

Schluter AA. *The discursive framing of Turkey's pro-government town square move-ment*. *World Englishes*. 2020; 39: 594–608. doi: [10.1111/weng.12503](https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12503)

# The discursive framing of Turkey's pro-government town square movement

Anne Ambler Schluter

The Department of English, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

## Correspondence

Anne Ambler Schluter, The Department of English, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong.

Email: [anne.schluter@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:anne.schluter@polyu.edu.hk)

## Abstract

Led by a notorious US-based Muslim cleric, Turkey's July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 attempted coup featured a renegade faction of the Turkish military that was overtaken by fearless citizens who answered the president's call to crowd town squares and preserve democracy. At least, this is the official narrative. During the following months, state ideology that indexed this populist narrative flooded the linguistic landscape. Simultaneously, a large-scale purge of government employees took place. Drawing on a larger corpus of signs containing 238 billboards, the current paper employs critical discourse analysis and geosemiotics to investigate three government-sponsored billboards' discursive and semiotic framing of the coup attempt to gain insights into the lack of opposition to the government's authoritarian crackdown. The analysis shows the mechanisms through which populist, nationalist slogans use intertextuality to tap into deeply familiar discourses from Turkey's founding narrative and legitimize the purge.

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

On the night of July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, a small segment of the Turkish military attempted a coup by, among other actions, placing troops in strategic locations, capturing a top military official, bombing the parliament building, and taking over major news stations. Through this medium, they instructed the residents of Turkey to stay inside their homes to avoid dangerous confrontations with the military while the coup was underway. The Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, narrowly escaped capture. Communicating through FaceTime which was broadcast live on CNN Türk, Erdoğan called for the Turkish people to defy the coup plotters' instructions by leaving their homes and taking to the streets and town squares. The loudspeakers of mosques in every district across the country broadcast 'sala', a traditional call normally used on special occasions like funerals and the call to Friday prayers, and repeated Erdoğan's message at regular intervals throughout the night. The people heeded this call and stood up to the tanks and guns pointed at them from their strategic locations in Istanbul and Ankara. In the ensuing conflict, 251 people who confronted the military lost their lives and over 2,200 were injured;<sup>1</sup> however, by daybreak, the people had succeeded in asserting their will over the military personnel participating in the coup attempt. Their efforts preserved democracy in Turkey. Those who died during the conflict have been memorialized as martyrs, and Turkey now officially

This is the peer reviewed version of the following article: Schluter AA. The discursive framing of Turkey's pro-government town square move-ment. *World Englishes*. 2020; 39: 594–608, which has been published in final form at <https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12503>.

This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Wiley Terms and Conditions for Use of Self-Archived Versions. This article may not be enhanced, enriched or otherwise transformed into a derivative work, without express permission from Wiley or by statutory rights under applicable legislation. Copyright notices must not be removed, obscured or modified. The article must be linked to Wiley's version of record on Wiley Online Library and any embedding, framing or otherwise making available the article or pages thereof by third parties from platforms, services and websites other than Wiley Online Library must be prohibited.

commemorates their sacrifices each July 15<sup>th</sup> during the newly declared Democracy and National Unity Day.

The summary above represents the official narrative described by state-run media, subsequent editions of Turkish history textbooks, and officially approved artistic renderings of the coup attempt. With the citizens' victory and the coup-plotters' impending punishment, these events fit neatly into a populist narrative in which two opposing groups emerge: the people vs. their would-be military rulers who were subsequently labeled as terrorists. This narrative's merging of the people's will with the governing regime's interests – also characteristic of a populist framing (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008) – reflects better known town square movements like the Arab Spring. Its departure from these movements through its pro-government position, however, presents an interesting case that co-opts similar discursive strategies to achieve an ideologically different outcome. During the nine-month period between the coup attempt and the April 2017 referendum vote, government-funded billboards and announcements that celebrated the people's resistance to a mortal threat to democracy dominated the landscape. The simultaneous shutdown of various news media outlets that did not align with the official narrative contributed further to the government's control over the post-coup messaging. Through the parallels between this discourse and present-day circumstances, 'structured immediacy' (Leudar et al., 2008) – which frames current events in terms of their continuity with historical events – emerged in this context. This framing strengthened the ruling regime's legitimacy and helped to justify its subsequent actions to delegitimize sections of the Turkish population deemed to be a threat.

Following the attempted coup, the ruling AK Party declared a state of emergency, which lasted nearly two years. This period brought with it a re-structuring of judiciary, military, and law enforcement sectors that eliminated much of the oversight on the Erdoğan regime. It simultaneously suspended many policies that protected workers from unjustified dismissal and citizens from baseless criminal charges. As a result, over 107,000 people lost their jobs in the public sector alone.<sup>2</sup> The stigma associated with these dismissals eliminated this group's future prospects of employment within Turkey, and the revocation of their passports rendered unviable their options for employment outside of Turkey. In addition to losing their livelihoods and their international mobility, over 50,000 Turkish citizens have been detained, tried, and sentenced to prison on related charges.<sup>3</sup> Although these statistics include people with diverse anti-government ideologies, the followers of Fethullah Gülen, a US-based Muslim cleric who the Turkish government blames for the coup attempt, represent the primary target of these actions. Many remain in prison, some lead a hidden life on the run from the authorities, and others have enlisted the help of human smugglers to flee Turkey. While the Turkish media have widely publicized these purges and their implications, domestic opposition to them has been quite limited. As comprehension of the widespread acceptance of such measures relies on a look at cultural narratives (Bilali, 2013), the current paper explores the government's discursive construction of the national coup narrative as a means of gaining insight into this lack of opposition.

