

**The Effect of Modernization on Ethnic Conflict:
The Kurdish Question in Turkey**

by
Yusuf Mađiya

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Supervisor: Professor Gábor Tóka

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Abstract

The literature on the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict has different variants, mostly disagreeing with each other. In this thesis, I examine the Kurdish question in Turkey in the light of the existent theories and the histories of the ethnic mobilizations of the Turkish and Kurdish societies before I conclude that a single theory on the relationship between modernization and the intensity of ethnic conflict can not explain the whole story, but it should be considered from a multi-theoretical perspective. I also statistically analyze this relationship for both groups, at individual level survey data. The finding of the statistical analysis is that the attitudes of the public towards ethnic conflict in Turkey does not have a relationship as predicted by any of the theories, but rather the results are mixed.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The Kurdish question in Turkey has been the most important problem on the agenda of the country for the past several decades. According to the survey *Kürt Meselesi'nde Algı ve Beklentiler* [Perceptions and Expectations in the Kurdish Question] (Konda 2010), one in every five people for the Kurds and one in every ten people for the Turks said that someone close to them was hurt or killed because of the violent conflict. Not only is the Kurdish question harmful because it costs lives, but it also has been deeply effecting and preventing progress in many other dimensions.

The conflict should be further taken seriously because firstly it is perceived as an important obstacle to further democratization of the country and the accession to the European Union (Kirişçi 2004; Ağırdir 2008). Since the mid-1980's, there has been a strong military presence in the Eastern and South-Eastern regions of the country, which are mostly inhabited by the Kurdish population. In order to suppress the widespread ethnic mobilization of the Kurdish population and to militarily extinguish the PKK, the Kurdish guerilla organization that has actively been in a de facto war with the Turkish state since 1984, the state has been relying on non-democratic laws to sentence Kurdish nationalists and also extrajudicially persecutes Kurdish individuals (Whitman 1993; Marcus 2007; White 2000; Gülbey 1996; Özcan 2006). These facts have created a very negative image of the country in the eyes of the observers abroad, as a non-democratic polity. Still, today many non-democratic laws are legislated, or some laws are interpreted in a non-democratic way in order to suppress the legal and illegal Kurdish political movements.

The second important aspect of the conflict is that it prevents economic and political development, especially in the Eastern and South-Eastern parts of the country. Due to the conflictual environment in the Kurdish regions since the 1920's and due to the fear of the

state elite that these regions could secede at any moment, they received very little public and private investment so that they have been stuck in a deep poverty (Altan 2002).

The third way the conflict hurts the country is that the ethnic conflict is used as an excuse by the Turkish state to justify human rights violations throughout the country. With the excuse of defending the country against the ‘terrorists’, the state has been involved in numerous human rights violations, especially against the Kurdish nationalists and leftists. Since the early 1980’s, during the military junta and after PKK started the armed insurgency, many Kurdish individuals have been exposed to torture, imprisonments, kidnappings and extrajudicial killings by the counter-guerilla organizations of the state and masses have been subject to forced displacements (Whitman 1993). I believe that these aspects render the Kurdish question the most critical and most urgent problem to be solved in Turkey.

All these aspects that render the Turkish-Kurdish ethnic conflict critical, especially the second and third factors, also contribute to the deterioration of the conflict; they make Kurdish people ethnically mobilize since they find themselves in a position of injustice. Therefore, it becomes more and more important to examine the sources of the conflict, to understand the underlying reasons and, if possible, to help any future work that can offer solutions. Relatedly, it is important to examine the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict in this case, the reason being the following: the Turkish state and the society has been in a rapid process of modernization especially since the beginning of the twentieth century. A project of modernization from above, planned by the state elite, has been tried to imposed onto the society. Nevertheless, it is not right to assume that every strata of the society have equally modernized. Some portions of the society sincerely adopted this modern life-style while some have been trying to resist modernization; resting on the belief that modernity, the westernized life-style and especially secular values that are brought by modernization are contradicting their religion and traditional way of life. There is a great

amount of difference in levels of modernization among different groups of people and this has been an important source of tension between different groups, intraethnic and interethnic. Parallely, M. Hakan Yavuz notes that the Kurdish rebellions at the first years of the republic “created a cumulative image of people in region as socially tribal, religiously fanatical, economically backward and a threat to the national integrity” and the republic had constructed the image of itself from these conflicts as “modern, secular and progressive”, and in a clear contrast of the Kurdish tribal structure which was constructed as “reactionary, backward and dangerous” (2007, 62). Considering that, still today, the perception of the Kurdish people by other groups, the mass media, the popular culture, the state and the Turkish education system is that Kurds are backward and non-modern people, still living in primitive life-styles, stuck in patriarchal and tribal relationships and a threat to the progressive and modern Republican Turkish values, and also considering the popular rhetoric that relates the ethnic conflict to a clash between these modern and non-modern formations, determining an existence or a non-existence of a relationship between the level of modernization and the attitudes towards the ethnic conflict is very critical.

In the literature, the theories that examine the sources of ethnic mobilization and ethnic conflicts can be roughly classified in two categories, according to their expectation of relationship between the degree of modernization, and intensity and the spread of the ethnic conflict. Being loyal to Donald Horowitz’s (1985) classification of them, the different strands of the literature on the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict can be summarized as follows:

The first branch, accepting that the concepts of ethnicity¹ and ethnic conflicts are rooted in the primordial, backward and traditional aspects of human societies, expect that with modernization diffusing to every strata of the society, industrialization, communication and

¹ Although ethnicity and nation are mostly used for defining different phenomena, throughout this study they will be used as identical terms.

more contact, people can resemble each other and throw off the backward thing called ethnicity so that different ethnic groups will learn to live peacefully with other groups. Ethnic conflict should gradually decrease and eventually disappear with a rising degree of modernization. The most important theorist who predicts such a negative effect of modernization on the intensity of ethnic conflict is Karl W. Deutsch.

These theories did not encounter serious problems in explaining the nationalisms in non-modern societies and were not seriously challenged until the second half of the twentieth century. But the radical nationalisms that emerged in the modern west started to pose important challenges. The prediction that modernization would sweep away ethnic belongings and ethnic conflict was unable to explain the nationalist phenomena such as the Quebecois in Canada; the Basques in Spain; Walloons and the Flemish in Belgium; and the Irish, Scottish and the Welsh in the UK where ethnic nationalist movements radicalized in spite of high levels of modernization. Therefore, some different underlying reasons of ethnic mobilization and conflict was to be considered.

The second variant of theories tried to explain the rise of the nationalism of the ethnic groups who were already modern. Basically, it is argued that ethnic consciousness, mobilization and thus ethnic conflict is a product of the process of modernization. These theories are called “conflictual modernization theories” (Newman 1991, 452) and some scholars even go on to say that ethnic conflict is an inevitable result of modernization (ibid). The main variants of this literature can be classified as rational choice and socio-psychological theories. The former, to be discussed through Michael Hechter’s book *Internal Colonialism* (1975) is based on the notion that when modernization creates uneven development between two ethnic groups, the deprived one has an interest in mobilizing along ethnic lines and therefore conflict emerges. The latter, which will be discussed over Walker Connor’s and Donald Horowitz’s theories, disagrees that mobilization and radicalization are

rational in their material outcomes, but people need a feeling of belonging and the environment that modernization creates eventually results in stronger ethnic identifications and mobilization.

