of energy production and irrigation. Cultural and historical destruction can be legitimized on grounds of increasing attention/attraction and tourism revenues after the semi-submerging of historical sites (e.g., Halfeti). Displacement and resettlement can be legitimized on grounds of elevated and modern living standards in new resettlement areas (e.g., Yeni Hasankeyf [New Hasankeyf Houses]). Having more cars, more luxurious cars, more houses, larger houses, more household appliances, and similar changes in consumption levels and patterns of the local population can be considered as indicators or proof of development and GAP’s success. To illustrate this tendency, a large landowner in Şanlıurfa reduced development to irrigation, irrigation to material gains, and material gains to the primary objective of GAP. In his words,

GAP is irrigation. There would be no life here [Şanlıurfa] without irrigation. ... Sometimes people say “GAP is not only about electricity and irrigation; it has a social aspect.” No, everything is linked to irrigation. ... It is the same everywhere in the world; you must create a value. ÇATOM, SODES, they are just details. Do they bring

money? What is their concrete contribution? Irrigation is a must in that sense. Irrigate first, so that you can build factories and people can work and get training there.¹¹²

Similarly, when asked about the historical sites, an expert from GAP-BKİ lamented about the “inevitability” of the flooding of Hasankeyf but justified the loss on the ground that “there was already some sort of destruction before the dam construction.” For her, “[e]ven if Ilisu Dam would not be built, very little in terms of cultural heritage would be left out of Hasankeyf anyway. Thanks to the dam, at least there [was] a huge flow of money now.”¹¹³

The conditions in GAP region in pre- and post-GAP periods were widely juxtaposed to illustrate how better off the local population became after GAP’s initiation. For instance, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa proudly expressed that “GAP increased people’s income level and changed their lives in [his] town.” For him, “there [was] an unbelievable difference between the old and new” because “they sent their kids to school, bought new cars and new tractors, and built modern houses.”¹¹⁴ Similarly, a former head of GAP Regional Directorate at DSİ in Şanlıurfa explained that when he served there, “there was not any water, the whole city stank. There was not even one restaurant. Now, everywhere [was] as green as grass. ... There [were] even luxury five-star hotels, everyone [rode] SUVs...”¹¹⁵ An expert from GAP-BKİ also underlined the magnitude of the change in Şanlıurfa in terms of how people became richer and the infrastructure became better after GAP. Accordingly, she explained that when she was in Harran in Şanlıurfa in 1995, “[people] had no bread to eat. ... They had nothing.” But, she continues,

if you go to Urfa now, you find everything. Everything! You have lake houses. ... Today a flat costs one million TL¹¹⁶ in Urfa. There used to be horse carts on the streets, today there are asphalt roads and double highways everywhere. Until last year, streets of Urfa smelled urine, now they are all shiny.¹¹⁷

The reduction of development to material gains or mainly economic and infrastructural development within GAP framework was not always perceived as a positive implication, though. As a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ explained, the realities in the field were much more complex than the simplistic picture drawn in the light of the increased material gains after the initiation of GAP. In his words,

¹¹² Personal interview, May 26, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

¹¹³ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹⁴ Personal interview, May 13, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹⁵ Personal interview, May 20, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹¹⁶ 1,000,000 TL roughly equals €250,000 as of 2017.

¹¹⁷ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

in GAP region communication [was] perfect, road network [was] great, irrigation [was] somehow going... But something [was] missing. Either we [had] a problem in connecting with them or they [had] a problem with connecting us. You [brought] everything in technical sense, but [could not] prevent femicides, abuses, child brides. Urban poverty [was] as widespread as rural poverty. ... This [meant], there [was] something we [could not] do well.¹¹⁸

Similarly, one of the former presidents of GAP-BKİ criticized GAP's "skewed" development understanding that attached more importance to material gains and little importance to qualifications and skills that would transform people into self-sufficient and rational human beings. He specifically criticized how globalization was interpreted in the overall GAP framework and stated that in GAP

globalization is misunderstood. It has different components. There is globalization on top. Then comes regionalization. Then, localization. At the bottom, atomization. At the bottom, you must be well-educated, have critical thinking, act rationally and consciously. Then, you must take initiative in local administration and actively participate in civil society. Following this, you raise your voice in the region and engage in competition. Finally, you must have a place at the global level. When you don't have any of these, indeed what you have at the end is skewed development.

The examples suggest that the pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction led to the emergence and/or consolidation of a narrow and one-dimensional interpretation of development that focused solely on the material aspect of the development process—or on economic and infrastructural development—in GAP region. Thanks to the high degree of importance both the elites and local population attached to material gains, materialization of development has also concealed numerous imperfections and contestations including, but not limited to, questions regarding power dynamics, inequalities, and winners and losers of development on the ground.

6.3.3. Summary

Development is largely associated with the provision of betterment in people's future conditions. It is concurrently associated with destruction and negative impacts it has occasionally and contextually brought. An examination of how destructive environmental, social, and humanitarian impacts of GAP were perceived crystallized that obtaining a positively transformed and better future at any cost was a strong rationale in the eyes of

¹¹⁸ Personal interview, May 5, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

GAP's architects. Rationalization of GAP as such normalized the idea that sacrifice was an absolute necessity for development. In this light, any kind of development-induced destruction or controversy was perceived as normal and legitimate. It further contributed to materialization of development in the sense that betterment or development was equated to and measured solely by material and monetary gains in a narrow and limited perspective.

6.4. Conclusion

Indeed, it is very difficult to fully unearth the true motivations and intentions of different elite groups who played different roles in the design and implementation process of GAP. Still, a careful analysis of legislative and elite discourses indicates that there are three major rationales behind GAP—under which almost countless number of individual and separate project goals could be subsumed—that created the urge and gave impetus for the initiation of the project. Accordingly, GAP had to be initiated on the grounds that the differences of GAP region and its local population had to be rectified and both the region and its local population had to be “normalized” in accordance with the standards determined by the state elites. In relation to this, the project had to be initiated on the grounds that both GAP region and the country as a whole had to “look at the West, look like the West, despite the West” and, therefore, had to follow and imitate the development trajectory that was once taken by the advanced countries in the West. Also, it had to be initiated on the grounds that development would always yield to positive outcomes and create a better future and, therefore, had to be pursued even at the expense of destruction on many fronts.

Rationalization of GAP as such was not neutral and led to various implications. The analysis indicates that the local population in GAP region—specifically the ones of Kurdish origin—have been both otherized and infantilized in the overall GAP framework. In relation to this, characterization of GAP region and its local population as such contributed to legitimization of GAP or any other development intervention from outside, even though they were often implemented in a top-down and insensitive manner. As for the Western-centrism, it ironically fuelled intense ethnocentric or Turco-centric sentiments according to which GAP was a solid proof that Turkey was “as advanced as” or even “more advanced” than the West and that the West was actually a rival or even an enemy who was “jealous” of the contributions of GAP. Also, legitimization of GAP normalized its destructive impacts. This also led to the emergence or ossification of an understanding that limited development with economic and infrastructural development and equated development solely with material gains. This understanding not only overlooked the drawbacks of the development process,

but also excluded the possibilities and opportunities of development in political, social, and cultural spheres in addition to economic development.

Rationalization of GAP on these three major pillars and their implications indicate that, despite the flexible character and amorphous structure of the project, modernist interpretation of development has remained prevalent and well-ingrained in the overall project framework. The project has been operationalized on dichotomies between backward and developed, traditional and modern, ignorant and educated, the other and the self, abnormal and normal, and the Eastern and the Western. Development has been conceived as an evolutionist paradigm and the project has been expected to catalyze the evolution of the traditional into modern in a teleological manner. Western development experience has been taken as a model to emulate and the West has almost always been praised, even within the country. Great importance was attached to the domination of the physical and human nature at any cost in accordance with techno-scientific principles and confidence in linear and irreversible progress. Also, the project has been highly authoritarian and elite-driven, as the local population was often the spectator, not the actor of the development process with their limited agency, visibility, and impact. In that sense, it can be argued that no matter how certain characteristics and governance of GAP have undergone changes and how multiple, amorphous, and loosely-defined GAPs have emerged over the years (see Chapter 5), the principles on which the project was built remain to be heavily based on modernist interpretation of development and its derivations. Also, the overall approach of the state in the design and implementation process of GAP resembled a “development regime” (Ludden, 1992, as cited in Li, 2007, pp. 15-16) because apparently ensuring development and progress was identified as a higher goal, a “people” was designated to improve its conditions, an ideology of science was adopted to accelerate and measure progress, and state power was used by self-declared leaders/elites to achieve their development aspirations. In addition, the three major rationales behind GAP contributed to the sustenance of the “mystique” of GAP and its “sanctified” status, as the higher goals of fixing the economic and social life in GAP region, bringing standards up to the level of the West, and making sacrifices for a greater good allowed (1) the representation of GAP as a vital and noble cause which no one should object, (2) its characterization as a neutral undertaking that would supposedly benefit all and benefit all equally in all contexts, (3) the justification of both the means and ends of GAP without being subjected to public debate or deliberation, and (4) obscuration of the problematic and often political aspects of development-cum-GAP while highlighting its certain rosy and positive contributions in a highly selective manner.

7. THE (POST-)POLITICS OF GAP: SOURCES AND FORMS OF DEPOLITICIZATION IN THE OVERALL GAP FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I discuss how GAP and the concept of depoliticization have related to each other and examine what kind of discursive and material practices have constituted the sources of depoliticization in the overall GAP framework. As noted in Chapter 2, depoliticization does not refer to the total removal of politics from social life or vanishing of political power altogether. It does not refer to a one-directional, one-dimensional, and irreversible process, either. Therefore, depoliticization in the context of GAP should not be understood simply as a terminal stage in which issues, institutions, or people become fully depoliticized and stay as such forever. Rather, it should be interpreted as a complex, fluid, and dynamic process in which there is also—and always—a room for politicization or repoliticization. In that sense, the claim that GAP has had depoliticizing implications does not automatically imply that it completely depoliticized “everything it touched” and never played a role in politicization of certain issues within the project and Turkish political landscape. It rather implies that GAP has contributed to depoliticization of various phenomena in different ways while various other politicizing and repoliticizing forces also simultaneously existed in the project framework and influenced how the project was governed and development was “done” on the ground. Furthermore, just as it was the case with the analyses of the historical trajectory of GAP (Chapter 5) and major rationales behind GAP (Chapter 6), in a way depoliticization is “in the eye of the beholder;” how one defines, identifies, and interprets depoliticizing implications is not absolute but rather subjective. As Anaïs Nin said, “We see things not as they are, but as we are” (as cited in Booth, 1997, p. 88). For this reason, even though the sources of depoliticization identified here emerged from GAP-related legislative and elite discourses, there might also exist different, even opposite interpretations of depoliticization.

The chapter comprises six sections. In the first five sections, I examine five major sources of depoliticization in the overall GAP framework, which I identify as (1) the employment of technical language, (2) the dominance of experts and expert knowledge, (3) the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character, (4) the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, and (5) the extension of the visibility and authority of the state in the guise of GAP. In the final section, I provide a summary of the chapter and make a general assessment of the implications of the examined sources.

7.1. The Employment of Technical Language

GAP had a purely technical and engineering focus in its initial stages (see Chapter 5). Even though the degree of technicity has changed after the widening of GAP’s focus and scope

over time, the technical aspect of the project never ceased to exist. In a broad sense, GAP's technical focus referred to its technical, engineering, and so-called non-political components such as dam and infrastructure construction, irrigation, and energy production. The analysis of legislative and elite discourses indicates that the language employed by the architects of GAP to narrate its technicity and recount its size, scope, latest situation, achievements, and future prospects was highly technical, too. It was loaded with quantitative data, statistical "facts" and figures, technical terms, and professional jargon. While this language was indeed comprehensible for experts in a specific field, it was often incomprehensible for laypersons. Especially jargon created "artificial barriers to understanding and participation and thus generate[d] obscurity rents that the insiders [could] appropriate" (Buitter, 2010, p. 223). To put it differently, this language was a typical example of writings on development which, according to Crush (1995, p. 4), were "jargon-ridden," "hackneyed," "exclusionary," "highly stylized," "repetitive," and full of "metaphor, image, allusion, fantasy, and rhetoric." Still, employing a technical language had certain advantages. For instance, in the context of Turkish domestic politics, politicians often relied on statistical figures to emphasize their political performances and achievements, as numbers allowed them to sound more credible and appear more practical and skillful before the electorate. In general, the electorate also found it more convenient to hear about their performances in numbers and favored politicians "of action." Technical language was convincing and effective because numbers were conceived as neutral, scientific, indisputable, and non-political; there was a wide consensus that they reflected "absolute truths" and "true nature" of different phenomena (Pool & Grover, 2006, p. 377). In this regard, it is telling that a Turkish politician with an engineering background stated in 1988 that "[b]ecause we speak with numbers, it is easy for us to persuade the other side. We are not commentators, we belong to a group who speaks with numbers. We do not resemble a lawyer, an economist or a bureaucrat (Göle, 1998, p. 15).

I argue that technical language had depoliticizing implications because it reduced political, economic, social, and cultural processes into technical processes that could supposedly be measured and expressed in quantitative terms. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Li (2007, p. 7) emphasized that issues that were rendered technical were at the same time rendered non-political. Their political, economic, and social nature was often excluded in diagnoses and prescriptions. Instead, science, neutrality, and rationality filled the vacuum. However, this sterile perspective risked overlooking micro-level, unquantifiable, and idiosyncratic problems with complex and multi-dimensional social and humanitarian aspects. It further risked reducing complexity into simplicity and heterogeneity into homogeneity. I

will demonstrate in what ways employment of technical language in the overall GAP framework contributed to depoliticization in the following section.

7.1.1. Isolation of Social and Human Factors

The analysis indicates that the employment of technical language led to the overlooking of social and human factors in GAP framework and the construction of a reality in which the local population did not exist or have any kind of identity or agency. GAP-induced problems (see Chapter 4, 5 & 6) were often narrated as if they were totally detached and isolated from political, social, humanitarian, and environmental concerns. However, such problems were actually far from being managerial problems only; processes such as resettlement involved political and transformative acts that could help the creation of a new type of citizens with different worldviews, cultures, and ways of life (Reyes-Gaskin, 2005, p. 70). In addition, it was impossible to calculate and quantify costs and benefits of such processes, as their inherent elements such as psychological trauma and cultural shock were not technical or numerical issues as often presented (Pool & Grover, 2006, p. 389). To illustrate how social and human factors were isolated by technical language specifically in the initial stages of GAP, Süleyman Demirel explained the significance of numbers in the context of development projects as follows:

In engineering projects, three questions must be answered based on numbers. One thing needs to be done, because it is useful. One thing needs to be done this way, because it is the optimum way to do it. One thing needs to be done now, because loss of time brings loss of interest; that thing is required now. ... Without knowing these points for sure, initiating large-scale projects that require large-scale investments might end up with a waste of resources and time (Turgut, 2000, pp. 291-292).

Similar purely technical, rational, and arguably dehumanized perspectives were also prevalent in more recent GAP-related discourses. For instance, in 2014, a planner who worked closely with GAP-BKİ evaluated the controversy around Ilısu Dam as follows:

Water in Tigris is so low during the summer that you can even cross one side to another without getting your feet wet. It is a river, yet nothing flows in summer and you try to produce energy out of this flow. To produce that energy, you lose vast agricultural lands. Is it economical? How valuable are these lost lands? It was not the case with Birecik Dam but here your loss is terrible. Is it worth the loss? Nobody talks about this aspect. Everybody talks about Hasankeyf, cultural heritage, and stuff.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Personal interview, April 3, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

As a further example, the language through which the proof of “concrete and important progress in [GAP] region’s development indicators” (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 18) was expressed in *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* was also highly technical. To illustrate, the progress or “Developments within the context of GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)” was expressed through quantitative data obtained from Turkish Statistical Institute in a purely technical and homogenizing manner (p. 18). The increase in gross value added per capita in GAP region between 2007 and 2011 was explained without any context as to which segment of the population was better off, how and why specifically this segment was better off, or at the expense of whom this segment was better off. Instead, it was only stated that

Gross value added per capita in the region was \$3,660 in 2007. Even though it increased to \$4,641 in 2011, the region ranks among the lowest in national gross value added distribution. The average gross value added per capita in the region is 44.3% and 50.2% of Turkey’s average in 2007 and 2011 respectively (p. 21).

These examples suggest that technical language contributed to the construction of an alternative reality in which GAP region was an independent and self-standing entity devoid of a population, interactions within population, interaction between population and state, and similar power relations. These elements were either reduced to numbers or neglected altogether. In this alternative vision, the local population was portrayed as a monolithic and homogenized entity despite GAP region was in fact one of the most heterogeneous regions in Turkey on many fronts (see Chapter 4). Socio-economic indicators expressed solely in quantitative terms provided no or only limited insights regarding their problems on the ground. They fell short on explaining why poverty has been widespread specifically in that region, who benefited and who lost after the initiation of GAP, how GAP had an impact on reducing or worsening intra-regional or intra-provincial inequalities, or how GAP had an impact on the reconfiguration of power dynamics and social tensions among ethnically Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic population or religiously Sunni and Alevi population. In that sense, technical language was narrow, reductionist, and one-dimensional. The examples further suggest that isolation of social and human factors and their reduction to numbers allowed the designers and implementers of GAP to interpret and redefine political and power-laden problems in accordance with their interests and selectively present only rosy aspects of these problems or outcomes in a sterile manner. A related issue, the question as to how technical language concealed and justified controversy and contestation, is discussed below.

7.1.2. Concealment and Justification of Controversial Policy Decisions and Outcomes

As mentioned above, technical language has the power to convincingly present only one specific and often rosy aspect of an inherently political problem and conceal its thorny and contested aspects. This power derives from the idea that numbers “do not lie” or “cannot be wrong.” Thanks to this functional aspect of the technical language, arguably the designers and implementers of GAP could selectively present whatever the local population would be content to hear and hide whatever they would be concerned to hear. It also allowed them to overemphasize the achievements of GAP while remaining silent on its drawbacks and negative impacts or to decide what to make visible and what to render invisible. For instance, according to an inspector from DSİ, “dams [were] national resources. You [built] them only once, their operation costs [were] low. You [did] not borrow foreign currency. They [were] very profitable, very clean, and serving to tourism purposes. They acclimatize[d] and help[ed] vegetation.”¹²⁰ This praise, however, was completely silent on how the very same dams carried the risk of bringing about a serious salinization problem and making the lands arid, as they actually did in GAP region. Similarly, Mahmut Dündar, the then 16th Regional Director at DSİ, praised Ilisu Dam for it would support a 1,200 MW power station, irrigate 120,000 ha of land, generate 980 million TL¹²¹ per year, and create 156,000 jobs (“Ilisu Barajı’nda”, 2015). However, apart from mentioning the planned forestation of 278 ha of land and plantation of 40,000 almond and 15,000 pistachio trees, he made no reference to how it would also “submerge Hasankeyf and at least 289 protected archeological sites” (TBMM, 2007b, p. 141) and potentially destroy the livelihoods of up to 78,000 people (Ayboğa, 2009). Dündar further explained that “those who [were] affected by dam construction [would] be provided a new house with high standards, new settlements with higher life standards, technical and social infrastructure” (“GAP’ta hayat”, 2014). However, there was again silence on how dams could also decrease resettled people’s income levels, disengage them from production systems, disintegrate their community structure, and change their cultural identity (Güler & Savaş, 2011, pp. 201-202). As Eguavoen et al. (2013, p. 3) argued in the context of adaptation, conceptualizing salinization as a solely environmental problem or relocation as a technical issue with a few social challenges on the side of the affected communities that could be solved through the application of quick and

¹²⁰ Personal interview, May 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹²¹ 980,000,000 TL roughly equals €245,000,000 as of 2017.

straightforward technological and managerial fixes concealed the normative and authoritarian character of this development discourse.

Technical language also contributed to justification of controversial policy decisions through making references to technical or natural “necessities” and similar obscure and abstract phenomena. The objective here was to remain distant from the “messy” or political aspect of policy decisions and pass the blame, responsibility, and transaction costs to other groups, organizations, and/or abstract phenomena to reduce risks (Foster, Kerr, & Byrne, 2014, p. 3). To exemplify this mechanism, in a discussion regarding the negative impacts of GAP, one of the vice presidents of GAP-BKİ confessed that he “had some regrets in the past.” However, he also underlined that “when [we] look[ed] at the bigger picture, [dams had to] be built. Turkey [was] an energy-dependent country. There [were] also people who contacted [them] and [said] the water [was] flowing in vain.”¹²² In other words, he justified GAP-induced problems through placing the responsibility to phenomena which neither he nor his institutions had control over such as the ambiguous notion of “the bigger picture,” Turkey’s energy dependency, and demands and calls of a group of anonymous people. Similarly, an inspector from DSİ confidently stated that they “must absolutely build large dams” based on the following technical explanation:

Water flows incessantly from the Alps in France. Climactic conditions in Europe and the Middle East are different. Their precautions and our precautions are different. It is very important to ensure water security and secure water supply in semi-arid climate. Rain is also an important factor, but rainwater should not flow to the sea in vain.¹²³

It is also noteworthy that, when asked about the alleged role of irrigation associations in worsening inequality (see Chapter 5), the same inspector from DSİ underlined that as long as associations functioned well and helped them collect the fees efficiently, he did not care about how they worked. In his words, “I cannot complain about conformism in this matter. I don’t care about human rights and democracy. It is not our job to do something about it.”¹²⁴ This “conscious indifference” of the responsible institutions, their reluctance to engage in political struggles, and inclination to transfer responsibility were further explained by a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ as follows:

At first sight, GAP runs successfully. But nobody looks at what is going on behind the scenes. Yes, you carry out land consolidation, but do you pay attention to ecological

¹²² Personal interview, May 29, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

¹²³ Personal interview, May 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹²⁴ Personal interview, May 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

corridors? To women's land ownership? They are losing their rights. Land consolidation ruins land heritage everywhere. GAP-BKİ knows these very well but remains aloof. The reason is, these are difficult issues, you must engage in conflict. You must be present in the field and fight. Instead, they give away free seeds. DSI's works are great, but only in terms of engineering. What about their social aspects?¹²⁵

The examples suggest that technical language not only concealed and justified controversial policy decisions and their outcomes, but also helped the architects of the project take a neutral position amidst controversy and keep their distance to political contestation. In addition, justification through technical language engendered and/or reinforced the idea that the techno-scientific interpretation of development was the only right way of practicing development, as will be briefly discussed below.

7.1.3. Characterization of Techno-Scientific Development as “the Only Game in Town”

Technical language characterized the techno-scientific interpretation of development as indisputable. Because development defined as such was supposedly the right way to follow and emulate, it had to be “the only game in town.” As Vento (2017, p. 80) also argued, such projects or megaprojects “played a crucial role in the establishment of a consensual post-democracy by turning the focus from ideological struggle to technocracy and by being the centre of a populist discourse that foreclosed ideological debate” and distracted attention “from social antagonism and contributing to mentally blocking the possibility of alternatives for entrepreneurialism.” In that sense, techno-science not only overshadowed and discredited alternative, homegrown, and grassroots development strategies and practices, but also nurtured the emergence of a homogenizing one-size-fits-all development approach in the overall GAP framework. To illustrate, the development trajectory of the West was taken as a model on the grounds that only the West possessed the science, technology, and skills required for development (see Chapter 6). For this reason, the past approaches and practices of the West were borrowed with no or only little modification to apply in GAP's context. However, this approach missed the fact that, for instance, TVA, Tennessee, and the US bore little resemblance to GAP, Southeastern Anatolia, and Turkey respectively. In contrast with the ethnic difference of the local population in GAP region from the majority of the population in the country, “the citizens of the Tennessee Valley were conformed American citizens who spoke English and had basically the same customs and culture as the rest of the country” (Nestor, 1996, p. 75). It further missed the fact that taking the regional development

¹²⁵ Personal interview, May 5, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

agency model in the UK as a basis to design agencies in GAP region (Karasu, 2015, p. 275) or taking irrigation systems in France as a model for irrigation networks¹²⁶ would not yield the best and expected results. Even though these were legitimate questions, characterization of the idea and practice of techno-scientific development as indisputable and unrivaled left little or no room for debate and contestation. For this reason, the viability, practicality, and productivity of such approaches often remained unquestioned and unchallenged.

7.1.4. Summary

Even though its degree changed contextually, GAP has always had a technical focus. The language employed to narrate the components of this focus was dominantly technical as well. I argue that the employment and at times overuse of technical language contributed to depoliticization in term of reducing contestation and essentially political problems into simple and easy-to-solve technical processes and problems that could be addressed through replicable techno-scientific formulas. It further contributed to depoliticization in terms of concealing the negative aspects of controversial policy decisions and their outcomes and justifying them on the grounds of the supposed indisputability and reliability of technicity and numbers. The so-called indisputability of techno-science was also depoliticizing in terms of presenting only one “right” way of development and closing off the debate regarding alternative approaches. I will discuss how the dominance of experts and expert knowledge in GAP’s context contributed to depoliticization in a similar manner in the following section.

7.2. The Dominance of Experts and Expert Knowledge

As it has also been the case with many other elite-driven development projects that were heavily shaped by the tenets of modernization theories, experts had the upper hand in steering GAP’s pace and direction with their knowledge and skills. As Bağış (1989, p. 217) underlined, “no matter how perfect the plans [were], their success depend[ed] on the success of the people who put them into practice” and well-educated and skilled technical and managerial personnel would “have a more important role in development efforts of [GAP] region than do very high fixed asset investments.” In line with this statement, the analysis of legislative and elite discourses indicated that the idea that experts were superior to non-experts and expert knowledge was more reliable than local and indigenous knowledge was highly prevalent in the design and implementation process of GAP. The spread and consolidation of this idea over time arguably led to the widening of the existing gaps between experts and non-experts, elites and the local population, and those who produced and

¹²⁶ Personal interview, May 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey

consumed knowledge. This situation elevated experts to a dominant position and provided them with an unquestionable authority. Before elaborating on how this dominance had depoliticizing implications, some of the significant characteristics of experts will be discussed below.

7.2.1. Distinct Characteristics of Experts vis-à-vis Non-Experts

As Crewe and Harrison (1998, p. 92) emphasized, experts and non-experts were not considered equal because the former was by definition assumed to be better than the latter in at least one respect, which was having greater expertise. Parpart (1995, p. 223, as cited in Kothari, 2002) also indicated that

Western scientific knowledge was presented as universally valid and consequently applicable to all, but not everyone qualified as an expert. Increasingly, only the “properly” initiated could claim this title, and it is these “experts” who came to play a pivotal role in the process of collecting, controlling and transferring scientific knowledge between North and South (pp. 47-48).

In other words, it required a certain level of education, training, or expertise for non-experts to penetrate into the mental and intellectual world of the experts and make sense of their ideas, unless experts made an extra effort to express their ideas in an adjusted and comprehensible form for non-experts. For this reason, expert knowledge—which was occasionally used interchangeably with technical knowledge—arguably elevated the experts to a supposedly higher and privileged position on the grounds that they, with their skills and expertise, had to be the ones who were authorized to have a say on others’ lives and formulate and implement policies on their behalf. Their primary goal in this matter was to improve and steer the capacity of lives for action (Li, 2007, pp. 4-5). Anecdotes below illustrate this hierarchical relationship between experts and the local population and how they at times spoke past each other in the context of GAP. For instance, a head of a department from the Ministry of Development provided the following example regarding the working principles of experts in his institution:

When we go to the region, we want to implement some projects. For instance, projects about tourism infrastructure. We always make our evaluations from the perspective of tourists. I say there are no good hotels in Şanlıurfa, think of what tourists would like to do, say let’s improve the front façade of the streets or let’s renovate the castle... But in fact the residents of Şanlıurfa do not have any other place

to spend their leisure time except Balıklıgöl. We do not see these things with this perspective.¹²⁷

In another occasion, when asked about her encounters with the local population in GAP region, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ recounted the following conversation:

When I first went to Urfa, I saw women having their healthy teeth pulled and replaced by golden teeth. One day, I asked one of them: “For God’s sake, why do you do this to yourself?” She turned to me and said: “Why do you wear earrings?” I said, “it is fashion.” She replied back: “If yours is fashion, this is also fashion. Here’s fashion.”¹²⁸

Especially the last example suggests that the hierarchy between experts and the local population gave the former the idea that it was their job to meddle and correct the supposedly wrong and unacceptable behavior of the latter, even at the level of everyday life. This perspective was self-centric and otherizing as much as it was hierarchical. At the expense of generalization, the examples further suggest that experts and non-experts hardly understood each other’s habits and worldviews despite the effort and good intentions. They also indicate that the roles and duties of experts were not given, but rather constructed and self-assumed.

In addition to enjoying privileged positions, the analysis further indicates that experts—specifically the ones with an engineering background—have always had high self-confidence and self-awareness of their expertise and skills. Especially civil engineers often reinforced the technical development discourse and dominated the water sector and authorities (Aggestam & Sundell, 2016). Given their privileged and powerful positions that enabled them to wield political power, “it [was] no coincidence that leading politicians and in some cases presidents have been drawn from the ranks of civil engineers” (Laurie, 2005, p. 540, as cited in Aggestam & Sundell, 2016). As Göle (1998, p. 9) also noted, engineers have moved beyond their roles in the production processes and championed models for social development and change on the grounds that engineering could be applied to address social issues and rationality could be extended at the level of the whole population, which corresponded to “social engineering.” Especially the “obsession” of non-Western societies with development has given engineers in these societies larger missions compared to their counterparts in the West and allowed them to position themselves as the spokespersons and representatives of industrialization against capitalism, rationality and positivism against

¹²⁷ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹²⁸ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

traditions, and social engineering against liberal thought (p. 13). To illustrate these phenomena in the context of GAP, in a conference on “Large Investment Projects” organized by TMMOB in 1986, Süleyman Demirel, as a civil engineer by training stated that

Turkey’s current engineers, technicians, development experts ... face[d] the duty of preventing the disasters caused by rivers and utilizing their prosperity for Turkey. At times, the engineer [had to] put golden handcuffs on [Euphrates and Tigris]. The goal of all these [was] to ... irrigate the land and extract abundance ... create job opportunities ... protect nature, embellish the country (Turgut, 2000, p. 329).

