## **Contents**

Acknowledgements —— V
List of figures —— XI
Abbreviations —— XIII
Introduction — 1  The Turkish state's colonial language governmentality — 3  The Kurdish language movement as anti-colonial — 7  Epistemological violence against the Kurdish language — 9  Colonial language governmentality during times of "peace" (2009–2015) — 12  The trajectory of my research — 13  The sites of inquiry — 17  Timing of my research and the social-political climate of Diyarbakır — 19  Kurdish language activists — 21  Institutions in my research — 24  My positionality as a researcher — 27  The idea of language as approached in this study — 30  Chapters overview — 32
Chapter 1  Kurds and Kurdistan — 37  The Kurdish language — 39  Kurdish language variation — 41  Kurdish language status in different parts of Kurdistan — 45  Religion in Kurdistan — 46  Political system in Kurdistan — 48  Colonial division of Kurdistan — 49
Chapter 2 Colonial language governmentality in Turkey and its relation to Euro-Colonial linguistics — 54 Colonial making of the language(s) and speakers — 59 Colonial racism as the basis for language theories — 62 The impact of Euro-colonial linguistics from late Ottoman to Turkey — 68 Turanian language family thesis as a raciolinguistic ideology — 74



Turkish Language Institute (TDK) and the search for Öz Türkçe [Pure Turkish] —— 79

Present-day Turkey's linguistic imperialism —— 85

Summary —— 100

### **Chapter 3**

### Colonial governance of non-Turkish languages in Turkey —— 103

Systematization of colonial linguistic governmentality —— 107

Educational institutions as prime spaces of colonial linguistic

governmentality —— **116**After the formation of the PKK (1978) and the lifting of the Kurdish

language ban (1991) --- 124

Turkey's ordeal with the Kurdish language since 2000 —— 128

Summary —— 132

### Chapter 4

# Party, politics, and language: The genealogy of the anti-colonial Kurdish language movement —— 135

Kurdish languaging as a political act —— 136

Kurdish language activism during Ottoman times —— 140

Kurdish language activism after the Turkish Republic —— 141

The 1960s: The Kurdish language gets out of the closet —— 143

The 1970s: Kurdish language thrives in independent Kurdish political parties —— 149

The 1980s: The rise of the PKK and the increased oppression of

language —— 152

The 1990s: The lift of the ban and the emergence of an organized language activism —— 155

The PKK's transformation and the new political project —— 162

Repositioning the Kurdish language within the new political paradigm —— 167

Understanding linguistic subjugation through the lens of colonialism —— 171

Alternative standardization and multilingual education —— 173

Conflicting language ideologies remain —— 179

Summary —— 185

Chapter 5
Liberal bracket in colonial history: Kurdish language politics during the
peace negotiation process (2009–2015) —— 188
Peace negotiations process as a "linguistic turn" in the sociopolitical
history of Turkey —— 189
Democratic opening (2009–2011) —— <b>190</b>
Resolution process (2013–2015) —— <b>194</b>
Not-war-not-peace —— 196
The European Union and the liberal politics of recognition —— 200
Peace negotiations process for the culturalization of the political
conflict —— 204
Techniques of "culturalizing" the political conflict —— 206
Depoliticization and instrumentalization of the Kurdish language —— 207
State monopolization of the Kurdish linguistic field —— 213
Institutionalization of language hierarchies —— 221
Summary —— 225
Chanter 6

### The split in the language sphere and the closing of the liberal bracket ---- 228

The state as a new actor in the Kurdish linguistic sphere —— 229

The challenge of being political: Discussions of neutrality and

objectivity --- 238

Failed negotiations and the closing of the liberal bracket --- 242

Regenerating while disguised —— 253

Summary — 261

### Chapter 7

### Decolonial education in Dibistanên Azad [Free Schools] ---- 264

The non-opening story of Dibistanên Azad —— 266

Pedagogical power of re-existence —— 272

Decolonial education via Dibistanên Azad — 275

Beyond oppositional: Dibistanên Azad as regenerative —— 278

Radical pedagogy: Dibistanên Azad as anti-sexist —— 283

Radical pedagogy: Dibistanên Azad as anti-hierarchical —— 288

Radical pedagogy: Dibistanên Azad as communal and radically

democratic — 289

Radical pedagogy: Dibistanên Azad as ecological —— 293

Essentialist tendencies of democratic imagining — 294

Summary — 299

Conclusion —— 302

Appendix —— 311

References —— 317

Index ---- 341