Nevertheless, I do not think that any of these theories are sufficient to explain the emergence of ethnic conflict in the Kurdish and Turkish case. As Jalali and Lipset (1993) note, these theories neglect or at least underemphasize the political variables that lead to ethnic conflict, which may be more important for some cases. “In many ethnic movements, institutional structures and state policies play a major role in shaping and conditioning the emergence of such movements” (597). They also emphasize the role that the non-neutrality of the military and the police forces play in the emergence or intensification of ethnic conflict situations (600) and several scholars have pointed out to the role of political variables in the ethnic conflict in Turkey (Gülbey 1996; İçduygu, Romano & Sirkeci 1999; Yavuz 2007; Tezcür 2010).

The aim of this thesis is to answer the question: is there a relationship between the degree of modernization at the individual level and attitudes of the individual towards the ethnic conflict and the other group, considering the ethnic conflict in Turkey? My expectations are that the Kurdish ethnic mobilization and the ethnic conflict is not dominantly based on expressive factors, like the nationalism of the Basque (Conversi 1997), and although there is a large inequality between the Kurdish and non-Kurdish portions of the society and the Kurdish regions and the Kurdish people are stuck in deep poverties, it can not be adequately explained by instrumental factors, such as the internal colonialism model of Hechter (1975). Rather, I will argue that the widespread mobilization of the Kurdish population is a result of the violent attitudes of the Turkish state towards Kurds, combined with other expressive and instrumental aspects of ethnic consciousness and mobilization. In addition to this, the Kurdish case also partially fits the ‘diffusion’ theories, many Kurdish

individuals have been assimilated into Turkish ethnicity after being educated, or moving to the big cities. Therefore, I expect no significant effect of modernization on the intensity of ethnic conflict for the Kurdish population. On the other hand, I expect modernization to increase the ethnic mobilization and radicalization of the Turkish population² since they have been exposed to decades long nationalist education and nationalist rhetoric of the state through mass media.

The rest of this thesis is structured as follows. The second chapter deals with the theoretical literature on the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict in a more detailed way and discusses what is meant by modernization in the context of this thesis. The third chapter starts with the histories of modernization in Turkey, discussing the radicalization of Turkish nationalism. Later, the historical overview of the Kurdish nationalist movements and the ethnic conflict are presented. Also in the same chapter, I elaborate why the diffusion and conflictual modernization theories are not adequate on their own to explain the conflict and we should seek more reasons, and I argue why we should expect no relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict in the Kurdish case. The fourth chapter introduces the research design, building of the models to be tested and how the variables are operationalized. I draw my conclusions in the fifth chapter, after discussing the results of the statistical analysis and finally the sixth and the last chapter is the overall discussion and conclusion of the thesis.

² It should be carefully noted here that I include every individual from non-Kurd ethnic origin in the subsample of Turks since they are predominantly assimilated and do not have very different attitudes than Turks.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Defining Concepts

2.1.1 What is Modernization and What Does it Encompass?

Modernization can be described as the process of transformation of “traditional ways of life” (Deutsch 1961, 493) and social, economic, political structures into more developed and contemporary forms. Another definition can be mentioned if we agree that what Deutsch calls social mobilization is another name for modernization, which I believe it is, due to the opening sentence of his famous article Social Mobilization and Political Development: “[s]ocial mobilization is a name given to an overall process of change, which happens to substantial parts of the population in countries which are moving from traditional to modern ways of life” (ibid, 493). Deutsch’s definition of social mobilization, or modernization, then, is: “the process in which major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior” (494). Since the terms modernization and modern are concepts that are open to interpretation, even after these definitions, I believe that in order to make what modernization will mean in this thesis more clear, firstly I should focus on what is commonly meant of a modern society and after in the next subsection, discussing the indicators of modernization on the level of individual, I should elaborate what properties should the “modern man” (Inkeles 1983; Inkeles and Smith 1999[1974]) possess.

Generally, modernization is seen as a process of development, including exposure of large masses to “aspects of modern life” and as a result of this, changes in the “socio-demographic aspects of societies and ...structural aspects of social organization” (Eisenstadt 1966, 2). The aspects that are transformed by this process are: economic activities (changes in occupation, a high division of labor, transformation of production systems and rise in average

income level); family activities (decline of considering relationships based on kinship and an inclination to live in smaller households); value systems (spread of secularity and rationality); and political structure (centralization of the political unit, bureaucratization and institutional differentiation) (Smelser 1964). The society, for example transforms to a structure in which formation of groupings are based on economic and political interests and has a more urbanized population. Systems of stratification change, such as decline of importance of tribes, castes, and religious groupings. Other factors, among many others, are exposure to high technology, better housing, rise in literacy and education, reaction to the mass media and directly social-psychological factors which create a new identity (Smelser 1964; Deutsch 1961; Eisenstadt 1966; Tiryakian and Nevitte 1985).

Modernization is an important aspect of social change, it transforms the whole structure of human societies and in the “cumulative impact, these changes tend to influence and sometimes ...transform political behavior” (Deutsch 1961, 493). Therefore an examination of change in political behavior of individuals and masses would be incomplete without considering their interaction with modernization.

2.1.2 Modernization at the Individual Level

Measuring the level of modernization on the level of the society and the country and measuring it at the individual level do not perfectly overlap. Many factors that are accepted to make a country or society modern can not be measured at the individual level. For instance, centralized political institutions may be a result of modernity in a polity, but there is no way of measuring an institution at the individual level. Therefore, we need to clarify what makes an individual modern.

Alex Inkeles, in his book *Exploring Individual Modernity*, starts examining the attributes of the modern individual with the assumption that “no one is born modern, but

rather that people become so through their own particular life experience” (1983, 31). According to him, the characteristics that the modern individual carries can be classified in two parts. The first of these is the internal characteristics of the individual, such as attitudes, values and feelings towards the environment; the second is external, socio-demographical factors like urbanization, education, mass communication, industrialization, politicization. In another book on individual modernity, *Becoming Modern*, Inkeles and David H. Smith summarize their findings on the character of the modern individual as such: “He is an informed participant citizen; he has a marked sense of personal efficacy; he is highly independent and autonomous in his relations to traditional sources of influence...; and he is ready for new experiences and ideas...” (1999, 290). Therefore, the modernization level of the individual can be measured by attitudinal and socio-demographic data.

It is important to note that these attributes can not be obtained at once; they are products of lifelong socializations and life experiences, and probably even aggregations from the previous generations of the family. Hence I believe that they will be good indicators of modernization. I also feel the need to emphasize that, in addition to the limitation of measurement of modernity at the individual level, the measurement of these attributes is limited by the survey questions that I use.

2.2 The Theories on the Relationship between Modernization and Ethnic Conflict

In this subchapter, I elaborate on the literature on the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each theory, to what extent they are successful in offering satisfactory explanations for the rising number of ethnic conflicts universally, and I discuss the criticisms towards them.