Similarly, in TMMOB’s “Symposium on Technical Services in GAP” in 1993, Olcay Ünver, the then President of GAP-BKİ and also a civil engineer by training expressed that

whatever the definition and scope of development, in historical perspective it always concerned itself with engineering as a principle element, and most of the time the largest element. For this reason, we, the engineers, as people who typically prepare[d] decisions on development, specif[ied] alternatives, and sometimes directly [made] decisions, assumed the most important roles in development projects and activities (TMMOB, 1993, p. 11).

Also, apparently experts used their knowledge, skills, and expertise as a leverage to retain their privileged positions in the overall GAP framework. For instance, a former deputy undersecretary from DPT acknowledged the dominant role the experts from DPT played in the initial stages of the project, but at the same time criticized the fact that

DPT experts were acquiring knowledge and expertise to the extent possible by their own efforts and initiatives. The more they knew, the more respected and in demand they were as sectoral experts in Planning and Budget Committee at TBMM. For this reason, they were keeping their knowledge for themselves and not sharing with the others, just to make others dependent on themselves. The “expert” title was very vital. This was one of the reasons why so many people with DPT background became MPs and ministers in Özal’s cabinet in the 1980s.¹²⁹

It should be noted that experts have also engaged in self-criticism about their privileged positions and “patronizing attitudes” in certain contexts. To exemplify, also in TMMOB’s “Symposium on Technical Services in GAP,” an expert openly discussed their positions in GAP and stated that they “as ‘the educated’ people, [were] not above people and [did] not know more. [They] need[ed] to acknowledge this and abandon elitist approaches”

¹²⁹ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

(TMMOB, 1993, p. 361). Similarly, Kâmrân İnan, the former Minister of State in charge of GAP between 1987 and 1991 underlined in 2000 that “Turkey [was] the worst administered country in the world” on the grounds that it “[was] an empire of bureaucracy” and “bureaucracy perceive[d] itself superior to people” (TCMB, 2000, p. 13). Also in 2000, Ahmet Saltık, the then Group Administrator of Social Planning at GAP-BKİ criticized his own position in GAP’s implementation process on the following grounds:

Generally we bureaucrats, I am also a bureaucrat, know better and look down on people. Unfortunately this is becoming more obvious when you go to east from west. GAP-BKİ’s plans, programs, attitude and behavior should be softer and more inclusive. When we fail to do this and continue to look down on people, people listen to us, thank us, and then go on their own ways as we leave (GAP-BKİ, 2000b, p. 22).

The examples suggest that distinct characteristics of experts in the forms of having greater expertise and self-perceived superiority normalized the hierarchy between experts and non-experts and tipped the power balance in favor of experts. In the context of GAP, this imbalance designated which actors could/could not speak, what topics could/could not be spoken about, how topics could/could not be spoken about, and so on. This last point on the speaker position and how it had depoliticizing implications will be explained below.

7.2.2. Exclusion and Silencing of Non-Experts in the Overall GAP Framework

The analysis revealed that there were many instances where experts and non-experts could neither speak the same language nor cooperate in an equal footing. The dominance of the experts allowed them to express themselves without much difficulty and have the upper hand in decision-making process, but prevented non-experts from raising their voices and concerns without restraints. Non-experts often faced difficulties in participating in debates and decision-making processes as well as negotiating their demands in these processes due to the barrier constructed by the incomprehensibility, complexity, and “elitism” of expert knowledge. Their lack of capacity, skills, and expertise led to the limitation of their channels of expression and negotiation or even their total exclusion from the process altogether. This imbalanced situation also justified the top-down and one-sided character of development interventions regardless of how human-focused or participatory GAP has allegedly become over time. Even though partnerships were often acknowledged as more flexible, bottom-up, and participatory and less hierarchical models, in practice generally a limited number of experts or similar elite groups retained the upper hand in decision-making process and non-experts were included in the process at the very late stages or even after the decisions were already made (Vento, 2017, p. 71). To illustrate how this dominance constituted a barrier for

the local population, in a meeting where GAP-BKİ representatives and the local population discussed the shift from central planning to participatory planning, the statement of Nezir Gürcan, the then Mayor of the town of Kurtalan in Siirt in 2000, was as follows:

With all due respect for honorable administrators here, I want to say something. They prepared a truly perfect program. It is scientific, it is contemporary but only 10% or 15% of the audience can understand this language. We invited our mukhtars,¹³⁰ too, and 75-80% of them did not understand even the word “sustainable development.” If we are organizing this meeting for mukhtars and other representatives, we better make it more understandable (GAP-BKİ, 2000d, p. 24).

Similarly, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa underlined that formal meetings under the banners of “symposia,” “seminar” or “workshop” were counterproductive due to discouraging the local population to attend these occasions and share their ideas and experiences. On this point, he regretfully and critically stated that “when we were in symposia, no real addressee was present. Who [was] the real addressee? The farmer. Farmers were not the ones who listened to us. Instead we, the ones who wore suit and ties, lectured each other.”¹³¹ In this regard, Nestor (1996, p. 42) also notes that DSI created the Management, Operation, and Maintenance Branch to provide local farmers with instructions, guidance, and consultancy regarding irrigation techniques and crop planting in 1993. However, the outcomes in Diyarbakır were disappointing because, in the words of an engineer, “We give seminars, but no one comes.” In relation to the exclusion of non-experts from debates and negotiations, another outcome of this dominance was their “scapegoating” for various destructive impacts of GAP, as will be explained below.

7.2.3. Scapegoating Non-Experts Through Transferring Blame and Responsibility

Simplistic binaries between experts and non-experts, modern and traditional, or developed and underdeveloped always helped the former groups in these binaries conceal social processes, simplify complexities to technical issues, and formulate straightforward explanations for failure (Crewe & Harrison, 1998, p. 46). As mentioned before, depoliticization was also concerned with formulating an explanation for failure and transferring of blame and responsibility. The analysis shows that the dominance of experts and expert knowledge also contributed to depoliticization in terms of transferring the blame on non-experts and insulating politicians, bureaucrats, and experts from policy failures and

¹³⁰ The head or chief of a village or neighborhood.

¹³¹ Personal interview, May 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

unforeseen and often negative consequences of GAP. Specifically local farmers and villagers were widely blamed for their so-called incompetency and incapability of following the “correct,” scientific, and modern guidelines for agriculture. They were often held responsible for destructive ecological impacts of GAP such as waterlogging and soil salinization. To illustrate, a freelance civil engineer who worked in GAP region complained about villagers and “uninformed” farmers due to the fact that “they could not internalize technological irrigation. They thought that the more they irrigated the land, the more they would produce. Thus, they brought about salinization.”¹³² Similarly, when asked about the flooding of Hasankeyf due to the construction of Ilisu Dam, an expert from GAP-BKİ explained that except a few natural caves, Hasankeyf would be “gone anyway” in terms of cultural assets because “the nature was causing destruction, but also the villagers were destroying the historical artifacts, removing stones to demarcate their fields, using columns in the foundations of their houses in accordance with their low level of consciousness.”¹³³ It is noteworthy that such accusatory and sterile approaches towards non-experts were criticized in GAP region. For instance, the critique of a wealthy landowner in Şanlıurfa towards DSI on this matter was as follows:

There are grave mistakes in irrigation. ... DSI employees attribute everything to excessive irrigation of farmers but it is not the only reason for the rise in groundwater and salinization. ... Many fields still lack drainage systems. Plus, open canal system. ... It is a disaster, a huge waste of water. DSI knows these [problems] very well. At the end of the day, it is not the locals or farmers who designed this project.¹³⁴

The examples suggest that the expert knowledge allowed experts to not only transfer blame and responsibility to non-experts for their supposed incapability, but also provide a simple and short-cut explanation for failure without being obliged to deal with their root causes. This requires engaging in political struggle and distorting power dynamics and, therefore, is often highly unfavorable and challenging in the eyes of the experts.

7.2.4. Summary

Experts have played crucial roles in GAP’s design and implementation process. They were considered different from non-experts for their greater expertise and knowledge, privileged positions, high self-confidence, and self-awareness of their skills. The hierarchy between experts and non-experts, however, had depoliticizing implications. The dominating role of

¹³² Personal interview, May 20, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹³³ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹³⁴ Personal interview, May 30, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

the experts in this hierarchy reconfigured the power dynamics in their favor and lowered the chances of non-experts to raise their concerns and negotiate their (often political) demands through conventional channels. It also facilitated the insulation of experts from blame and responsibility of policy failures and GAP-induced destructive impacts. The question as to how the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character contributed to depoliticization in the context of GAP will be discussed in the next section.

7.3. The Neoliberalization of GAP and “Biopoliticization” of its Character

7.3.1. Neoliberal Transformation of the Turkish Economy and Neoliberal Face of GAP

GAP has never been totally exempt from the influence of neoliberalism (see Chapter 4 & 5). The neoliberal transformation of the Turkish economy was initiated in the early 1980s by Turgut Özal, who was the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Economy and responsible for implementing IMF’s SAP between 1980 and 1982, Prime Minister between 1983 and 1989, and President between 1989 and 1993 until his sudden death (Scheumann et al., 2014, p. 135). Özal was often referred to as the “Turkey branch” of Thatcherism, Reaganomics, or New Deal. There is little question as to how his vision and initiatives facilitated and gave impetus to the opening and market orientation of the Turkish economy. However, his leadership also had negative impacts on social welfare, income inequality, and rule of law. In the words of Pamuk (2008, p. 288), Özal had a tendency to “govern by personal decisions and decrees” and “underestimate the importance of rule of law and a strong legal infrastructure for the effective operation of a market economy. His rather relaxed attitude towards the rule of law had devastating long-term consequences” including the increasing level of corruption since the 1990s. Neoliberalization had significant impacts on the management of energy markets and formulation of water policy. Some notable changes were liberalization and deregulation of energy sector to deal with the financial bottlenecks and attract foreign investment (Scheumann et al., 2014, pp. 134-135) and, as mentioned in Chapter 5, privatization of irrigation water management in the early 1990s through the establishment of irrigation associations with the guidance and financial support of the World Bank (Kibaroğlu, Başkan, & Alp, 2009, p. 287). Also, BOT model was introduced to the energy sector and later on modified also to include other sectors. It allowed private sector to generate, transmit, and distribute energy or construct, operate, and manage infrastructure projects such as large dams, HPPs, and irrigations networks (p. 289). The country’s neoliberal transformation gained momentum in the 1990s and 2000s after the intensified interaction between Turkey and international institutions such as IMF, the World Bank, OECD, the EU, and private national and international corporations. The single party rule of

AKP since 2002 under the strong leadership and control of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was the Prime Minister between 2003 and 2014 and has been the current President since 2014, has been the continuation of this decades-long process, which was not at all surprising given AKP's—or Erdoğan's—political ideology, political agenda, and economic, social, and cultural policies heavily influenced by neoliberal principles (see Balkan, Balkan, & Öncü, 2015 and Özden, Akça, & Bekmen, 2017 for detailed analyses in regard to AKP's neoliberal policies).

Turkey's neoliberal transformation heavily influenced the governance of GAP, too. Even though numerous concepts associated with neoliberalism such as public-private partnership, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, foreign investment, and market integration were embedded—but dormant—in GAP, the degree of their significance increased over time and they became the leitmotif of the project. To illustrate, GAP was presented as a private sector-oriented and investor-friendly project as early as 1989. In his book, which was sponsored by a private bank named İnterbank, Bağış (1989) described the prospects of GAP as follows:

There will be surely lucrative investment opportunities in agriculture and animal husbandry, in manufacturing industry, tourism and banking, alongside construction operations that will turn the region into a building site over the next 15 years. ... Demand for banking and financial services will no doubt increase in line with the booming economic activity in the region. Therefore, the present financial structure, dominated by state banks, is expected to be replaced with a new one characterized by a greater presence of private financial institutions. The region will gradually attract private investments in education and medical services with its expanding towns and growing per capita income (p. 222).

The injection of sustainability, participation, social and human development into GAP in the 1990s was also partially linked to the neoliberalization of the project. According to Özok-Gündoğan (2005, pp. 100-101), especially the studies conducted on the social dimension of GAP (see Chapter 5) deserved a special focus for providing the architects of the project with ample opportunities to collect detailed information about the local population and problematize the processes they went through such as settlement, migration, population growth, education, health, and hygiene. Problematization at this large scale was an indicator of the state's will to intervene and administer life at the level of populations. In other words, it indicated that GAP was given a biopolitical character, as it came to be concerned with how lives of individuals and populations could be supported, maintained, and enhanced as well as how they could be indexed, sorted, and arranged (Clark, 2013, p. 839). In addition, neoliberal

transformation of the economy changed the means of how social services were provided to the local population; NGOs, professional associations, and community centers began to take significant roles in addition to government institutions. This change increased the gravity of market orientation over bureaucracy (Özok-Gündoğan, 2005, p. 104).

The analysis indicates that the degree of GAP's neoliberal character significantly increased from the 2000s onwards. In this period, it was common among the political elites to emphasize the importance of foreign capital flow to make GAP the "power engine" of Turkey's development, especially at a time when Turkey became a "foreign capital paradise" (TBMM, 2007a, p. 76). It was also common to underline the necessity of public-private investments supported with economic incentives in order for GAP region to "take off" (TBMM, 2012a, p. 60). Similarly, from the perspective of an MP who represented Diyarbakır, it was envisioned that GAP region would "become the most important textile center in the world" with its labor-intensive production with low wages, as "China and Southeast Asia [were] losing their advantage of cheap labor."¹³⁵ Also, in the form of a critique, an MP who represented Hakkâri explained that

GAP brought irrigation to Urfa and everybody cultivated cotton, fruits, vegetables, the region became an export base, then the products were appreciated in value and people became richer... There [was] no such thing. Land values in some cities were intentionally increased through planning and zoning. That was the case in Urfa, too. Today, there [were] streets where the poor [could not] enter. That [was] an intentional state policy, introduction of wild capitalism into the region. This [was] a skewed development policy and social engineering, an attempt to shape a new identity.¹³⁶

It was also telling that many large private companies began to engage in various projects to ensure corporate social responsibility since the early 2000s. For instance, as the Turkey branch of Ronald McDonald's House Charities, McDonald's Children's Foundation (*McDonald's Çocuk Vakfı*) funded "Healthy Eye and Success in Education Project" between 2003 and 2016 (GAP-BKİ, 2017b, p. 95), PepsiCo provided financial support to "GAP-Cheetos Children Development Centres Project" between 2006 and 2016 (p. 60), Philips supported "Little Hearts Project" in 2015 (p. 95), and more recently Unilever—along with the Government of Kuwait—funded the project entitled "Support to Adaptation of Syrian Women Living in Southeast Anatolia to Social and Economic Life" between 2015 and 2017 (p. 95).

¹³⁵ Personal interview, May 7, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹³⁶ Personal interview, May 7, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

The examples above suggest that the neoliberal transformation of the Turkish political economy since the 1980s and the neoliberalization of GAP went hand in hand. One of the outcomes of the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character was also the redefinition of how an ideal citizen had to think and behave like. More emphasis was put on the need for this ideal citizen to embrace a rational, self-sufficient, and entrepreneurial attitude to adapt to the changed conditions of GAP region, as will be discussed below.

7.3.2. Mentality Change Towards Becoming “Homo Economicus”

As Pınarcıoğlu and Işık (2004, p. 30) noted, “the human model” that was previously shaped by the bureaucratic organizational structures in developmentalism period gradually changed and gave its way to a human model that was shaped by entrepreneurship, risk-taking, innovativeness, adaptiveness, and self-reliance in post-developmentalism period. According to neoliberal formulation, poor people were expected and also encouraged to take on the responsibility of their own advancement through “engaging with markets, learning how to conduct themselves in competitive arenas, and making appropriate choices” (Ferguson, 1994, p. 234). In this context, the neoliberalization of GAP also brought about a “mentality change,” which I interpreted as a form of irreversible and radical change in the mindset and vision of individuals and populations towards acting more rationally and reasonably. In relation to this mentality change, the ideal citizen was redefined as a rational, self-sufficient, and docile “homo economicus” instead of intrusive, inquisitive, and critical “homo politicus” who could lead to commotion and create tension. “Homo economicus” was at a central position in neoliberal thought, as cost-benefit analyses and market rules could be applied to decision-making processes regarding life in the social domain redefined as a form of economic domain (Lemke, 2001, p. 200). To exemplify this change, an anecdote from the 1990s recounted by a former project consultant from GAP-BKİ was as follows:

I met a farmer in Harran. I was surprised to see he had only two children. I jokingly asked, “What’s wrong? Why few children?” He explained that water was coming, he inherited this amount of land from his father but he had that number of brothers, he would produce a lot from this small land now, and his children would be starved if he has more children. I was astonished. GAP brought such a mentality change.¹³⁷

Similarly, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ compared the mindset and vision of mayors in GAP region in the pre- and post-GAP periods. His observations were as follows:

¹³⁷ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Municipality of Urfa, for example. Former presidents did not have any vision. They were interested only in zoning. Now it is different. They care about irrigation, commerce, planning; their vision changed. When I was there in the 1980s, Karaköprü district was developing. In 20 years the place would be overpopulated and, therefore, needed to be planned well. But they could not see it. Current mayors can see it. This is a vision change. Circumstances after GAP forced people to think that way.¹³⁸

In a parallel manner, when comparing the conditions in GAP region in the pre- and post-GAP periods, one of the vice presidents of GAP-BKİ underlined that

GAP made the most impact in starting NGOs and changing perspectives. We [did not] see such establishments in, for instance, Eastern Black Sea Region. ... EU projects, trainings on how to prepare such projects, analyses on the region, application of the projects...etc, they all changed the perspective of the local population. The perspectives of chambers of industry, farmers' organizations, and different organizations really changed. It [was] a positive change.¹³⁹

Along with this shift towards acting more rationally and reasonably, the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character also prompted the transformation of people into socially and economically self-sufficient citizens, as will be discussed below.

7.3.3. Investment in Social and Human Capital to Achieve Self-Sufficiency

According to Tuğrul and Fazlıoğlu (1999, p. 303), who were the then GAP-BKİ employees as sociologists by training, those who lacked self-sufficiency or were disadvantaged (1) generally faced obstacles in benefiting from development, (2) were less educated and organized compared to powerful interest groups, (3) were difficult to reach, (4) were weak and ineffective in accessibility to services, (5) had weak social networks, and (6) were poor and deprived. The analysis demonstrates that in GAP's context self-sufficiency can also be interpreted as the elevated level a person reached after s/he developed adequate skills and capacities to survive without any further need for a push or intervention from outside. Accordingly, it refers to a level where s/he cannot be perceived as an infant in need of constant care, but instead as a grownup who can use his/her own rationale and judgments as well as take responsibility for his/her own actions. Ensuring self-sufficiency is biopolitical in terms of involving shaping and reshaping of bodies and selves in accordance with a grand

¹³⁸ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹³⁹ Personal interview, May 29, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

scheme and management and control of risks and dangers that are supposedly emerging from the underdeveloped life (Duffield, 2010, p. 63).

Thanks to the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character, elevating the local population to the level of self-sufficiency and “investing in social and human capital” in GAP region have become crucial project objectives. To demonstrate this phenomenon with various examples from different periods, Kut (1999, p. 28) underlined the need to “enhance the capacity of people and equip people with the equipment needed in the conditions of the world we live[d] or modernization process.” She further underlined that people had to be developed in such a way that they had to criticize the services provided to them, show discontent with their quality, and eventually work towards improving their level of quality. A similar comment was made by the then President Süleyman Demirel in 1999:

How can we change people’s—especially those who live in rural areas—houses, locations, lifestyles, how can we make them part of the contemporary world? Muddy villages, people in need of a cup of water, people who survive but remain silent about their problems must be transformed into strong people who look to the future in confidence, who gain strength to live and joy of life (Turgut, 2000, pp. 441-442).

Also, according to a report published by GAP-BKİ and İstanbul Chamber of Industry on the investment potentials in GAP region in the 1990s, irrigation and increased productivity “[would] revolutionize the way people [thought],” as the local population

who had been highly dependent on the natural conditions in dry agriculture and thus had a fatalist and passive mentality [would] reach consciousness regarding the human will and activity to be able to change the nature for their own interests and create a more combatant and entrepreneur mentality (GAP-BKİ, 1996, p. 6).

In addition, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ compared the pre- and post-GAP periods in GAP region on the basis of self-sufficiency in 2014 and highlighted that

GAP changed people’s view of life. When we were in the field before GAP, families were saying, “we [did not] want anything but to see our children going to school.” Now, they started to demand for themselves. In the past, women were interested in handicraft courses, now they demand[ed] computers, sociologists, psychologists. They want[ed] to go to university. ... The number of entrepreneur, self-employed women increased. Most importantly, women started to do something for themselves. A father told me, for instance, that his daughter [was] not approving him anymore.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Also in 2014, an MP who represented Diyarbakır explained that before GAP “villagers were cultivating wheat once a year and doing nothing else. This was what they saw and learned from their parents.” After the initiation of GAP, however, the same villagers would have to

cultivate three times a year, learn what to cultivate, when to cultivate, profitability of the product in stock market, how to transport the product, and stuff like these. They [would] acquire this culture. They [would] have difficulty for maybe two, maybe five years but they [would] eventually become self-sufficient people.¹⁴¹

The examples above suggest that the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character contributed to the redefinition of the ideal citizen in GAP region as “homo economicus” who had to leave his/her previous habits and behavior behind and act in accordance with rationality, self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship, and similar (neoliberal) principles. Norms, beliefs, standards, and values of “the self,” but not “the other” formed the basis of this redefinition. In that sense, the redefinition was highly self-centered and top-down. Also, since the redefinition was made along the lines of economics but not politics, it was highly sterile and almost blind to people’s political aspirations and motivations.

7.3.4. Summary

Neoliberal principles played a significant role in the steering of GAP since its early stages. The weight and impact of these principles increased with the injection of sustainability, participation, human and social development into the overall GAP framework in the 1990s. They facilitated the shift from predominantly state-led development to market-led development. They also allowed the architects of GAP to problematize almost every aspect of life and intervene to manage life at the level of population more conveniently. With the reinforcement of market logic within the project from the early 2000s onwards, the project’s neoliberal and biopolitical character was further strengthened. The project’s neoliberal and biopolitical character had depoliticizing implications in terms of redefining the ideal citizen as a rational, self-sufficient, entrepreneur, and neutral “homo economicus” along the sole lines of economics and concealing his/her political positions, identities, aspirations for the sake of attaining and maintaining a non-conflictual and consensual condition. Due to its close relation to this phenomenon, I will discuss how the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question contributed to depoliticization in the next section.

7.4. The “Developmentalization” of the Kurdish Question

Over time, the concepts of security and development have been linked to each other in both

¹⁴¹ Personal interview, May 13, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

theoretical and practical levels, leading to the emergence of the elusive notion of security-development nexus (Bilgen, in press; Buur, Jensen, & Stepputat, 2007; Hettne, 2010; Spear & Williams, 2012). Not only influential economic, financial, and political institutions such as the EU, African Union, the World Bank, and the UN, but also the majority of countries followed the calls to fuse security and development perspectives and policies and conceptualized them as interrelated and interconnected (Tschirgi, 2006, pp. 41-42). Arguably, the Turkish state was no exception in this regard, as the analysis indicated that security and development as well as the Kurdish question and GAP were widely perceived as interrelated. This perception led to the “securitization” of GAP and “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, which was essentially a political issue. Before elaborating on how “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question had depoliticizing implications, presenting the major narratives on the relationship between GAP and the Kurdish question would provide a better perspective on the issue.

7.4.1. Narrative 1: GAP is a Strategic “Anti-Kurdish” Plot

According to the first narrative, which was prevalent specifically among the Kurdish political elites from the Kurdish political movement, GAP was initiated to intentionally and strategically inflict harm on the Kurdish population and the PKK. Accordingly, GAP was a project of exploitation, assimilation, destruction, and repression in relation to the Kurdish question. To elaborate briefly on each, from this perspective, GAP was essentially anti-Kurdish on the grounds that it has systematically transferred natural and human resources of GAP region—or Kurdistan in the lexicon of many Kurdish elites—to western Turkey (see Mutlu, 2001 for an assessment of these claims and counterarguments in this matter). The claim that there was a one-way flow of resources from eastern and southeastern Turkey to the center-western Turkey—existed before the initiation of GAP though; it has long been emphasized that transportation, communication, trade, and banking systems in the region enabled and facilitated the natural and human resources flow out of the region (Jafar, 1976, p. 80). To illustrate these claims, an MP who represented Hakkâri underlined that

the approach and strategy of the state [was] entirely on energy production. ... The state got what it wanted. GAP paid for itself. It even made profit. ... [However], only 20% of irrigation projects [were] realized. Because the state’s strategy [was] to extract from there, we describe[d] it as an exploitation project. They extract[ed] the resources

there and use[d] them in western parts of Turkey. For this reason, GAP's contribution to the local population [was] almost zero.¹⁴²

GAP was found essentially anti-Kurdish also on the grounds that it has contributed to “Turkification” or “de-Kurdification” of the local population. In this regard, the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan (2015, p. 357) underlined that when “the background of HPPs and projects in Kurdistan” and capital behind them were examined, one could realize that “[Kurds] face[d] a serious de-Kurdification policy.” Similarly, an MP who represented Diyarbakır underlined that “GAP [was] a political and social transformation project,” as an important statesman [sic] from the State Security Court once told him in the 1990s that “whenever Kurdish women [would] start dying their hair blonde, Kurdish problem [would] be solved.”¹⁴³

In relation to these, GAP was found to be against the “existence” of Kurds for it destroyed Kurdish culture, history, and ecology in GAP region or Kurdistan. For Öcalan (2015, p. 266), implementation of GAP and similar development projects were “similar to how ultra-nationalists kill[ed] leftists,” as “HPPs kill[ed] the nature. Here, there [was] an ecological massacre. ... See Botan, Dersim; every corner [was] flooded. They buil[t] HPPs everywhere on Tigris. [Yet,] there [was] no electricity in Urfa.” Similarly, Hasip Kaplan, an MP who represented Şırnak, accused the government for flooding historical heritages for the sake of electricity and stated that “this destruction and pillage whet[ted] your appetite but increase[d] our people's anger. ... You [did not] irrigate, you [did not] bring water, you [did not] renew GAP, you [did not] complete it, but you insist[ed] on flooding the history, culture” (TBMM, 2011, pp. 242-243). Also, in the words of İbrahim Binici, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa, the focus of GAP “lack[ed] good intention, solution, nature, humanity, and most importantly the Kurds, as inhabitants of this land” (TBMM, 2012b, p. 815).

Finally, GAP was found anti-Kurdish on the grounds that damming Euphrates and Tigris aimed to limit Kurds' freedom of movement, prevent the maneuver capabilities of the PKK, and block the passageways of the insurgents. In this regard, an MP who represented Muş underlined that “dozens of dams between Hakkâri and Şırnak [were] incapable of producing energy. In appearance they [were] built for energy production and irrigation. Karakaya, Atatürk, Keban dams... The reason they [were] there [was] to challenge guerrilla's presence and prevent their passage.”¹⁴⁴ A researcher on water politics confirmed this claim and stated that “the army admitted that dams were constructed on the passage ways of

¹⁴² Personal interview, May 7, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁴³ Personal interview, May 6, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁴⁴ Personal interview, May 8, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

terrorists. This was exposed on Vatan Newspaper two years ago. ... They especially fill[ed] the caves with water and prevent[ed] terrorists from passing from east to west.”¹⁴⁵

7.4.2. Narrative 2: GAP is a Remedy for the Conflict

According to the second narrative, which was prevalent specifically among the Turkish political elites from the right-wing and nationalist parties, initiation of GAP would address the root causes of the Kurdish question. From this perspective, GAP could either end the conflict by itself or complement the military solutions towards this goal on the grounds that there was a direct and causal link between the underdevelopment of GAP region and the emergence, continuation, and intractability of the Kurdish question. The logic was: GAP would develop GAP region, development of GAP region would improve the socio-economic conditions of the local population, the local population in better conditions would feel loyal and sympathetic to the state and stop supporting the PKK, the PKK would lose its recruitment base and support from the bottom, and the Kurdish question would eventually be solved. To put it differently, GAP would introduce a modern and irrigation-based agriculture in GAP region, facilitate its integration to the markets, bring a new and modern lifestyle, eliminate feudal and tribal relations, increase income and living standards, remove regional disparities, and, thus, create an atmosphere that would prevent future secessionist movements (Jongerden, 2010, p. 141). Accordingly, GAP would not only “win the hearts and minds” of the local population through providing development, but also rid the PKK of its propaganda material to exploit poverty to attract new recruits to join its ranks.