## **2 | BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 | Embedding the present within the past**

The slogans analyzed below tap into deeply familiar discourses that frame the 1923 founding narrative of the Turkish Republic. Considered largely responsible for inspiring revolutionary patriotism and winning key battles against foreign foes, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk forged a new national identity for the young republic's diverse inhabitants. The legacy of Atatürk's ideology, known as Kemalism, looms large in today's Turkey. Two key components of the discourses critical to this ideology include nationalism and populism; moreover, both also play integral roles within the Turkish government's framing of the 2016 coup attempt. In terms of nationalism, the perception of shared underlying traits among members of the same citizenry represented by Anderson's (1991) concept of imagined community highlights its unifying role for a given population and accounts for its enduring presence in the Turkish context. As analysis of the slogans below will show, this unity through nationalism also imposes divisions through contrasts with populations that are discursively constructed as different and, as such, potentially designates individuals with specific traits as out-group members. Given the variable shape of nationalist discourses according to specific national contexts and prevailing political agendas (Billig, 1995, p. 64), one aim of the forthcoming analysis includes identifying specific components of the nationalist discourses that shape both Turkey's founding and coup narratives. These details help to delegitimize specific segments of the Turkish population and, in so doing, justify actions against them. With respect to populist discourse, frequent references to 'the people' suggest alignment with their collective will and justification for populist leaders' actions (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007, p. 322). This discourse is rooted in populist ideology, which, according to Albertazzi and McDonnell (2008), exhibits the following characteristics: (1) 'the people are one and are inherently good', (2) 'the people are sovereign', (3) 'the people's culture and way of life are of paramount value', and (4) 'the leader and party/movement are one with the people' (p. 6). The prominence of the monolithic people whose persistent struggle against Goliaths resulted in victory both in the framing of the Turkish revolution under Atatürk and the coup overthrow under Erdoğan points to the historical use and re-emergence of populist discourse. While Atatürk's eloquent speaking style sharply contrasts Erdoğan's directness, their shared populist discourse highlights an important point of comparison. The strong emotional appeal of charismatic, populist leaders like Atatürk and Erdoğan who emphasize the monumental importance of the current political moment reflect an additional parallel associated with populism (Canovan, 1999). Finally, populists' common strategy of blaming the country's perceived problems on scapegoats (Heinisch, 2008) suggests that populist discourse merits investigation with respect to the coup narrative's allowance for the large-scale persecution that followed.

By supplying historical antecedents to contextualize current events and shape future interpretations, such comparisons place the coup narrative within the 'master narrative' (Hammack, 2009) of Turkish collective memory that allows individuals to become 'practical historians' (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2011). On the discursive level, such connections underline the important role of intertextuality, which refers to the incorporation of features from pre-existing texts into new ones (Fairclough, 1992). As the meanings of the original formulation frame interpretations of new iterations (Rose, 2007), deep associations between them emerge. Within the current context, Erdoğan's co-opting of slogans and recognizable discursive features employed by Atatürk stimulates the transfer of some of the public's reverence for Atatürk and his revolutionary ideas onto his own image.

## **2.2 | Focus of the analysis: Slogans on billboards within the linguistic landscape**

Through their intentional ambiguity, slogans allow for personalized interpretations according to readers'/listeners' own perspectives and, as such, resonate with larger portions of the population than their more precise alternatives (Campbell & Huxman, 2009). This capacity to accommodate various worldviews was vital to the development of diverse citizens' feelings of belonging to the young Turkish Republic under its one-nation, one-people ethos. Firmly grounded in this nation-building tradition, the ideologies that guide these slogans continue to be celebrated within Turkey's highly centralized education system, on its national monuments, and on billboards that commemorate national holidays (Bilali, 2013). With their potential to disseminate 'the weight of the nation' through carefully crafted text and imagery, billboards have received attention for their potential to engage their readers in 'intersubjective nation-building' (Jenks, 2018, p. 69). For these reasons, billboard slogans and imagery represent the primary lens adopted here through which the discursive construction of the coup narrative is examined. Billboards represent conspicuous components of linguistic landscapes, which, through their interactive engagement with their readers (Johnstone, 2010), play influential roles in shaping community members' perspectives (Shohamy & Gorter, 2008). For this reason, states traditionally use the linguistic landscape as part of a larger strategy to disseminate its ideology, especially in authoritarian contexts (Sloboda, 2008). Moreover, of particular relevance to the current study's focus on discursive links between the founding and coup narratives, messages of the linguistic landscape gain salience through 'the retellings of the remnants of histories' that mark intersections between previous and currently existing ideologies (Stroud, 2019, p. 15). In the same way that the contestations and negotiations that typically characterize linguistic landscapes in relatively democratic contexts underline local struggles for control over messaging (Shohamy & Waksman, 2008), the absence thereof – as in the case of Turkey's post-coup linguistic landscape – reflects the state's control over messaging. In these ways, analysis of the linguistic landscape provides a discursive and semiotic means through which to gain insight into local power dynamics.

## **2.3 | Research question**

Grounded in the foci described above, the following question guided the current study: Through a discursive and semiotic analysis of three government-sponsored billboards, how did the official July 15<sup>th</sup> political narrative help to legitimize the purges that took place in the aftermath of the July 15<sup>th</sup> coup attempt?

## **3 | METHODS**

The three billboards analyzed below come from a corpus of nearly 250 photographs of signs that comprised parts of Istanbul's linguistic landscape during the nine month-period between the 15<sup>th</sup> of July coup attempt and the referendum vote held in April of 2017. While only billboards receive attention here, the slogans and images reflect a larger governmental strategy of controlling the narrative by widely disseminating its messaging through different media. This practice started on

the evening of the coup attempt and continued the following day with proclamations amplified by the loudspeakers of local mosques. Written discourse recycled one of these statements through an Erdoğan-authored text message sent to all Turkish residents on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July. In the following days and weeks, announcements appeared in public transportation stations and vehicles. Simultaneously, informal posters were affixed to unregulated roadside spaces to create the perception of grass-roots support. Out of the different segments of the linguistic landscape, billboards represented the most salient contributions and, through their size and repeated display, appeared to shout for readers' attention. This focus allowed analysis to look at some of the core aspects of the government's messaging. By creating links between the founding and coup attempt narratives, the three billboards discussed here achieve discursively the association that pictures of Atatürk next to Erdoğan achieve semiotically. Such connections are noteworthy given the AK Party's publicized distancing from Atatürk's legacy, and, for this reason, suggest a larger discursive strategy to strengthen the government's appeal beyond AK Party's supporters that is worthy of investigation. The three billboards selected for this paper represent a range of allusions to Atatürk slogans, including a direct quotation, a modified quotation, and an original slogan that incorporates a similar discursive feature.

Having experienced the coup attempt and its aftermath first-hand, I noticed that the memory of personalized coup attempt narratives gradually faded away as the single, government-controlled narrative gained widespread acceptance. An examination of this observation represents the topic of an on-going study, which investigates the coup narrative from the perspective of school children, for whom memories of the coup attempt can be constructed both from personal experience and exposure to their classroom framing. With an understanding of narratives as individualized entities, the current study adds to the goals of the larger project, which seeks to identify the mechanisms through which the single pro-government coup attempt narrative has replaced many personal narratives. The prominent portrayal of some details and simultaneous absence of others within the government's coup narrative underscores the role of framing to draw attention to 'patterns of presentation, selection, emphasis, and exclusion' (Gitlin, 1980, p. 108) that characterize the discursive constructions of its narrative. Given discursive frames' socio-cultural specificity (Coupland & Garrett, 2010), the analysis presented here incorporates relevant socio-political considerations. This approach builds on post-representational interpretations of performativity theory (Stroud, 2016), which look to the historical and political foundations that motivate sign creation.