2.2.1 The Theories that Expect a Negative Effect

The first strand of theories are generally classified as modernization theories. These theories basically predict modernization and development to decrease the ethnic differences and therefore expect the conflicts between different ethnic groups to diminish thanks to a natural process of assimilation and homogenization as a side-effect of modernization. In this view, ethnic conflicts are consequences of mutual hostilities that were rooted in ancient hatreds (Kaufman 2006, 45-6). In the relatively peaceful post World War II environment, the concept of ethnicity was thought to be an outmoded form of political affiliation in the industrial countries and the existing ethnic affiliations were treated as results of backwardness, traditionalism, economic crisis, uneven development, even a disguise of class conflict (Horowitz 1985, 13; Conversi 2004, 4) or it was just a temporary phase that was a consequence of the transition from traditionality to modernity (Hechter 1985, 18).

One of the most important models that predict such a relationship is called the “*diffusion* model of national development” (Hechter 1975, 6). Karl W. Deutsch is the prominent scholar of such an approach. According to him, “modernization is characterised by the presence of ‘social mobilization’, that is, the process through which the ancestral bonds... are eroded and ...individuals become freely available to new forms of socialization” (Conversi 2004, 8).

Michael Hechter provides a brief sketch of diffusion theories, which also comprises Deutsch’s arguments. He says that the first stage of the diffusion model is the pre-industrial era when core and peripheries exist in isolation. These societies which differ in the economic, cultural and political institutions also possess variances in standards of living, culture, religion and life-style. But, after modernization occurs, the interaction between different regions gets more intense and what is expected out of this interaction is a commonality and convergence among these different groups (1975, 6-8).

According to Deutsch (1953), the process of social mobilization that causes a commonality among different groups works with such dynamics: With modernization, the means of transportation and mass communication dramatically improve. People can travel to other regions more easily and quickly, get exposed to the languages and cultures of other groups through newspapers, radio and television. Moreover, with the rise of industrialism, a unified and bigger market and a unified education system develop. Social mobilization also brings expansion of politically relevant strata of the population, a change in quality of politics and changes in elite communications (Deutsch 1961, 498-9). Therefore, there is a high degree of contact among different groups in the society, which, in the end should decrease the differences between groups and lead to an assimilation towards the institutions of the core and a new, homogenized identity. All previous ethnic affiliations should be forgotten and a successful nation-building process may be achieved.

Yet, the diffusion theories were incapable of explaining the growing number of ethnic conflicts in a rapidly modernizing and already modernized world. Fred W. Riggs notes that contrary to the expectation of modernizers, that modernization would bring rationality behavior and rule of law, it “transformed the dynamics of multiculturalism” into inter-ethnic tensions (1998, 269-70). Another great weakness of diffusion theories is the fact that, individuals from the most modernized portions of the society, such as army officers or educated elites, were sometimes the most radical ethnic nationalists and urban areas were regions where ethnic violence was most intense (Horowitz 1985, 97).

A revised version of diffusion theories can also be cited, that explains survival of traditionalism and ethnic conflicts in spite of relatively high levels of modernization. One explanation is that “the peripheral collectivity is not, in fact, economically integrated into the society” (Allard 1964; cited by Hechter 1975; 28). Deutsch himself argues that ethnic conflict is product of something analogous to a competition between degree of social mobilization and

degree of assimilation. If the first overcomes the second, conflict arises. If the latter overcomes the former, modernization is successful and ethnic conflict vanishes (Deutsch 1953; cited by Horowitz 1985, 100). In this view, intense ethnic conflicts can be impediments to the processes of modernization. But still, these are not satisfactory explanation for rising nationalisms in the developed countries.

2.2.2 The Theories that Expect a Positive Effect

As we have seen above, the diffusion theories were not able to explain the rise of ethnic tensions although there is a general tendency to modernization throughout the world. Walker Connor (1972), whose work will be introduced below, openly states that the recent upsurge [as of 1972] in ethnic conflict in more industrialized European and North American states are serious challenges to diffusion theories. As a response to the inadequacy of diffusion theories, another line of theories developed, especially in order to explain the newly intensifying violent nationalisms of the developed west.

Most generally, proponents of this literature, observing that trade expansion and unmitigated Western supremacy did not lead to world peace as previous scholars had predicted, and even that it led to a century of total war, genocide and unequal miseries, often under the banner of rapid modernization and defence of the homeland, concluded that there must be a direct relationship between conflict and; modernization, animosity and nationalism (Nairn 1977; cited by Conversi 2004, 9).

I will examine this subsection under two titles. The first will be theories which expect a positive effect because they argue material inequalities or struggle for material goods, or struggle for power are the underlying reasons of ethnic conflict. The main scholar I will focus will be Hechter and his book *Internal Colonialism* will be examined. Next, I will discuss the theories that expect the underlying reasons to be socio-psychological attachments and group identification, mostly through works of Connor and Horowitz.

2.2.2.1. The Theories that Expect a Positive Effect Due to Material Interest

According to Horowitz, the theories that expect a positive effect of modernization on the intensity of ethnic conflict underline two very important themes: role of ambitions and conflict motives of the elites, and the role of differential modernization of different groups (1985, 101). According to proponents of this view, ethnic conflicts appear because there is limited material goods or positions and different ethnic groups may compete over them. This competition may be on the level of the elite and they can work to mobilize masses to obtain material gains, such as power or important positions, as Bates diagnoses: “elites organize collective support to advance their position in the competition for the benefits of modernity” (1974, 468; cited by Horowitz 1985, 100). The competition may also be on the level of ordinary people and increase when they become more similar “in the sense of possessing the same wants” (Melson and Wolpe 1970, 1114; cited by Horowitz 1985, 100) such as competitions in the job market.

Parallely, Horowitz mentions other instances when ethnic conflict is expected to increase when there is an uneven distribution of benefits of modernity among groups. This can happen if one group gains a “headstart advantage” in the competition and as a result of this ethnic and class boundaries overlap and the confrontation of the groups is even more intense. (1985, 101-2). The conflict can also increase, according to Bates, when “more wealthy, better educated, and more urbanized tend to be envied, resented, and sometimes feared by others; and the basis for these sentiments is the recognition of their superior position in the new system of stratification” (1974, 462; quoted by Horowitz 1985, 102).

My discussion on the material interest theories of modernization will mostly focus on Hechter and his arguments in the book *Internal Colonialism* (1975). A brief sketch of the model of internal colonialism is as the following: first, there is an uneven modernization and relatively more and less advantaged groups are formed in different regions of the country. As

a result of this unequal development, a crystallization of inequality in the distribution of resources and power happens. In the next stage, as rational actors who are trying to maximize their gains, the advantaged group tries to “stabilize and monopolize its advantages through policies aiming at the institutionalization of the existing stratification system” (ibid, 9). This institutionalization of the stratification system, or “the cultural division of labor” (9) should ensure that high prestige positions are reserved for the superordinate group while denying the access of the individuals from other groups to these positions. The cultural division of labor makes ethnic identifications of groups even more solid and distinct since actors “categorize themselves according to the range of roles each may be expected to play” (9). What is worse, this categorization is helped by “visible signs, or cultural markers which are seen to characterize the groups” (9). I believe that language is a perfect example for these cultural markers which make groups categorize themselves and the others. The final stage of this deeper differentiation and cleavage between groups is an assertion of the disadvantaged group that their culture is equal to, or even superior than the culture of the core and this assertion may make them consider themselves a separate nation and seek independence, further fueling the conflict (9).