It should be noted that, though, the idea of reversing the harsh policies towards the Kurds and instead serving the Kurds “well and with affection” was not entirely novel and dated back to as early as the 1930s (Heper, 2007, p. 132). For instance, in the report entitled “*Eastern Problem*,” Celâl Bayar, the then Minister of Economy between 1932 and 1937, underlined the need to complement the efforts of the army and gendarmerie with “a capable and regularly functioning civil service” so that people would “think that they [were] not left to their own devices and that the state cared for them” and “feel that they were not perceived as an alien element in the social body and ... think that they, too, constituted an integral element of the nation” (p. 132). To provide more recent examples of this narrative, in the relatively early stages of GAP in 1988, Güneş Müftüoğlu, an MP who represented Zonguldak, made a straightforward link between socio-economic development and terrorism and underlined that “the remedy of preventing anarchy and terror in [GAP] region [was] to

¹⁴⁵ Personal interview, May 5, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

complete crucial investments ... and ensure local populations' economic and social development" because "when [their] social, economic, and cultural development [was] ensured, both anarchy and terror [would] be eliminated" (TBMM, 1988c, p. 338). In the early 1990s, İsmet Sezgin, the then Minister of Interior, made a similar connection between underdevelopment and terrorism. His statement was as follows:

We don't see counterterrorism only as security measures; we give equal importance to its social and economic dimensions. ... With this approach, within the framework of GAP, we continue to use all resources allocated by our state and work hard towards developing the local population. ... Thus, the claim of interregional growth inequality and regional underdevelopment, which is used to cloak the real objective of terror, will be debunked (TBMM, 1993, p. 470).

Even though the dynamics and trajectory of the Kurdish question significantly changed after the capture and imprisonment of Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 (see Chapter 4), apparently the perception of development or GAP as a silver bullet in the Kurdish question remained intact during this period. In 2000, for instance, Necati Çetinkaya, an MP who represented Manisa, repeated the same formula and explained that "the completion of GAP [meant] the realization of the greatest development move in Southeastern Anatolia and ... draining of the source of terrorism. We must not kill the mosquitoes but drain the source, the swamp in which they reproduce[d]" (TBMM, 2000, p. 348). Also, despite the initiation of the "Kurdish Opening" in 2009, politicians continued to employ similar discourses. In 2009, for instance, Cemil Çiçek, the then Deputy Prime Minister, stated that "they always sa[id] security measures [were] not enough to prevent terror, economic package [was] also needed ... GAP [was] the economic package of the [Kurdish] Opening" (TBMM, 2009b, p. 69). İbrahim Binici, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa, summarized the position of GAP after the failure of this democracy initiative as follows:

Turgut Özal had clearly emphasized the relationship between the Kurds and GAP by saying, "If the region develops and the local population becomes rich, political reactions and conflict come to an end." This skewed perspective, which envisages the substitution of Kurds' demands for collective rights with economic bribes, has given GAP this mission from the beginning (TBMM, 2013).

The analysis further indicates that bureaucrats and experts also widely characterized GAP as a project to provide security through development. For instance, a former project consultant from GAP-BKİ explained how TAF perceived GAP as a way out of the Kurdish question and cooperated with civil bureaucracy to this end. Accordingly, in a National

Security Council meeting in the mid-1990s, one military official told her that TAF did its job and, from then on, it was the job of bureaucracy to get TAF out of the region.¹⁴⁶ Similarly in the 2000s, Muammer Yaşar Özgül, the former president of GAP-BKİ linked GAP and the Kurdish question and stated that

[a]s people has more income and a better social life, they stay away from terrorism. In other words, unemployment and underdevelopment in the region are sources that feed terrorism. As GAP will advance, people's social life, income level, and quality of life will change. Why would a person whose quality of life and lifestyle improve be interested in terrorism? (GAP-BKİ, 2012b, p. 131).

It is remarkable that an expert from the same institution established almost the same links, gave almost the same explanation regarding the causes of the Kurdish question, and proposed almost the same solutions to the problem in 2014. Her statement was as follows:

If you fail to develop a region's economy and attract sufficient investment, some may engage in provocation. That was the reason behind terrorism. ... The more you develop, the more you reduce interregional development disparities. The more you increase their welfare level, the more they see themselves as part of the state.¹⁴⁷

The “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question was observable in policy documents, too. To illustrate in chronological order, in the annual *General Broadcasting Plan* of TRT, it was stated in 1991 that programs to be broadcasted in Priority Localities in Development aimed at “teaching the consciousness of national unity and brotherhood, spreading Turkish language, culture, and art” and “reinforcing the trust and respect of people to the state through the presentation of the services brought by the state to these regions” (MGK, 1993, p. 379). Similarly, some of TRT GAP's—or GAP TV's—goals were stated as “creating a social, cultural, and psychological atmosphere required to build a rational basis for GAP” (p. 382) and “strengthening the national unity through informing the public about different aspects of social life in provinces under GAP TV's coverage and GAP's stages of development” (p. 384). Also in the 1990s, it was noted in *GAP Social Action Plan* that the realization of GAP would “accelerate the whole economy of the region, greatly contribute to the solution of the backwardness and unemployment problems of the region, and in turn [would] dry up economic and social sources of terrorist activities” (GAP-RDA, 1995, p. 3). Similarly in the 2000s, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan underlined in *GAP*

¹⁴⁶ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁴⁷ Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

Action Plan (2008-2012) that “the regional development applications initiated during our government [within GAP framework] were based on strengthening our national unity and brotherhood, spreading development opportunities to all over the country, and transition to production culture on the whole” (GAP-BKİ, 2008a, p. i). In the 2010s, it was noted in *GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)* that GAP was “an indicator of our country’s determination to march in unity and brotherhood, its openness to development” and the goal of the state was to “make our completed projects lasting, sustain the peaceful environment by increasing welfare level, and strengthening the brotherhood” (GAP-BKİ, 2014a, p. 3).

7.4.3. Narrative 3: GAP is a Neutral Project

According to the third narrative, which was prevalent specifically among the experts, the link between GAP and the Kurdish question was weak and even spurious, as GAP has always been a totally neutral project and completely detached from security considerations and political calculations. Therefore, the Kurdish question was not one of the factors that triggered the initiation of GAP. A detailed examination of the discourses illustrated that there were three main arguments that supported this narrative. According to the first argument, only scientific and technical, not political reasons played the dominant role in GAP’s design and implementation process. To illustrate, one of the former heads of GAP Regional Directorate at DSİ in Şanlıurfa made a clear distinction between the project’s technical and political aspects. His explanation was as follows:

Politicians cannot have any influence on engineering projects. ... Hydraulic system determines everything. You make your calculations according to water criteria. Dams cannot be built for security; they are built to provide drinking water, prevent floods, generate energy, and irrigate lands. It is naïve to think of dams as security providers or blockages against someone.¹⁴⁸

Similarly, an expert from GAP-BKİ emphasized that “GAP [was] a regional development project, so naturally nine provinces were chosen to this end. The project [was] implemented in Southeastern Anatolia not because Kurds live[d] there, but because of physical and technical concerns.”¹⁴⁹ In other words, GAP was falling under the category of plans that were prepared for resource-rich regions to mobilize these underused resources and prompt regional development (MGK, 1993, p. 45). One of the former presidents of GAP-BKİ also confirmed that “security was not a main factor” in the overall GAP framework and underlined that

¹⁴⁸ Personal interview, May 20, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁴⁹ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

controlling the basins, implementing the project for security, etc... There was no such thing. People later on claimed that GAP was initiated to limit terrorists' mobilization but I still [did not] think the claim [was] valid. There [were] millions of terrible things terrorists [could] do, how [could] they be stopped by a few dams?¹⁵⁰

According to the second argument, GAP could not be characterized as an “anti-Kurdish” project because, ethnically speaking, not only Turks and Arabs, but also Kurds benefited from the project. In this regard, a large landowner in Şanlıurfa stated that “GAP was not initiated against the Kurds” because “a large portion of agricultural lands in GAP region belong[ed] to the Kurds anyway. They [were] the ones who [would] be better off when the irrigation system [was] built.”¹⁵¹ Similarly, a former expert from GAP-BKİ underlined that there was no discrimination against the Kurds because “the Kurds [would] reap GAP's benefits as much as Turks [would] do. True, there [were] instances where they [would] suffer as in Hasankeyf, but there [were] also instances where they receive[d] a lot of money from the state. They [would] be richer.”¹⁵² An expert from the same institution also indicated that the Kurds [were] the real beneficiaries of GAP and stated that “if there were discrimination between Turks and Kurds, [he] would not try to increase the local population's quality of life and they would live a shorter life in poorer quality.”¹⁵³

According to the third argument, ethnic, religious, or linguistic identity of the local population played no role in determining whom to include or exclude in the development process. To exemplify, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ emphasized that they did not discriminate against the Kurds and Arabs and only conducted “sociological studies to formulate projects according to their different water consumption patterns, social structures, and stuff.”¹⁵⁴ Similarly, another former coordinator from GAP-BKİ underlined that

We did not care about people's ethnicity, religious sect, or belief. It did not matter whether they were Yazidi, Assyrian, Laz, Kurdish, or Arabic. The only criteria were: [Were] they poor? From a gender equality perspective, [were] they women, men, children, or youth? [Did] they have access to services?¹⁵⁵

A researcher on water politics also found the claims on ethnic, religious, and linguistic discrimination in the overall GAP framework exaggerated and stated that

¹⁵⁰ Personal interview, May 16, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁵¹ Personal interview, May 30, 2014, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

¹⁵² Personal interview, April 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁵³ Personal interview, March 21, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁵⁴ Personal interview, April 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁵⁵ Personal interview, March 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

GAP [was] not an assimilation project. Not only Kurds live[d] in Southeastern Anatolia Region. Everyone [was] resettled in every dam project. It happened in Keban, it also happened when a dam was constructed on Kızılırmak¹⁵⁶ and people of Çorum¹⁵⁷ had to leave their lands. [Did] this mean that we assimilated people of two Sunni villages and one Alevi village there? Of course not.

7.4.4. Discussion on the Position of GAP in the Kurdish Question

The narratives above indicate that the security dimension of GAP is constructed, not given. The examination of legislative and elite discourses as well as the historical trajectory of GAP illustrate that security considerations were hardly significant in the initial stages of the project. However, later in the 1990s, possibly in parallel with the intensification of the PKK activities, GAP was constructed also as a security project and considered as another and/or complementary means to address the Kurdish question. In other words, while GAP was gradually securitized in the course of the project, the Kurdish question was also gradually and simultaneously “developmentalized” over time. However, it is fair to argue that security never became the leitmotif of GAP; it has never been *the* reason or a major reason, but at best *one of the* minor reasons behind the project’s initiation. Considering that development has never been a practice that was completely isolated from politics and power dynamics, indeed GAP led to various security-related outcomes that also concerned the Kurdish question. To illustrate the interaction between development and security, a head of a department from the Ministry of Development explained that whenever, wherever, and on whatever the state establishment spent public funds, the state “calculate[d] every single return” including “citizens’ sense of belongingness, loyalty to the state.” He further explained that whenever they aimed to

fix the economy of [GAP] region, [they] never ignored the political agenda there. [Was] there any social engineering or doctrinization? This absolutely exist[ed] as a side effect... Inclusion of the citizens, changing their perceptions, these long existed not only within GAP, but also in many projects that were implemented in the region.¹⁵⁸

Despite the intertwinement of development and security gains, it would be simplistic and reductionist to characterize GAP solely as a security project for several reasons. First, the claim that social policies under GAP were actually social control and assimilation

¹⁵⁶ Kızılırmak (Red River) is Turkey’s longest river. It flows across the Central Anatolia Region to Black Sea.

¹⁵⁷ It is a landlocked province located in the central Black Sea Region.

¹⁵⁸ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

mechanisms was often overstated. To explain why, in the words of a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ, “the world is not the world of the 1960s, 1970s. It is impossible to assimilate population with such means anymore, especially in such a politicized region. We are in Information Age, everyone can reach any kind of information.”¹⁵⁹ For this reason, it was naïve to claim that a population over eight million was being assimilated only through programs and activities carried out at nine Youth and Culture Centers, nine Child Development Centers, and 44 ÇATOM in GAP region.

Second, social policies pursued in GAP region were only slightly different than social policies pursued in other regions in Turkey. They were not specifically designed for or against the Kurdish population in GAP region. As the above-mentioned coordinator from GAP-BKİ also stated, for instance, social welfare funds were distributed not only in GAP region, but also in other regions. In addition, GAP region received the largest share of funds in this regard (“En fazla sosyal yardım”, 2008; “Seçim öncesi 63 milyon”, 2015). ÇATOM-like community centers were not established exclusively there, either; hundreds of community centers were established all over Turkey over the years.¹⁶⁰

Third, social policies pursued under the umbrella of GAP were formulated to replace the traditional with the modern and accelerate the modernization of GAP region. Considering that nationalism was a phenomenon highly associated with—or even a product of—modernity (see Gellner, 1997) and that social policies have been effective in terms of modernizing the region so far, it can be argued that social policies actually played a significant role in increasing the political awareness of the Kurds and fueling Kurdish nationalism rather than they repressed their national consciousness and assimilated the population.

Finally, at the expense of speculation, if GAP were solely a security project, priority would have been given to irrigation and socio-economic projects that would directly benefit the local population and change their perception of the state. Instead, energy projects that provided large returns to the state but little returns to the local population were prioritized. This problem of limited trickle-down effect of GAP further estranged the local population from both the state and the project and confirmed the claim regarding being “neglected” and “forgotten” for decades in their eyes. For such reasons, characterizing GAP as a development project with a potential to have a minor and indirect impact on the resolution of the conflict as an externality is more reasonable than reaching the quick conclusion that GAP was solely

¹⁵⁹ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁶⁰ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

a security project. The question as to how the position of GAP in the context of the Kurdish conflict contributed to depoliticization will be addressed below.

7.4.5. The “Developmentalization” of the Kurdish Question and Depoliticization

Indeed, the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question had depoliticizing implications. Just as neoliberalism redefined the ideal citizen in GAP region along the sole lines of economics and economic competition, the idea of addressing the Kurdish question through GAP also redefined an ethno-political confrontation along socio-economic lines. Therefore, the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question enabled various elite groups to redefine an antagonistic relation and recast it into a milder, more negotiable, and more manageable form. In the context of the Kurdish question and the conflict-ridden environment of GAP region, ideally speaking the confrontation or antagonism had to take place between the Turkish and Kurdish, TAF and the PKK, the oppressor and the oppressed, right-wing and left-wing ideologies, or ultra-nationalist Turkish and Kurdish political parties and movements. However, due to the idea that socio-economic problems were actually at the heart of the conflict, confrontation was no longer defined in such forms, but instead defined in economic terms as if they were between developed and underdeveloped, modern and traditional, wealthy and poor, or contented and discontented. Also, following the increased influence of neoliberalism on the project, confrontation took other forms that were defined between self-reliant and dependent, entrepreneur and lazy, competitive and noncompetitive, or adaptive and maladaptive in accordance with market principles. Such a redefinition would be considered desirable from the perspective of the state because addressing the structural, administrative, and ethno-political issues regarding the Kurdish question such as ending the armed conflict, decentralizing the governance of the state, normalizing Turkish-Kurdish relations at societal level, or providing education in mother tongue has always been more burdensome and challenging compared to addressing socio-economic development issues that required a less political or non-political solution toolset for the state.

In addition, the redefinition of the dynamics of the Kurdish question as such evaporated the “Turkishness,” “Kurdishness,” religious identities, and political leanings of the local population. The local population was stripped out of their ethnic and political identities and presented as dehumanized and neutral subjects in a sterile manner. In other words, as in the case of the “moralization” of politics, political contestations and identities were concealed through the “developmentalization.” To exemplify this concealment, in 2000, Emin Uluğ, the then Head of Chamber of Doctors in Diyarbakır underlined that “Southeastern Anatolia [was] not just any region. It [had] certain characteristics” and

complained that he could not find a single detail about the ethnicity of this region in the study on population movements in GAP region (GAP-BKI, 2000e, pp. 14-15). It is also noteworthy that the local population were widely referred to as “them, locals, local people, people of the region, our people, our brothers there” in legislative and elite discourses without references given to their identities and ethno-political characteristics. The “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, then, apparently negated the political or antagonistic confrontation and diffused it into economics and at times ethics while in fact the political nature of the question remained intact and arguably became even more explicit in recent years.

7.4.6. Summary

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing tendency to assume that security and development went hand in hand and there would be no security without development and no development without security. Arguably, the architects of GAP were also influenced by this perception, as GAP and the Kurdish question were somehow linked to each other over time. This led to the securitization of GAP and “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question. The narratives regarding the position of GAP in the context of the Kurdish question were quite diverse. Accordingly, in different times and by different elite groups, GAP was characterized as a project that was initiated (1) against the Kurdish population with malevolent intentions, (2) as a remedy for the Kurdish question due to its potential to eradicate the root causes of the conflict which were allegedly related to the “underdevelopment” of GAP region, and (3) as nothing but a development project in an objective and neutral fashion in the sole guidance of science and technicity.

A critical analysis of these narratives indicates that the interrelation between GAP and the Kurdish question has been a construct, not a given. Given this, it is more reasonable to characterize GAP not as a security project primarily concerned with the Kurdish question, but as a development project that had minor and indirect impacts on the trajectory of the conflict due to the intertwined nature of development, security, politics, and the Kurdish question. Also, regardless of how it was conceived, the position of GAP in the conflict had depoliticizing implications in terms of redefining ethno-political confrontations and antagonisms along socio-economic lines and concealing political contestation and identities, which would enable the formulation of less controversial and less contested solutions to the highly contested and essentially political problem. I will discuss how the extension of the visibility and authority of the state in the guise of GAP contributed to depoliticization in the following section.

7.5. The Extension of the Visibility and Authority of the State in the Guise of GAP

7.5.1. GAP and the Visibility and Authority of the State

When development problems are conceived as technical problems in a depoliticized manner, their solutions require the heavy use of expert knowledge and extension of government services, which carries the risk of the extension of state power as an unforeseen consequence (see Chapter 2). In line with this claim, it can be argued that GAP also contributed to the extension of the visibility and authority of the state apparatus in the guise of GAP in GAP region. As expected, GAP's long span, wide focus and scope, and multiple goals and objectives necessitated the involvement and cooperation of various government institutions that focused on different aspects of the project in accordance with their duties and missions. However, in the overall GAP framework, the range of involved institutions was so extensive that almost all ministries in the country played significant and diverse roles in the project's implementation process. The Ministry of Development; the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock; the Ministry of National Defense; the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology; the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning; the Ministry of Economy; the Ministry of Culture and Tourism; the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs; the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources; the Ministry of National Education; the Ministry of Labor and Social Security; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Customs and Trade; the Ministry of Family and Social Policies; and the Ministry of Youth and Sports were among some of these government institutions (GAP-BKİ, 2014a). Similarly, GAP was associated with a wide range of social, economic, and cultural problems which various government institutions were given the responsibility to design and implement development plans, programs, and activities for their solution. For instance, the jurisdiction of GAP-BKİ covered activities in the fields of agriculture, mining, manufacturing, industry, energy, transportation, communication, construction, and tourism in the broader fields of human resources, sociology, economics, development and technology, environment and urban planning, regional development, and culture (Pool & Grover, 2006, p. 378). While the involvement of that many governmental actors increased GAP's sphere of influence, this increase in return allowed these actors to become more involved and visible both in the overall project framework and GAP region in varying degrees. Indeed, the increase of state visibility contributed to the restoration and increase of the state authority in GAP region. According to Özok-Gündoğan (2005, p. 95), the restoration of the state authority was especially sought to win the trust and loyalty of the local population and facilitate control over them (see previous section for more details). Below, two highly similar texts that were

produced in different decades illustrate how the perceived role of GAP in increasing the state visibility and authority—specifically to win the hearts and minds—remained intact in years. Accordingly, İsmail Köse, an MP who represented Erzurum, proudly stated in 1998 that

[I]ast month, during one of our trips to Şanlıurfa ... from Akçakale to Bozova, I saw the excitement of our people, our citizens who lived in Şanlıurfa and benefited from this national project, I saw their loyalty to their state. They really expressed their pride in living under the flag of crescent and star¹⁶¹ (TBMM, 1998, p. 306).

More than a decade later, Ramazan Başak, an MP who represented Şanlıurfa, stated that

[a]bout ten days ago, we went to Şanlıurfa, the capital of GAP ... to investigate investments in its place. ... I wish you could see those huge machines, machines that work day and night, main canals that lie until the horizon. There was another thing I wanted you to see, honorable members: I wish you could see the light in the eyes of the local population, I wish you could see their loyalty to this country, this state, this flag ... [and] that hope in their eyes (TBMM, 2009, p. 12).

A former coordinator from GAP-BKİ also emphasized that “GAP was a hope” for the local population in GAP region and explained that “during [the 1990s], I told the President Süleyman Demirel, ‘Sir, whichever village or town you [went] there, you [could] see a sign that [was] related to GAP.’ GAP was indeed a hope, but now Apo¹⁶² became the hope.”¹⁶³

Arguably, the establishment of regional development agencies and relocation of GAP-BKİ’s headquarters from Ankara to Şanlıurfa (see Chapter 5) also contributed to the extension of state’s visibility and reach in the guise of GAP. To elaborate, Turkey has had a strong centralized political and administrative structure. For this reason, one may argue that both policy decisions would accelerate the shift from centralism to decentralization and contribute to strengthening of the local administrations. However, a careful examination of the process in the aftermath of these decisions indicates that the outcome was the roll forward, not roll back of the state; these decisions did not prompt a shift towards a more decentralized governance structure (see Karasu, 2015 for a detailed discussion on this matter). Neither regional development agencies nor GAP-BKİ became more autonomous at the end of the process. They could not perform their duties and functions at full capacity, either. Arguably, there were two major reasons for this drawback and unforeseen consequence. First, development agencies and the administration were not granted the

¹⁶¹ “The (red) flag of crescent and star” is often used to refer to the Turkish flag.

¹⁶² The imprisoned Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan is also widely referred to as Apo.

¹⁶³ Personal interview, May 5, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

authority of the central government adequately; they especially lacked the authority to engage in planning activities. Second, they were not granted the authority of the central government to control financial resources and make financial allocation to be used in planning activities. To illustrate both points, in 2014, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of GAP-BKİ's relocation and explained that

[d]ecentralization [was] just a myth. It [did] not matter whether you [were] in Urfa or Ankara if you [did] not have the authority. Decisions [were] made here [Ankara]. A regional development administration [had to] make financial allocation in accordance with the plans within its jurisdiction. For integration purposes, it [had to] have the authority to allocate the resources in accordance with the stakeholder organizations' roles in the designated projects. ... In their current forms, they [were] nothing but the extension of the central authority.¹⁶⁴

Similarly, another former coordinator from GAP-BKİ emphasized in the same year that

[i]t was a mistake to relocate GAP-BKİ before redesigning the planning system in Turkey in general. ... Authorities of the central government [had to] be transferred to local authorities. You transfer[ed] many things, but the center still [had] all the authority. You [held] meetings again and again, you [made] plans again and again, but Ankara [gave] the final decision. Therefore, it [was] meaningless. The center [was] still strong, it [had] the resources, the authority; the rest [was] only for show. Now no one [took] GAP-BKİ seriously because it [had] no authority.¹⁶⁵

Regional development agencies were in the same position as regional development administrations in terms of their impotency. On this point, a head of a department at the Ministry of Development acknowledged that "there [was] always a need for a localized expertise capacity." However, he also underlined that since "projects [were] dominantly investment projects, they need[ed] to have an Ankara connection for bargaining and tracking policies day by day. ... The center [was] here [Ankara]."¹⁶⁶ He further underlined that

agencies played an active role in carrying local contributions to the process. ... Even the man [sic] in the remotest town [said] the agency came and asked our opinion. This [was] also an important public relations activity for the region. We would not have gone as deep in another region, but here [GAP region] there was such a need. People were glad to be heard. They thought like, "the state came here."

¹⁶⁴ Personal interview, April 9, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁶⁵ Personal interview, April 25, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁶⁶ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

In other words, in their current form, regional development agencies functioned as the extensions of central government in general and the Ministry of Development in particular. Another sign that they were the extensions of the central government was that the heads of administrative boards of the agencies were appointed by the central government. The appointed persons were governors. In the words of an MP who represented Aksaray, “governors [were] the top-level administrators. Secretary-general [could not] be superior over governors. For this reason, secretary-generals [were] always in a secondary position”¹⁶⁷ in administrative boards. Similarly, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ lamented that

[t]he board of directors comprise[d] governors, mayors, provincial heads, and presidents of chambers of commerce and industry. According to regulations, the board chairperson [was] the governor. ... Therefore, agencies [were] established at a local level, but administered by governors who reside[d] in these cities just for a limited time, and [knew] little about the local dynamics except their bureaucratic services. ... Agencies [were] like the branch offices of DPT in the region, because everything [was] approved and investment priorities [were] determined by DPT in Ankara after all. This [was] not decentralization, but rather localization.¹⁶⁸

The examples suggest that the state apparatus has intentionally or unintentionally used GAP and regional development agencies in GAP region as a means to extend the state’s visibility and fill the authority vacuum that long reinforced the sense that the region was not a fully governed space and given adequate attention and resources for years. However, the extension of the visibility and authority of the state through GAP and GAP-related policy decisions was not without implications and risks, as will be briefly discussed below.

7.5.2. The Omnipresence of GAP and Infiltration of State Power

Partly due to GAP’s amorphous structure and partly due to the extension of the visibility and authority of the state, over time GAP came to be conceived as an omnipresent project and a perpetual process in the eyes of both its designers and implementers and the local population. The project was often used even synonymously with broad processes such as development, growth, progress, and change. In line with this, it was also considered as ahistorical, infinite, and exempt from contextual influences. To illustrate this tendency with different examples, a former coordinator from GAP-BKİ conceived the project in 2014 as follows: “GAP does not ever finish... It is a process; it will always exist. New technologies will replace the old ones.

¹⁶⁷ Personal interview, May 13, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁶⁸ Personal interview, March 27, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

New lands will be irrigated, agro-industries will flourish, trade will expand. Therefore, GAP does not ever finish.”¹⁶⁹ In a parallel manner, according to another coordinator from GAP-BKİ,

GAP does not ever finish. Completion of GAP means the end of development... Only fundamental infrastructure investments can be completed. When these are completed, it is private sector and industrial investments that will increase economic development and foster take-off in GAP. After that stage, GAP continues to exist in accordance with the other developments in the world. Just as you cannot stop growth in a country or in a society, you cannot stop growth in the region. Due to the region’s underdevelopment, there will always be a need for intervention.¹⁷⁰

Similarly, from the perspective of a head of a department at the Ministry of Development,

GAP finishes only if it is conceived as a project. But when to leave the field, what is the point of exit? The solidity of the criteria set in hand is open to debate on this point. “We intervened, elevated this and that social and economic parameters to this and that level, it will be complete when we reach that level...” This message is not clear.¹⁷¹

Combined with the conception of GAP as an eternal process, the large extension of the visibility and authority of the state carries the risk that the state apparatus can eventually infiltrate and shape every aspect of life in GAP region. At the expense of generalization, in this situation, the field of possible actions in all spheres of life is structured in such a way that the agency of the local population becomes eroded (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). Due to this extension, the ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying can be defined in such a way that the—already infantilized—local population becomes even weaker to utter their interests, demands, and needs in such an asymmetrical power configuration. This leads to the exclusion of the local population from the overall GAP framework, the closure of public debate, and consideration of certain arguments, voices, and concerns as illegitimate and unacceptable, which are all associated with depoliticization. The extension of the visibility and authority of the state and omnipresence of GAP do not involve any brute force or coercive power in shaping the conduct of the local population. Instead, they define and limit the local population’s choices, preferences, and maneuver capabilities in such a way that individuals are left with no option but to behave in accordance within the limits of “acceptable” standards. This is also problematic and depoliticizing in the sense that such all-

¹⁶⁹ Personal interview, April 2, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁷⁰ Personal interview, March 24, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

¹⁷¹ Personal interview, April 30, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

encompassing and ubiquitous structures that favor univocalism and portray society as a harmonious monoblock often leave no space for political contestation and debate. They neutralize the political, dehumanize the local population, and redefine an order that is devoid of power dynamics, opposition, and contestation. In that sense, the extended visibility and authority of the state has depoliticizing as much as it has authoritarian implications.

7.5.3. Summary

With its size, scope, significance, historical trajectory, and the amorphous form it ultimately took, GAP enabled the state to extend its visibility and authority in the guise of the project in GAP region. Even administrative policies pursued in the name of decentralization led to further centralization of state power. This extension had two major implications. First, it led to the characterization of GAP as a colossal and omnipresent project and a perpetual process. Second, in relation to the so-called omnipresence of GAP, it led to the risk that the state power would permeate all aspects of social and economic life in GAP region. This would have depoliticizing implications in terms of eroding the agency of the local population; further limiting their already limited choices, preferences, and maneuver capabilities; and leaving no room for alternatives, contestation, and debate with its all-encompassing and ubiquitous structure.

7.6. Conclusion

A meticulous examination of legislative and elite discourses indicates that there has been more than one source of depoliticization in the overall GAP framework. Also, depoliticization took more than one form in the historical trajectory of the project. The employment of technical language, the dominance of experts and expert knowledge, the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character, the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, and the extension of the visibility and authority of the state in the guise of GAP contributed to depoliticization in multiple ways during the course of the project. These ways included, but not limited to, the negation of stark antagonisms; rendering the political technical; redefinition of ethno-political conflicts along the lines of economics, economic competition, and ethics; erosion of agency; transferring of blame, responsibility, and costs to other people, bodies and institutions, or phenomena that are believed to be beyond human agency and control.