The slogans on the three billboards provide linguistic data that were analyzed through critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003), and the imagery on the signs served as semiotic material for analysis through geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Critical discourse analysis allowed for micro-level examination of such textual aspects as lexical choices, grammatical constructions, and pronouns with respect to their larger discursive implications. Geosemiotics contextualized these findings by emphasizing their situatedness within a larger semiotic setting. This epistemology drew attention to the connections between the imagery and discourse on the billboards, other community signs, cultural symbols, and individual action. With these details of this study's methodological approach in mind, it is now possible to address the content and analysis of the three selected billboards.

## **4 | ANALYSIS**

## Common features across the three billboards

Prior to engaging with the analysis of three featured billboards, it is worthwhile to note three features they share: use of the word 'millet' (the people/nation), incorporation of the Turkish flag, and inclusion of techniques to enhance their salience. These three aspects help to advance state ideology and are discussed here as a means of foregrounding analysis of the billboards.

### *Millet*

The meaning of 'millet' refers to either the nation or the people who make up the nation, depending on the specific semantic context. Indeed, within the first two slogans undergoing analysis, millet refers to the national territorial entity: the sovereignty of the nation (in Figures 1 and 2) and the single nation (in Figure 3). However, the line between the nation and its people is blurred in the third slogan, which refers to the people's/nation's active resistance to a terrorist threat (Figure 4). The duality of this term, in fact, lies at the heart of populism, in which, as discussed in the background section, the nation functions as a collective manifestation of the people's will (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008). This pairing of populism with the nation plays a central role in constructions of Turkey's historical memory (Bilali, 2013), and, for this reason, helps to contextualize the slogans and images on the billboards discussed below.

### *The flag*

Prominent displays of Turkey's national flag across the three billboards comes directly out of this focus on the nation. While the flag routinely appears during public holidays and in the aftermath of military conflicts and national tragedies, it took on particular importance in the context of the coup narrative. Before discussing its meaning with respect to the billboards, it is important to note that flags are polysemous (Reichl, 2004); moreover, they serve as 'floating signifier[s] whose meaning[s] are decided by the signifier' (Laskar et al., 2016, p. 210). Accordingly, displays of the flag during the coup could be interpreted in different ways. In line with practice both from previous military coups and calls for the military to keep the Erdoğan regime in check during the early years of their administration, the coup plotters themselves could have used the Turkish flag to symbolize the restoration of Atatürk's secularist principles. In spite of these potentially diverse understandings of the flag's symbolism, however, the high concentration of July 15<sup>th</sup> images that contain the flag reflect widespread uniformity. Through repeated exposure to countless government-funded billboards that feature images of coup resisters brandishing the flag as either a weapon or reminder of sanctimonious Turkish values, the flag's polysemous meanings converged into one: the people's victory over military rule. The strong association between the flag and this meaning was cemented with the 2017 commemorative edition of the one lira coin, which memorializes the July 15<sup>th</sup> 'martyrs' with the image of numerous hands grasping a raised Turkish flag.

The pairing of the flag with state ideology benefits the regime in power by channeling citizens' deep emotional attachment to the nation through the flag (Schatz & Lavine, 2007), which often transfers to the chief disseminator of the ideology. Indeed, in the weeks following the coup, vociferous, flag-waving supporters of the president flooded the streets and dominated media coverage. Even the main opposition party leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, voiced his deference to

Erdoğan during this period, leading some scholars to label him as complicit (Toktamış & David, 2018). This lack of opposition to the head of state has been cited as one of the primary contributing factors to the ‘rally ‘round the flag effect’ in which the leader of a state that is perceived to be under attack becomes a central focus of citizens’ increased patriotism (Baker & O’Neal, 2001; Mueller, 1970). In this context, conspicuous displays of the flag develop into proxies for the president, to whom the people look to unify the nation.

### *Salience of the billboards*

Within this setting that amplifies the ruling party’s voice and silences dissent, the state’s control over messaging, or ‘hegemony of representation’ emerges (Yurchak, 1997). The billboards discussed below provide visual contributions to this phenomenon by increasing their salience in various ways, two of which receive mention here. Considered a written form of shouting (Blom et al., 2014), the exclusive use of capital letters to convey written messages intensifies the rhetorical volume. The ubiquity of the billboards reinforces the emphatic quality of these messages by creating ‘linguistic landscape corridors’ (Sloboda, 2008) that provide repeated exposure to the state’s ideology in a way that resembles aggressive advertising. By shouting in written form and eliminating contesting voices from the linguistic landscape, such features suggest that – contrary to the populist messaging – the government and its supporters possess the only audible voices. The billboards discussed below represent a small sample of thousands of billboards in Istanbul that carry the same slogan and index those with similar slogans. Together, they provide a picture of the linguistic landscape that further projects state ideology over a range of people’s voices.

### **Slogan #1: Sovereignty belongs to the nation**

The familiar slogan, HAKİMİYET MİLLETİNDİR [Literally: SOVEREIGNTY IS THE NATION’S] that appears on the billboard in Figure 1 (below) invokes nationalism both through the historical context of the slogan itself and use of Turkish national symbols. Consistent with Turkey’s national colors, the slogan’s white font appears over a red background that stands underneath the crescent moon and star of the Turkish flag.



**FIGURE 1** Sovereignty belongs to the nation billboard

References to sovereignty represent a common characteristic of populist discourse (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008), including that which has traditionally framed Turkish national identity. This slogan in particular recalls Atatürk's creation of the Turkish Republic, which followed battles against various foreign states that had laid claim to parts of the territory. This text, thus, points to the Turkish people's successful, hard-fought battles that led to independence. Incorporating such a 'discourse of victory' to construct national identity (Wodak et al., 1999, p. 26), in fact, sets up the state's power as a defining aspect of the nation (Sloboda, 2008). In this way, the use of this slogan reinforces the power of the ruler, both in the case of Atatürk and Erdoğan.