The core claim of this book is that cultural division of labor is strongly connected to the rise of nationalist movements (Hechter 1985, 18). In order to construct the basis for this argument, Hechter assumes a model of a society in which there is one dominant core and a periphery that is dominated. Moreover, he separates the process of national development into three different “analytically separate black boxes” (1975, 18-20). The first of these is the *cultural integration* where language and religion are basic determinants. It aims to achieve “gradual effacement of objective cultural differences” (19) and formation of a common identity and feeling of a belonging to a “corporate group” (19). Therefore, it is important to ensure that groups can peacefully live together. Another dimension of national development is

economic integration, which implies that social and economic development levels are roughly equal. The last dimension Hechter analyses is the *political integration* in which “the social structural position of a collectivity determines its political behavior” (19). An unintegrated society, on any of these dimensions, is more likely to experience conflict.

Hechter continues to examine the effect of unintegrated groups on ethnic conflict. He determines two instances in which “a collectivity may reassess its sense of social membership, and hence withdraw its grant of legitimacy” (1975, 20). The first is when the peripheral group becomes aware of changes in the social situation that are to their disadvantage. Hechter gives example of a job discrimination against the members of the collectivity (ibid, 20). The second can be the changes in the demands of the peripheral group, in the direction of expecting “more rewards for supporting the regime” (20). The former reason encompasses a change in the social structural position of the disadvantaged group, while the latter does not, but what is common in both is that they are impediments towards political integration and they increase the conflict.

The theory of internal colonialism rests on an analogy between colonialism of The Western countries on the third world and the situation of the disadvantaged peripheral groups. In external colonialism an exogenous, culturally alien group conquers the undeveloped people and a phase of colonial development would start. The properties of the rule of the core on the periphery rests on a “racial, ethnic, or cultural superiority, on a materially inferior indigenous people” (1975, 30). Although there is cultural contact, the result of colonial development is a cultural division of labor. The cultural division of labor requires “a system of social stratification where objective cultural distinctions are superimposed upon class lines” (ibid, 30) and the high status occupations are very often in the reach of the individuals from core culture, the reach of the colonial people to these being extremely limited. The colonized people are stuck in the lowest strata of the society (30). Although this situation is called

colonial development, Hechter says that the development between the core and the periphery are very distinct from each other (31). The development of the periphery is towards being a colony of the metropolis, not one that resembles it.

Internal colonialism is a very similar situation, but instead of the exogenous alien rulers there is the dominant core group within the same polity and instead of the indigenous group there are dominated groups in the periphery. Hechter determines the similarities of the internal colonialism with the exogenous colonial situation as such (1975, 32-4): the members of the core monopolize the commerce and trade among the members of the periphery and hence the peripheral economy is strictly dependent on the development of the core. The result of this is a dependence of the peripheral economy on external markets. Another general property of the peripheral economy is a dependence on a single, mostly agricultural and mineral export. Migration of peripheral workers as a consequence of price fluctuations in this primary product is also typical. What is worse, this dependence and disadvantageous position of the periphery is strengthened by “juridical, political and military measures” (33) and a lower quality of life and annoyance among the peripheral population exists. Cultural properties such as language and religion are used for discrimination against the peripheral population. Considering these, Hechter concludes that economic inequalities are caused by cultural differences.

Contrary to what diffusion theories expected, Hechter (1975, 34) argues that increased contact between the core and the periphery does not decrease inequalities and ethnic affiliations, but instead makes peripheral groups believe they have to obtain more political power, or form their own political organization in order to equalize distribution of resources. Since this inequality is ultimately rooted in cultural differences, this mobilization creates political movements based on ethnic affiliations and ethnic conflicts appear. All in all, only possible ways for the individuals from peripheral groups to increase their “individual life

chances” is either by leaving their group, or raising demands, emphasizing their group identity (ibid, 18). Here, both a weakness and a strength of internal colonialism theory attracts attention. It is successful in explaining ethnic mobilization for material demands, but what about leaving the group? Cultural properties such as language and religion are relatively easy to change, especially in one or two generations and internal colonialism theory possesses some weaknesses in explaining why people prefer to mobilize, rather than escape their group (Horowitz 1985, 15).

The weaknesses of material explanations of ethnic conflict is not limited to this point. A criticism of Horowitz towards all theories which expect competition for scarce resources to increase ethnic conflicts is that most of them are unable to explain why the disadvantaged groups are organized in ethnic lines rather than other, for instance, class lines (1985, 15). Although Hechter’s internal colonialism theory provides a relatively satisfactory answer by saying that cultural and ethnic differences are the main underlying reasons for material inequalities, this is not supported by empirical examples since “ethnic groups and social classes rarely overlap perfectly” (ibid, 105). Thus, material explanations may not help us fully understand the underlying mechanisms of mobilization. We should look for other mechanisms that are effective in making this mobilization along ethnic lines.

2.2.2.2 The Theories that Expect a Positive Effect Due to Psychological Attachments

A common criticism to material explanations of ethnic conflict is that they are omitting the psychological elements that the concepts of ethnicity and nation rest on. Instead of a mobilization of groups in pursuit of material benefits, psychological theories emphasize the motives of need for belonging and group identification in the formation of ethnic identity and conflicts.

One scholar who advocates a social-psychological approach is Stuart J. Kaufman who calls his own approach *symbolic politics* (2006). In his model of ethnic conflict the main

causes of the conflict are “group myths that justify hostility, fears of group extinction, and a symbolic politics of chauvinist mobilization” (ibid, 47). A struggle for a group worth and self-esteem is more determinant in the rise of ethnic conflict rather than group’s or the individual’s calculation of the material benefit (Horowitz 1985, 143; mentioned in Kaufman 2006, 52).

Another scholar who has seminal works in social-psychological models of ethnic conflict is Walker Connor, whose views will be discussed through his book *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (1994) and his article Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying (1972). In Connor’s view, the concepts of ethnicity and nation and therefore mobilization along ethnic lines rest on psychological feelings and beliefs. Connor’s own definition of nation should reflect how his understanding about the nature of nations are and this should give some ideas how his theory is built on this understanding. He defines nation as “a group of people who *believe* they are ancestrally related” (1994, 212). The verb believe, italicized by Connor himself is extremely important here. It does not matter if these group of people are actually ancestrally related, or not. What matters is that they have such a belief; they need to feel a belonging, or because of social circumstances, people are led to believe in this ancestral relationship. But, this should not imply that Connor did not agree with the ethnic, or cultural nature of nations. In fact, Smith writes that Connor’s theory linked nationhood to perennial factors (2004, 57). Therefore, according to him, modernization proceeded not by creating the concepts of ethnicity and nation, but it created an environment in which individuals sought these perennial properties. A point that should be underlined in Connor’s theory is that the belief in nations and the feeling of nationalism are “mass phenomena” and “only when the great majority of a population has become nationally aware, can we legitimately speak of it as a nation” (ibid, 57), it can be said that modernization increased the number of people who were aware of their ethnicity and nationality and when

the number of people with the same cultural traits who believed that they constituted a nation was above a certain threshold, they started to form a nation.

The dynamic which constituted an environment in which people needed to seek such a belonging in Connor's theory was the increasing contacts between different groups due to modernization. This mobilization is a consequence of the increases in communication, like Deutsch's model. But, contrary to what Deutsch had predicted, Connor argued that the "accompaniments of economic development" (1972, 332) like the spread of communication by rise of literacy, more newspapers, radio and television, "increase cultural awareness" (ibid, 328). This cultural awareness is raised when people become more aware of other groups and also ones who share his/her ethnic identity. Therefore, groups "become more aware of the distinctions between themselves and others" (329).