Neither the sources nor the ways of depoliticization were fixed. They were rather dynamic and flexible phenomena that rose to prominence or lost their relevance depending on the context of how, when, and by which major actors GAP has been governed. They were not free-standing and independent from each other, either. A discerning eye can recognize that

they were actually interrelated and even overlapping to some extent. For instance, there were strong links between the heavy use of technical language and the dominance of experts; the “biopoliticization” of GAP and the omnipresence of the project; the neoliberalization of GAP and the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question; the dominance of expert knowledge and the extension of the visibility and authority of the state; and the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question and the extension of the visibility and authority of the state.

Considering this complex web of interconnection among these sources, it is fair to argue that the idea, design, and implementation of GAP steadily and continuously led to depoliticization of objects, subjects, people, ideas, and issues through various means in various arenas throughout the years. The governance of GAP in a depoliticized mode and contribution of the project to technicization and neutralization of political phenomena also nurtured the “mystique” of GAP and strengthened its “untouchable” status, as these factors enabled (1) the introduction and spread of the idea that GAP was “above” and “beyond” politics and, thus, incontestable, (2) the concentration of power and authority in the hands of the elites and placement of responsibility and burdens to the non-elites, (3) the construction of a reality in which it was almost a moral imperative to provide automatic and unconditional support to the project and everything it would bring, while remaining silent about anything it would take away, and (4) the circulation of regulatory power defined in a Foucauldian manner to achieve people’s voluntary participation to the development process. Still, considering that contestation and power dynamics cannot be eradicated but only be repressed, sublimated, or obscured, GAP and its sources of depoliticization defined in a neutral domain might also lose their depoliticizing characters and become contested and repoliticized in the later stages of the project.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

8. CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, I synthesize what has been discussed in the previous seven chapters and make the concluding remarks of the study. The chapter comprises four sections. In the first section, I provide a brief summary of the study and highlight some of its significant and unique findings. In the second section, I identify and discuss the major inferences about both the concept of development and GAP and “take-home messages” based on the demystification of the project. In the third section, I explain the implications of the study on GAP in particular and development practice in general. In the fourth and final section, I discuss the future research directions that might complement and strengthen the study and open new research avenues in GAP- and development-related studies.

8.1. A Brief Summary of the Study

Turkey’s modernization process has been heavily influenced and shaped by the strong will and idealistic ambition of the state to ensure progress and development since the inception of the country in 1923, or even earlier, since the modernization efforts of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. Elevating the nation to the level of “contemporary civilizations”—also perceived and interpreted as the standards of the West—and ensuring integration and homogenization in political, economic, social, and cultural spheres at the national level have been prevalent and indispensable principles of this process. For this reason, dispersing the population and services throughout the whole country and reducing the long-standing and inherited disparities between the coastal and inner regions as well as western and eastern Turkey have also been of utmost importance for the Turkish state in terms of achieving its regional policy as well as modernization goals and objectives.

A vast number of development plans were formulated and development policies were implemented to this end since the 1920s. Designed and implemented in the 1970s, GAP has been possibly the most ambitious, sensational, and controversial project among these plans and projects that varied in size and significance. It can even be qualified as a utopian project due to its colossal scale, ever expanding focus and scope, almost never-ending schedule, and comprehensive and rigorous goals and objectives. Put simply, initially GAP was initiated to produce hydroelectric energy and irrigate vast arid lands through constructing dozens of dams and HPPs on Euphrates and Tigris rivers and extensive irrigation networks in long “underdeveloped” and conflict-ridden Southeastern Anatolia Region. Over time, the project was given the mission to completely transform the political, social, economic, and cultural landscape of the whole GAP region—which corresponded to around 10% of Turkey’s surface area—and reshape the mindset and behaviors of its local population—which corresponded to

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around 10% of Turkey's population. It has gradually become influential on GAP region and infiltrated the lives of the local population not only through development discourses and concepts prevalent in master plans, reports, surveys, policy papers, action plans, and parliamentary speeches, but also through a wide range of development practices on the ground.

The project was, however, as controversial as it was ambitious and sensational. It created not only regional and international controversies such as exacerbating the water sharing dispute among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, but also domestic controversies such as causing various ecological, social, and humanitarian drawbacks including, but not limited to, soil salinization, soil erosion, flooding of historical and cultural sites, and forced internal displacement. The supposed role the project was playing in the context of the Kurdish question was a source of controversy as well. Also, the project was subjected to criticism over time for being overly technical and economic and/or infrastructural development-focused, turning a blind eye to the genuine and bottom-up needs and demands of its target groups, or prioritizing the interests of the state rather than the interests of the local population. Despite such undesirable consequences and disappointments, GAP was not discredited or abandoned *in toto*. On the contrary, numerous times the project has been redefined, repackaged, and eventually reintroduced as a solution to various socio-economic and socio-political problems of GAP region and Turkey.

This situation was puzzling for several reasons. It was unclear—almost mysterious—how and why GAP was given a “special,” “untouchable,” and almost “sanctified” status that limited debate and deliberation on its usefulness, consequences, and alternatives and prevented challenges to its foundations. It was also unclear how every drawback, unintended outcome, or “clear” failure could be somehow justified and the project could advance without interruption, as if such issues of crucial importance were trivial and irrelevant matters. It was both unclear and striking why GAP was perceived and characterized as an objective and neutral design while it was leading to political consequences that involved changing power dynamics, contestation, dissensus, and similar “thorny” issues. Furthermore, it was unclear how and why the unfavorable aspects of GAP or destructive GAP-induced problems never or rarely led to the questioning of the project's rationales, development vision embedded in the overall project framework, or the concept of development itself. Combined together, it was puzzling how GAP could remain rarely problematized both within policy-making circles and in the literature and proceed without its politics, rationales, *raison d'être*, *modus operandi*,

and similar crucial, profound, and often overlooked aspects being adequately questioned and challenged.

In order to demystify and untangle this “mystique” around GAP as well as development, in this study I aimed my attention primarily at the texts of GAP and development. I focused on how both GAP and development were written and narrated in legislative documents, policy papers, action plans, reports, surveys, etudes, formal and informal discussions, parliamentary debates, speeches, and similar texts that were produced by political, bureaucratic, expert, and intellectual elites in various sectors. I concentrated on the project’s rationale, vocabulary, assumptions, constructions, and mechanisms. Indeed, various aspects of GAP were subjected to evaluation and analysis through different approaches in different disciplines in the past. However, studies that examined the project in the theoretical guidance of critical development approaches and especially depoliticization—both of which questioned the supposed neutrality and universality of development and focused on contestation and power relations created or altered by development discourses and practices—were very rare. Studies that concentrated on discursive constructions and discursive practices in the overall GAP framework together with their multiple ramifications on multiple fronts were rare as well. In that sense, GAP remained largely unpacked and uncontested.

In order to fill this important research gap and introduce a fresh, original, and alternative perspective on GAP, in this study I primarily asked the broad question of through what kind of discursive and material practices politicians, bureaucrats, experts, and other elite groups as the architects of GAP have shaped the design and implementation of the project. I also asked the broad question as to how state practices have contributed to depoliticization of issues, institutions, and processes in the overall GAP framework. I drew on the methodological guidance of qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis methods to provide answers to these broad questions as well as related minor questions. In order to make a rigorous examination possible and cover every important detail in written and spoken texts to the extent possible, I asked *what* and *why* questions in addition to *how* questions regarding GAP based on the assumption that they were interlinked and “interstitial.” Since the final interpretation and reordering of findings well reflected the *what*, *why*, and *how* of GAP and the operation of development—or the development apparatus—in Turkey, I chose to present them in the same order. For this reason, in simpler terms, I discussed *what* GAP used to be in the past, has recently become, and would look like in the future; *why* GAP was initiated; and *how* GAP was designed and implemented in this study.

In my empirical analysis, I first examined the historical trajectory of GAP from its inception until 2015 as well as oscillations in the modes of its governance over time. I demonstrated that GAP has passed through different periods in which GAP was (1) a water and land resources development project, (2) a multi-sectoral and integrated project, (3) in limbo, (4) a sustainable human development project, (5) a market-based project, and (6) “new GAP,” and finally provided a more systematic and accurate analysis of what the project has become as of 2015 and what it might look like in the future. My main argument was that GAP’s gradual shift from its state-led, technical, engineering, infrastructure-based, “economist” or economic development-oriented character to its market-friendly, sustainable, participatory, human-centered, social development-oriented character could not be separated from the process of how the theory and practice of development have also undergone significant changes since the modernization theories of the 1950s to post-development approach in the 1990s and 2000s. Global development discourse and its prescribed concepts, norms, values, and standards have had a major influence on how the elites as the architects of GAP conceived and interpreted development. Just like a cascade or a chain reaction, the way they conceived and interpreted development influenced how they “did” development and shaped the trajectory of the project. I also demonstrated that GAP, with its current form, resembled a flexible and adaptive structure that was constantly redefined, redesigned, and rebranded in accordance with contextual necessities, changing conditions, and personal, institutional, and national interests. Over time, it has become an empty signifier-like container, into which different—even opposite—meanings could be placed in different contexts. In this light, I suggested that while GAP was once a concrete project, in its later stages it has spawned multiple, amorphous, and loosely-defined GAPs that permeated almost every aspect of social life in the whole GAP region, like an omnipresent and ubiquitous project. As a final remark, I argued that this fluid structure has played a crucial role in bolstering and sustaining the “mystique” of GAP for enabling (1) the justification of drawbacks and imperfections of the project at all times and in all contexts, (2) the concealment of the project-related imperfections and drawbacks and their implications which were in fact political in nature, and (3) the insulation of the project from criticism, problematization, and investigation to the extent possible and, thus, maintenance of its “special,” “untouchable,” and “sanctified” status. Thus, I provided answers to *what* GAP used to be in the past, has recently become, and would look like in the future.

Following this, I examined the sources that gave impetus to GAP’s design and implementation and rationalized both processes. I demonstrated that even though GAP

included a wide range of connected and independent project goals and objectives in a wide range of fields, the major impetus and rationalization of GAP originated from broader and more complex sources, which were (1) the rectification of differences of GAP region, (2) the admiration of the West and Western development trajectory, and (3) the pursuit of development and betterment at the expense of destruction. I also demonstrated that rationalizing GAP on these grounds was not without implications. My main argument was that the perception of GAP region as different from the rest of the country due primarily to the so-called ignorance and traditional lifestyle of its local population was a strong motivation for the architects of GAP to normalize the differences and “fix the abnormalities.” The outcome of this was not only the otherization and infantilization of the local population, but also the legitimization of development interventions exogenously imposed in a top-down manner without adequately taking the needs, demands, and concerns of the local population into account. I also argued that the aspiration to “look at the West, look like the West, despite the West” and the belief that emulating the development experience of the West was imperative to achieve this aspiration deeply motivated the architects of GAP to initiate the project. This, however, led to the otherization of whatever and whoever deemed as “non-Western” and the emergence of a nationalist and ethnocentric—or Turco-centric—tendency to imagine GAP as the embodiment of “Turkishness” and concrete proof of Turkey’s level of development and “greatness” vis-à-vis the West. I further argued that the will and ambition to ensure progress and development—or betterment in a broader sense—at the expense of counterproductive and even destructive consequences also contributed to the rationalization of GAP’s initiation. The implications of this were the normalization of development-induced destruction on many fronts and reinforcement of the narrow and “economist” idea that development was solely about material and financial gains. These sources and their implications indicated that even though GAP has undergone significant changes through the course of the project, the modernist interpretation of development and many features of modernization theories remained embedded and largely unchanged in the overall GAP framework. My final argument was that the three major rationales behind GAP helped the preservation of the “mystique” of GAP and its “sanctified” status, as the higher goals these rationales prescribed allowed (1) the representation of GAP as a vital and noble cause which no one should object, (2) its characterization as a neutral undertaking that would supposedly benefit all and benefit all equally in all contexts, (3) the justification of both the means and ends of GAP without being subjected to public debate or deliberation, and (4) obscuration of the problematic and often political aspects of development-cum-GAP while highlighting its

certain rosy and positive contributions in a highly selective manner. Thus, I provided answers to the question as to *why* GAP was initiated.

Finally, I identified and examined the sources that contributed to the governance of GAP in a depoliticized mode and formed the basis of depoliticizing implications of the project. Accordingly, I illustrated that there was not only one, single, and simple source of depoliticization in the overall project framework. Instead, depoliticization originated from various complex and interrelated sources, which I identified as (1) the employment of technical language, (2) the dominance of experts and expert knowledge, (3) the neoliberalization of GAP and “biopoliticization” of its character, (4) the “developmentalization” of the Kurdish question, and (5) the extension of the visibility and authority of the state in the guise of GAP. I also illustrated that there was not only one, uniform type of depoliticization in GAP’s context. It rather took different forms such as the negation of antagonisms (e.g., replacing dissensus-based discourses on conflict with consensus-based discourses on development), redefinition of political issues and conflicts along the lines of economics and morality (e.g., perceiving the Kurdish question as an “underdevelopment” problem), erosion of agency (e.g., extending the project to infiltrate all aspects of life and perceiving it as a perpetual process), and transferring of blame, responsibility, and costs to other people, institutions, or phenomena that were considered to be beyond human agency and control (e.g., placing the responsibility and burdens of GAP-induced drawbacks to farmers or policy changes in the project to globalization). Indeed, both the sources and types of depoliticization were not constant and fixed; they were rather flexible and dynamic. For this reason, I argued that depoliticization could be better interpreted not as a conclusive and terminal stage in which issues, institutions, and people stayed depoliticized forever, but instead as a continuous and fluid process in which depoliticizing, politicizing, and repoliticizing forces competed, conflicted, and balanced each other. In the guidance of the argument above and also the strong and accurate claim that in any setting contestation or power dynamics could not be completely eradicated but could only be obscured or repressed at best, I suggested that GAP and the depoliticized issues under its umbrella would also be pushed out from the supposedly neutral domain they were in and become contested and repoliticized in the later stages of the project. In the end, I argued that the governance of GAP in a depoliticized mode and contribution of the project to technicization and neutralization of political phenomena also nurtured the “mystique” of GAP and strengthened its “untouchable” status, as these factors facilitated (1) the spread and consolidation of the idea that GAP was “above” and “beyond” politics and therefore

incontestable, (2) the concentration of power and authority in the hands of the elites and placement of responsibility and burdens to the non-elites, (3) the construction of a reality in which it was almost a moral imperative to provide automatic and unconditional support to the project and everything it would bring while remaining silent about anything it would take away, and (4) the circulation of regulatory power in a Foucauldian manner to achieve people's voluntary participation to the development process. Thus, I provided answers to the question as to *how* GAP was designed and implemented. Both the demystification of the “mystique” of GAP especially regarding how the project could remain unproblematized and uncontested and examination of the project from an alternative perspective provided a number of important and illuminating inferences on the idea, discourse, and practice of development as well as GAP, as will be discussed below.

8.2. Main Inferences About the Concept of Development and GAP

Needless to say, the inferences below about development and GAP were formulated on the basis of my own interpretation and examination of the collected data as well as previous literature on development and GAP. They are by no means absolute truths; their number, content, and focus might indeed change depending on the context in which—and by whom—they are reinterpreted and reexamined. Also, it is important to note that these inferences do not automatically and necessarily suggest that development has been nothing but a “devilish” conspiracy planned in the meeting rooms of international development institutions, aid agencies, or government institutions to inflict deliberate harm on certain people in certain geographies. They do not suggest that development unconditionally and irrevocably “fails” whenever, wherever, and however implemented and leads to catastrophe at all times. Neither they overshadow successful cases in which development actually worked and changed the lives of the poor and powerless people all around the world. They rather suggest that it would be misleading and inadequate to conceptualize development as a neutral, apolitical, indisputable, and almost sacrosanct phenomenon that should have a universal meaning, always lead to a positive and favorable change, and always bring equal benefits to all stakeholders and beneficiaries or everyone in a society. In contrast to this conceptualization, they indicate that development has been value-laden and power-loaded and its impacts and outcomes have varied depending on historical, geographical, and contextual specificities and conditions, as will be discussed in greater detail below.

8.2.1. Inference 1: Development Lacks a Conceptual Precision and Fixed Content

An important inference drawn from the study is that how states, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and local communities perceived and interpreted development has

become so diverse that development came to mean anything and everything at the same time over time (see Chapter 5). Just as an empty signifier signified a totality or a universality, development came to signify the utilization of water resources, construction of infrastructure, increase in agricultural production and productivity, increase in income level, improvement in socio-economic indicators, transformation of the traditional into modern, sustainability, social inclusion, self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship, security, good governance, freedom, democracy, and an infinite number of similar—and also dissimilar—concepts and processes simultaneously in different contexts. Apparently, while development has always remained intact as a signifier, different concepts or processes were included into, reinterpreted within, or excluded from the pool of signifieds in different periods in accordance with the continuities and discontinuities in the theory and practice of development. However, it can be argued that it was to a certain extent this imprecise and umbrella-like character that made the constant redefinition and reproduction of development possible and, thus, allowed development to proceed anywhere and anytime without much contestation and resistance. The vagueness and ambiguity of development-related mobilizing concepts such as participation, partnership, and governance facilitated the concealment of ideological differences and compromise of many different interests (Mosse, 2005, p. 230). Development was “in the eye of the beholder” and could be filled with any content whatsoever depending on the context. In the words of Eade (2010), development, or “development speak,” has been simultaneously

descriptive and normative, concrete and yet aspirational, intuitive and clunkily pedestrian, capable of expressing the most deeply held convictions or of being simply “full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” This very elasticity makes it almost the ideal post-modern medium, even as it embodies a modernizing agenda (pp. viii-ix).

It can also be inferred that GAP in its latest form is devoid of well-defined limits and a fixed content. Indeed, the project was not monolithic and comprised a large number of different subprojects in a wide range of spheres from the beginning. Still, widening of its focus and scope as well as its redefinition(s) gradually blurred the line between what the project covered and what it excluded. In line with their international, national, institutional, and even personal interests, involved development actors and institutions that operated at the global, national, regional, and local levels attached different meanings to both GAP and development to reap different benefits out of their subjective characterization, such as legitimacy in international relations (e.g., water sharing dispute among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq), flow of resources (e.g., different amounts of budget allocated to DSI, DPT, and GAP-

BKĪ), political support (e.g., attraction of votes), or bureaucratic influence (e.g., turf wars among institutions to have the upper hand in the steering of the project). The projects could have as well been separately and independently signified and handled by their own merits without being subsumed under the banner of GAP. Had this been the case, however, quite possibly GAP would not have attracted a vast amount of material and human resources and retained its promising and alluring image over decades. In that sense, the imprecise and fickle character of GAP has actually allowed the project to continue incessantly by constantly reproducing the project and maintaining its legitimacy and powerful image.

8.2.2. Inference 2: Development Tends to Simplify and Homogenize

Another inference about development is that development has generally tended to simplify and homogenize for a more convenient and straightforward operationalization process (see Chapter 6). It often took a shortcut and viewed continents, countries, regions, and populations as single units. For instance, development recipes were prescribed mostly to “save” a whole continent (e.g., Africa), “reconstruct” a group of countries (e.g., Western European countries as in Marshall Plan), “promote the development” of a whole region (e.g., Hokkaido in Japan), “rapidly transform” a whole society (e.g., Great Leap Forward in China) without necessarily breaking these large units into smaller units. Even when it was done and more specific recipes were prescribed to develop “the local communities,” “the powerless,” “the poor,” “the disadvantaged,” or “the backward,” it was not clearly specified who exactly was meant by these easy labels. Such simplifications were often based on documentary, static, personal (e.g., migration patterns) or impersonal (e.g., the length of highways built each year) aggregate facts and observations of only specific aspects of social life that would serve the official interests and benefit “officials ... to group citizens in ways that permit them to make a collective assessment” (Scott, 1998, p. 80). However, regardless of how functional and operational such simplified and homogenized “snapshots” of beneficiaries and target groups of development projects might be, the questions that concerned their lives had to be as detailed, differentiated, and sensitive as possible. As Ferguson (1994) underlined in his work on Lesotho (see Chapter 2 for more details), for instance, “they” in the often-asked question of “what should they do?” did not say much because

[t]he inhabitants of Lesotho [did] not share the same interests or the same circumstances, and they [did] not act as a single unit. ... When the “developers” spoke of such a collectivity (“they,” “the Basotho,” “Lesotho”) what they meant was usually the government. But the government of Lesotho [was] of course not identical with the people who live[d] in Lesotho, nor [was] it in any of the established senses

“representative” of that collectivity. ... [T]he interests represented by governmental elites in a country like Lesotho [were] not congruent with those of the governed ... “The people” [were] not an undifferentiated mass. Rich and poor, women and men, city dwellers and villagers, workers and dependents, old and young; all confront[ed] different problems and devise[d] different strategies for dealing with them (pp. 280-281).

It is possible to infer that GAP has not been free from the homogenizing and simplifying implications of development, either. As emphasized before, GAP region was far from being monolithic; there were significant political, economic, social, and cultural divergences among nine provinces in the region, townships in each province, villages under each township, the local population in each locality, and men, women, children, disabled, poor, rich, Turkish, and Kurdish in each community (see Chapter 4). Indeed, it would be unfair to claim that there was absolutely no effort to differentiate among different subregions in GAP region and different subgroups of the local population in the overall project framework. Still, it is difficult to assert that the multiplicity of identities, interests, needs, and worldviews of the local population was acknowledged to an extent that policies were specifically tailored according to subgroups and individuals. In other words, an approach that would pay the utmost attention to what kind of challenges, risks, potentials, and prospects development-cum-GAP would create for different groups, subgroups, and individuals and take into consideration how development-cum-GAP would create and alter power dynamics among these groups was missing or weak at best within GAP framework.

8.2.3. Inference 3: Development Tends to be Authoritarian

Another significant inference about development is that development has had authoritarian implications, as it has often been a design or process in which there was one side who instructed the other side on what to do, what not to do, and how to or how not to do whatever it was deemed necessary to be done (see Chapter 7). This power imbalance took multiple forms within which international development institutions provided prescriptions for governments (e.g., SAP and austerity measures imposed by IMF), governments provided prescriptions for their domestic institutions (e.g., the neoliberal restructuring of education, health, and security sectors), and domestic institutions provided prescriptions for the target groups of development (e.g., development programs based on PRA or microcredit schemes). Similar hierarchical power relations between the West and the East, Global North and Global South, developed countries and developing countries, or experts and non-experts persisted as well. It has almost always been the case that development concepts, norms, standards, and

even the concept itself originated from one or a few centers and dispersed in a unidirectional manner. They were either borrowed and put into practice as they were or borrowed and adapted to national, regional, or local conditions to a certain extent, while the core philosophy and objectives behind them often remained intact and unchallenged.

In addition, development has involved intervening in people's lives and shaping their preferences regardless of whether they agreed or disagreed with the instructions and prescriptions provided to them (see Chapter 6). Despite the entrance of participatory development, bottom-up development, "farmers first" approach, and similar notions into the lexicon of development actors and institutions long time ago, the hierarchy between "the top" and "the bottom" has remained relatively constant. Even when the needs, demands, and concerns of stakeholders and beneficiaries were taken into consideration and negotiated, it has always been "the top" who set the rules and limits of this negotiation process and "the bottom" who had to abide by these rules. In other words, the relationship in which one side assumed the active role of "the developer" and made the "push" for change from outside and the other side was given the passive role of "to be developed" and dependent on an external force for change continued to exist.

Authoritarian implications of development were discernable in the overall GAP framework as well. Despite the significant shifts in the project's governance and intensified efforts to include both disadvantaged and powerless groups into the development process and local voices and perspectives into the planning process, the power has remained concentrated in the elites as the architects of the project (see Chapter 7). From the beginning of the project until its current stage, they have wielded the power and authority to formulate and implement policies on behalf of the local population; control the pace, direction, and resources of the project; and decide on "what is to be done" or "what 'they' should do" in a normative manner. As it has been the case with many other recent development or urban renewal projects in Turkey, generally participation was either only on paper; done at a very late stage of projects after almost all decisions were made without consulting to public; or done with a very limited number of people whose representativeness was questionable. It has been mostly the case that projects were not adapted to priorities of people, but instead people adapted themselves to the consequences of projects even involuntarily, as witnessed in flooding, displacement, and planned resettlement cases.

8.2.4. Inference 4: Development Tends to Depoliticize

One notable inference drawn from the study is that development has had depoliticizing implications due to a number of reasons. Without repeating what has already been discussed

on the relationship between development and depoliticization (see Chapter 2 & 7), suffice it to say that development has been largely conceptualized and implemented as a neutral and technical enterprise which would eventually lead to a process or condition without contestation and confrontation. Even though many development-related concepts were considered “essentially contested”—which roughly implied that there was an agreement on what they meant in theory, but at the same time an endless disagreement on what they meant in practice—their contestability in the development lexicon was often flattened and obscured (Cornwall, 2010, p. 2). In a sense, development has often banished politics and turned a blind eye to the political and/or conflictual aspects of issues, processes, and power dynamics in the process of development. The fresh, transformed condition to be attained after the successful implementation of development practices had to be devoid of chaos, disorder, friction, and similar “inconveniences” that would harm its orderliness and sterility. The incongruities and inconsistencies had to be smoothed and oppositional voices and spaces of dissent had to be erased (Crush, 1995, p. 2). However, attaining development in such a smooth and straightforward mode has been almost impossible; every intervention led to the distortion of power relations. It produced winners and losers and provides benefits—if any at all—to “haves” and “have-nots” in different ways. In a zero-sum fashion, someone’s gain might be someone else’s loss, or vice versa. Such processes have inevitably involved conflict, disagreement, dispute, clash of interests, discursive battles, and similar struggles in varying degrees. In other words, the notions of power and contestation occupied a central position in the development process and conflictual relations and could not be easily and totally removed. Still, politicization or repoliticization of development was always possible and even necessary in order for development to genuinely “work” and endure. Any development intervention in which “who gets what, when, how” was not adequately taken into consideration and political antagonism was neutralized or suppressed was less likely to bring the expected benefits and lead to the expected outcomes, if not completely end up in catastrophe. Therefore, even though it has been widely accepted that science, technicity, rationality, expert knowledge, and similar elements constituted the grounds of development’s so-called neutrality and gave little or no room for the political to emerge, alternative routes such as traditional practices, local knowledge-based approaches, homegrown initiatives, grassroots alternatives, and solidarity movements can pose a challenge to these elements and promote the repoliticization of development.

As discussed in Chapter 7, it can be inferred that GAP was also narrated and implemented largely in a depoliticized mode. The interpretation of development in the overall

project framework has been mostly technical and at times biopolitical; contestation was therefore minimized to the extent possible. The idea that development was a neutral and a positive process that brought equal benefits to everyone without causing any friction has occupied a dominant position throughout the project. Arguably, the primary aim of GAP has not been to converge and eventually equalize wealth and power of the “haves” and “have-nots” at the expense of engaging in politics and distorting power relations. Rather, it was aimed to ensure the development of each group without necessarily interfering in contested and thorny matters such as who actually reaped the benefits of the project, how they benefited from the project, how just or unjust development process was, or what kind of unintended and undesirable consequences the project led to. The viewpoint of an expert from GAP-BKİ on the problem of income and land ownership inequality in GAP region succinctly sums up this claim, as she explains that

You don't have the right to intervene. Large landowners, landlords, tribes... Look, I don't like the hatred against the rich. God gave him plenty. He gave me little. You don't have to turn against the rich for this. What can I do if that wealth is acquired not by theft, falsification, and illicit [*haram*] activities but in lawful [*helal*] ways? ... For instance, I am completely against land reform. The state cannot confiscate anyone's property. My property is mine. Your property is yours. I am absolutely against it.¹⁷²

8.2.5. Inference 5: Development Tends to Legitimize

It can also be inferred from the study that development has been a “legitimization machine” as much as it has been an “anti-politics” machine. Development has had an immense power to legitimize interventions imposed from outside, controversial and risky policy decisions, destructive outcomes that might arise during or at the end of the development process, and similar undesired situations (see Chapter 6). Even the word development itself—along with progress, growth, and improvement—tended to have positive, optimistic, and rosy connotations and was often associated with a better and improved future. For this reason, development has evolved into an almost magical and mythical concept no one should challenge and oppose, as it would be simply preposterous and even vicious to question such a neutral, benevolent, and idealistic enterprise. Thanks to this “shield from criticism” and legitimizing power, severe environmental, social, and cultural problems induced by development interventions were often normalized as the “inevitable” side effect or “natural”

¹⁷² Personal interview, April 22, 2014, Ankara, Turkey.

cost of development and change. Even though they were serious problems with serious consequences, the tendency was to tolerate them on the grounds that they resembled “labor pain,” “treatment,” “breaking the eggs,” “sacrifice for a greater good,” and similar situations in which supposedly one had to suffer first to attain a brighter future. In that sense, legitimizing power of development has not only masked the other, dark, untold, and maybe the “real” side of development, but also functioned as a motor of the process through reframing even the catastrophic failures as a price to be paid and shifting blame on some other sources, but never on the idea and practice of development itself despite its impacts and consequences.