As the original version of this slogan is attributed to the political philosopher, Rousseau, Turkey's ambitions of sovereignty are firmly grounded in the high-minded values of the French Revolution. Atatürk created a direct connection between the democratic values of revolution and sovereignty through another widespread slogan, *Hürriyetin de, eşitliğin de, adaletin de dayanak noktası, ulusal egemenliktir* ('Freedom, equality, and justice rest on national sovereignty'), which identifies sovereignty as a pre-condition for freedom, equality, and justice. Through this link, this slogan reflects a part of the larger practice of disseminating ideology by displaying 'signs that mutually index each other' (Sloboda, 2008, p. 174). Both with respect to Rousseau's coinage and Atatürk's adoption of *Hakimiyet Milletindir*, therefore, association enhances the authoritative quality of the slogan in the current context. Beyond these origins, this slogan remains in the collective memory of Turks through its prominent location in the parliament building and its placement above Atatürk's bust on gold coins. Each of these contexts reminds Turkish readers of their shared, proud history. By re-issuing the slogan, *Hakimiyet Milletindir*, therefore, state ideology taps into the reverence for the founding narrative and the citizens' belonging within it.

The July 15<sup>th</sup> coup attempt featured domestic – rather than foreign – military personnel who attempted to wrest control from the regime in power. In this way, the situation is not directly comparable to the foreign threats faced by the nation's founders. Similarly, reference to the state's sovereignty through the slogan *Hakimiyet Milletindir* suits the revolution that preceded independence far more than the one-night defense against rogue members of Turkey's military. Its appearance as the text of numerous consecutive billboards in the aftermath of the coup attempt, however, suggest its meaning in the present day. Following the cooperative principle's



maxim of relation (Grice, 1989), readers of the slogan interpret the slogan in ways that make it relevant to the coup attempt.

As the audience supplies the missing information to make the relevant connection, this slogan functions as an enthymeme. A foreign entity's invasion or attack on the sovereign Turkish nation represents the required presupposition, and widespread allegations of Fethullah Gülen's culpability, together with his international status, inform this presupposition. While the majority of readers are likely to formulate presuppositions that cite Gülen's involvement, they likely differ with respect to the specific form that this presupposition takes. Interpretations can range from the fact-based information that Gülen resides in the United States to the more extreme (but widespread) speculation of Gülen's alleged ties to the CIA. As with other enthymemes, the unspoken nature of this pre-supposition allows for its customization that builds off the individual's pre-existing understanding and deepens its apparent veracity (Campbell & Huxman, 2008). Its strength lies in the lack of attention it receives: as it is never directly addressed, it is not subject to direct challenge. By co-opting a direct quotation from Atatürk, the billboards project a recognizably authoritative message that, when applied to the current context, allows for diverse interpretations according to readers' perceptions of the political situation.

The reader's involvement outlined in the preceding paragraphs underlines the interactive nature of place-making through linguistic and semiotic landscapes that ultimately heightens readers' emotional experiences (Stroud & Jegels, 2014), and the 'rally 'round the flag effect' (discussed with reference to the meaning of the flag) provides an outlet for this emotion. The billboard in Figure 2 (below) shows an important outcome of this effect: the display of the same slogan on an extremely large (approximately twenty meter-long and four meter-high) sign that features the logo of a prominent construction company, Akdağlar, on its far right side.



**FIGURE 2** Privately-funded 'Sovereignty belongs to the nation' billboard

The repetition of the government slogan on the large, privately funded billboard in Figure 2 (above) allows the state's ideology to be further stamped onto the local linguistic landscape in a way that is consistent with settings strictly controlled by the government (Sloboda, 2008). While citizens rally around the flag, private members of society who benefit from allegiances with the government intensify the government's message. Billboards such as these put a diverse face on unity in a climate that, as will be discussed in the next section, shows little tolerance for diverse viewpoints.

**Slogan #2: The New Turkey: Unity under the same nation and flag but no longer the same language**

National unity represents the primary theme of the billboard analyzed in Figure 3 (below). It features text transposed over a waving Turkish flag. Streaks of light that emanate from illumination underneath suggest a rising sun. With the inclusion of the official title and younger-than real-life bust of President Erdoğan, the billboard's chief endorser is clear.



**FIGURE 3** 'One flag, one nation'

Set in the largest font, the slogan *Tek bayrak, tek millet, tek vatan, tek devlet* ('Single flag, single nation, single homeland, single state') receives the most emphasis. The placement of Erdoğan's name and title (in smaller fonts) directly following the slogan appears to follow a citation convention, which, to the non-Turkish reader, would suggest that Erdoğan coined the slogan. For those acculturated as Turks, however, intertextuality represents this slogan's most salient feature: it serves as a direct allusion to Atatürk's famous quote: *Tek devlet, tek bayrak, tek millet, tek dil* ('A single country, single flag, single nation, single language'). With its emphasis on singularity, Atatürk's original coinage represents an extension of the one nation-one people paradigm, a cornerstone of the nation-state model upon which Turkey was founded (Schluter, 2014). With parallel structures that repeat seven of the eight original words (albeit in a different order), the link between Erdoğan's version and the original is clear and carries the benefits of association between Atatürk's legacy and Erdoğan's authority.

Continuity between Atatürk's and Erdoğan's eras also helps to advance Erdoğan's message through semiotic means. Erdoğan's reformulation of this famous slogan invokes the revolutionary context of Atatürk's original version to suit the new revolution of the modern era; the illumination with upward rising streaks at the bottom of the billboard reinforces this interpretation. This imagery suggests that it is the dawn of a bright, new era, which calls for a revolutionary leader with his own visions for the country. As the face of this fresh, new era, the archive photo of the then sixty-two-year-old Erdoğan projects the image of a leader who, in his prime, is strong enough to carve out a new chapter for Turkey. In this way, frames from the past heighten the legitimacy of Erdoğan's vision while, simultaneously, signaling a break with the past. This break with the past, in fact, receives explicit attention from members of the AK Party with

their discussion of the *Yeni Türkiye* ('New Turkey') and their visions of 'closing the century-long parentheses', a reference to the Atatürk-inspired era of the Turkish Republic (Yeni Şafak, 2013). Such comments invoke the AK Party's larger agenda of re-framing Atatürk's legacy as anachronistic (White, 2013). According to the AK Party's description, the New Turkey represents a departure from the centralist, authoritarian character of the preceding era and the beginning of a true democracy in which Turkish citizens directly elect their president (Christofis, 2018). While the New Turkey has been an AK Party talking point since 2010 that gained prominence with Erdoğan's 2014 election campaign, the 2016 coup attempt provided an opportunity to showcase it with the optics of a 'Second War of Independence' (Christofis, 2018, p. 19), which, for this reason, Erdoğan subsequently described as a 'Gift from God' (Champion, 2016).