In addition to rational choice theories, Connor also criticized elitist theories of ethnic conflicts which treated ethnic awareness and ethnic conflicts as results of elite ambitions. An appropriate example for such an approach towards which Connor is critical is Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism in his book *Nations and Nationalism* (1983). In a nutshell, the argument in this book was that an important source of rise of nationalisms was the nation-building and homogenization projects of the elites in order to modernize the society and the country. Therefore, advocates of this approach argue that the belief of people in an ethnic identity and their mobilization along these lines were to the benefits of the elites. Emphasizing that nationalism is a mass phenomenon that exists in the beliefs and feelings of the ordinary individuals and that it has penetrated to many aspects of daily lives of modern societies, Connor criticizes elitist approaches which do not pay enough attention in understanding how nationalism is adopted by larger masses and radical movements are followed by individuals who do not personally have material benefits. Horowitz, another scholar who is fond of social-psychological theories of ethnic conflict points out another

aspect of rational choice theories that can be criticized. Against the theories which argue that the “middle class careerist interests” (1985, 105) are important parts of ethnic conflicts and the lower classes are misled to follow the nationalist movements which arise from these interests, he says that lower class masses are not actually ignorant about politics, they get involved in the mobilization and conflict consciously, knowing what it is about (ibid, 105); it is a matter of identity.

Nevertheless, Connor’s social-psychological explanations are also prone to criticism. He is usually criticized for an only psychological understanding of nation and dependence on psychological variables in explaining ethnic conflict. Smith finds Connor’s approach relying very much on subjective factors and omitting the cultural and structural terms that are effective in the increase of ethnic consciousness (2004, 63). He states that Connor’s theory would be stronger and could be valid for more cases if it was supplemented by “more ‘objective’ components” (ibid, 63).

Chapter 3: Historical Background to the Conflict

3.1 Modernization in Turkey and Mobilization of the Turkish Nationalism

The modernization process in the Ottoman Empire was first initiated as a response to the military failures the Empire continuously suffered at the Western and Northern borders. It started as modernization of the army and later gradually spread to the other aspects of the state and the society (Poulton 1997). Initially, it was a means for saving the state from falling apart (Yeğen 2007). The process was only gradual until the first years of the Turkish republic, when the political authority of the one-party state, with no serious opposition and with a strong desire for modernization, implemented more radical and faster reforms.

After the severe military defeats and the huge land losses in the Balkan Wars and the First World War, the Turkish state elites and the intellectuals embraced Turkish nationalism, seeing that the Ottomanism ideology, which sought to unite all ethnicities and religions under the banner of ‘Ottoman Nation’, had failed and the Islamism ideology, which demonstrated that the core of the empire should be the Muslim groups, was a disappointment due to nationalist rebellion and secessions by Muslim minorities. Turkish nationalism, which began as a cultural movement (Mardin 1962; cited by Yeğen 2007, 120), later evolved to be a “constitutive ideology of a secular and modern ‘nation-state-society’ after the first years of the republic” (Yeğen 2007, 120). The idea was to establish a new state with a Turkish identity, but the fact that national consciousness did not exist among the public was the greatest obstacle to this ideal. Therefore, a starting point was to create a Turkish nation, which would also help the process of modernization.

This process of nation-building and raising the national consciousness required a lot of effort, including a strict nationalist education and propaganda. There were significant changes in the discourse of the state elite and the education curriculum in the late 1920’s and 1930’s

(Poulton 1997). The history textbooks were written in a much more nationalist way, emphasizing the need for a more homogenous society – even racial aspects were emphasized (ibid, 94-7). The nationalist rhetoric of the state and its willingness to ethnically mobilize its citizens still exists today. The education curriculums, from primary school to university, always preach nationalism and impose nationalist consciousness to the students. Moreover, the nationalist propaganda diffuses to many levels of the society since a large majority of the press and the media employ this nationalist discourse and continuously propagate along these lines.

Baskin Oran argues that the lessons derived from the history of the country that ethnic and religious minorities were the most important factors in collapse of the empire and the mental category that was subconsciously “transplanted” onto the society is the main reason of the suspicion of ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity of the Turkish public (2004; quoted by Somer 2005a, 81). It can be argued that this ‘transplantation’ occurred through the education system and being exposed to the nationalist rhetoric. The main enemies of this rhetoric were minorities who rejected to be assimilated such as non-muslims and Kurds. The content of the discourse against the Kurds was and still is “in terms of reactionary politics, tribal resistance, or regional backwardness” (Yeğen, 1998, 216). According to Somer (2005a), the state continues to be the dominant actor in the Kurdish question. He stresses that “the discourse and practices of the state actors will determine the way the mainstream public-political discourse will evolve” (84). If the nationalist education system was liberalized and the state and the media had not employed the nationalist rhetoric which blames the minorities, I do not think that the Turkish population would be this much mobilized and radicalized against the minorities, including Kurds.

Another factor that radicalizes the Turkish society against the Kurds in the ethnic conflict is that the attacks of the PKK lead to many losses of life (Zürcher 2004, 178). The

ethnic nationalisms of both Kurds and Turks gained more supporters and strength as the casualties grew due to the armed struggle (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 148). In addition, in the popular discourse, Kurds are still shown as separatist terrorists, which fuels the anger of Turkish individuals in the ethnic conflict. Kalaycıoğlu mentions the increased support for both ethnic parties in the 1990's to support his argument that the armed struggle further deteriorates the conflict and leads both groups to perceive each others as enemies, creating a xenophobic and chauvenistic environment (ibid, 148-9) and what is worse, this perception leads to hostile attitudes towards the other group.

Some more support for the argument that education and state rhetoric is influential in the radicalization of the Turkish population can be two different surveys that Poulton (1997) mentions. One survey conducted in 1968 revealed that high school students identified themselves along ethnic lines, compared with the other group that was surveyed, factory workers. Poulton relates this difference to the nationalist state education that the high school students were much more exposed to (ibid, 201). In the other survey, conducted in 1993, 69 percent of the respondents defined themselves as 'Turks', compared with the 50 percent of 1968 (201). Poulton concludes that the increase in the national consciousness is an indicator of the success of "the process of inculcating a primary loyalty to the Turkish nation" (202), which was achieved through education and exposure to nationalist rhetoric in my view.

One last factor that increases the ethnic mobilization of Turks can be the rising level of secularity with modernization. After decline of religion, people were in need of finding new identities to feel a belonging and 'imagined' ethnic groups were perfect to fill the vacuum (Anderson 1983). While previously, Kurds, being fellow Muslims were more easily tolerated by individuals whose identity was foremost defined by their Islamic religion, after the rise of ethnic consciousness and spread of ethnic radicalism, a more hostile towards Kurds was and is more likely to happen.

Regarding all the discussion above, I believe that it is possible to argue that the more modern portions of the people with Turkish ethnicity should be more mobilized and have more radical attitudes towards the ethnic conflict and the Kurds since more modern individuals are exposed to a longer nationalist education, and a longer exposure to the nationalist rhetoric through mass media and more levels of secularity.