Many controversial policies and the discontent of the local population were also legitimized through similar mechanisms in the overall GAP framework. Even though the problems of soil salinization, soil erosion, waterlogging, deforestation, internal displacement, flooding of historical sites, and changing land ownership patterns were acknowledged and addressed to a certain extent, the general tendency at the state, government, and institutional level has been to consider such destructive outcomes as inherent in and necessary for development. Since they were normalized and legitimized as such, GAP could maintain its legitimacy in the eyes of both its architects and the local population and run on for decades despite all its drawbacks and limited trickle-down effects. Development could remain unquestioned and unchallenged through the same mechanism as well. In other words, while a myriad of GAP-related problems were highlighted and different sets of recommendations were proposed for the better design and implementation of the project in the past, the possibility that the genuine problem might lie not in how development was practiced, but how it was interpreted was often overlooked due to the legitimizing power of development.

8.2.6. Inference 6: Development is Better Interpreted in Relative, not Absolute Terms

The final inference from the study is that it would be more accurate and elucidative to consider success, failure, strength, weakness, impact, influence, and similar notions employed to assess whether development “worked” or development projects were “effective” as relative, not absolute terms. Arguably, the discrepancies between development theory and practice, development planning and implementation, development expectations and outcomes have gradually widened since the inception of the development concept. Part of these gaps stemmed from the assumption that indicators and criteria of the notions of success, failure, or impact were well-defined and universally agreed upon. Understood this way, when development projects—often standardized and selected from an existing repertoire of past development projects and experiences—fell short of fulfilling a long list of prescribed norms,

they were automatically denigrated and stigmatized as failure. However, it was often overlooked that the verdict of success or failure would be different in case the very same project would be assessed in the light of another set of criteria in accordance with contextual realities and more personalized, micro-level challenges. It was also often overlooked that where one sat determines what one saw; the perception of success and failure in the eyes of those who initiated development and those who were selected “to be developed” might completely differ. In this context, the questions as to whose perspective constituted the basis of the assessment—and why—had to also be asked and satisfactorily answered. It is noteworthy that Mosse (2005) also viewed the matter from a different perspective and argued that development projects

[were] “successful” not because they turn[ed] design into reality, but because they sustain[ed] policy models offering a significant interpretation of events. ... Development proceed[ed] not only (or primarily) from policy to practice, but also from practice to policy. Correspondingly, project failure [was] not the failure to turn designs into reality; but the consequence of a certain disarticulation between practices, their rationalizing models and overarching policy frameworks. Failure [was] not a failure to implement the plan, but a failure of interpretation (pp. 181-182).

Therefore, taking according to whose perspective and interests development was interpreted and practiced into consideration might contribute to the redefinition of some subjective development-related concepts. This might also manage expectations about the “successful” practice of development and reduce disappointments for the “failures” that were maybe not failures at all. Thus, the constructed discrepancies or gaps between different phenomena would also be diminished.

GAP, too, is better interpreted in relative, not absolute terms. The assessment of the project as such might provide a fresh and different picture of the project and illustrate how interpretations can vary depending on the position of the speaker and context in which the project is assessed. For instance, when the impacts of GAP were subjected to debate, it is by and large the case that these impacts were expressed in binary terms—negative and positive (see Chapter 6). However, it often goes untold from whose perspective these impacts were concluded as negative or positive. The assessments of the project impacts by a farmer who quadrupled his/her income after the extension of irrigation systems, a family who had to leave their village due to the impoundment of dam reservoirs, a pregnant woman who had a chance to see a doctor for the first time in her entire life, a seasonal worker who lost his/her job opportunity after increased agricultural mechanization, a civil engineer at DSI, a

sociologist at GAP-BKĪ, an economist at the Ministry of Development, and a foreign service officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs all differ. So does the “negativity” and “positivity” degrees of these impacts. Given this, the debate can take a new form and binary terms can lose their meaning if the very same impacts are reinterpreted from different perspectives and under different circumstances. Similarly, the question as to whether GAP has been a success story or a failure—which resembles the question whether the glass is half empty or half full—can also be answered in relative terms. Rigid definitions of and generic claims on success and failure might be misleading. For instance, according to Scott (1998, pp. 4-5), there were four elements whose combination would turn state-led social engineering into a tragedy: administrative ordering of nature and society, high-modernist ideology, an authoritarian state with a will to use coercion to realize its high-modernist goals, and a weak civil society with inadequate capacity to show resistance against these plans and designs. Even though GAP more or less fits to this description, it would be unfair to qualify the project as a tragedy or a complete failure. Also, ironically, in the absence of an ideal to reorder nature and society, a strong state tradition, and a society that lacked self-sufficiency, a project of GAP’s scale would not/could not be initiated anyway. In this case, the elements of tragedy or failure are actually *raison d’etre* of the project, which once again illustrates the subjective nature of both development and metrics to assess success and failure. Indeed, all of these inferences also had a number of practical implications concerning GAP and other similar development projects worldwide, as will be discussed below.

8.3. Implications for GAP and Development Practice

To reiterate, the main concern of the study is not to franchise the idea that development “stinks” (Esteva, 1985, p. 78, as cited in Pieterse, 2000, p. 176). It does not conceptualize development as a “malignant myth” whose pursuit has become threatening for people. Neither does it argue that development “failed miserably” all around the world (p. 176) and that “[t]he time is ripe to write its obituary” (Sachs, 2010, p. xv). In other words, the study does not advocate anti-development; it rather emphasizes the possibility and necessity of imagining and practicing development—or any endeavor to improve human conditions—in more critical, different, and alternative ways. Based on these premises, the study also provides practical insights on how to—or how not to—think of development and execute it.

To elaborate on the practical implications of this study in specific relation to GAP, one of the main concerns of the state elites who were involved in the design and implementation process of GAP has been to accomplish the project goals and objectives as quickly and efficiently as possible. To this end, a considerable number of master plans, action

plans, reports, surveys, studies, and similar policy-oriented documents were produced and a considerable number of changes were made in terms of how the project could be better administered and implemented (see Chapter 5). However, a critical look at written texts on GAP—especially policy documents—reveals that over time each text has become some sort of a repetition or extended version of the previous texts. Almost all the texts that were enthusiastically reintroduced as “latest” or “novel” and in which GAP was referred to as “new” and “different” were actually not as original as they were presented. In that sense, the constant renewal, redefinition, and rebranding of GAP resembled “an institutional Groundhog day in which every decade or two similar pronouncements [were] repackaged by a new generation of aid administrators and presented afresh as the way forward” (Duffield, 2007, p. 227, as cited in Ziai, 2016, p. 222). To put it differently, the efforts to accomplish the project goals and objectives were concentrated not on changing the imagination and practice of development, but on changing the means of attaining “development as usual,” imagined and practiced in mainstream and “classical” terms. For this reason, neither alternatives *of* development nor alternatives *to* development were genuinely sought and found. While the means of development were challenged and questioned to a certain extent, the end of development remained largely uncontested and intact. It is also noteworthy that over time both the architects of GAP and the local population in GAP region have become aware of the limits of the project and the difficulty of reaping its benefits in the short term. The ambitions of the people—both stakeholders and beneficiaries—and the fate of the project became disconnected and the project came to have “fewer and fewer pots and pans tied to its tail, [made] a smaller noise and awaken[ed] fewer people of less importance (Latour, 1996, p. 137, as cited in Mosse, 2005, p. 184). The once almost magical allure of the project was replaced by monotony and the hopes and excitement of the local population were replaced by disappointment and discontent over the years, leading to a “development fatigue.” Given this context, this study suggests that it is futile to allocate more time, effort, and resources for the sake of attaining “more” and “better” development within the limits of the current interpretation of development embedded in the overall GAP framework. Therefore, from an optimistic perspective, first and foremost the study exemplifies a challenge to the ossified beliefs about development and encourages the acknowledgement of the concept not as a purely neutral, technical, and apolitical enterprise and process within GAP and similar large-scale development projects worldwide.

The study also reinforces the idea that the added value of describing every endeavor to improve human conditions under the banner of development and carrying out these

activities in the name of development is questionable and limited. For this reason, it might contribute to the construction of a new language to reframe GAP and its different components and rescale its focus and scope. GAP as a label can be abandoned and GAP as a project can be dismantled so that many different projects that were designed to irrigate lands, raise the quality of life, or encourage entrepreneurship can be carried out autonomously and liberated from the overly bureaucratic and hegemonic development-cum-GAP apparatus. After all, many would agree that GAP has been overused and lost its functional meaning to a great extent. Channeling efforts and redirecting resources to carry out the existing schemes in the proposed manner would give a fresh impetus to the processes of change and improvement in the region. Such a profound change would by no means mark the end of development, change, progress, and similar processes. On the contrary, it would rather mark the end of the homogenizing, authoritarian, depoliticizing, and legitimizing implications of both development and GAP or at least reduce their impacts. It would also mark the abandonment of the techno-scientific development paradigm that provides generous benefits to states, governments, and already powerful groups but only limited benefits to people who must be the actual target of improvement schemes for their limited power and agency.

In addition, the study highlights that the role power plays before, during, and after the initiation of GAP or similar projects in different geographies in the world is generally overlooked. This awareness might lead to the placement of power dynamics at the crux of improvement schemes and prevent their concealment through various means. For instance, in future policy implementations different identities might not be concealed through vague terms such as “the local communities” or “the people of the region,” but instead openly expressed as Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Sunni, Alevi, and Assyrian. Positive and negative changes or betterments and deteriorations might not be reduced to numbers, percentages, statistics, charts, and graphs, but instead narrated more qualitatively and more comprehensively to provide a multidimensional picture of how people are better or worse off after interventions. Beneficiaries might not be concealed through generic terms such as “farmers,” “villagers,” or “women,” but instead examined more closely and broken down into smaller groups. Such critical questions might be asked: Can large landowners, sharecroppers, and landless people all be grouped as farmers, while they greatly differ in power and influence? Can Turkish, Kurdish, and Arabic villagers all be grouped as villagers, while there are stark differences among their traditions, values, and interests? Can a child bride in a remote village, an illiterate woman in a town, and a businesswoman in a city all be grouped as women, while they all face different challenges in different settings? Taking such power dynamics into

consideration and unpacking concepts and terms to the extent possible might contribute to the distribution of power among different groups more evenly and mitigate the turbulent effects of the processes of development and change.

Finally, the study suggests that prescribing techno-scientific and techno-managerial solutions to problems—or issues that are framed as problems from a technical perspective—that actually embody complex political, social, psychological factors has been counterproductive in the context of GAP and arguably similar development projects. As mentioned above, such solutions often provide more and mainly economic benefits to states and governments than they do to people despite the widespread claim that the former carries out development activities for the prosperity and happiness of the latter. Even if they provide benefits to people, their impacts are not often long-term due to the mismatch between the technical lens at the supply side and the non-technical lens at the demand side. This mismatch can also be viewed as a clash between rational and emotion-based perspectives, scientific and traditional practices, “textbook” definitions and real life possibilities, and construction and reality. In this context, the study might help the acknowledgement of this mismatch as one of the key challenges to be addressed and overcome for the successful and legitimate implementation of GAP and similar projects. It might also contribute to the abandonment of technicity as a point of departure to address problems that are loaded with complex and intertwined socio-political factors that defy easy and straightforward solutions. The question as to how the theoretical contributions and practical implications of the study can be expanded further in the future will be discussed below.

8.4. Future Research

With its emphasis on the need to take a critical stance against the taken-for-granted and sterile conceptions regarding GAP and neutralized, technicized, and power-free interpretations of development, the study makes an original contribution to development studies literature as well as the literature on Turkish studies and GAP. However, the findings indicate that the limitations of the current research can be strengthened through future research in four major areas. Concentrating on these areas would not only complete the “puzzle” regarding the examination of GAP in the guidance of critical development approaches, but also contribute to the formulation of a larger framework that can be employed to examine other similar large-scale development projects in Turkey and also other geographies in the world.

First, more research that combines empirical data and valuable insights and experiences of experts, consultants, specialists, researchers, and project team members who

served their institutions for years and contributed to the initiation of GAP in their own or institutions' capacity should be conducted directly by these practitioners. It is disappointing—but also understandable given the circumstances and conditions under which they work—to see that a limited number of scholarly and/or critical works were produced by practitioners who were engaged in GAP under DSİ, DPT, GAP-BKİ, or similar institutions. In the meantime, however, their counterparts who were affiliated with various development-related institutions such as Oxfam, DFID, United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of dominantly Western European countries have conducted groundbreaking ethnographic and anthropological studies especially after the 1990s. Especially the ethnography of GAP should be examined by practitioners who know the bureaucracy and state mechanisms very well and can provide perspectives “from inside” regarding how development has been practiced and the Turkish development apparatus has operated. Such qualitative studies would better illustrate the similarities and mismatches between not only development theory and practice, but also project designs made behind the walls of governmental buildings and the “realities,” prospects, and challenges on the ground. After all, for some “the most important political effects of a planned intervention may occur unconsciously, behind the backs or against the wills of the ‘planners’ who may seem to be running the show” (Ferguson, 1994, p. 20). Such studies would also better reveal what kind of inter- and intra-institutional and inter- and intra-elite dynamics have existed within GAP and what kind of functions they had in the negotiation process of the project since its inception.

The second area to concentrate would be the inclusion of local voices and perspectives to a larger extent into studies similar to the current one. This can be achieved in two ways. First, considering that the elites vary in power and type, future studies should focus more on local, “mid-range” elites such as local politicians, local bureaucrats, local journalists, or civil society representatives and examine their perceptions of development-cum-GAP as well as interactions with “high-level” elites and the local population. While discourses of politicians and bureaucrats at the ministry, parliamentary, or undersecretary level without a doubt provide credible and valuable insights, incorporating less official and locally more influential voices and perspectives into the analysis would add a different dimension to the study and better reflect the local understandings and experiences regarding GAP and development. Second, future studies should focus more on through what kind of discursive practices the local population or laypeople—differentiated among different groups and subgroups—have narrated the project. This would be illuminating in terms of exploring

their subjective understandings and perceptions of the project in particular and development in general; examining whether or how especially global development discourses trickle down from the “top” to the “bottom;” revealing what kind of mismatches exist between the perceptions, expectations, and realities of “the developers” and “to be developed;” and discussing the reasons behind “the lack of emancipation of large groups of people” and their structural causes (Schuurman, 2009, p. 836). Thus, more accurate explanations to the questions as to how development is put into effect from project to practice and how it creates beneficiaries and losers can be provided.

Third, just as this study focused on depoliticizing implications of development and GAP, a follow-up study should be conducted to examine politicizing implications of the project and its politicization process. As noted before, politicization and depoliticization are not static conditions; they are rather dynamic and fluid processes. Given this, the focus on the depoliticization side of the continuum should be complemented with research that focuses on the politicization side as well as past and rare repoliticization attempts in the overall project framework. This would provide a complete picture of how GAP has been influenced by politicizing and depoliticizing forces and swayed from one end to another—or not—over the years. This would also provide an opportunity to compare and contrast both politicized and depoliticized modes of governance in terms of their functionality and efficiency in development practice and prevent waste of resources through reducing the number of “trial and error” type of development interventions.

Finally, similar theoretical framework, methodology, and research questions can be employed to examine other large-scale development projects within Turkey such as Eastern Anatolia Project, Eastern Black Sea Project, and Konya Plains Project. Projects of smaller scale in Turkey or similar large-scale projects all around the world such as Narmada Valley Project in India, Three Gorges Dam in China, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in Pakistan, Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia, or the Lamu Port Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor in Kenya can also be examined through the same guiding principles. Such works would not only reveal a more complete picture of the development vision, aspirations, and practices of the Turkish state, but also provide an opportunity to make comparisons across different development experiences worldwide and draw conclusions out of convergent and divergent patterns.

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- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (1992b, August 28). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 19, Year 1, Sitting 97). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (1993, March 9). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 19, Year 2, Sitting 78). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (1994, November 15). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 19, Year 4, Sitting 35). Ankara: TBMM.
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- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (1997, December 11). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 20, Year 3, Sitting 27). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (1998, December 24). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 20, Year 4, Sitting 37). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2000, November 21). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 21, Year 3, Sitting 18). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2003, October 8). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 22, Year 2, Sitting 4). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2004a, October 27). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 22, Year 3, Sitting 11). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2004b, November 4). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 22, Year 3, Sitting 14). Ankara: TBMM.

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- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2007b, September 3). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 23, Year 1, Sitting 9). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2009a, November 4). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 23, Year 4, Sitting 13). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2009b, December 25). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 23, Year 4, Sitting 42). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2011, February 8). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 23, Year 5, Sitting 61). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2012a, July 3). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 24, Year 2, Sitting 131). Ankara: TBMM.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. (2012b, December 14). *Tutanak Dergisi* (Term 24, Year 3, Sitting 40). Ankara: TBMM.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The list of examined parliamentary proceedings

A. THE LIST OF EXAMINED PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS FROM THE JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS¹⁷³

#	Dönem [Term]	Cilt [Volume]	Yasama yılı [Legislative Year]	Birleşim [Session]	Tarih [Date]	Sayfa sayısı [Number of pages]
1	9	18	3	12	3/12/1952	60
2	1	3	1	54	23/2/1962	110
3	1	3	1	58	27/2/1962	92
4	1	3	1	59	28/2/1962	26
5	1	5	1	94	28/5/1962	14
6	4	8	2	38	12/2/1975	46
7	4	11	2	63	9/4/1975	128
8	4	14	3	47	29/1/1976	90
9	5	4	1	115	24/2/1978	124
10	5	7	2	13	27/11/1978	82
11	5	7	2	15	29/11/1978	92
12	5	13	3	7	22/11/1979	120
13	5	14	3	46	18/2/1980	84
14	5	14	3	47	19/2/1980	102
15	5	14	3	50	22/2/1980	122
16	5	15	3	54	26/2/1980	156
17	N/A	1	1	5	7/12/1983	8
18	N/A	2	1	38	28/2/1984	158
19	17	5	1	87	10/7/1984	50
20	17	6	2	1	1/9/1984	108
21	17	7	2	8	4/10/1984	112
22	17	7	2	13	17/10/1984	96
23	17	8	2	22	7/11/1984	78
24	17	8	2	24	13/11/1984	46
25	17	11	2	44	16/12/1984	230
26	17	11	2	47	19/12/1984	188
27	17	12	2	49	21/12/1984	68
28	17	14	2	72	13/3/1985	106
29	17	15	2	93	1/5/1985	118
30	17	16	2	97	9/5/1985	128
31	17	19	3	18	17/10/1985	42
32	17	23	3	48	18/12/1985	122
33	17	23	3	49	19/12/1985	138
34	17	24	3	59	14/1/1986	56
35	17	28	3	101	6/5/1986	90
36	17	29	3	111	28/5/1986	128
37	17	30	3	115	4/6/1986	138
38	17	31	4	2	2/9/1986	58
39	17	31	4	4	4/9/1986	62
40	17	31	4	12	9/10/1986	46
41	17	32	4	16	21/10/1986	62
42	17	33	4	35	8/12/1986	528

¹⁷³ See Chapter 3 for the criteria used to select these proceedings. Proceedings are sorted in chronological order. **Bold** indicates proceedings that were included in the analysis.

Appendix A: The list of examined parliamentary proceedings

#	Dönem [Term]	Cilt [Volume]	Yasama yılı [Legislative Year]	Birleşim [Session]	Tarih [Date]	Sayfa sayısı [Number of pages]
43	17	34	4	39	12/12/1986	94
44	17	34	4	42	15/12/1986	116
45	17	35	4	47	20/12/1986	90
46	17	35	4	48	21/12/1986	78
47	17	35	4	49	22/12/1986	142
48	17	35	4	52	25/12/1986	108
49	17	36	4	61	29/1/1987	54
50	17	37	4	68	24/2/1987	88
51	17	37	4	72	4/3/1987	64
52	17	37	4	75	11/3/1987	56
53	17	37	4	76	12/3/1987	56
54	17	41	4	109	21/5/1987	124
55	17	42	4	115	12/6/1987	82
56	17	43	4	122	21/6/1987	136
57	18	1	1	3	25/12/1987	42
58	18	1	1	4	28/2/1987	134
59	18	1	1	13	26/1/1988	50
60	18	1	1	14	27/1/1988	66
61	18	2	1	16	2/2/1988	62
62	18	2	1	17	3/2/1988	34
63	18	2	1	18	4/2/1988	41
64	18	2	1	19	9/2/1988	82
65	18	3	1	31	8/3/1988	66
66	18	3	1	32	9/3/1988	88
67	18	4	1	34	15/3/1988	70
68	18	5	1	41	24/3/1988	150
69	18	5	1	42	29/3/1988	68
70	18	6	1	45	4/4/1988	804
71	18	7	1	47	6/4/1988	126
72	18	9	1	55	14/4/1988	138
73	18	9	1	56	15/4/1988	162
74	18	11	1	69	24/5/1988	80
75	18	16	2	22	8/11/1988	92
76	18	18	2	33	1/12/1988	118
77	18	19	2	37	9/12/1988	842
78	18	20	2	39	11/12/1988	142
79	18	20	2	40	12/12/1988	146
80	18	20	2	42	14/12/1988	134
81	18	20	2	45	17/12/1988	206
82	18	21	2	46	18/12/1988	132
83	18	21	2	48	20/12/1988	148
84	18	21	2	51	23/12/1988	150
85	18	25	2	81	23/4/1989	16
86	18	27	2	86	3/5/1989	54
87	18	27	2	88	16/5/1989	92
88	18	28	2	93	25/5/1989	90
89	18	30	2	104	19/6/1989	300
90	18	30	2	105	20/6/1989	74
91	18	30	2	106	21/6/1989	80
92	18	30	2	107	22/6/1989	162

Appendix A: The list of examined parliamentary proceedings

#	Dönem [Term]	Cilt [Volume]	Yasama yılı [Legislative Year]	Birleşim [Session]	Tarih [Date]	Sayfa sayısı [Number of pages]
93	18	32	3	12	4/10/1989	88
94	18	33	3	29	9/11/1989	64
95	18	33	3	31	13/11/1989	64
96	18	33	3	32	14/11/1989	40
97	18	36	3	46	14/12/1989	156
98	18	36	3	47	15/12/1989	114
99	18	36	3	49	17/12/1989	152
100	18	37	3	52	20/12/1989	132
101	18	37	3	53	21/12/1989	156
102	18	37	3	55	23/12/1989	112
103	18	38	3	56	24/12/1989	148
104	18	38	3	59	27/12/1989	172
105	18	54	3	53	19/12/1990	142
106	18	40	3	69	25/1/1990	88
107	18	40	3	73	6/2/1990	94
108	18	40	3	75	8/2/1990	32
109	18	41	3	78	15/2/1990	40
110	18	41	3	82	27/2/1990	120
111	18	41	3	84	1/3/1990	52
112	18	41	3	85	6/3/1990	92
113	18	43	3	103	17/4/1990	104
114	18	45	3	114	16/5/1990	168
115	18	45	3	115	17/5/1990	88
116	18	46	3	117	23/5/1990	58
117	18	46	3	122	5/5/1990	148
118	18	47	4	1	1/9/1990	252
119	18	48	4	11	25/9/1990	118
120	18	50	4	29	6/11/1990	258
121	18	51	4	32	13/11/1990	116
122	18	52	4	44	10/12/1990	698
123	18	52	4	46	12/12/1990	160
124	18	53	4	48	14/12/1990	130
125	18	53	4	49	15/12/1990	200
126	18	54	4	55	21/12/1990	126
127	18	54	4	56	22/12/1990	122
128	18	54	4	58	24/12/1990	218
129	18	56	4	80	12/2/1991	146
130	18	57	4	89	5/3/1991	122
131	18	57	4	91	7/3/1991	110
132	18	58	4	95	19/3/1991	116
133	18	58	4	97	21/3/1991	76
134	18	59	4	104	9/4/1991	158
135	18	59	4	106	11/4/1991	232
136	18	61	4	119	21/5/1991	216
137	18	61	4	130	3/7/1991	76
138	18	63	5	1	1/9/1991	210
139	19	1	1	2	14/11/1991	38
140	19	1	1	7	25/11/1991	38
141	19	1	1	8	28/11/1991	96
142	19	2	1	18	19/12/1991	52

Appendix A: The list of examined parliamentary proceedings

#	Dönem [Term]	Cilt [Volume]	Yasama yılı [Legislative Year]	Birleşim [Session]	Tarih [Date]	Sayfa sayısı [Number of pages]
143	19	2	1	19	24/12/1991	126
144	19	2	1	20	25/12/1991	78
145	19	2	1	21	26/12/1991	116
146	19	4	1	37	18/2/1992	82
147	19	5	1	46	10/3/1992	776
148	19	6	1	49	13/3/1992	148
149	19	6	1	51	15/3/1992	210
150	19	6	1	52	16/3/1992	168
151	19	7	1	53	17/3/1992	168
152	19	7	1	54	18/3/1992	170
153	19	7	1	56	20/3/1992	270
154	19	8	1	57	21/3/1992	124
155	19	8	1	59	23/3/1992	154
156	19	8	1	61	25/3/1992	180
157	19	9	1	66	21/4/1992	98
158	19	14	1	89	26/6/1992	146
159	19	14	1	92	2/7/1992	266
160	19	16	1	97	28/8/1992	198
161	19	17	2	1	1/9/1992	220
162	19	17	2	6	23/9/1992	126
163	19	19	2	17	20/10/1992	124
164	19	20	2	22	4/11/1992	72
165	19	20	2	25	11/11/1992	132
166	19	23	2	38	10/12/1992	760
167	19	24	2	39	11/12/1992	174
168	19	24	2	41	13/12/1992	132
169	19	25	2	44	16/12/1992	162
170	19	25	2	45	17/12/1992	160
171	19	25	2	46	18/12/1992	118
172	19	25	2	47	20/12/1992	164
173	19	31	2	78	9/3/1993	222
174	19	32	2	82	17/3/1993	102
175	19	33	2	89	8/4/1993	122
176	19	37	2	118	29/6/1993	140
177	19	37	2	119	30/6/1993	96
178	19	38	2	128	15/7/1993	84
179	19	39	3	1	1/9/1993	692
180	19	42	3	20	26/10/1993	230
181	19	44	3	34	30/11/1993	358
182	19	46	3	38	8/12/1993	792
183	19	47	3	44	14/12/1993	126
184	19	48	3	46	16/12/1993	134
185	19	48	3	47	17/12/1993	254
186	19	48	3	49	19/12/1993	158
187	19	49	3	54	24/12/1993	228
188	19	50	3	56	26/12/1993	178
189	19	53	3	70	10/2/1994	138
190	19	54	3	79	3/3/1994	214
191	19	63	3	123	24/6/1994	250
192	19	68	4	20	18/10/1994	156

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193	19	71	4	31	9/11/1994	96
194	19	71	4	32	10/11/1994	162
195	19	71	4	35	15/11/1994	158
196	19	71	4	36	16/11/1994	212
197	19	71	4	37	17/11/1994	118
198	19	75	4	51	13/12/1994	204
199	19	75	4	53	15/12/1994	188
200	19	75	4	55	17/12/1994	190
201	19	75	4	56	18/12/1994	182
202	19	76	4	57	19/12/1994	184
203	19	76	4	59	21/12/1994	212
204	19	76	4	61	23/12/1994	128
205	19	77	4	65	10/1/1995	168
206	19	77	4	66	11/1/1995	122
207	19	81	4	84	9/3/1995	272
208	19	83	4	94	4/4/1995	276
209	19	84	4	100	18/4/1995	210
210	19	86	4	112	18/5/1995	116
211	19	87	4	117	31/5/1995	196
212	19	88	4	120	7/6/1995	196
213	19	90	4	133	4/7/1995	230
214	19	91	4	137	8/7/1995	98
215	19	91	4	139	12/7/1995	452
216	19	92	4	140	13/7/1995	146
217	19	92	4	142	18/7/1995	196
218	19	93	4	144	20/7/1995	140
219	19	94	5	1	1/10/1995	284
220	19	94	5	8	13/10/1995	104
221	19	96	5	22	3/11/1995	134
222	19	96	5	25	7/11/1995	198
223	20	1	1	1	8/1/1996	428
224	20	1	1	9	6/2/1996	33
225	20	2	1	20	7/3/1996	34
226	20	2	1	21	10/3/1996	117
227	20	2	1	24	14/3/1996	65
228	20	2	1	32	3/4/1996	50
229	20	3	1	35	10/4/1996	107
230	20	3	1	38	17/4/1996	675
231	20	3	1	39	18/4/1996	177
232	20	3	1	40	19/4/1996	191
233	20	4	1	41	20/4/1996	220
234	20	4	1	43	22/4/1996	89
235	20	5	1	49	8/5/1996	137
236	20	6	1	60	11/6/1996	147
237	20	7	1	63	18/6/1996	151
238	20	7	1	66	25/6/1996	83
239	20	8	1	72	6/7/1996	117
240	20	8	1	77	16/7/1996	118
241	20	8	1	82	24/7/1996	66
242	20	9	1	84	30/7/1996	164