Entry into the era of the New Turkey also marks a shift away from an understanding of equality as 'sameness' and toward a 'multicultural democracy' that recognizes 'equality in difference' (Benhabib & Isiksel, 2006, p. 230). Indeed, this re-conceptualization of national identity foregrounds the *Kurdish Opening*, which lifted some restrictions on Turkey's minority languages under the AK Party's rule. In this way, Erdoğan's removal of 'single language' from Atatürk's original slogan aligns with the democratic reforms of his tenure. The updated slogan, thus, recalls the original and simultaneously points out its lack of suitability for the present-day context. The inclusion of Erdoğan's title as the president – information that is entirely unnecessary for the billboards' intended audience – reminds readers that he is the first democratically elected president of Turkey, a fact that reinforces his legitimacy as the people's choice (Kubicek, 2016).

Despite the updated slogan's more democratic vision of unity, it is also important to consider a noteworthy by-product of this unity. The goal of preserving national unity has served as the primary justification for pursuing Gülen followers, who are colloquially referred to as 'parallel' for their perceived ambitions of installing a parallel state that would undermine the single, unified Turkish Republic. In the coup attempt's aftermath, this group acquired an additional label: members of FETÖ, a newly declared terrorist organization. This development underlines the convergence of populism with exclusionary interpretations of nationalism in which 'loving one's culture translates into rejecting others' (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008, p. 6). In these ways, the unity frame co-opted by Erdoğan to invoke a new Turkish era, in fact, resembles the Atatürk's tradition from which it originally emerged (Christofis, 2018).

### **Slogan #3: The people, called to action to defend the nation from terrorists**

The naming of those who participated in the coup as terrorists represents an important component of the slogan that appears in the four billboards in Figure 4 (below). This slogan adopts the perspective of the hero who is defined in relation to the source of conflict: coups and terror. Set on top of a simple white background with a Turkish flag integrated into the slogan, the red and black-colored text reads: *BİZ MİLLETİZ (bayrak) TÜRKİYE'Yİ DARBEYE TERÖRE YEDİRMEYİZ* ('WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF THE NATION (flag) WE DON'T LET COUP, TERROR GOBBLE UP TURKEY').



**FIGURE 4** 'The people defend Turkey from terrorists' billboards

Analysis of the above slogan begins by focusing on the two most prominently displayed words in the sign: *darbeye teröre* ('coup terror') in order to address the discursive means through which the terrorist label, mentioned in the previous section, expanded to include Gülen followers. Coup and terror appear next to one another in the text, and the exclusive use of black font for these two words sets them apart from the others. First, it is important to note that *coup* and *terror* both contain suffixes to suggest that each one acts as a separate object rather than as the compound noun, 'coup terror'. A translation that captures this nuance includes 'We are the people of the nation. We don't let coups or terror gobble up Turkey' (author's emphasis). The Turkish version of the slogan, however, contains neither this added conjunction nor a separation between the two words with a comma. In this way, the slogan adopts a convention of direct, less formal spoken language – a common characteristic of populist discourse (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008) – in which the speaker lists intolerable entities. The exact items on this list are conceived of spontaneously and are of secondary importance to the characteristics they share as part of the same list. The items, thus, appear largely interchangeable, and the unseparated pairing of the two words reinforces this diminished distinction. Repetition of this slogan throughout the larger linguistic landscape discussed with respect to its hegemony of representation (Yurchak, 1997) provides persistent exposure that erodes the two concepts' previously strict semantic boundaries and leads to this pairing's normalization. Within this frame, coup and terror achieve semantic similarity, and one word emerges to refer to the culprits of these acts: terrorists.

Prior to the coup attempt, the terrorist label largely referred to Kurdish dissidents. Since the coup attempt, 'terrorist' has been extended to include a diverse group of actors who have committed a wide spectrum of alleged offenses, most prominently including Gülen followers. Perceived opposition to the state's policies or politicians represents 'terrorists' only commonality. Three months prior to the attempted coup, Erdoğan argued publically for the need to expand the definition of terrorist (Eleftheriou-Smith, 2016). The post-coup state of emergency allowed for this expanded definition and resulted in large-scale arrests and far more severe convictions for those accused of terrorism. This case of naming highlights the consequences of politicians' use of the terrorist label without invoking a strict legal definition (A. Bhatia, 2009). It

simultaneously demonstrates the power asymmetries that distinguish individuals in the position to assign names from those who possess limited recourse to contest them (M. Bhatia, 2005). To be clear, the terrorist label has been a feature of public discourse with reference to members of Kurdish separatist groups since the 1980's (Barrinha, 2011). However, the post-coup era has vastly expanded this semantic category to include a far wider scope of activities.

Returning to the slogan in Figure 4, this practice of grouping diverse forms of opposition under the same terrorist category, absolves Erdoğan of guilt for his crackdowns. The slogan glorifies his actions against the 'terrorists' who would otherwise 'gobble up Turkey'. Use of *yedirmek* ('gobble up') in this context enhances this heroic framing by suggesting an extreme power disparity: coups and terrorists have the capacity to gobble up Turkey in the same way that a menacing snake may gobble up a defenseless mouse. Such discourse plays into the 'siege mentality' that envisions the nation as constantly under threat of invasion by outsiders (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992). This trope features prominently in Turkey's national narrative; moreover, acculturation through centralized education and strong government-sponsored media maintains its continued relevance in present-day Turkey (Bilali, 2013). The use of extreme measures to counteract such immense threats, thus, represents a valid course of action that merits widespread public support (Huddy et al., 2007). Given the lack of recourse for the accused to appeal their cases, the evidence suggests, contrary to the 'gobble up' framing, that the power imbalance strongly favors the regime.

Moving to the slogan's use of 'We' to refer to the nation's people and their juxtaposition against 'coups [and] terror', a common populist dichotomy between the 'monolithic group without internal differences' and the 'specific categories who are subject to an exclusion strategy' emerges (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007, p. 322). A populist framing such as this plays into in-group vs. out-group distinctions that influence opinions of individuals and their actions, underlining 'the identity of the 'true' people' in contrast to the undesirable other (Bonikowski, 2017, p. S185). Social Identity Theory assigns more favorable ratings to in-group members than their out-group counterparts (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Accordingly, violent terrorist acts tend to be attributed to out-group members, who the in-group also considers to be 'more deserving of harsher punishments for their crimes' (Dolliver & Kearns, 2019, p. 4). Such 'in-group glorification' and its concomitant 'derogation of the out-group' has a long history in Turkey (Bilali, 2013, p. 20). In this way, members of the in-group who are perceived as Turkey's protectors merit less condemnation than terrorists, who, as members of the out-group, are the target of widespread antipathy.