3.2 History of Kurds and the Ethnic Conflict in Turkey

3.2.1 Kurds in Turkey Before the Turkish Republic: Conflicts Between Elites

One of the native peoples of the area, Kurds have always lived under the rule of other kingdoms and empires, have never constituted their own state. A large number lived in the East and South-East of Turkey, North-Eastern parts of today's Iran and Northern regions of Iraq, a majority of them were under the Ottoman rule until the empire collapsed. The term 'Kurd' was synonymous with 'nomad' at the time of Islamic conquest of Kurdistan, which means the lands where Kurds live, but when we look at the mid 19th century, Kurd had also become the word to define the people who spoke the Kurdish language (McDowall 1996, 13). Largely being Sunni Muslim, there are also significant Alevite Muslim Kurds living in Turkey.

Ali Kemal Özcan (2006) notes that the Ottoman Empire was a "multi-ethnic" and a "religio-feudal" state but also had the Turkish ethnicity at the core (60). But still, ethnic categorizations could not be deemed of great importance in the empire. Relatedly, Denise Natali (2005) writes that although we can say that ethnic categorizations existed, Kurds were considered by others and also considered themselves a part of the dominant Sunni Muslim majority group (xviii).

Although some parts of the Kurdistan were already directly ruled by the center in the nineteenth century, Somer (2011) remarks that “many Kurdish chieftains had semi-autonomy under the nineteenth century” (256). Centralization of these rural areas were crucial for these aims and decreasing the power of the tribal Kurdish landlords in the mostly decentralized Eastern and South-Eastern Anatolia and putting these regions under direct control of the Sultan was a part of these reforms. These centralization attempts created the first instances of conflict in these areas. There were several uprisings by the feudal Kurdish landlords against the state. We should carefully note here that these conflicts were only between the state elite and the local Kurdish elite and the Turkish-Kurdish conflict had not been ethnicized or socialized yet. It was only a power struggle between the elite although it is the predecessor of the highly ethnicized and socialized ethnic conflict that exists today (Yavuz 2007, 56).

3.2.2 Kurds in Turkey in the Last Years of the Empire and the First Years of Republic: Period of Insurgencies

When Anatolia was occupied by the allied powers after the First World War, the demography of the country significantly changed due to losses of land and migration. The two most significant Muslim ethnic groups were the Turks and the Kurds. When an Anatolian resistance movement was organized, it was in the form of a religious liberation movement which was mainly comprised of these two groups (Özcan 2006, 60), which aimed to save the Caliphate³. Since the Kurds were fighting together with the Turks against the occupying forces in the name of religion, we can infer that the Muslim identity was prevailing over a Kurdish national identity among them.

³ In a caliphate; caliph, the leader of the state, is the representative of Islam religion and all Muslims. The Ottoman Sultans had an assertion to be the caliph, and this institution was emphasized after the late nineteenth century, when Islamism ideologies became more viable in the empire.

After proclamation of the independence of the new Turkish state and the change of the regime to the republic, the expectations were that the new state would be based on a Muslim identity and would be a state of Turks and Kurds. The founders of the new state also made statements which conformed to such expectations. A speech of İsmet İnönü, who was one of the leading commanders of the Turkish independence war and would be the future prime minister and president of the republic, that was delivered at the Lausanne conference where the new Turkish state was recognized by the western powers should be helpful in understanding the context: “The government of the Grand National Assembly is also the government of the Kurds as much as of the Turks. This is because the bona fide and legitimate representatives of the Kurds have taken part in the National Assembly, and have been enjoying the right to participate in the government and to rule the country” (Beşikçi 1969, 399; quoted in Özcan 2006, 77-8). Nevertheless, the situation would change. The Turkish state adopted a nationalist agenda that based the identity of the Turkish citizen on the Turkish ethnicity and Kurdish tribes rebelled against the state in the Eastern and South-Eastern regions of the country. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to speculate which of these caused the other, but the only thing that I can surely say is that it was clear that the previous expectations that the new state would be the state of the Turks and Kurds were not fulfilled starting from the mid 1920’s.

The policy the new state followed was to construct a new identity of a Turkish citizen that melted all other identities in the pot of Turkish ethnicity. According to Natali, this nation building project that created a “we-they dichotomy” that excluded Kurdish and other ethnicities was highly effective in the formation of a Kurdish ethnic identity (2005, xix). Özcan states that the 1924 constitution of the republic was imposing a “Turkishness onto the Kurdish population” since it “insisted that ‘anyone who is a citizen of the Turkish republic’ was a Turk”. He goes on to quote Barkey and Fuller (1998) where they demonstrate that 1924

constitution had “equated the term of ‘citizen’ with being a Turk” and Kurds could only qualify as Turks “at the expense of denying their own ethnic identity” (2006, 78). Now, Kurds in Turkey had two choices: either to be assimilated and be an ‘equal citizen’, or embrace their own ethnic identity but come into conflict with the state.

I believe that the frequency of rebellions by the Kurds in the early republican period can be illuminating at this point. There were 16 uprisings in the period between 1924 and 1938. İçduygu, Romano and Sirkeci (1999, 993) presume these conflicts to be religious or tribal, rather than ethnic nationalist. Even if we assume that some of these were Islamic rebellions, as the official history argues, and that they were a reaction to the secularization of the state, I believe that it is insufficient to explain all cases, especially if we consider that some of these revolts were by the Alevite Kurds, who would be more than satisfied with the secularization of the Sunni dominated state. Instead, we can turn to the tribalistic explanations, which can not explain the leftist and modern recent discourse of radical Kurdish nationalism. One last explanation can be to assume that these revolts had nationalist tendencies (White 2000; Natali 2000). Especially in the last, but also to a certain extent in the tribal revolt explanation, a possibility appears that the policies of Turkification of minorities, homogenization of the population and assimilation that were pursued by the state and the “highly ethnicized, centralized, and exclusionary political space in Turkey gave rise to a more ethnicized and violent form of Kurdayeti [Kurdish nationalism]” (Natali 2005, 91) which planted the seeds of the highly ethnicized and socialized conflict that is present today.

3.2.3 Kurds in Turkey Until the Last Insurgency: Different Levels of Modernization and the Secularization of the Kurdish Identity

After the Dersim insurgencies were bloodily repressed in the late 1930’s, the “silent decades” (Özcan 2006, 60) started. There were no large-scale clashes between the Kurds and the military and everything seemed calm. Turkey was experiencing a transition to a multi-party

system after the Second World War and the modernization process was still very effective. The literacy rate was much higher compared to the first years of the republic and many individuals were receiving higher education. Also, the rate of urbanization was becoming significantly higher. Naturally, Kurds were also effected from these changes, although it was relatively less than the other ethnic groups.

An important phenomenon about this period is that the gap between the level of modernization of different groups rose even more. The tension between secular, urban classes and more traditional, religious people living in the rural areas was such that the army implemented a coup d'état in 1960 in order to remove the representatives of the latter group from the government and to restore it back to the state elite (Kadioğlu 1998, 189). The situation was not very different among people of Kurdish ethnicity. While some individuals could move to urban areas, be educated in the most distinguished schools in the West and join the state elite – still only when they denied their Kurdish identity – a large portion of the Kurdish society lived in the underdeveloped East, under much worse life-standards.