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243	20	11	2	1	1/10/1996	299
244	20	13	2	17	13/11/1996	210
245	20	16	2	33	14/12/1996	184
246	20	17	2	37	18/12/1996	154
247	20	22	2	66	11/3/1997	298
248	20	24	2	73	26/3/1997	84
249	20	25	2	83	22/4/1997	106
250	20	26	2	89	6/5/1997	136
251	20	28	2	101	3/6/1997	188
252	20	30	2	112	26/6/1997	92
253	20	34	3	1	1/10/1997	482
254	20	34	3	2	2/10/1997	40
255	20	34	3	5	21/10/1997	66
256	20	38	3	24	8/12/1997	92
257	20	38	3	26	10/12/1997	84
258	20	38	3	27	11/12/1997	224
259	20	40	3	30	18/12/1997	198
260	20	40	3	31	19/12/1997	164
261	20	40	3	33	21/12/1997	142
262	20	41	3	35	23/12/1997	148
263	20	43	3	44	20/1/1998	204
264	20	43	3	45	21/1/1998	926
265	20	45	3	53	11/1/1998	232
266	20	45	3	54	12/2/1998	100
267	20	46	3	60	26/2/1998	314
268	20	46	3	61	3/3/1998	292
269	20	48	3	70	24/3/1998	198
270	20	50	3	76	14/4/1998	252
271	20	52	3	91	20/5/1998	118
272	20	53	3	96	2/6/1998	388
273	20	57	3	114	2/7/1998	182
274	20	58	3	120	13/7/1998	184
275	20	59	3	124	20/7/1998	164
276	20	60	3	128	27/7/1998	72
277	20	62	4	1	1/10/1998	1262
278	20	64	4	9	20/10/1998	180
279	20	65	4	20	18/11/1998	130
280	20	66	4	23	24/11/1998	158
281	20	68	4	34	17/12/1998	62
282	20	68	4	37	24/12/1998	76
283	20	70	4	51	9/2/1999	172
284	20	70	4	52	10/2/1999	322
285	20	71	4	54	13/3/1999	272
286	21	2	1	19	22/6/1999	1975
287	21	3	1	20	23/6/1999	117
288	24	4	1	24	27/6/1999	239
289	21	5	1	28	1/7/1999	151
290	21	6	1	32	13/7/1999	130
291	21	6	1	35	20/7/1999	186
292	21	8	1	42	30/7/1999	512

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293	21	9	1	46	10/8/1999	226
294	21	12	1	58	26/8/1999	312
295	21	13	2	1	1/10/1999	282
296	21	13	2	6	13/10/1999	98
297	21	14	2	7	14/10/1999	134
298	21	14	2	8	19/10/1999	106
299	21	14	2	11	26/10/1999	128
300	21	14	2	12	27/10/1999	384
301	21	16	2	16	9/11/1999	160
302	21	16	2	20	16/11/1999	104
303	21	17	2	23	23/11/1999	168
304	21	18	2	26	30/11/1999	222
305	21	20	2	36	17/12/1999	363
306	21	21	2	39	21/12/1999	202
307	21	21	2	40	22/12/1999	170
308	21	21	2	41	23/12/1999	172
309	21	21	2	42	24/12/1999	162
310	21	22	2	44	26/12/1999	190
311	21	22	2	46	28/12/1999	422
312	21	23	2	48	18/1/2000	356
313	21	26	2	57	15/2/2000	280
314	21	27	2	63	29/2/2000	208
315	21	27	2	64	1/3/2000	182
316	21	28	2	67	8/3/2000	162
317	21	29	2	72	28/3/2000	174
318	21	29	2	74	30/3/2000	76
319	21	30	2	78	11/4/2000	274
320	21	30	2	79	12/4/2000	138
321	21	31	2	82	18/4/2000	246
322	21	33	2	98	24/5/2000	120
323	21	34	2	103	1/6/2000	198
324	21	34	2	104	2/6/2000	146
325	21	38	2	121	28/6/2000	234
326	21	43	3	13	8/11/2000	156
327	21	43	3	14	9/11/2000	94
328	21	45	3	18	21/11/2000	185
329	21	49	3	30	13/12/2000	144
330	21	49	3	32	15/12/2000	136
331	21	50	3	35	18/12/2000	180
332	21	54	3	56	8/2/2001	162
333	21	54	3	57	13/2/2001	218
334	21	58	3	79	5/4/2001	248
335	21	59	3	81	10/4/2001	220
336	21	61	3	91	25/4/2001	192
337	21	62	3	96	3/5/2001	162
338	21	63	3	98	9/5/2001	156
339	21	64	3	105	17/5/2001	120
340	21	65	3	112	5/6/2001	255
341	21	68	3	124	25/6/2001	178
342	21	68	3	128	29/6/2001	328

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343	21	71	4	1	1/10/2001	28
344	21	71	4	7	16/10/2001	225
345	21	72	4	8	17/10/2001	270
346	21	76	4	26	27/11/2001	116
347	21	79	4	34	8/12/2001	214
348	21	97	4	108	4/6/2002	342
349	21	99	4	119	27/6/2002	271
350	22	1	1	4	26/11/2002	50
351	22	1	1	11	17/12/2002	50
352	22	1	1	12	18/12/2002	29
353	22	2	1	15	25/12/2002	52
354	22	4	1	29	30/1/2003	486
355	22	4	1	30	4/2/2003	136
356	22	5	1	37	26/2/2003	520
357	22	10	1	54	24/3/2003	146
358	22	10	1	55	25/3/2003	168
359	22	14	1	77	8/5/2003	168
360	22	15	1	85	27/5/2003	286
361	22	21	1	104	9/7/2003	334
362	22	26	2	1	1/10/2003	956
363	22	27	2	4	8/10/2003	130
364	22	35	2	32	20/12/2003	234
365	22	37	2	40	8/1/2004	216
366	22	38	2	42	14/1/2004	1166
367	22	42	2	57	25/2/2004	146
368	22	45	2	70	7/4/2004	557
369	22	48	2	84	5/5/2004	264
370	22	53	2	104	22/6/2004	262
371	22	56	2	114	13/7/2004	1370
372	22	58	2	118	4/8/2004	486
373	22	61	3	1	1/10/2004	77
374	22	62	3	11	27/10/2004	146
375	22	63	3	14	4/11/2004	231
376	22	63	3	15	9/11/2004	611
377	22	64	3	17	11/11/2004	63
378	22	70	3	36	21/12/2004	165
379	22	70	3	37	22/12/2004	119
380	22	70	3	39	24/12/2004	114
381	22	71	3	43	28/12/2004	163
382	22	72	3	49	11/1/2005	415
383	22	72	3	51	13/1/2005	164
384	22	75	3	59	16/2/2005	246
385	22	78	3	72	17/3/2005	105
386	22	79	3	76	29/3/2005	677
387	22	83	3	95	5/5/2005	222
388	22	86	3	107	2/6/2005	114
389	22	87	3	111	14/6/2005	418
390	22	89	3	117	24/6/2005	166
391	22	92	3	126	13/7/2005	614
392	22	93	3	127	19/9/2005	2903

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393	22	94	4	1	1/10/2005	460
394	22	94	4	2	4/10/2005	248
395	22	97	4	14	28/10/2005	454
396	22	104	4	34	17/12/2005	179
397	22	106	4	42	25/12/2005	176
398	22	106	4	43	26/12/2005	356
399	22	107	4	45	28/12/2005	314
400	22	107	4	46	29/12/2005	652
401	22	109	4	53	24/1/2006	255
402	22	109	4	54	25/1/2006	243
403	22	112	4	69	1/3/2006	210
404	22	113	4	72	8/3/2006	194
405	22	114	4	78	22/3/2006	196
406	22	114	4	79	23/3/2006	146
407	22	114	4	80	28/3/2006	496
408	22	115	4	83	4/4/2006	372
409	22	116	4	86	11/4/2006	522
410	22	118	4	96	2/5/2006	242
411	22	119	4	97	3/5/2006	198
412	22	124	4	117	20/6/2006	481
413	22	125	4	121	28/6/2006	435
414	22	126	4	122	29/6/2006	336
415	22	130	5	1	1/10/2006	73
416	22	137	5	25	29/11/2006	327
417	22	139	5	31	13/12/2006	192
418	22	140	5	33	15/12/2006	1361
419	22	141	5	35	17/12/2006	143
420	22	141	5	37	19/12/2006	196
421	22	142	5	42	24/12/2006	416
422	22	149	5	74	13/3/2007	386
423	22	150	5	75	14/3/2007	169
424	22	159	5	112	25/5/2007	203
425	23	1	1	6	28/8/2007	15
426	23	1	1	9	3/9/2007	58
427	23	2	2	1	1/10/2007	199
428	23	2	2	8	17/10/2007	65
429	23	4	2	19	13/11/2007	325
430	23	5	2	25	27/11/2007	237
431	23	7	2	29	4/12/2007	3481
432	23	8	2	30	5/12/2007	164
433	23	8	2	31	6/12/2007	143
434	23	8	2	32	7/12/2007	160
435	23	8	2	33	8/12/2007	139
436	23	9	2	37	12/12/2007	311
437	23	9	2	38	13/12/2007	156
438	23	10	2	39	14/12/2007	414
439	23	11	2	47	9/1/2008	131
440	23	12	2	50	16/1/2008	139
441	23	13	2	54	24/1/2008	175
442	23	16	2	79	19/3/2008	126

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443	23	17	2	83	27/3/2008	415
444	23	19	2	96	29/4/2008	361
445	23	20	2	100	7/5/2008	232
446	23	20	2	101	8/5/2008	149
447	23	20	2	103	13/5/2008	268
448	23	20	2	104	14/5/2008	137
449	23	20	2	105	15/5/2008	305
450	23	21	2	107	21/5/2008	514
451	23	21	2	109	27/5/2008	217
452	23	21	2	110	28/5/2008	156
453	23	21	2	111	29/5/2008	200
454	23	22	2	113	4/6/2008	265
455	23	22	2	114	5/6/2008	142
456	23	22	2	115	10/6/2008	339
457	23	22	2	116	11/6/2008	380
458	23	22	2	117	12/6/2008	212
459	23	25	2	131	16/7/2008	233
460	23	26	2	135	24/7/2008	157
461	23	26	2	136	29/7/2008	195
462	23	26	2	137	30/7/2008	176
463	23	29	3	4	9/10/2008	104
464	23	29	3	8	21/10/2008	677
465	23	32	3	22	26/11/2008	1503
466	23	33	3	24	2/12/2008	324
467	23	34	3	28	16/12/2008	2122
468	23	35	3	29	17/12/2008	272
469	23	35	3	30	18/12/2008	276
470	23	35	3	32	20/12/2008	148
471	23	36	3	34	22/12/2008	332
472	23	36	3	37	25/12/2008	267
473	23	37	3	39	27/12/2008	92
474	23	38	3	52	3/2/2009	236
475	23	39	3	59	18/2/2009	166
476	23	44	3	88	12/5/2009	208
477	23	45	3	89	13/5/2009	95
478	23	45	3	91	20/5/2009	266
479	23	45	3	92	21/5/2009	112
480	23	46	3	98	3/6/2009	223
481	23	46	3	99	4/6/2009	201
482	23	50	4	2	6/10/2009	380
483	23	51	4	12	3/11/2009	464
484	23	52	4	13	4/11/2009	222
485	23	53	4	18	13/11/2009	93
486	23	54	4	27	8/12/2009	509
487	23	56	4	33	16/12/2009	219
488	23	57	4	39	22/12/2009	295
489	23	57	4	40	23/12/2009	141
490	23	57	4	41	24/12/2009	221
491	23	58	4	42	25/12/2009	118
492	23	59	4	53	27/1/2010	204

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#	Dönem [Term]	Cilt [Volume]	Yasama yılı [Legislative Year]	Birleşim [Session]	Tarih [Date]	Sayfa sayısı [Number of pages]
493	23	60	4	60	11/2/2010	152
494	23	61	4	64	23/2/2010	1321
495	23	62	4	67	2/3/2010	546
496	23	63	4	70	9/3/2010	375
497	23	63	4	73	16/3/2010	609
498	23	66	4	84	8/4/2010	203
499	23	66	4	85	13/4/2010	436
500	23	67	4	89	20/4/2010	227
501	23	75	4	134	14/7/2010	393
502	23	75	4	135	15/7/2010	392
503	23	75	4	136	16/7/2010	153
504	23	76	4	137	20/7/2010	419
505	23	77	5	1	1/10/2010	1447
506	23	79	5	8	19/10/2010	302
507	33	79	5	10	21/10/2010	168
508	23	85	5	31	13/12/2010	1986
509	23	86	5	33	15/12/2010	183
510	23	88	5	46	4/1/2011	343
511	23	92	5	61	8/2/2011	252
512	23	92	5	63	10/2/2011	275
513	23	93	5	69	22/2/2011	678
514	23	95	5	72	2/3/2011	256
515	24	7	2	31	8/12/2011	2090
516	24	8	2	35	12/12/2011	231
517	24	8	2	36	13/12/2011	198
518	24	9	2	37	14/12/2011	192
519	24	9	2	42	19/12/2011	200
520	24	12	2	56	25/1/2012	146
521	24	13	2	60	2/2/2012	190
522	24	16	2	82	22/3/2012	134
523	24	19	2	95	17/4/2012	368
524	24	20	2	102	3/5/2012	174
525	24	22	2	114	31/5/2012	284
526	24	24	2	121	19/6/2012	494
527	24	25	2	126	28/6/2012	262
528	24	27	2	131	3/7/2012	495
529	24	34	3	23	13/11/2012	313
530	24	34	3	25	15/11/2012	162
531	24	36	3	36	10/12/2012	1695
532	24	37	3	40	14/12/2012	243
533	24	38	3	43	17/12/2012	224
534	24	38	3	45	19/12/2012	162
535	24	40	3	52	15/1/2013	685
536	24	40	3	54	17/1/2013	532
537	24	41	3	55	22/1/2013	548
538	24	42	3	60	31/1/2013	206
539	24	43	3	65	13/2/2013	750
540	24	43	3	66	14/2/2013	232
541	24	45	3	74	6/3/2013	363
542	24	48	3	87	3/4/2013	205

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543	24	48	3	89	9/4/2013	406
544	24	49	3	93	17/4/2013	168
545	24	50	3	100	7/5/2013	593
546	24	51	3	107	21/5/2013	377
547	24	53	3	116	5/6/2013	181
548	24	54	3	127	1/7/2013	736
549	24	56	3	135	9/7/2013	185
550	24	62	4	21	26/11/2013	N/A
551	24	66	4	31	14/12/2013	N/A
552	24	67	4	35	18/12/2013	N/A
553	24	72	4	63	18/2/2014	N/A
554	24	72	4	64	19/2/2014	N/A
555	24	N/A	4	70	28/2/2014	N/A
556	24	N/A	4	82	29/4/2014	N/A
557	24	N/A	4	83	30/4/2014	N/A
558	24	N/A	4	96	3/6/2014	N/A
559	24	N/A	4	111	2/7/2014	N/A
560	24	N/A	4	113	8/7/2014	N/A
561	24	N/A	4	120	19/7/2014	N/A
562	24	N/A	4	126	25/7/2014	N/A
563	24	N/A	4	130	6/8/2014	N/A
564	24	N/A	4	131	12/8/2014	N/A
565	24	N/A	4	134	1/9/2014	N/A
566	24	N/A	4	138	9/9/2014	N/A
567	24	N/A	4	139	10/10/2014	N/A
568	24	N/A	5	29	14/12/2014	N/A

Appendix B: The list of examined documents from the archives of GAP-BKİ

B. THE LIST OF EXAMINED DOCUMENTS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF GAP-BKİ¹⁷⁴

#	Publication	Year
1	The Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study: Final Master Plan report: Master Plan (Vol. 2)	1989
2	The Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study: Final Master Plan report: Appendices A, B, C (Vol. 3)	1989
3	The Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study: Final Master Plan report: Appendices D, E, F, G (Vol. 4)	1989
4	The Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study: Final Master Plan report: Executive summary (2 nd ed., Vol. 1)	1990
5	Agricultural commodities marketing survey, planning of crop pattern, and integration of marketing and crop pattern studies	1992
6	<i>Entegre planlama ve GAP</i> [Integrated planning and GAP]	1993
7	<i>GAP Bölgesi Hareket Planı (1993-1997)</i> [GAP Region Action Plan (1993-1997)]	1993
8	<i>GAP Bölgesi'nde göç hareketleri</i> [Migration movements in GAP Region]	1993
9	<i>GAP Bölgesi'nde nüfusun demografik özellikleri</i> [Demographic features of population in GAP Region]	1993
10	<i>GAP bölgesinde toplumsal değişme eğilimleri araştırması</i> [Survey on the trends of social change in the GAP Region]	1993
11	<i>GAP Dergisi Cilt I</i> [GAP Review Volume 1]	1993-1997
12	GAP region environment study Dicle Basin (Environmental study for Diyarbakır and surroundings): Executive summary	1993
13	GAP regional transportation and infrastructure development study final report: Executive summary	1993
14	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi'nin mekânsal yapısı ve kentleşme</i> [Spatial structure of Southeastern Anatolia Region and urbanization]	1993
15	<i>GAP bölgesi baraj göl aynasında kalacak yörelerde istihdam ve yeniden yerleştirme sorunları araştırması</i> [Survey on the problems of employment and resettlement in areas affected by dam lakes in GAP region]	1994
16	<i>GAP ve çevre</i> [GAP and environment]	1994
17	Population movements in the Southeastern Anatolia Project region	1994
18	Survey on the problems of employment and resettlement in areas which will be affected by dammed lakes in GAP region: Executive summary	1994
19	Women's status in the GAP region and their integration to the process of development: Executive summary	1994
20	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi (GAP) dış kaynak kullanımı</i> [The use of external funding in Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP)]	1995
21	Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Action Plan	1995
22	<i>Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Semineri Raporu</i> [Sustainable Development and Southeastern Anatolia Project Seminar Report]	1995
23	<i>GAP bölgesinde tarımsal mekanizasyon gereksinimleri etüdü projesi</i> [The project of the study on agricultural mechanization needs in GAP region]	1996
24	<i>GAP: Az gelişmiş bölgelerin potansiyel araştırma toplantısı: İstanbul Sanayi Odası</i> [GAP: Meeting on the survey for potentials in underdeveloped regions: İstanbul Chamber of Industry]	1996
25	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi su kaynakları</i> [Water resources of Southeastern Anatolia Project]	1997

¹⁷⁴ Documents are sorted in chronological order.

Appendix B: The list of examined documents from the archives of GAP-BKİ

#	Publication	Year
26	<i>Birecik Barajı'ndan etkilenen nüfusun yeniden yerleşimi, istihdamı ve ekonomik yatırımları için planlama ve uygulama projesi</i> [Planning and implementation project for the resettlement, employment, and economic investments of the population affected by Birecik Dam]	1998
27	<i>GAP Dergisi Cilt 2</i> [GAP Review Volume 2]	1998-1999
28	<i>Birecik, Halfeti, Suruç, Bozova ilçeleri ile Rumkale'deki taşınmaz kültür varlıkları</i> [The cultural heritage in the towns Birecik, Halfeti, Suruç, Bozova and Rumkale]	1999
29	Southeastern Anatolia Project Social Action Plan	1999
30	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi'nde kültürel mirasın korunması, ve değerlendirilmesi üzerine öneriler</i> [Recommendations on the conservation and utilization of cultural heritage in Southeastern Anatolia Region]	2000
31	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Diyarbakır bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Diyarbakır] (Çalışma raporu No. 1)	2000
32	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Gaziantep bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Gaziantep] (Çalışma raporu No. 2)	2000
33	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Şanlıurfa bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Şanlıurfa] (Çalışma raporu No. 3)	2000
34	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Şırnak bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Şırnak] (Çalışma raporu No. 4)	2000
35	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Mardin bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Mardin] (Çalışma raporu No. 5)	2000
36	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Batman bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Batman] (Çalışma raporu No. 6)	2000
37	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Siirt bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Siirt] (Çalışma raporu No. 7)	2000
38	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Kilis bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Kilis] (Çalışma raporu No. 8)	2000
39	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Adıyaman bilgilendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Contact meeting of GAP Regional Development Plan in Adıyaman] (Çalışma raporu No. 9)	2000
40	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Vizyon, amaç, hedefler ve politikalar dokümanı hazırlık çalışmaları: Kamu kurumları ile arama toplantısı, Ankara</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: GAP Regional Development Plan: Preparation studies of the vision, goal, aim, and policies document: Stakeholder meeting with public institutions, Ankara] (Çalışma raporu No. 10)	2000
41	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Vizyon, amaç, hedefler ve politikalar dokümanı hazırlık çalışmaları: Kamu kurumları ile arama toplantısı, Diyarbakır</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: GAP Regional Development Plan: Preparation studies of the vision, goal, aim, and policies document: Stakeholder meeting with public institutions, Diyarbakır] (Çalışma raporu No. 11)	2000
42	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Kilis vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Kilis] (Çalışma raporu No. 12)	2000

Appendix B: The list of examined documents from the archives of GAP-BKİ

#	Publication	Year
43	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Gaziantep vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Gaziantep] (Çalışma raporu No. 13)	2000
44	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Batman vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Batman] (Çalışma raporu No. 14)	2000
45	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Adıyaman vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Adıyaman] (Çalışma raporu No. 15)	2000
46	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Şanlıurfa vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Şanlıurfa] (Çalışma raporu No. 16)	2000
47	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Şırnak vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Şırnak] (Çalışma raporu No. 17)	2000
48	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Siirt vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Siirt] (Çalışma raporu No. 18)	2000
49	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Mardin vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Mardin] (Çalışma raporu No. 19)	2000
50	<i>Merkezi planlamadan katılımcı planlamaya: GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Diyarbakır vizyon, amaç, hedef ve politikalar değerlendirme toplantısı</i> [From central planning to participatory planning: Assessment meeting of vision, goal, aim, and policies of GAP Regional Development Plan in Diyarbakır] (Çalışma raporu No. 20)	2000
51	<i>GAP Bölge Kalkınma Planı sağlık sektörü raporu</i> [GAP Regional Development Plan health sector report]	2001
52	<i>GAP Bölgesi'nin jeolojisi: Maden ve enerji kaynakları</i> [Geology of GAP region: Mining and energy resources]	2001
53	<i>“Kadınlar geleceğe bakıyor” 1. toplantı: “Kadın girişimciliği”</i> [First meeting of “Women look to the future: “Women entrepreneurship”]	2001
54	<i>Zeugma: A bridge from past to present</i>	2001
55	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Yönetici özeti</i> [Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Plan: Executive summary] (Vol. 1)	2002
56	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölge Kalkınma Planı: Ana rapor</i> [Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Plan: Main report] (Vol. 2)	2002
57	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi (GAP) bölgesinde faaliyet gösteren sanayi işletmelerinde üst düzey yöneticilerin profilleri</i> [Profiles of executives in industrial enterprises in Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) region]	2002
58	<i>Kentsel enformal sektörde istihdam ve iş potansiyelinin geliştirilmesi: Yönetici özeti</i> [Enhancing employment and business potential in informal urban sector: Executive summary]	2002
59	<i>GAP bölgesi halk sağlığı projesi raporu</i> [Report on public health project in GAP region].	2003
60	<i>GAP biyolojik çeşitlilik araştırma projesi 2001-2003 – Sonuç raporu</i> [GAP biological diversity research project 2001-2003 – Final report]	2004
61	<i>GAP bölgesi su ürünleri üretim ve tüketimini artırma etüt projesi: Yönetici özeti</i> [Survey on increasing the production and consumption of aquaculture: Executive summary]	2004

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#	Publication	Year
62	<i>Yeni kalkınmacılık: Bölgesel kalkınmada arayışlar</i> [New developmentalism: Searches in regional development]	2004
63	<i>Avrupa Birliği uyum süreci ve yerel yönetimler: Seminer el kitabı</i> [European Union harmonization process and local administrations: Seminar handbook]	2005
64	<i>Dünyada, Türkiye’de, GAP’ta tarım</i> [Agriculture in the world, in Turkey, and in GAP]	2005
65	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi’nde kadınların ekonomik güçlenmelerine yönelik yol haritası</i> [Roadmap to economically empower women in Southeastern Anatolia Region]	2006
66	Competitiveness agenda for the GAP region: GAP entrepreneur support centers project	2007
67	<i>Toplumsal cinsiyet temelli toplum liderlerine yönelik eğitim programı değerlendirme raporu</i> [Evaluation report of the training program for gender-based community leaders]	2007
68	<i>GAP Eylem Planı (2008-2012)</i> [GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)]	2008
69	<i>Stratejik Plan 2008-2012</i> [Strategic Plan 2008-2012]	2008
70	<i>Bölgesel kalkınmanın can suyu GAP: Karşılaştırmalı sosyal ve ekonomik yapı araştırması</i> [Water of life of regional development: GAP: A comparative study of social and economic structure]	2010
71	<i>GAP Eylem Planı’nın uygulanmasına yönelik insan kaynakları araştırması: Sonuç raporu</i> [Survey on human resources in the implementation of GAP action plan: Final report]	2010
72	<i>Toprak tuzlulaşması</i> [Soil salinization]	2011
73	<i>En eskiden en yeniye GAP Bölgesi’nde sanat</i> [Art in GAP Region from the oldest to the newest]	2012
74	<i>GAP sanayi gelişim raporu</i> [GAP industrial development report]	2012
75	<i>GAP ve emeğe saygı</i> [GAP and respect for the effort]	2012
76	<i>GAP ve enerji</i> [GAP and energy]	2012
77	<i>GAP ve mimari</i> [GAP and architecture]	2012
78	<i>GAP ve spor</i> [GAP and sports]	2012
79	<i>GAP ve turizm</i> [GAP and tourism]	2012
80	<i>GAP’ta şehirleşme ve sosyalleşme</i> [Urbanization and socialization in GAP]	2012
81	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi’nde Yenilenebilir Enerji Kaynaklarının Kullanımı ve Enerji Veriminin Artırılması Eylem Planı</i> [Utilization of Renewable Energy Resources in Southeastern Anatolia Region and Enhancement of Energy Efficiency Action Plan]	2012
82	<i>Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi’ne genel bakış</i> [An overview of Southeastern Anatolia Project]	2012
83	<i>Kültürel mirasın kalkınmaya etkisi</i> [The impact of cultural heritage on development]	2012
84	<i>Sulama ve sulama yöntemlerinin projelendirilmesi</i> [Irrigation and project design or irrigation methods]	2012
85	<i>Klasik GAP biterken</i> [As the classical GAP ends]	2014
86	<i>GAP Eylem Planı (2014-2018)</i> [GAP Action Plan (2014-2018)]	2014

C. THE LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS**C.1. Participants from TBMM¹⁷⁵**

Participants	Political party	Polling district	Interview date	Interview location
P1	AKP	Diyarbakır	07/05/2014	Ankara
P2	AKP	Şanlıurfa	08/05/2014	Ankara
P3	AKP	Gaziantep	08/05/2014	Ankara
P4	AKP	Şanlıurfa	08/05/2014	Ankara
P5	AKP	İstanbul	12/05/2014	Ankara
P6	AKP	Batman	12/05/2014	Ankara
P7	AKP	Diyarbakır	13/05/2014	Ankara
P8	AKP	Aksaray	13/05/2014	Ankara
P9	AKP	Şanlıurfa	13/05/2014	Ankara
P10	AKP	Gaziantep	13/05/2014	Ankara
P11	AKP	Bingöl	14/05/2014	Ankara
P12	AKP	Adıyaman	14/05/2014	Ankara
P13	AKP	Mardin	14/05/2014	Ankara
P14	AKP	Adıyaman	14/05/2014	Ankara
P15	AKP	Gaziantep	14/05/2014	Ankara
P16	AKP	Diyarbakır	20/05/2014	Ankara
P17	AKP	Şanlıurfa	21/05/2014	Ankara
P18	BDP	Şırnak	06/05/2014	Ankara
P19	BDP	Şanlıurfa	06/05/2014	Ankara
P20	BDP	Hakkâri	07/05/2014	Ankara
P21	BDP	Muş	08/05/2014	Ankara
P22	CHP	Adana	29/04/2014	Ankara
P23	CHP	Diyarbakır	06/05/2014	Ankara
P24	CHP	Mersin	13/05/2014	Ankara
P25	CHP	Gaziantep	20/05/2014	Ankara
P26	MHP	Antalya	07/05/2014	Ankara
P27	MHP	Denizli	09/05/2014	Ankara
P28	MHP	Adana	20/05/2014	Ankara

¹⁷⁵ Participants are sorted by the alphabetical order of their affiliated political parties.

C.2. Participants from Governmental and Non-Governmental Institutions¹⁷⁶

Participants	Institution	Position	Date of the interview	Location of the interview
P29	Ankara University	Professor	08/04/2014	Ankara
P30	Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies	Researcher	05/05/2014	Ankara
P31	Freelance	Farmer, landowner	29/05/2014	Şanlıurfa
P32	Freelance	Farmer, landowner	30/05/2014	Şanlıurfa
P33	GAP-BKİ	Expert	21/03/2014	Ankara
P34	GAP-BKİ	Expert	24/03/2014	Ankara
P35	GAP-BKİ	Retired coordinator	24/03/2014	Ankara
P36	GAP-BKİ	Coordinator	24/03/2014	Ankara
P37	GAP-BKİ	Former coordinator	25/03/2014	Ankara
P38	GAP-BKİ	Former consultant	27/03/2014	Ankara
P39	GAP-BKİ	Retired coordinator	02/04/2014	Ankara
P40	GAP-BKİ	Retired expert	02/04/2014	Ankara
P41	GAP-BKİ	Freelance planner	03/04/2014	Ankara
P42	GAP-BKİ	Former coordinator	09/04/2014	Ankara
P43	GAP-BKİ	Former vice president	22/04/2014	Ankara
P44	GAP-BKİ	Expert	22/04/2014	Ankara
P45	GAP-BKİ	Expert	22/04/2014	Ankara
P46	GAP-BKİ	Former coordinator	25/04/2014	Ankara
P47	GAP-BKİ	Former coordinator	05/05/2014	Ankara
P48	GAP-BKİ	Former coordinator	16/05/2014	Ankara
P49	GAP-BKİ	Vice president	29/05/2014	Şanlıurfa
P50	GAP-BKİ	Former head of regional unit	30/05/2014	Şanlıurfa
P51	DSİ	Head of division	01/04/2014	Ankara
P52	DSİ	Former employee, freelance engineer	20/05/2014	Ankara
P53	DSİ	Former head of GAP Regional Directorate	20/05/2014	Ankara
P54	DSİ	Expert	22/05/2014	Ankara

¹⁷⁶ Participants are sorted by the alphabetical order of their affiliated institutions.