Given its prominence in populist discourse (Bonikowski, 2017), the use of *Biz* ['We'] in this slogan is noteworthy. A note about Turkish grammar underlines the increased emphasis of this pronoun both within the given context and in a comparable Atatürk quotation. As Turkish verb conjugations contain complete information about person and number, they largely render the inclusion of corresponding pronouns redundant. The common practice of dropping pronouns in Turkish – classified accordingly as a pro-drop language – reflects this practice. The instances in which pronouns appear in spite of their redundancy, thus, attract attention. In this case, the pronoun *biz* ['we'] functions as an inclusive we, which extends to all readers of the billboard. This use of the pronoun underscores readers' deep belonging to the *millet*, the people who form the nation and defend it from threats.

A similarly salient use of the first person plural pronoun also appears on famous signs from the early Turkish Republic. One such example appears in Figure 5 (below). In it, a group of Turkish citizens – whose different clothing styles suggest a range of social classes – stands in front of a barren hill. A hand-written sign above them states: *CUMHURİYETİ BİZ BÖYLE KAZANDIK* ('THIS IS HOW WE EARNED/WON THE REPUBLIC') (author's emphasis). Atatürk's bust appears in the foreground of the sign with text that repeats the salient 'we': *Cumhuriyeti biz kurduk* ('We founded the republic').



FIGURE 5 'We founded the Republic' sign

The inclusive *biz* ('we') refers to the diverse citizenry that fought for independence, Atatürk, and all others who read their sign. In this way, the post-coup slogan that appears in Figure 5 (above) incorporates a key syntactic feature of prominent slogans in the collective historical memory. This feature invokes the people's agency both with respect to the nation's creation in the 1920's and its subsequent preservation in 2016. The people's agency also emerges as an important theme in protest slogans from the Arab Spring (Ben Said & Kasanga, 2016), and, therefore, underlines a discursive aspect of Turkey's pro-government town square movement that parallels such movements that oppose the regime in power.

The spectacle of agentive people power creates the appearance of a truly participatory democracy, which is especially important for populist leaders whose legitimacy rests on their apparent representation of the people. The simultaneous need for populist leaders to ensure that this participation does not diminish their hold on power, however, gives rise to a dilemma that is typically resolved through participatory populism. This concept references participation that mimics participatory democracy but, in fact, relegates citizens' political engagement to symbolic and/or grass-roots levels (Rhodes-Purdy, 2015). Indeed, the small sample of activities listed below illustrate this point through their both their inclusiveness and lack of real political influence. For the three weeks directly following the attempted coup, participatory populism took the form of the town square movement, mentioned above, in which the people were "on duty" to preserve the people's will. Once the people were no longer on democracy duty, memorial services for each of the 251 martyrs who died in the fight against the military coup offered new opportunities for participation. For those who did not attend, numerous additional opportunities to commemorate the martyrs existed, including the November 2016 Istanbul Marathon, which, unbeknownst to the many athletes who had signed up in the summer, was

ultimately dedicated to the martyrs. At the same time, writing and photography contests enlisted citizens' help with portraying the July 15<sup>th</sup> narrative. Students in secondary school, meanwhile, recorded their personal histories of the coup attempt, and university students and academicians participated in July 15<sup>th</sup> conferences. These events culminated in the first anniversary celebration of the coup's overthrow during the newly declared Democracy and National Unity Day in 2017, which showcased the state-approved, winning entries of the writing and photography contests.

These well documented events highlight the potential for state ideology to imitate democratic participation when it is 'cloaked in spectacle' (Adams & Rustemova, 2009, p. 1252). Indeed, these spectacles unified both direct and vicarious participants while strengthening the impact of the carefully manufactured discourse and symbols associated with them. The introduction of the new national holiday, which directly follows the Soviet tradition of using holidays to influence public perception (Petroni, 2000), reinforced this effect. Moreover, the state-approved creation of artefacts that place the events of the coup attempt in a historical perspective for future generations' consumption highlights a way in which the state activated the people and harnessed their efforts as 'practical historians' (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2011) to further the state's ideology rather than enacting any political change. Juxtaposed against the increased power under the state of emergency to act unilaterally, these spectacles of inclusion, in line with De La Torre (2010), serve primarily as distractions. Nevertheless, these events strengthened the bonds between members of a new post-coup imagined community that recognized their historically grounded role as the defenders of democracy. Given the board of education's mandate to begin each school year with instruction about July 15<sup>th</sup>, reverence for these figures and their historical role will be cemented within the collective memory of current and future school-attending generations. While the inclusive, agentic message of the slogan in Figure 5 (above) echoes that of Atatürk, therefore, the images of the people's triumph over the attempted coup have become the face of a new 'time zero' to mark the beginning of a new democratic era (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2011). The 'salas' that have reverberated from the mosques every Thursday evening since the attempted coup invoke the memory of the same call that urged the people to resist the coup and, thus, provide a weekly reminder of this new era. As it is not possible to separate this brand of democracy from its leader, support for one implies support for the other.

## 5 | CONCLUSION

The AK Party's attempts to turn Atatürk's legacy into an anachronism have received considerable attention in socio-political critiques of the Erdoğan era (White, 2013). Rather than breaking with the Kemalist past as some of this work and the ruling party's 'New Turkey' slogan suggest (Karaveli & Cornell, 2014), however, the analysis presented here provides evidence of intertextuality and association that link discourses used in the aftermath of the coup with those of Atatürk's revolution. Specifically, the examples presented here include a direct Atatürk quote that, owing to its incongruity with the facts of the coup attempt, functions as an enthymeme that requires readers to provide their own pre-suppositions that lead to individualized interpretations. A slightly altered Atatürk quote represents the second example, which highlights development and adaptation from the past into the dawn of the 'New Turkey'. While the third example features greater deviation from a recognizable Atatürk quote, it, nevertheless, recycles a central theme and syntactic component. Through these discursive means, Erdoğan has become

‘the anti-Atatürk Atatürk’ (Çağaptay, 2017) by co-opting Atatürk’s legacy and attempting to replace it. The billboards invoke the practical historian both through their contextualization of the coup attempt according to deeply familiar Kemalist frames and, from this discourse, the construction of the coup narrative that will shape future understandings.