Another crucial aspect that makes this period important in the mobilization of Kurdish nationalism is that it is perceived as a period of “secularization of the Kurdish identity” (Yavuz 2007, 57). While modernization was diffusing to more number of people, the Kurdish identity was getting away from its Islamic flavor and adopting a more secular, ethnic nationalism (Kirişçi & Winrow 1997; Yavuz 2007). Yet, it will be too early to demonstrate, as Kirişçi and Winrow do, that this modernization, which made them urbanized and more educated, was an important factor in the radicalization of the Kurdish youth in the political arena. I believe that there are additional factors, especially the state's attitudes towards Kurds, which was the crucial factor in the radicalization of the Kurdish nationalism.

Lastly, the period between the coups of 1960 and 1980 were the peak years of the leftist ideologies in Turkey. Gaining a large support among the Turkish youth, radical left was

an effective force in the streets and for some time had a presence in the parliament. Since the Kurds constituted the poorest portion of the population of the country, situation of the Kurds in Turkey was perceived as an 'internal colonialism', in which being a Kurd largely overlapped with being a member of the lower strata, many individuals and groups from the Turkish left were sympathetic towards the Kurdish cause. In turn, leftist ideologies were highly popular among the Kurdish youth (Yavuz 2007). Some roots of the Kurdish Guerilla Organization (PKK) can be traced back to the leftist organizations in the 1970's. Abdullah Öcalan, one of the founders and long-time leader of the PKK was a member of the radical Marxist left groups, along with the founders and first members of the PKK (Özcan 2006, 60).

3.2.4 Ethnicization and Socialization of the Conflict: A Widespread Mobilization

Although there are different levels of modernization among people, there is more or less ethnic mobilization in every segments of the Kurdish society when we look at today's situation (Özcan 2006). While the conflict was between the Turkish state and the local Kurdish elite in the beginning, dating back to the 19th century, especially after the second half of the 20th century the ethnic mobilization and the involvement with ethnic conflict spread to the ordinary Kurdish and Turkish citizens of every socioeconomic backgrounds.

The coup of 1980 was devastating for the left and for the Kurdish nationalists. Identified as one of the divisive forces in the country, Kurdish nationalism was banned by the military government and therefore it was highly marginalized (Yavuz 2007, 64). The point that should be emphasized here is that it is natural that a movement that found no opportunity to participate in the legal platform would resort to illegal means, such as violence. The military junta "prohibited use of Kurdish language, militarized the Kurdish territories, outlawed Kurdish parties, and banned Kurdish cultural activities" (Natali 2005, 82-3). "Kurds have been subjected to emergency decree for decades, and also a regionally specific legal system, state military control and, at the same time, economic neglect" (Gülbey 1996, 13).

The state elite adopted a discourse, which was also fashionable in the racist climate of 1930's, that declared there was no ethnic groups called Kurds, "For decades, Kurds were officially declared to be *mountain Turks* and even words such as Kurds, Kurdish, Kurdistan, as well as the Kurdish language were prohibited" (ibid, 13). Moreover, numerous people were tortured, or killed in jails. These were the crucial points when radical Kurdish nationalism started to become more widespread. Somer (2005b) considers the junta period as "a new peak in the state oppression of the Kurdish identity" and as a result of this its "politization" (596). In my opinion, these facts make it easier to see that the policies and attitudes of the state were not innocent in the mobilization of the Kurdish nationalism.

After the PKK, which "for the first time politicized and united Kurds on a much more ethnic nationalist basis than on tribal or religious one" (İçduygu, Romano & Sirkeci 1999, 994), initiated its attacks against the Turkish army and state officials in 1984, the state and the military would only reply with more violence and repression. Although there were weak liberalization attempts in the political arena, such as the removal of the ban on the Kurdish language in 1991, the 1990's was a period when the conflict got more widespread and deeper. There were many lives lost, according to Somer about 40,000 in total until 2008 (2011, 256), from both sides of the conflict, civilians or fighters. The polarization in the society was growing worse due to these incidents. Many critical and Kurdish journalists, prominent lawyers, representatives of Kurdish political parties and Kurdish businessmen were killed in unidentified murders (Gülbey 1996, 17). Moreover, there were still kidnappings, imprisonment, and tortures of Kurdish individuals who were suspected of having a connection to the Kurdish nationalist movements, by the state security forces. On the political arena, the Kurdish political parties were banned in 1993-4 and in 1994 several Kurdish members of parliament were imprisoned after their parliamentary immunities were repealed. It is no wonder than, combined with other repressive policies of the state, the outlawing of the

Kurdish political parties, blocking the legal and political means of expressing themselves, was effective in making the conflict more widespread and socialized and helped Kurdish people get closer to the PKK (White 2000, 131-2) which only made the conflict more violent.

On the other side of the conflict, the constant warfare and the casualties due to PKK's attacks had caused a radicalization of Turkish nationalists as well and also a large amount of discrimination against the Kurdish people, since being Kurdish was seen as identical with being a PKK sympathizer (Kirişçi & Winrow 1997, 132-3). Gülbey stresses that discrimination and attacks against the Kurds living in western Turkey had increased in the 1990's. These consisted of "being the first to be arrested during police raids and searches", physical violence and destruction of Kurdish shops by mobs, attacks on neighborhoods where Kurds formed a majority and "boycotting of shops run by Kurds" (1996, 17). Another important factor that increased radicalization, ethnicization and socialization of the conflict on both sides was the policy of the evacuation of the Kurdish villages. According to Gülbey (1996, 18) around 2 million, and according to Yavuz (2007, 68) approximately 1 million Kurdish people were forcibly deported from their villages in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of the country and had to migrate to big cities while their villages were burned. These people who were deported were also economically damaged, leaving for example, their fields, or selling their stock for a much cheaper price. They usually worked in low-quality jobs or lived in the suburbs of big cities, being unemployed and getting involved with crime (Yavuz 2007, 68). These deportations were key in the broadening of the conflict and increase in the violence since Kurds who lived in much worse conditions and were facing discrimination became more and more attached to the PKK, therefore carrying the PKK to the big cities (Gülbey 1996, 18) and as a response to this also raised radical Turkish nationalism and prejudices against the Kurds. Here, Barkey's designation can be helpful in summarizing the spread of the polarization: "The combination of army operations and societal polarization has

raided the consciousness of even the most assimilated Kurd” (1993, 58; quoted by Kirişçi and Winrow 1997, 132).

Hence, considering all the conflictual polarized environment, again my expectation will be that the discrimination which individuals of Kurdish origin were subjected is independent of the degree of modernization of the Kurdish individual; any individual who was born in the Eastern provinces could be subjected to this treatment, for instance, in the school by the teachers, in the workplace by the colleagues, or in daily life in the marketplace, so that in turn I expect a radicalization of the individual independent of his/her degree of modernization.

3.2.5 Disappearance and Reappearance of Ethnic Violence

At the late 1990's the Turkish military had weakened the PKK (Tezcür 2010, 778) and the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan was abducted in Kenya by the Turkish secret services, in February 1999. He called for a continuation of the ceasefire he had declared in September 1998 (Marcus 2007, 282-3), called for a withdrawal of Kurdish militants from the Turkish soil and stressed the importance of non-violent solutions to the conflict (Tezcür 2010, 779-80). After a few years of a peaceful environment, the PKK reinitiated its attacks in the mid-2000's and these attacks increased towards the end of 2000's, today making the Kurdish question in a situation of deadlock, again.