Appendix C: The list of interview participants

Participants	Institution	Position	Date of the interview	Location of the interview
P55	Harran University	Professor	30/05/2014	Şanlıurfa
P56	Hacettepe University	Retired professor	24/04/2014	Ankara
P57	METU	Associate professor	10/04/2014	Ankara
P58	DPT/Ministry of Development	Deputy undersecretary	24/04/2014	Ankara
P59	DPT/Ministry of Development	Head of department	24/04/2014	Ankara
P60	DPT/Ministry of Development	Former project consultant	30/04/2014	Ankara
P61	DPT/Ministry of Development	Head of department	30/04/2014	Ankara
P62	DPT/Ministry of Development	Deputy undersecretary	02/05/2014	Ankara
P63	DPT/Ministry of Development	Former deputy undersecretary	16/05/2014	Ankara
P64	TRT	Director	23/05/2014	Ankara

D. THE CODING FRAME¹⁷⁷

Main Category (Dimension) 1: Characteristics of GAP region

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion about the historical and/or current physical, socio-political, and socio-economic characteristics of Southeastern Anatolia Region/GAP region.

Label 1.1. Arid and barren¹⁷⁸

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP region has been (1) a region with low rainfall and (2) arid and barren for years.

Indicators: kuraklık, çorak, yağış [aridity, barren, rainfall]

Example 1: Yağışları az alan bir bölge, özellikle yağmur yağışları. Bunun için kurak bir bölge.

[It is a region that receives little rain. That's why it is an arid region.]

Example 2: Hala şu gün bile Urfamız'da diyelim ki yağışların düzensiz, dengesiz olması nedeniyle veya ufak bir iklim değişikliğiyle ciddi kuraklıklar yaşadığımızı biliyoruz.

[We know that even today we face serious droughts in our Urfa due to irregular rainfall and climate change.]

Label 1.2. Backward and underdeveloped

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that (1) GAP region is backward and underdeveloped due to its low socio-economic standards, (2) the local population therein are ignorant, desperate, and helpless, and (3) the region is inferior to the rest of the country.

Indicators: geri kalmışlık, fukaralık, az gelişmişlik [backwardness, poverty, underdevelopment]

Example 1: Ayrıca, birçok bölge insanı cahil ve mağdur durumdadır; kendilerini ifade edemiyorlar.

[In addition, a lot of people in the region are ignorant and suffered; they cannot express themselves.]

Example 2: Güneydoğu Anadolu, aynı zamanda bir fukaralık olayıdır, bir sosyal düzen sıkıntısıdır. İşsiz ve umutsuz insanlar diyarımız Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi.

[Southeastern Anatolia is at the same time a matter of poverty, a matter of social order. Southeastern Anatolia is the land of unemployed and desperate people.]

Label 1.3. Discriminated and neglected

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that (1) GAP region has been intentionally or unintentionally discriminated and neglected, and (2) there has been a divide between western and eastern Turkey in general.

Indicators: ihmal, unutmak, ayırım [neglecting, to forget, discrimination]

Example 1: Şimdi, siz, Karadeniz Otoyolu'na, Bolu Tüneli'ne veya Esenboğa Havaalanı'na bir şekilde kaynak bulabiliyorsunuz; ama, verimliliği ve kârlılığı kendini kanıtlamış GAP Projesine dönüp bakmıyorsunuz bile.

¹⁷⁷ Unless stated otherwise, categories and subcategories appear in all three coding frames, which were formulated with the reviewing process of GAP-related parliamentary proceedings, interviews with the MPs, and interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals from various governmental and non-governmental organizations (see Chapter 3 for more details).

¹⁷⁸ This subcategory emerged only in the interviews with the MPs.

Appendix D: The coding frame

[Now, you can find resources to build Black Sea Highway, Bolu Tunnel or Esenboğa Airport, but you do not even bother taking GAP into consideration despite its proven productivity and profitability.]

Example 2: İstanbul'daki GSMH'den kişi başına düşen pay ile Urfa'daki vatandaşın arasında dört kat fark var. Ortalama 11,000 dolar diyor da, İstanbul'da yaşayanın ortalama 21,000 civarındadır, GAP bölgesinde 4,500 civarındadır aldığı pay. Böyle bir dengesizlik var zaten.

[The per capita income in İstanbul is four times as much as per capita income in Urfa. You know they say the per capita income in Turkey is around 11,000. It is 21,000 in İstanbul and around 4,500 in GAP region. There is already such an inequality.]

Label 1.4. Feudal and unjust¹⁷⁹

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP region is marked by (1) the remnants of feudal structure and relations even today and (2) inequalities in land, income, and opportunities, as a small number of people or families own vast quantity of lands in the region.

Indicators: feodal yapı, eşitsizlikler, büyük arazi [feudal structure, inequalities, large land]

Example 1: Çünkü toprakların büyük bölümü onların elinde, para onların elinde. Orada tarım geliştiği zaman da fabrika açanlar, otel açanlar, yatırım yapanlar hep onlar olduğu için daha da güçleneceklerini düşünüyorum.

[Because they own the lion's share of lands, they have the money. It is them who open a factory, open a hotel, or make investments; therefore, I believe they will get even stronger.]

Example 2: Feodal yapı kırıldı mı dersenez, bence hiçbir zaman oradaki feodal yapı kırılmaz. Ancak toprak dağılımında bir düzenleme olursa kırılabilir.

[If you ask me whether the feudal structure there is eliminated, well, I don't think it will ever be eliminated. It happens only when lands are redistributed.]

Label 1.5. Resourceful, diverse, and full of potential

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP region has (1) abundant water and land resources to be developed, (2) rich human potential to be utilized, and (3) vast opportunities to be seized.

Indicators: zengin su kaynakları, su potansiyeli, toprak potansiyeli [rich water resources, water potential, land potential]

Example 1: Başta Fırat ve Dicle olmak üzere, ülkemizin en önemli su kaynakları da bu bölgededir.

[Euphrates and Tigris being the first, the most important water resources of our country are also located in this region.]

Example 2: Bölgenin yer altı ve yer üstü kaynakları son derece zengin. Pazara yakın, Ortadoğu ülkelerine son derece yakın.

[The region is very rich in terms of underground and ground sources. It is close to the markets, very close to the Middle Eastern countries.]

¹⁷⁹ This subcategory emerged only in the interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

Appendix D: The coding frame

Main Category (Dimension) 2: Characteristics of GAP

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker (1) expresses any opinion about the characteristic features of GAP, (2) describes the project from his/her point of view, and (3) draws attention to its different yet interrelated aspects in terms of its size, scope, and significance.

Label 2.1. Exploitative and assimilative¹⁸⁰

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is exploitative and assimilative because the main focus of the project is to (1) transfer the resources of GAP region to western Turkey, (2) empower the rich, and (3) assimilate the Kurdish population.

Indicators: dönüşüm, Türklük, asimilasyon [transformation, Turkishness, assimilation]

Example 1: Dolayısıyla GAP uygulama biçimi ve yöntemi itibariyle bir sömürge projesidir. Kaynak sömürüsü projesidir.

[Therefore, in terms of its implementation and administration form, GAP is an exploitation project. A resource exploitation project.]

Example 2: Bir zamanlar korucu projesi gibi, aslında amaç o şekilde yine siyasete şey sağlamak, onları asimile etmek. AKP din üzerinden asimile etmeye çalışıyor, kalkınma değil de biraz da yardımlarla bunu desteklemeye çalışıyor.

[Just like in the village guard project in the past, the real goal is to assimilate them. AKP tries to assimilate through religion and supports this not through development, but through aids.]

Label 2.2. Huge and vital

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is a large and comprehensive project which is of vital importance and necessity both for GAP region and Turkey.

Indicators: kapsamlı, önemli, hayati [comprehensive, important, vital]

Example 1: Çünkü, netice itibariyle Türkiye'nin en büyük mühendislik projesidir ve bu projenin yapılıp bitmesi ülkemize çok şeyler kazandıracaktır.

[because, it is the largest engineering project in Turkey and the completion of this project will bring many benefits to our country.]

Example 2: Halbuki, değerli arkadaşlar, GAP Türkiye için çok önemlidir, Türkiye için her yönüyle hayati bir projedir.

[However, dear friends, GAP is very important for Turkey, it is vital for Turkey in every sense.]

Label 2.3. Long-established¹⁸¹

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is an old, long-established project that has been going on for many years.

Indicators: eski, en eski, devam eden [old, the oldest, ongoing]

Example 1: aynı zamanda da en uzun zamandır devam eden projesidir.

[it is at the same time the longest running project]

Example 2: Açıkçası GAP çok eski bir proje.

[Honestly speaking, GAP is a very old project.]

Label 2.4. Multi-sectoral and integrated

¹⁸⁰ This subcategory emerged both in the interviews with the MPs and bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

¹⁸¹ This subcategory emerged only in the interviews with the MPs.

Appendix D: The coding frame

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is not merely an energy production and irrigation project, but rather a multi-sectoral and integrated project that covers a wide range of sectors under its banner.

Indicators: çok sektörlü, entegre, topyekûn [multi-sectoral, integrated, total]

Example 1: Tabii ki, değerli arkadaşlar, GAP projesi dediğimiz zaman, sadece bir elektrik ve sulamadan bahsetmiyoruz; bunun içinde sanayi var, bunun içinde eğitim var, bunun içinde sağlık var, bunun içinde ulaşım var, bunun içinde tarımın modernizasyonu var; çok sektörlü bir projeden bahsediyoruz.

[Indeed, dear friends, when we talk about GAP, we do not merely talk about electricity and irrigation; it contains industries, education, health, transportation, agricultural modernization; we talk about a multi-sectoral project.]

Example 2: Proje birçok şeyi kapsıyor, barajlar var, sulamalar var, havaalanları var, yollar var, köprüler var, OSB'ler var, sanayi siteleri var, çok entegre.

[The project covers many things. There are dams, irrigation schemes, airports, roads, bridges, organized industrial zones, it is very integrated.]

Label 2.5. National and supra-political

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that (1) GAP embodies the greatness and power of the Turkish nation, (2) GAP does not belong to a specific political party or person but rather to the whole nation, and (3) GAP is a supra-political project.

Indicators: millî, milletin projesi, Türk ulusunun büyüklüğü [national, nation's project, greatness of the Turkish nation]

Example 1: Biz Türkiye'yiz, biz yaparız. Bizim mühendisimiz dünyada nam salmış mühendislerdir. Biz hiçbir ülkenin mühendisinden geri kalmıyoruz.

[We are Turkey, we just do. Our engineers are worldly renowned. We are not behind any country's engineers.]

Example 2: Atatürk Barajını Türk müteahhitleri yapıyor; bu, Türkiye'nin ulaştığı teknoloji seviyesini gösterir; ondan da iftihar duyun.

[It is Turkish contractors who build Atatürk Dam; this shows Turkey's level of technological advancement. Be proud of that.]

Label 2.6. National security and peace

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP (1) promotes national security, (2) plays, or can play, a role in establishing peace both within Turkey and in the Middle East, and (3) allows Turkey to use the project strategically as leverage against other states.

Indicators: barış, millî güvenlik, stratejik [peace, national security, strategic]

Example 1: GAP sadece enerji, GAP sadece sulama değil, GAP bir barış projesi.

[GAP is not merely an energy and irrigation project; it is a peace project.]

Example 2: Onun için, projeye yalnız, insanların karnını doyurmak açısından değil, millî güvenlik açımızdan da, millî güvenlik meselesi açısından da bakmakta fayda vardır.

[Therefore, it is better to view the project not solely from the perspective of feeding people, but also from our angle of national security, the angle of national security.]

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Label 2.7. Non-political¹⁸²

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is a non-political project that was initiated only with technical, not political and security calculations and necessities.

Indicators: Kürt sorunu, tamamıyla kalkınma, siyasi olmayan [Kurdish problem, purely development, non-political]

Example 1: İçeride teknisyen olarak da çalıştığım için söyleyebilirim, bunlar siyasi değil. Biz bir GAP uygulayalım, biz bu Güneydoğu'yu kuşatalım oradaki terör vesaire falan bitsin gibi bir anlayışla bu işe başladığına inanmıyorum.

[Since I worked as a technician inside the project as well, I can say that these are not political. I don't believe the project was initiated with the idea of surrounding the Southeastern Anatolia, initiating GAP, and thus eliminating terrorism.]

Example 2: Ben bunu Kürtleri asimile etmek için yapılmış bir proje olarak görmüyorum. Güneydoğu'da sadece Kürtler yok. Her baraj projesinde herkes taşınıyor.

[I don't see it as a project to assimilate the Kurds. The Kurds are not the only entity in the Southeastern Anatolia. Everybody migrates in every dam project.]

Label 2.8. Political¹⁸³

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is a political project that was initiated with political calculations, specifically to (1) to garner votes from GAP region and (2) exert political influence on people and institutions.

Indicators: siyasi, hükümet, oy [political, government, vote]

Example 1: Teknik boyutunu yitirip çok siyasi bir hâl almış bir projeydi. O iş beni rahatsız ediyor bu işlerle uğraşan biri olarak.

[It was a project that lost its technical aspect and became a political project. That disturbs me as a person who is dealing with these issues.]

Example 2: Yine de geçmişte, özellikle Demirel ve Özal tarafından proje sık sık siyasete alet edildi ve propaganda amacı ile kullanıldı.

[Again in the past, the project was abused in politics and used as a propaganda tool specifically by Demirel and Özal.]

Label 2.9. Sustainable, participatory, and human-focused¹⁸⁴

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP prioritizes (1) sustainable development and environmental sensitivity in particular, (2) participation of various disadvantaged groups and different private and public sector institutions into the development process, and (3) human development.

Indicators: sürdürülebilirlik, katılımcı süreçler, insan odaklı [sustainability, participatory processes, human-focused]

¹⁸² This subcategory emerged both in the interviews with the MPs and bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

¹⁸³ This subcategory emerged only in the interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

¹⁸⁴ This subcategory emerged both in the parliamentary proceedings and interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Example 1: Şu anda gelinen noktada ekonomik ve bölgesel kalkınmanın büyük bölümü tamamlandığı için, artık daha çok insani odaklı projelere ağırlık vermeye başladık.

[Because a high degree of economic and regional development is achieved, we started to give more importance to human-focused projects.]

Example 2: Bu çerçevede, GAP, kalkınmadan olumsuz etkilenebilecek dezavantajlı kesimlerin kalkınmaya entegrasyonu, kamu sektörünün yanı sıra özel sektör ve halk katılımının projeye entegrasyonu gibi kavramları da dikkate almaktadır.

[Within this framework, GAP also takes into consideration the concepts such as the integration of disadvantaged groups who can be negatively affected by development and integration of private sector and public participation into the project.]

Label 2.10. Transformative¹⁸⁵

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that GAP is a transformative project that enables and accelerates the change and transformation of both GAP region and Turkey.

Indicators: değişim, dönüşüm, farklılık [change, transformation, difference]

Example 1: Sosyo-ekonomik olarak bir yapının değişmesinde katkısı olmuştur. Yapı tamamen değişmek üzeredir. Olumlu olumsuz fark etmez, değişme değişmedir.

[It contributed to the socio-economic change of the structure. The structure is about to change completely. It does not matter whether it is positive or negative; change is change.]

Example 2: GAP'ın başlangıcı ve öncesi ayrı bir Türkiye'den söz edebiliriz, bugün ayrı bir Türkiye'den söz edebiliriz. GAP'ın bölge üzerindeki genel etkisini çok büyük olarak değerlendiriyorum.

[We can talk about a different Turkey before GAP and we can talk about another Turkey after GAP. I believe the impact of GAP on the region is huge.]

¹⁸⁵ This subcategory emerged both in the interviews with the MPs and bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Main Category (Dimension) 3: Objectives of GAP

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion about (1) the objectives of GAP, (2) actual or potential contributions of the project, and (3) the need to fulfill these objectives without further delay.

Label 3.1. Addressing the Kurdish question

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to solve the Kurdish question and helps the state (1) win the hearts and minds of the local population, (2) make propaganda, (3) rid the PKK of its propaganda material to attract others to join its ranks, (4) fight the PKK through socio-economic development, and (5) prevent the maneuver capabilities of the PKK through building dams on their passage ways.

Indicators: bölge halkını kazanmak, ekonomik ve sosyal tedbirler, terörü önlemek [winning local population, economic and social measures, preventing terror]

Example 1: GAP yüzde 80'e gelsin orada anarşi falan kalmaz. Adam tarlasını ekip biçtikten sonra, para kazandıktan sonra niye anarşist olsun?

[If 80% of GAP is completed, there will be no anarchy there. As long as a man cultivates and makes money, why would he become an anarchist?]

Example 2: İşsizlik, terörün en büyük istismar konusu ve malzemesidir. Bu bakımdan, GAP'ın ülke ve bölge ekonomisine sağlayacağı katkı, küçümsenmeyecek boyutlarda olacaktır.

[Unemployment is the biggest material and source of abuse for terror. Therefore, the contribution of GAP to the economy of the region and the country will be immense.]

Label 3.2. Changing the face and destiny of Turkey¹⁸⁶

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) initiate change in GAP region, (2) initiate change in the country, and (3) radically transform the socio-economic landscape of GAP region and Turkey.

Indicators: makûs talih, memleketin kaderi, insanın kaderi [ill fate, destiny of the country, destiny of the people]

Example 1: GAP ve benzeri hizmetlerle Doğu'nun makûs talihi yenilecektir. Bunda kararlıyız, hiç kimsenin şüphesi olmasın.

[With GAP and similar projects, the ill fate of the East will be defeated. We are determined to do so, have no doubt about it.]

Example 2: Bu projenin gerçekleşmesiyle, Güneydoğu Anadolu insanının kaderi değişecektir.

[With the completion of this project, the destiny of the people of Southeastern Anatolia will be changed.]

Label 3.3. Eliminating feudalism and land inequality¹⁸⁷

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) eliminate or weaken the remnants of feudal structure in GAP region and (2) address the land ownership inequality in relation to the feudal structure.

¹⁸⁶ This subcategory emerged only in parliamentary proceedings.

¹⁸⁷ This subcategory emerged both in parliamentary proceedings and the interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Indicators: toprak reformu, feodalizm, adaletsiz toprak dağılımı [land reform, feudalism, unjust land distribution]

Example 1: Yani bilinenin aksine, burada büyük toprak sahibi kalmadı ki? Nedir büyük toprak sahibi ölçüsü? 100 dönüm mü, 1,000 mi? 5,000 mi? Dolayısıyla bu sulama feodal ilişkileri perçinlemedi, aksine bozmuştur. Yok etti. Sulama yok etti. GAP'ın bu yönde etkisi var.

[Contrary to the common belief, no large landowner was left here. Whom to call a large landowner anyway? The ones who owned 100 acres? 1,000? 5,000? Therefore, irrigation ruined the feudal relations. Eliminated. Irrigation eliminated feudal relations and GAP had a decisive effect on this.]

Example 2: Bölgede adil ve ciddi bir toprak reformu yapmadan bu yöre halkının yoksulluğuna son vermek mümkün değildir. GAP bölgesinde toprak reformu yapılacak mıdır? Büyük çoğunluğu topraksız olan bölge halkının, GAP tamamlandıktan sonra, büyük arazi sahiplerine ırgatlık yaparak, kalkınabileceklerine inanıyor musunuz?

[It is impossible to eliminate poverty in the region without carrying out a just and serious land reform. Is there going to be a land reform in GAP region? Do you really believe that local population, the majority of whom are landless, can develop just by working for the large landowners?]

Label 3.4. Eliminating regional disparities

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) ensure regional development and (2) eliminate or minimize regional disparities between GAP region and the rest of the country in terms of socio-economic indicators.

Indicators: bölgesel farklılıklar, gelişmişlik farkları, bölgeler arası dengesizlik [regional differences, development differences, inter-regional disparities]

Example 1: Bugün Ankara ile Urfa arasında binalar ve lüks arasında bir fark yok. Konya öyle, Diyarbakır öyle. Bizim istediğimiz de o, Doğu-Batı, Kuzey-Güney arasındaki farklılıkların azalması.

[Today, there is no difference in terms of luxury between Ankara and Urfa. Same applies for Konya and Diyarbakır. That's what we want, to minimize the differences between east and west, north and the south.]

Example 2: Bakın, biz göreve geldiğimizden beri GAP projesinin önemini farkındayız. Bütün cumhuriyet hükümetleri GAP projesinin önemini farkındadır çünkü bu bir devlet projesidir, doğru olan bir iştir, bölgeler arası dengesizliği ortadan kaldıracak.

[Since we took office, we are aware of the importance of GAP. All of the governments are aware of this because it is a national project, it is the right project that will eliminate regional disparities.]

Label 3.5. Generating national income and providing added value

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) generate national income and (2) provide added value in some way.

Indicators: ekonomiye katkı, gelir elde etmek, katma değer [contribution to the economy, generate income, added value]

Example 1: Sayın milletvekilleri, neden yapıyoruz biz bunları? Çünkü biliyoruz ki bir GAP, bir buçuk yılda ülke ekonomisine, 72 milyon insanın cebine 32 milyar dolar para koyuyor.

[Honorable deputies, why do we do that? Because, we know that GAP puts 32 billion dollars into the country's economy, into the pockets of 72 million in one and a half years.]

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Example 2: parasal olarak, parasal olarak tekrar söylüyorum, kazancımız korkunç. Barajın ötesinde, onun su sathından faydalanmak suretiyle korkunç maddi kazançlar elde etti o ülke.

[in monetary terms, I repeat, in monetary terms, our gains are terrific. The country has generated terrific economic gains through utilizing its water resources.]

Label 3.6. Improving agricultural and industrial production and efficiency

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) increase agricultural production and efficiency in GAP region, (2) improve agriculture-based industries, (3) turn the region into the food base of the Middle East, and (4) turn the region into a trade base.

Indicators: üretim artışı, tarıma dayalı sanayi, tahıl merkezi [increase in production, agriculture-based industries, grain base]

Example 1: 3 yılda 1 mahsul yerine, 1 yılda 3 mahsul alabilmenin adıdır Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi. [Southeastern Anatolia Project is the name of harvesting three crops in one year instead of one crop in three years.]

Example 2: GAP'ta Harran Ovası'nda susuz bir dönüm tarlayı ektiğinizde 200 kilo buğday alırsınız. Bunu bir sefer suladığınız zaman 1,200 kilo buğday alıyorsunuz, bu kadar basit bir hesap.

[When you cultivate one acre of land without water in Harran Plain in GAP, you produce 200 kilograms of wheat. When you irrigate this land once, you produce 1,200 kilograms of wheat. It is simple as that.]

Label 3.7. Irrigating agricultural lands

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) bring water to dry lands of GAP region and (2) irrigate its agricultural lands.

Indicators: tarımsal sulama, su ihtiyacı, arazi [agricultural irrigation, water need, land]

Example 1: Değerli arkadaşlar, GAP Projesinin temeli, tarımsal sulamadır. Sulama projeleri tamamlanmadan, GAP'ın tamamlanmasından kimse bahsedemez.

[Dear friends, the crux of GAP is agricultural irrigation. Unless the irrigation projects are completed, no one can claim that GAP is completed.]

Example 2: GAP'ın anlamı bu. 2000 yıldır su görmeyen bir arazinin suya kavuşması demek yorulmamış, bakir toprakların işletmeye açılması demektir.

[That's what GAP is all about. It is irrigating the untouched, waterless lands for the past 2000 years and opening them to operation and management.]

Label 3.8. Preventing migration and containing the local population

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) provide employment opportunities for the local population, (2) curb migration from GAP region to larger cities, (3) contain the local population, and (4) reverse the migration trends.

Indicators: istihdam, iş olanakları, göç [employment, job opportunities, migration]

Example 1: Sulu tarıma bağlı sektörler güçlenecek, çalışacak ve istihdam gerçekleştirecektir. Yapılan tahminlere göre yaklaşık olarak 3.5-4 milyon insanımız ekmek sahibi olacaktır.

[Sectors that depend on irrigation will grow stronger and provide employment opportunities. According to the estimates, 3.5-4 million people will be employed.]

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Example 2: Yıllardır, Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi'nden büyük kentlerimize göç vardır. GAP'ın bitirilmesiyle bu göç sona erecek, üstelik tersine dönerek yıllardır büyük kentlere göç eden insanlar yine kendi topraklarına döneceklerdir.

[For years, there has been migration from Southeastern Anatolia Region to our large cities. With the completion of GAP, this trend will end and, furthermore, be reversed. People who migrated to large cities will return to their lands.]

Label 3.9. Producing energy

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to produce hydroelectric energy to meet Turkey's growing energy demands.

Indicators: enerji üretimi, hidroelektrik enerji, elektrik [energy production, hydroelectric energy, electricity]

Example 1: Devletin buraya yaklaşımı ve stratejisi tamamıyla enerji üretimi üzerine olmuş.

[The approach and strategy of the state have been entirely on energy production.]

Example 2: Proje tamamlandığında, GAP ile Türkiye'nin toplam hidroelektrik enerjisinin üçte biri üretilecektir.

[When the project is completed, GAP will have produced one-third of Turkey's hydroelectric energy.]

Label 3.10. Raising the infrastructural standards of GAP region

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) improve the transportation and infrastructural standards of the region and (2) facilitate the integration of GAP region to the rest of Turkey.

Indicators: altyapı, teknik altyapı, ulaşım [infrastructure, technical infrastructure, transportation]

Example 1: Öncelikli olarak ele alınıp altyapı kısımlarının bir an önce tamamlanması lazım.

[Sections related to infrastructure must be handled with priority and completed at once.]

Example 2: Ulaşım olanaklarının iyileştirilmesi temelde GAP nedeniyledir. Türkiye'nin bir sürü yerinde bugün bölünmüş yol yapılıyor ama GAP bunu biraz daha hızlandırmıştır.

[The improvement of transportation opportunities is essentially linked to GAP. Highways are built everywhere in Turkey but GAP accelerated this a little bit more.]

Label 3.11. Raising the socio-economic standards of the local population

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) raise the income and welfare level of the local population and (2) focus on the social and cultural development of disadvantaged groups such as women, children, and youth.

Indicators: sosyal kalkınma, sosyo-ekonomik, yaşam kalitesi [social development, socio-economic, quality of life]

Example 1: Projenin gerçekleşmesi durumunda, bölge ekonomik ve sosyal yönden kalkınacak, fakirlik ve sefalet, bir daha dirilmemek üzere, tarihe gömülecektir.

[With the realization of the project, the region will develop economically and socially. Poverty and misery will irreversibly be history.]

Example 2: yeni şehirler yeni köyler kurulacak, yepyeni bir vatan köşesi imar görecektir, bugün kuşun dahi içecek suyu bulunmayan - bir süre önce, 10 sene, 15 sene önce - bu ovalarda yarın dış ülkelere yaş meyve ve sebze ihraç edecek hava meydanları yapılacak.

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[new cities, new villages will be established, a new country will be constructed, new airports that will be used to export fruits and vegetables to foreign countries will be constructed in these plains, where even birds were unable to find water to drink 10, 15 years ago.]

Label 3.12. Rationally utilizing and efficiently developing natural resources¹⁸⁸

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that GAP contributes to the state's efforts to (1) have control over the flow of Euphrates and Tigris and (2) rationally and efficiently develop and utilize the natural resources of the region.

Indicators: kaynakların değerlendirilmesi, kaynakların rasyonel kullanımı, kaynakların geliştirilmesi
[utilizing resources, rational use of resources, developing resources]

Example 1: Kaynağı ülkemizde bulunan akarsuları tamamen kontrol edebilmek için bu proje süratle bitirilmelidir.

[This project should be completed quickly to be able to control the rivers originating from our country.]

Example 2: Şimdi biliyorsunuz Fırat tamamen göl haline döndü. Su devletin kontrolünde. Dicle'de Iısu yapılıyor, sonra Cizre yapılacak.

[You know that Euphrates has become a lake. The water is under the control. Now Iısu Dam is being built on Tigris, and later on Cizre Dam will be built.]

¹⁸⁸ This subcategory emerged both in parliamentary proceedings and the interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Main Category (Dimension) 4: Drawbacks of GAP

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion about (1) a drawback of GAP, (2) its actual and potential harmful effects, (3) its unintended or unforeseen consequences, and (4) implications of these consequences on GAP region.

Label 4.1. Delays and incompleteness

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is (1) the deviation from the project schedule and (2) lingering of the project, which was supposed to be completed in 2005 according to *GAP Master Plan*.

Indicators: uzamıştır, gecikmiştir, sapma [lingered, delayed, deviation]

Example 1: Ama maalesef 90'lı yılların başında, 80'li yılların sonunda bitmesi gereken proje 25 yıllık zaman geçtiği halde bitmedi.

[But unfortunately the project that was supposed to be completed at the beginning of the 90s, at the end of the 80s is still incomplete after 25 years have passed.]

Example 2: Bu hızla giderse -AKP ne kadar daha iktidarda kalacak bilemiyoruz- eğer AKP devam ederse iktidara, bu yatırımların bitmesi için Türkiye'nin yüz on beş yıla ihtiyacı var.