With this overall picture in mind, it is possible to re-visit the research question. Namely, through a discursive and semiotic analysis of three government-sponsored billboards, how did the official July 15<sup>th</sup> political narrative help to legitimize the purges that took place in the aftermath of the July 15<sup>th</sup> coup attempt? Nationalism and populism typify the narratives of both the coup attempt under Erdoğan and the revolution under Atatürk. The specific discursive ways in which the coup attempt narrative uses these two features to legitimize its actions and delegitimize those who suffered from these actions receive mention here. Under the guise of nationalistic passion, linguistic landscape corridors of government-sponsored signs index each other to create an echo chamber of state ideology (Sloboda, 2008). In doing so, these corridors contribute to a hegemony of representation (Yurchak, 1997) that eliminates dissenting voices. The size of the billboards, together with their use of all capital letters, further amplifies these messages of the state. Moreover, private company-sponsored signs that reproduce these messages reinforce this one-sided presentation of the coup narrative. These characteristics represent a semiotic display of the rally ‘round the flag effect (Mueller, 1970), which stimulates emotional, patriotic support for Erdoğan and renders opposition to him inappropriate.

Such dynamics underline the role of nationalism in reinforcing deep power asymmetries that favor the state. By incorporating ‘discourses of victory’ that parallel those of the Turkish revolution, the construction of the coup narrative as a successful battle for the New Turkey – in line with Wodak et al. (1999, p. 26) – sets up the state’s power as a defining aspect of the nation. Reverence for the nation’s sovereignty in the first billboard and the people’s defense of the nation in the third billboard play into the deeply embedded siege mentality of the Turkish collective memory (Bilali, 2013), and, thus, further underlines the state’s paramount importance. This mentality contributes to in-group glorification, which constructs Erdoğan as a member of the in-group who fights terrorists heroically. It simultaneously justifies suppression of dissent and widespread public support for crackdowns on members of the out-group, including those labeled as terrorists (Dolliver & Kearns, 2019), who, themselves, possess extremely limited power to refute this label (M. Bhatia, 2005). In this way, nationalist discourse legitimizes the government’s actions against those who it successfully delegitimizes, and, in doing so, justifies powerful actors’ exertion of their power over an already marginalized group.

Distinctions between the terrorists and moralistic citizens are firmly grounded in populist discourses, which typically contrast an inclusive, uniform in-group against an identifiable stigmatized out-group (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). The three slogans discussed above refer to this monolithic group as the millet, a concept that, through its merging of the people and the nation, invokes the nation’s actions on behalf of its people. Language strategies like the salient use of the first person plural provide micro-level examples of populist discourse that reinforce the theme of people power; furthermore, the numerous opportunities to take part in participatory populism (Rhodes-Purdy, 2015) build feelings of ownership and belonging in the national narrative that complement this theme. As the discursive construction of the people as powerful agents of revolutionary change directly parallels the anti-government protests of the Arab Spring’s Town Square Movement (Ben Said & Kasanga, 2016), its application to the Turkish town



square movement – despite its affiliation with the ruling party – is straightforward. In this case, populist language equates ‘loyalty to the leader’ with ‘loyalty to the people’ (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008, p. 7). The micro- and discursive-level strategies outlined above contribute to a populist discourse that creates the incorrect impression that actions have simultaneously been carried out on behalf of the Turkish people. This framing renders opposition to governmental policy unsuitable.

Through practical historians’ (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2011) preservation of the coup attempt narrative that has been vetted to ensure alignment with state ideology, a new ‘time zero’ emerges. This political narrative draws on culturally familiar frames that infuse nationalism and populism to mark the beginning of the new, democratic post-coup era to become the collective historical memory for now and the foreseeable future.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Daily Sabah. (2019, July 16). Turkey marks 3rd anniversary of July 15 coup attempt. *Daily Sabah*. Retrieved from <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2019/07/15/turkey-marks-3rd-anniversary-of-july-15-coup-attempt> It is important to note that many in the military also died, but these numbers are not included in the official death toll as they were considered to be traitors. They are buried in Istanbul’s “cemetery of treason.” If the coup attempt had been successful, the labels of martyr and traitor would have been reversed.
- <sup>2</sup> Many people in the private sector also lost their jobs, but official numbers do not exist for these data, and they are difficult to estimate.
- <sup>3</sup> The numbers presented here are based on those that appear in Morris (2018).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Turkish colleagues who have given their advice on the analysis and interpretations presented here.

## REFERENCES

- Adams, L. L., & Rustemova, A. (2009). Mass spectacles and styles of governmentality in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. *Europe-Asia Studies*, *61*, 1249-1276.
- Albertazzi, D., & McDonnell, D. (2008). Introduction: The sceptre and the spectre. In D. Albertazzi & D. McDonnell (Eds.), *Twenty-first century populism: The spectre of Western European democracy* (pp. 1-14). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London/New York: Verso.
- Baker, W., & O’Neal, J. R. (2001). Patriotism or opinion leadership? The nature and origins of the ‘rally ‘round the flag’ effect. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *45*, 661–687.
- Bar-Tal, D., & Antebi, D. (1992). Beliefs about negative intentions of the world: A study of the Israeli siege mentality. *Political Psychology*, *13*, 633–645.

- Barrinha, A. (2011). The political importance of labelling: Terrorism and Turkey's discourse on the PKK. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 4, 163-180.
- Ben Said, S., & Kasanga, L. A. (2016). The discourse of protest: Frames of identity, intertextuality and interdiscursivity. In R. Blackwood, E. Lanza, & H. Woldemariam (Eds.), *Negotiating and contesting identities in linguistic landscapes* (pp. 71–84). London: Bloomsbury.
- Benhabib, Ş., & Isiksel, T. (2006). Ancient battles, new prejudices, and future perspectives: Turkey and the EU. *Constellations*, 13, 218-233.
- Bhatia, A. (2009). The discourse of terrorism. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41, 279-289.
- Bhatia, M. V. (2005). Fighting words: Naming terrorists, bandits, rebels, and other violent actors. *Third World Quarterly*, 26, 5-22.
- Bilali, R. (2013). National narrative and social psychological influences in Turks' denial of the mass killings of Armenians as genocide. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69, 16-33.
- Billig, M. (1995). *Banal nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Blom, R., Carpenter, S., Bowe, B. J., & Lange, R. (2014). Frequent contributors within US newspaper comment forums: An examination of their civility and information value. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 58, 1314-1328.
- Bonikowski, B. (2017). Ethno-nationalist populism and the mobilization of collective resentment. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68, S181-S213.
- Çağaptay, S. (2017). *The new sultan: Erdogan and the crisis of modern Turkey*. London/New York: Tauris I. B.
- Campbell, K K., & Huxman, S. S. (2009). *The rhetorical act: Thinking, speaking and writing critically* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political Studies*, 47, 2–16.
- Champion, M. (2016, July 17). Coup was a 'Gift from God' for Erdogan planning a new Turkey. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from [www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-07-17/coup-was-a-gift-from-god-says-erdogan-who-plans-a-new-turkey](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-07-17/coup-was-a-gift-from-god-says-erdogan-who-plans-a-new-turkey)
- Christofis, N. (2018). The AKP's 'Yeni Türkiye': Challenging the Kemalist narrative? *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 29, 11-32.
- Coupland, N., & Garrett, P. (2010). Linguistic landscapes, discursive frames and meta-cultural performance: The case of Welsh Patagonia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 205, 7–36.
- De La Torre, C. (2010). *Populist seduction in Latin America* (2nd ed.). Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies.
- Dolliver, M. J., & Kearns, E. M. (2019). Is it terrorism? Public perceptions, media, and labeling the Las Vegas shooting. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Latest Articles, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1647673
- Eleftheriou-Smith, L-M. (2016, March 16). President Erdogan wants to change definition of 'terrorist' to include journalists and politicians. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/turkey-s-president-erdogan-wants-definition-of-terrorist-to-include-journalists-as-three-academics-a6933881.html>
- Fairclough, N. (1992). Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. *Discourse and Society*, 3, 193-217.

- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Gitlin, T. (1980). *The whole world is watching*. California: University of California Press.
- Grice, P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hammack, P. L. (2009). Exploring the reproduction of conflict through narrative: Israeli youth motivated to participate in a coexistence program. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 15*, 49–74.
- Heinisch, R. (2008). Austria: The structure and agency of Austrian populism. In D. Albertazzi & D. McDonnell (Eds.), *Twenty-first century populism: The spectre of Western European democracy* (pp. 67-83). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Huddy, L., Feldman, S., & Weber, C. (2007). The political consequences of perceived threat and felt insecurity. *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science, 614*, 131–153.
- Jagers, J., & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style: An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research, 46*, 319-345.
- Jenks, C. (2018). Meat, guns, and God: Expressions of nationalism in rural America. *Linguistic Landscape, 4*, 53-71.
- Johnstone, B. (1990). *Stories, community, and place: Narratives from Middle America*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Karaveli, H., & Cornell, S. (2014, August 26). Davutoğlu and the 'New Turkey': The closing of a 'hundred-year-old parenthesis'. *Bipartisan Policy Centre*. Retrieved from [bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/davutoglu-and-new-turkey/](http://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/davutoglu-and-new-turkey/)
- Kubicek, P. (2016). Majoritarian democracy in Turkey: Causes and consequences. In C. Erisen & P. Kubicek (Eds.), *Democratic consolidation in Turkey: Micro and macro challenges* (pp. 123-43). London/New York: Routledge.
- Laskar, P., Johansson, A., & Mulinari, D. (2016). Decolonising the rainbow flag. *Culture Unbound, 8*, 193–216.
- Leudar, I., & Nekvapil, J. (2011). Practical historians and adversaries: 9/11 revisited. *Discourse and Society, 22*, 66-85.
- Leudar, I., Sharrock, W., Hayes, J., & Truckle, S. (2008). Therapy as a 'structured immediacy'. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*, 863-885.
- Morris, C. (2018, June 18). Reality check: The numbers behind the crackdown in Turkey. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44519112>
- Mueller, J. E. (1970). Presidential popularity from Truman to Johnson. *American Political Science Review, 64*, 18–34.
- Petrone, K. (2000). *Life has become more joyous, comrades: Celebrations in the time of Stalin*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Reichl, S. (2004). Flying the flag: The intricate semiotics of national identity. *European Journal of English Studies, 8*, 205-217.
- Rhodes-Purdy, M. (2015). Participatory populism: Theory and evidence from Bolivarian Venezuela. *Political Research Quarterly, 68*, 1-13.
- Rose, G. (2007). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to the interpretation of visual materials*. London: Sage.
- Schatz, R. T., & Lavine, H. (2007). Waving the flag: National symbolism, social identity, and political engagement. *Political Psychology, 28*, 329–355.

- Schluter, A. (2014). Competing or compatible language identities in Istanbul's Kurdish workplaces? In K. Kamp, A. Kaya, F. Keyman, & Ö. Onursal-Beşgül (Eds.), *Contemporary Turkey at a glance: Interdisciplinary perspectives on local and trans-local dynamics* (pp. 125-138). Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer.
- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. W. (2003). *Discourses in place: Language in the material world*. Routledge.
- Shohamy, E., & Gorter, D. (Eds.). (2008). *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Shohamy, E., & Waksman, S. (2008). Linguistic landscape as an ecological arena: Modalities, meanings, negotiations, education. In E. Shohamy & D. Gorter (Eds.), *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery* (pp. 313-331). London/New York: Routledge.
- Sloboda, M. (2008). State ideology and linguistic landscape: A comparative analysis of (post)communist Belarus, Czech Republic, and Slovakia. In E. Shohamy & D. Gorter (Eds.), *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery* (pp. 173-188). London/New York: Routledge.
- Stroud, C. (2016). Turbulent linguistic landscapes and the semiotics of citizenship. In R. Blackwood, E. Lanza, & H. Woldemariam (Eds.), *Negotiating and contesting identities in linguistic landscapes* (pp. 1–14). London: Bloomsbury.
- Stroud, C. (2019). Zombie landscapes: Apartheid traces in the discourses of young South Africans. In A. Peck, C. Stroud, & Q. Williams (Eds.), *Making sense of people and place in linguistic landscapes*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Stroud, C., & Jegels, D. (2014). Semiotic landscapes and mobile narrations of place: Performing the Local. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 228, 179–199.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relation* (pp. 7–24). Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.
- Toktamış, K. F., & David, I. (2018). Introduction: Democratization betrayed – Erdoğan's new Turkey. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 29, 3-10.
- White, J. (2013). *Muslim nationalism and the new Turks*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wodak, R., de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Liebhart, K. (1999). *The discursive construction of national identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Yeni Şafak. (2013, March 1). Yüzyıllık parantezi kapatacağız [We will close a century-long parentheses]. Retrieved from <http://www.yenisafak.com/yazidizileri/yuzyillik-parantezi-kapatacagiz-494795>
- Yurchak, A. (1997). The cynical reason of late socialism: Power, pretense, and the anecdote. *Public Culture*, 9, 161-188.