The Mother, the Politician and the Guerrilla: Figures who Tell the Truth in the Kurdish Anti-colonial Struggle

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This paper will address three dominant female figures in the Kurdish public space: the mother, the female politician and the female guerrilla. Drawing on Lacan's, Veena Das' and Judith Butler's analyses of Antigone, I will explore the limits these figures occupy in Kurdish struggle and how their occupation of such limits endow them with the capacity of truth telling. While Antigone's speech and performance derives its power from her assured death, these figures in Kurdish politics define themselves to be speaking on behalf of life. Hence their exploration gives us an opportunity to reframe the question of "truthful" discourse and speech. Also, such an exploration helps us to overcome the dichotomy between oppression and freedom, patriarchy and liberation and focus instead the cosmology of the Kurdish resistance where the figure of the women play an extremely important role that informs political and everyday life. Finally, it also enables us to concretely talk about how the Kurdish Movement's practices and ideology unmake the state and patriarchy. While Kurdish Movement's gender-equal organisations and anti-patriarchal and anti-state ideology have received scholarly attention, there is much less discussion on its cosmology and social imagination, ethics, aesthetics and affectivity's. Looking at these figures in concrete situations, I hope, will open up a new scholarly avenue to discuss Kurdish anti-colonial struggle in Syria and Turkey.