[We don't know for how long AKP will govern but if AKP continues to govern, with that pace Turkey needs 115 years to complete these investments.]

Label 4.2. Detachment from the local population

Definition: A unit of coding falls under this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is its failure to (1) bring the expected benefits to the local population, (2) be sensitive to the needs of the local population, and (3) shift from an "elitist" project to a popular/societal project.

Indicators: bölge ihtiyaçlarından uzak, topluma yansımaları yok, rant [far from the needs of the region, effects not felt within society, rent]

Example 1: yani çalışıyorsun da sonunda bir şey çıkmıyor. Kendi kendimizi tatmin ettik. Bölgeyi kalkındıracağız, bölge ekonomisine büyük şeyler yapacağız diye projeler yaptık, şevkle çalıştık.

[I mean, you work, but at the end nothing happens. We worked hard and made projects to develop the region and contribute to the region's economy, but we only satisfied ourselves.]

Example 2: "Yüzyılın projesi" olarak lanse edilen bu projenin odağında iyi niyet yok, çözüm yok, doğa yok, insanlık yok ve en önemlisi de o coğrafyada yaşayan Kürtler yok.

[There is no good will, no solution, no environment, no humanity, and more importantly, no Kurds living in that geography within the focus of this project, introduced as the "project of the century."]

Label 4.3. Deviation from the integrated approach¹⁸⁹

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is the failure to (1) handle the project in an integrated and harmonious manner and (2) implement sectoral projects in a synchronized manner.

Indicators: entegre, dengesizlik, uyumsuzluk [integrated, disparity, lack of harmony]

¹⁸⁹ This subcategory emerged only in parliamentary proceedings.

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Example 1: 1989 yılında *GAP Master Planı* hazırlanırken, tarım, sanayi, ulaştırma, eğitim, sağlık, kırsal kesim altyapı yaptırımlarını da içeren bir GAP entegre planıydı ancak görüyoruz ki son zamanlarda farklı bir uygulama var.

[When *GAP Master Plan* was prepared in 1989, it was a plan containing agriculture, industry, transportation, education, health, and infrastructure investments, too. Yet, we see that this has changed lately.]

Example 2: Ortada, entegre proje yok veya duruma entegre proje gibi bakıldığı yok.

[As far as I can see, there is no integrated project, or nobody thinks it is an integrated project.]

Label 4.4. Harming the environment and cultural and historical heritages

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is the harm the project does, or can do, to (1) the environment and (2) the historical and cultural heritages of GAP region specifically through flooding historical sites such as Samsat, Hasankeyf, Zeugma, and Halfeti.

Indicators: tuzlanma, çoraklaşma, ekolojik tahribat [salinization, desertification, ecological destruction]

Example 1: Geçen yılki bütçe konuşmalarında da değinmiştim. GAP projesi bir yanda sulamaya geçilen, özellikle Harran Ovası'nda çoraklaşma geçen yıla göre yüzde 30 oranındayken bu yıl yüzde 35'lere doğru gitmektedir.

[I mentioned it last year, too. While the desertification rate in Harran Plain was 30% last year, it is increasing to 35% this year.]

Example 2: Bakın, Hasankeyf'i sular altında bırakıyorsunuz elektrik enerjisi uğruna. Cizre Barajı'yla tarihî yerleri sular altında bırakacaksınız.

[Look, you are flooding Hasankeyf for the sake of energy production. With Cizre Dam, you are going to flood historical locations.]

Label 4.5. Insufficient scientific research¹⁹⁰

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is (1) the failure of the establishment of a partnership between the academia and public institutions and (2) the lack of high-quality scientific research that focuses on GAP-related topics.

Indicators: çalışma, araştırma, araştırma-geliştirme [study, research, research and development]

Example 1: Şimdi, Allah aşkına... Ilısu Barajı yapılıyor. Münih Üniversitesi bundan yedi sene önce geldi Ilısu Barajı'yla ilgili gövde barajından Hasankeyf'in batısına kadar bütün ekolojik yapıyı, bütün hayvan türlerini, canlı türlerini, hepsinin fizibilitesini, çalışmasını yaptı, 500 tane kitap bastı ve bu kitapları piyasaya vermedi. Türkiye'nin elinde var mı öyle bir çalışma?

[Now, for God's sake... Ilısu Dam is being constructed. Seven years ago, University of Munich came here and conducted a research on the ecology, animal species, species, and feasibility from Ilısu Dam to Hasankeyf. They published 500 books and did not release them. Does Turkey have such a study?]

¹⁹⁰ This subcategory emerged both in parliamentary proceedings and the interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Example 2: deęişimleri ölçmek için çok geniş kapsamlı, topyekûn bir sosyal etki deęerlendirmesinin yapılması lazım. İyileşme ancak bu şekilde ölçülebilir, böyle bir çalışmanın yapılması gerektiğine inanıyorum.

[A very comprehensive social impact assessment should be made. Development can only be measured as such, I believe such a study should be conducted.]

Label 4.6. Negligence of irrigation projects

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is (1) the prioritization of energy projects at the expense of neglecting irrigation projects, (2) the low realization level of the irrigation projects, and (3) the failure to implement irrigation projects in a synchronized manner.

Indicators: sulama, enerji, gecikmeler [irrigation, energy, delays]

Example 1: GAP'a sadece enerji projesi bakımından vazgeçilmelidir. Sulama gibi çok önemli ekonomik ayakların unutulmaması lazım olduğunu söylemek istiyorum.

[It is time to stop conceiving GAP merely as an energy project. Its other stages, such as irrigation, should also be remembered.]

Example 2: Biz sürekli savunduk tarımsal payın artırılmasını, sulamanın bitirilmesini. İşin en kötü tarafı da, Atatürk Barajı'nda 15-20 yıldır su tutuluyor, o su isale edilemedi, tarlaya aktarılamadı. Bu atıl kapasitedir. Biz suyunu kullanamadık.

[We have always stood for increasing the share of agriculture and completing the irrigation projects. The worst is that the water is kept in Atatürk Dam for the past 15-20 years. That water could not be allocated to the lands. This is unutilized capacity. We could not use that water.]

Label 4.7. Source of forced migration, income inequality, and social degeneration

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the drawbacks of GAP is (1) forced migration of inhabitants due to dam construction, (2) worsening of the income distribution and inequality, and (3) the emergence of various social problems.

Indicators: küçük toprak sahibi, su altında kalmak, sosyal sorunlar [small landowner, submerging, social problems]

Example 1: bu kentlerde yoksul ile zengin arasındaki yaşam standardı açısından bir uçurum yaratıldı.

[In these cities, there emerged a huge difference between the poor and the rich in terms of living standards.]

Example 2: Urfa'yı ayrı bir incelemek lazım. OSB'ler yapılıyor. Bir para oldu Araplarda. İlk önce onlar da bir zenginlik bunalımı yaşadılar. Ne oldu, ikinci, üçüncü hanımları aldılar, Antep'te pavyonlara gittiler, bir de araba aldılar.

[Urfa needs to be examined separately. Organized industrial sites are being built. Arabs made huge amounts of money. First, they experienced a richness crisis. They married to their second, third wives. They went to nightclubs in Antep, and bought cars.]

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Main Category (Dimension) 5: Factors behind GAP's delay

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion regarding (1) the direct and indirect factors behind the delay and incompleteness of GAP and (2) the immediate need to address these factors to fully implement and successfully complete the project.

Label 5.1. Administrative structure of GAP-BKİ

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is administrative problems within GAP-BKİ in the forms of (1) its ambiguous tenure, (2) its location and relocation between Ankara and Şanlıurfa, (3) its insufficient capacity, and (4) its lack of authority and sanction power.

Indicators: yetkisizlik, yaptırım gücü olmayışı, taşınma [lack of authority, lack of sanction power, relocation]

Example 1: GAP İdaresi çözülmüş bir idaredir. Çok kötüdür. Zamanla GAP İdaresi bir nevi turizm merkezine döndü. Ankara'da yeni bir binaya taşındılar, ondan sonra da orada çalışanlar bir bakarsınız pazartesi burada, salı Urfa'da, çarşamba burada, cuma yine Urfa'da. Ya yapmayın, bunu pekâlâ planlayabilirsiniz. Turizm şirketi gibi çalıştılar, bu olmaz.

[GAP Administration is a dissolved administration. It's terrible. In time, GAP Administration has turned into a tourism agency. They moved to a new building in Ankara, you see the employees in Ankara on Monday, in Urfa on Tuesday, here in Ankara on Wednesday, in Urfa again on Friday. Come on, you can plan it in advance. That's unacceptable; they operated like a tourism agency.]

Example 2: Değerli arkadaşlarım, GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi'nin istenen etkiyi gösteremediğini de biliyoruz. Bu idarenin istenen etkiyi gösteremeyişinin birincil nedeni yetkisiz oluşudur, koordinasyonda yaptırım gücünün olmayışıdır ve ödenek tahsis etme yetkisinin bulunmayışıdır.

[Dear friends, we know that GAP-BKİ has not shown the desired effect. The primary reasons for that are its lack of authorization, sanction power in coordination, and authority in financial allocation.]

Label 5.2. Foreign powers

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is foreign powers, as they supposedly (1) consider GAP as a threat to themselves and (2) engage in activities to hinder Turkey to implement the project.

Indicators: dış güçler, engellemek, terör [foreign powers, hinder, terror]

Example 1: Ben komplolara inanan birisi değilim ama bu su meselesini dışarıdan kaşıyanlar olabilir. Mesela Almanya. Bu bölgeyle çok yakından ilgililer. Belki sizin araştırmanız da onun bir parçası olabilir.

[Anyway, I don't normally give credit to conspiracy theories but some actors may stir this water problem in the future. For instance Germany... Germany is so interested in this region, your research may be part of this, too.]

Example 2: Bu nedenle, GAP Projesini istemeyenler, Türkiye'nin o bölgesinin kalkınmasını istemeyenler, o bölgedeki doğal potansiyelin değerlendirilmesini istemeyenler, direkt ve indirekt şekilde PKK terörüne destek vermişlerdir.

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[For this reason, countries that do not want GAP project, that do not want Turkey's that region to develop, that do not want Turkey to use the region's natural potential have directly or indirectly supported PKK terrorism.]

Label 5.3. Strong centralized governance structure

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is (1) strong centralist orientation of Turkey and (2) insistence on governing the country in a centralized manner from the capital.

Indicators: merkeziyetçilik, yerel yönetim, yerel kalkınma konsepti [centralism, local administration, local development concept]

Example 1: Türkiye'nin idari ve siyasi dokusunun tümünden değişmesi gerekiyor. Yeniden bir dizayn gerekiyor. Kaynakların yönetimi yerelin inisiyatifine bırakılmalı. GAP da bunun bir parçasıdır.

[The administrative and political structure of Turkey should be changed completely. A new design is required. Administration of the resources should be left to the initiative of the local. This applies to GAP, too.]

Example 2: Bölge kalkınma idareleri de merkezi otoritenin uzantıları, ajanslar da öyle. Bunun ademimerkeziyetçilikle hiçbir alakası yok. Kararlar Ankara'da veriliyor.

[Both regional development administrations and development agencies are the extensions of the central authority. This has nothing to do with decentralization. Decisions are still given in Ankara.]

Label 5.4. Poor and insufficient planning¹⁹¹

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is (1) the lack of good and detailed planning and (2) mistakes in planning and engineering projects.

Indicators: plansızlık, projersizlik, teknik problemler [the lack of plans, the lack of projects, technical problems]

Example 1: Türkiye'nin iş yapış biçiminden de kaynaklanıyor. Aslında GAP başı sonu belli, adı sanı konmuş, iyi tanımlanmış bir proje değil. 77 yılındaki GAP ile 87 yılındaki GAP, 87 ile 97 arasındaki GAP farklı.

[This is because of how Turks do business. GAP is not a well-defined project. GAP in year 1977 is different than the one in 1987, the one in 1987 is different than the one in 1997.]

Example 2: Şimdi, normal olarak bakarsanız proje biter. Bir başlama yılı vardır, bitiş yılı vardır. Bitmesi gerekir. Yılan hikâyesine dönüyorsa, bitmiyorsa, ortada proje mroje yoktur.

[Actually any project ends. There is a beginning year and an end year. It must end. If it becomes an endless story, this means there is no project at all.]

Label 5.5. Cumbersome bureaucracy and the lack of coordination

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is (1) cumbersome bureaucratic state structure that slows down the implementation of the project and (2) the lack of coordination among various state agencies.

¹⁹¹ This subcategory emerged only in interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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Indicators: koordinasyonsuzluk, bürokrasi, yaptırım gücü [lack of coordination, bureaucracy, sanction power]

Example 1: Bürokraside ne oldu bilmiyorum. Bir devlet kültürü problemimiz var. Kapasite yönetiminiz yok. Bana bir arkadaşım öyle tanımladı. Yabancı kendisi, “sizde capacity building yok” dedi. Mevcut kapasiteyi yönetemiyoruz ve kullanamıyoruz.

[I don't know what happened in bureaucracy. We have a problem of state culture. We do not have capacity management skills. One of my foreigner friends told me that we did not have capacity building. We cannot manage and use the existing capacity.]

Example 2: Tuzlanma mesela. DSİ'ye soruyorsun, tuzlanma sosyal bir problemdir diyor. Ben suladım, gerisine GAP İdaresi baksın. GAP İdaresi diyor, bu DSİ'nin işidir falan filan. Tuzlanıp gidiyor sonuç olarak. Bu tür koordinasyon sorunlarımız var.

[For instance, salinization. When you ask DSİ, they say it is a social problem. They say they irrigated, the rest concerns the GAP Administration. GAP Administration says it is DSİ's job... Meanwhile, salinization spreads. We have such coordination problems.]

Label 5.6. The lack of financial resources

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is (1) insufficient financial resources of the country and (2) insufficient amount of public funds allocated to GAP.

Indicators: ödenek, yetersiz finans kaynakları, kıt kaynaklar [allocation, insufficient financial sources, scarce resources]

Example 1: Gecikmeler teknik ve mühendislik gecikmeleri değil, kaynak gecikmesi. Yani yeterince kaynak bulunamadı Türkiye'nin ilk yıllarında. Türkiye'nin genel ekonomik durumuna bağlı olarak bulunamadı.

[Delays are not about technical or engineering problems. They are about the lack of resources. Due to the situation of Turkey's economy, sufficient funds could not be found during the first years.]

Example 2: Bence en önemli mesele yeterli kaynağın tahsis edilmemesi. Paranız varsa bugünkü teknolojiyle, bugünkü Türkiye'nin kurumsal yapısında her şeyi yapıyorsunuz. Paranız yoksa olmuyor.

[I think the most important problem is the lack of allocated resources. If you have the funds, you can do anything with today's technology and Turkey's institutional structure. If you don't have the funds, it just does not happen.]

Label 5.7. The lack of investments

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay and incompleteness of GAP is (1) the lack or absence of private sector investments in GAP region, (2) the lack of public-private partnership in investments, and (3) insufficient role the state has played in making investments in the region and attracting investors to the region.

Indicators: özel sektör, kamu yatırımı, kamu-özel sektör ortaklığı [private sector, public investment, public-private partnership]

Example 1: Şimdi serbest piyasa, neoliberalizm, her şeyi piyasaya bırakalım tarzında bir şey var. Tabii serbest piyasaya bırakırsanız GAP gibi bir projeyi olmaz.

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[Now there is a tendency to embrace neoliberalism and leave everything to the markets. If you leave a project like GAP to free market, of course it does not work.]

Example 2: “E, canım, zarar ediyor devlet teşkilatı, kurarsak, devlet ekonomik işletmesi kurarsak.” Zarar ederse, zarar etsin. Bu, ekonomik hesap işi değil, finansman, hesap işi değil, bunun gereğini yapacaksınız, bu bir barış projesi, mutlaka uygulayacağız.

[“But the state is making a loss if we establish an economic enterprise run by the state,” they say. I don’t mind about the loss. This is not a matter of economic calculation, not a matter of finance. This is a peace project; you must do whatever is necessary.]

Label 5.8. The lack of political will, stability, and competence

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is (1) the lack of political will of the governments, (2) the lack of competence and skills of the politicians, (3) the lack of interest of the politicians, and (4) the lack of political stability and strong one-party governments.

Indicators: siyasi irade, ilgisizlik, sahipsizlik [political will, indifference, lack of ownership]

Example 1: Değerli arkadaşlarım, sorun, 1990’lardan itibaren GAP projesinin siyasi irade tarafından yeterince desteklenmemesindedir. GAP, 1930’lu yıllardan beri, yıllar boyunca sahipsiz kalmıştır.

[Dear friends, the problem is the lack of political support given to GAP since the 1990s. GAP has been abandoned for years since the 1930s.]

Example 2: Sürdürülebilir olması lazım, siyasi değişim olmaması lazım. Millî bir politika olması lazım. Diğer hükümetlerin de aynı şekilde devam ettirmesi lazım ki hedefe ulaşabilesiniz.

[It must be sustainable. There must not be political change. There must be a national policy. Other governments should also pursue the same policies so that you can reach your goal.]

Label 5.9. The lack of qualified personnel¹⁹²

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is the lack of qualified personnel who are (1) knowledgeable in their fields and of GAP region and (2) tailored to the needs of the project.

Indicators: kabiliyet, tecrübesiz, bilgisiz [ability, inexperienced, clueless]

Example 1: Buradan bölgeye gidince ne yaşadık? Bir defa burada bölgesel kalkınma alanında uzmanlaşmış en az 70 yetişmiş personelimizi kaybettik. Oraya gittik, orada aldığımız personel yeni mezun personel, bölgesel gelişme alanında deneyimi yok. Kendi lisans eğitimini aldığı alanda bile bir deneyimi yok. Siz bunlarla orada GAP gibi bir projeyi izleyip, değerlendirip, yönetip yeni projeler ortaya koymaya çalışıyorsunuz.

[What happened when we were relocated to the region? First of all, we lost at least 70 regional development experts. The ones we employed there were newly graduates without any experience. They did not even have any experience in their own fields. You are trying to measure, evaluate, and administer a project such as GAP with these people.]

Example 2: Ama benim en büyük sıkıntım iyi sosyolog bulamamaktı. İşin ta başından beri iyi bir sosyoloğun olmasını istedim. Sosyologlar sosyal araştırmacı gibi çalıştılar GAP’ta. Efendim insanın

¹⁹² This subcategory emerged only in interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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grubuna bakıp sonuçlar çıkarmaya çalıştılar. Bana kitle sosyolojisi lazım, onu kimse çıkartamadı. Bugün bile yok.

[The gravest challenge I had was to find a sociologist. From day one, I wanted to have a qualified sociologist. Sociologists worked as if they were social researchers and tried to reach conclusions upon focusing on a specific group. I needed a mass sociologist, not social researchers. Even today, I don't see any.]

Label 5.10. The PKK

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind the delay of GAP is terrorism and the PKK, as the organization has (1) sabotaged the construction of dams in the past and (2) prevented the private sector investments to flow to the region.

Indicators: terör örgütü, PKK, sabotaj [terrorist organization, PKK, sabotage]

Example 1: Bölgede on yıl boyunca yaşanan terör, GAP'ın yarım kalmasının en önemli nedenidir; terör, önce bu projeyi vurmuştur.

[Terrorism that has been going on for the past ten years is the most important reason why GAP is half-completed. Terrorism primarily hit the project.]

Example 2: Türkiye'ye çok bedeller ödetti. 300-400 milyar dolar gibi bir para harcandı terörle mücadeleyle. GAP'a baktığınız zaman onun yanında esamesi bile okunmayan bir para. Bu terörle yapılan mücadele parası bölgeyi geliştirmek için kullanılsaydı zaten iş bu duruma kadar gelmezdi.

[It cost Turkey a lot. Around 300-400 billion dollars were spent to fight against terrorism. When you compare it to money spent on GAP, it is huge. Had that money was spent on developing the region, these incidents would not have been experienced.]

Main Category (Dimension) 6: Factors behind GAP's loss of popularity¹⁹³

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion regarding the direct and indirect factors behind GAP's loss of popularity.

Label 6.1. Changing development paradigms and practices

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind GAP's loss of popularity is (1) the shift in Turkey's development paradigms and (2) implementation of new and ambitious megaprojects in the light of recently formulated development policies and practices.

Indicators: yeni projeler, büyük projeler, popülerite [new projects, large projects, popularity]

Example 1: Birincisi, özellikle son hükümet döneminde, AKP yönetiminde hep şu verildi: Bir tek Güneydoğu değil. Doğu, Karadeniz, Doğu Karadeniz, İç Anadolu, biz hepsine aynı yatırımı yapıyoruz. [To begin with, lately during AKP government, the underlying message was that "we don't invest only in Southeastern Anatolia, we at the same time invest in the East, Black Sea, Inner Anatolia regions."]

Example 2: büyük projeler peşindeler. İşte İstanbul'a dünyanın en büyük havaalanı açılacak. İkinci Marmaray, Üçüncü Köprü yapılacak. Bunlar puan topluyor.

[They are after huge projects. Soon the world's largest airport will be opened in İstanbul. Second Marmaray, the Third Bridge... They are more alluring now.]

Label 6.2. Completion of vote-garnering projects

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind GAP's loss of popularity is (1) the completion of sensational development projects within GAP that can attract the voters and (2) relatively low importance of the remaining projects from the perspective of the local population.

Indicators: propaganda, oy, vaatler [propaganda, vote, promises]

Example 1: Barajlar bitti. Daha doğrusu büyük propagandası yapılacak şeyler bitti. 90'ların başlarında Atatürk Barajı bittiği zaman büyük bir ulusal şeydi.

[Dams are completed. More precisely, things they can use as a propaganda tool are completed. At the beginning of the 1990s, it was sensational when Atatürk Dam was completed.]

Example 2: Propaganda aleti olarak kullanabilecekleri, kamuoyu oluşturabilecekleri şeyler yapıldı bitti zaten. Bazı barajlar hâlâ yapılıyor ama o kadar önemli değil onlar.

[Things they can use as a propaganda tool, things they can mold public opinion are already completed. Some dams are being constructed but they are of minor importance.]

Label 6.3. Disappointment and loss of excitement

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind GAP's loss of popularity is (1) disappointment and (2) the loss of excitement due to broken promises and unmet goals after the initiation of GAP.

Indicators: bıkkınlık, başarısızlık, heyecan [weariness, failure, excitement]

Example 1: Bu sefer de halkın güveni kalmıyor işte. O yapıda oluşmuyor. Hedeflediğimiz şeylere çok ulaşamıyoruz. O kadar para, yatırımlar, emek, insan gücü aktarıyoruz, insan birazcık sonuçlarını görmek istiyor.

¹⁹³ This category emerged only in interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

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[Then the public loses its confidence in you. We cannot reach our goals. We allocate that much money, make investments, and make a great effort, but people would like to see the results.]

Example 2: İlk yıllar çok iyiydi, başarılı işler yapıldı. O heyecan vardı. Heyecan yerini zamanla alışkanlığa devretti, o bıkkınlık yarattı. Yerel açınsından umutsuzluk hâline geldi.

[During the first years, everything was fine and successful. Excitement was there. In time, excitement was replaced by routine. That caused weariness. The project became a source of hopelessness.]

Label 6.4. Indifference of the society

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker expresses that one of the factors behind GAP's loss of popularity is the absence or lack of interest of society and the elites in the project.

Indicators: ilgisizlik, bilgisizlik, Türk toplumu [indifference, cluelessness, Turkish society]

Example 1: Yoksa çoğu parlamenter bile bilmiyor Güneydoğu'yu, yatırımları, kaynakları. Çoğu insan bilmiyor. Bunun için de ben kimseyi suçlamıyorum, çok hızlı tüketiyoruz artık... Saatle tüketiyoruz.

[Even many parliamentarians have no idea about the Southeastern Anatolia, investments, resources. Many people have no idea. I don't blame anyone for this, we consume everything very fast nowadays... We consume by hours.]

Example 2: üniversiteden sınıf arkadaşım "Ben GAP'ta çalışıyorum" dediğim zaman Kâzım Karabekir'deki GAP Oteli'nde çalıştığımı sanıyorlardı. O zaman da GAP'tan haberdar olmayan çok kişi vardı. Kurumsal olarak ele alırsanız üst düzey hariç alt düzeyin de bir bilgisi yoktu.

[When I was telling my friend from the university that I was working at GAP, she thought I was working at the GAP Hotel on Kâzım Karabekir Street. Even then there were a lot of people who were uninformed about GAP. Institutionally speaking, except high-level bureaucrats, low levels did not have any idea.]

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Main Category (Dimension) 7: Miscellaneous

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion that does not belong to the categories above, but is still important in terms of understanding the governance of GAP and processes the project has been going through.

Label 8.1. Foundation and coordination task of GAP-BKİ¹⁹⁴

Definition: Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion regarding the history of GAP-BKİ and its current functions.

Indicators: koordinasyon, GAP İdaresi, *GAP Master Plan* [coordination, GAP-RDA, *GAP Master Plan*]

Example 1: kurum ve kuruluşlar arasındaki koordinasyonu sağlamak üzere, Başbakanlığa bağlı Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Teşkilatı kurulmuştur.

[GAP Regional Development Administration, working under the Prime Ministry, was founded to ensure coordination among institutions.]

Example 2: İdare dünyadaki gelişmeleri sürekli izler, takip eder, gelişmeye açıktır. Ama gördüklerini olduğu gibi almaz, yerel gerçekleri göz önünde bulundurarak uyarlar, sonra uygular. Bu olumlu bir noktadır bence.

[The Administration follows the developments in the world. But it does not adopt these developments as they are. It adjusts them to local realities and then applies. I think this is a positive point.]

Label 8.2. Political debates to claim ownership of GAP¹⁹⁵

Definition: Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion regarding which political party or which political leader has the right to claim ownership of GAP.

Indicators: Demirel, Özal, Erdoğan

Example 1: Neden Anavatan Partisi tarafından da destekleniyor? Çünkü, GAP'ın gerçek mimarı Anavatan Partisi kurucusu merhum Turgut Özal da ondan dolayı, değerli arkadaşlarım.

[Why is it supported by the Motherland Party? Because, the real architect of GAP is the founder of the Motherland Party, Turgut Özal, dear friends.]

Example 2: Bu vesileyle de, Sayın Süleyman Demirel'i buradan minnetle ve şükranla anmayı da bir vazife biliyorum. Yani, bir projeyi başlatan, Türkiye'nin ufkunu açan değerli insanları her zaman anmak durumundayız ve onlara minnet ve şükranlarımızı her vesileyle ifade etmek durumundayız.

[I take this opportunity and remember Honorable Süleyman Demirel with gratitude. We always have to commemorate and respect those who initiated the project and expanded our horizons.]

Label 8.3. GAP policies of AKP¹⁹⁶

Segments should be coded under one of the codes below if a speaker expresses any opinion regarding the GAP policies of AKP and evaluates whether these policies were helpful (framed as supportive) or harmful (framed as opposing) for the implementation and the future of the project.

Label 8.3.1. Supportive views

¹⁹⁴ This subcategory emerged both in parliamentary proceedings and interviews with bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

¹⁹⁵ This subcategory emerged only in parliamentary proceedings.

¹⁹⁶ This subcategory emerged both in interviews with the MPs and bureaucrats, experts, and intellectuals.

Appendix D: The coding frame

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker (1) expresses that GAP policies of AKP have been determined and straight to the point in the past 13 years, (2) takes a supportive stance towards these policies, (3) praises the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for his contributions to the project, and (4) praises *GAP Action Plan (2008-2012)*.

Indicators: *GAP Eylem Planı*, başbakan, ödenek, [*GAP Action Plan*, prime minister, allocation]

Example 1: 2005'te sayın Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın Diyarbakır'da açıklamış olduğu *Eylem Planı*'ndan sonra GAP'ın kaderi değişmeye başlamıştır.

[After honorable Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made the *Action Plan* public in Diyarbakır in 2005, the destiny of GAP began to change.]

Example 2: Dolayısıyla en planlı ve en fazla kaynak aktaran, proje bir an önce bitsin de maksimum verim sağlansın diye uğraş veren hükümetlerin başında AK Parti geliyor.

[Therefore, AK Party is the leading government that allocates resources the most in order to complete the project as soon as possible and attain maximum efficiency.]

Label 8.3.2. Opposing views

Definition: A unit of coding falls into this category if a speaker takes a critical stance and expresses that (1) the primary motivation of AKP is to seek political and economic rent rather than addressing the problems of the region and (2) AKP lacks realistic plans and motivation to complete the project.

Indicators: siyasi rant, oy, gerçekçi olmayan [political rent, vote, low priority, unrealistic]

Example 1: Tamamıyla bir simülasyon, bir yanılsama. 2008'de 11 bakanla Erdoğan Diyarbakır'da GAP'a muazzam yatırım yapacaklarına dair bir çıkış yaptı. Ancak o günden bugüne kadar verilen sözün yüzde 20'si dahi gerçekleşmemiş.

[It is entirely a simulation, an illusion. Erdoğan, with 11 ministers, stated in Diyarbakır in 2008 that they would make huge investments to GAP. Since then, not even 20% of the promises are kept.]

Example 2: Ben AKP'nin bu kalkınma planlarına gerektiği değeri verdiğini düşünmüyorum. AKP her alana siyasi gözlükle bakıyor. Ne kadar oy alırım, ne kadar kaybederim, o gözlükle bakıyor.

[I don't think AKP is giving enough importance to these development plans. AKP evaluates everything as part of politics. They evaluate everything on the basis of how many votes they would attract or lose.]