There are two contrasting arguments in the explanation of this revival of the conflict. Tezcür, emphasizing the democratization and liberalization attempts and the decline in human rights violations in Turkey in the first half of the 2000's (ibid, 778-9) argues that the top cadres of the PKK did not have the intention of withdrawing the militants from the Turkish territory and they continuously recruited new militants (779-80) even during this era of democratization and relative improvement in the cultural rights of the Kurdish society. He writes that, relying on certain evidence and some inferences from the political atmosphere of

the region, the reinitiation of armed PKK attacks in spring 2004 was directly ordered by Öcalan (780).

Yet, Aliza Marcus argues that withdrawal of the Kurdish militants from the Turkish soil was a very risky decision for the PKK since “Turkish soldiers laid ambushes for the retreating rebels and then kept up the chase with cross-border attacks that continued over the next few months” (2007, 287). Also it is debatable how the relative attempts of democratization and improvement in the cultural rights of the Kurds were genuine and had real impact of lives of the Kurdish population. The Kurdish regions were, and are, still, highly underdeveloped, and the inequality gap between the Turks and the Kurds do not seem to decrease (Kırdar 2007; Tocci 2001). Moreover, There are still human rights violations in Turkey that have been in increase for the last years, such as the charges of being a member of an alleged extension of the PKK, an organization called the KCK, because of which thousands of people are imprisoned (Cemal 2012). Numerous Kurdish children are prosecuted for being a member of the terrorist organization and get prison sentences just because they throw stones at the police. There are still no great improvements in cultural rights compared with what Kurds desire, for example education in Kurdish seems very unlikely under today’s circumstances. Lastly, political participation of the Kurdish population is still trying to be limited by the state and the government. The Kurdish party Democratic Society Party was banned in December 2009 and several Kurdish candidates were forbidden to run in the June 2011 parliamentary elections.

Considering all these it can be rightfully said that it is not certain that the Turkish state really had a desire of democratization and granting more equal rights to the Kurdish citizens, and therefore it can be concluded that there is no great improvement in the situation of the Kurdish society between today and when PKK insurgency began, all the conditions that led Kurdish nation to mobilize and radicalize still exist. They are relatively poorer, culturally

their rights are not recognized and the state still pursues assimilationist policies and the maltreatment towards the Kurdish population happens very often.

3.2.6 A Glance at the Properties of Kurdish Society and the Radical Kurdish Nationalism Today

Several things have changed, but many also remain the same for the Kurdish population in Turkey, compared with the 1980's and 1990's. For decades, they have constituted the lowest strata of the society. Kurdish regions were the most underdeveloped ones in Turkey, lacking any type of investment (Poulton 1997). Kurds are stuck in the underdevelopment of Kurdish regions, with very low percentage of schooling, bad health facilities, infrastructure, security, and other state services, or if they move to the big cities and start to live in the slums, joining unemployed masses.

As I noted above, early Kurdish society had strict tribal structures and a majority of them lived in the rural areas, in remote villages. Yet, in the 20th century modernization, a high amount of urbanization and the policies of the state changed these structures. Natali says that “the highly restrictive and the unchanging political space weakened tribal structures and closed all opportunities for Kurds to express their ethnic identity” (2005, xix-xx). She goes on to add that the result of this political space was a “highly ethnicized, illegal, diversified, urban-based national movement whereby tribal leaders played no significant role” (xx).

Yet, there are some minor disagreements in the literature about the social bases of the radical Kurdish national movement and the PKK. While some scholars demonstrate that PKK draws its base from the lowest strata of the society and the most marginalized groups (White 2000; van Bruinessen 1992) and that the Kurdish elite can never participate in the leadership positions, Özcan has different observations and argues that although its name is Kurdistan Worker's Party, its social base is not even the working classes. He adds that most of the base of the PKK is formed by ‘middle’ class such as rural and urban petty bourgeoisie and ‘low’

classes, people who are outside the labor market such as “unemployed workers, students, housewives, retired people” (2006, 236) while there is still considerable percentages of educated professionals, wealthy families and university students (235). Doğu Ergil’s (1995) study reveals that the PKK has deep ties with the Kurdish society, and enjoys a wide support from the public. According to his survey, 35% of the Kurdish individuals admitted having some close relative, or friend in the PKK and 47% of the respondents said they somehow supported the PKK (cited by Nigogosian 1996, 45). According to Nigogosian, these results reveal that PKK is not comprised of “handful of terrorists” (1996, 46), but has a very wide support among the Kurdish population of Turkey.

Lastly, I want to mention the effect of migration on Kurds, escaping the poor conditions of the Kurdish regions, which is due to the unequal modernization, or by destruction of the villages by the military. Kirişçi and Winrow (1997) mention a two-wise effect of migration to the west and big cities . The first can be, in addition to the discrimination arguments that I have discussed above, that Kurds can be more aware of the “socioeconomic disparities between the regions and therefore ethnicities” and therefore can be more conscious of their ethnic identity which makes them “vulnerable to the propoganda of the PKK” (136). On the other hand, the migrated people can “develop a vested interest in becoming integrated into a society that still provides considerable opportunities in upward social mobility” (136) and thus an individual would have less incentive to emphasize his/her ethnic Kurdish identity and less often get involved in a conflict.

3.3 The Kurdish Question in the Light of Theories

3.3.1 Previous Works on this Specific Case

There are two recent studies that are based on survey questions which examine the support for Kurdish ethno-nationalist movements. The first is Zeki Sarıgil's (2010) article which confirms diffusion theories of ethnic conflict, having socio-economic development as the independent variable, and the second is Faruk Ekmekçi's (2011) response and criticism towards Sarıgil in which he also includes some personal values such as religion and ideology. Yet, these works only include Kurdish individuals, not the whole sample of population and Sarıgil's independent variable is only socio-economic development but not a wider variable that measures modernization. One important note that should be made here is that both articles include an individual's vote for the Kurdish ethnonationalist party as an indicator of the ethnic consciousness and support for ethno-nationalist movements. Therefore, what these two articles measure do not exactly overlap with what I intend to measure in my analysis: attitudes of the individual towards the other group and the ethnic conflict as an indicator of likelihood of getting involved in conflict.

In the former article, Sarıgil tests three widely argued hypotheses in the Turkish public and academic circles. The first tested hypothesis predicts Islamic consciousness to reduce "likelihood of appeal to Kurdish ethno-nationalism" (537) and the second and third hypotheses predict socioeconomic development to decrease, and increase this likelihood respectively. The results he found are important. The diffusion theory of ethnic conflict, predicting that individuals would be less supportive of ethnic mobilization as their modernization level and socioeconomic development level are better, is confirmed, while conflictual modernization theories which expect individuals to get more mobilized as they are more modern and Islamic consciousness hypothesis, which argued that a higher Islamic

consciousness would overcome the ethnonationalist feelings and would result in individuals being less inclined towards mobilization, are not confirmed.

Ekmekçi's article is a direct response to Sarıgil and involves a methodological criticism which should be taken seriously. The first and the foremost criticism is Sarıgil's sample. Sarıgil does not create a subsample of the Kurdish population, but analyses Kurdish nationalism for the sample which includes the whole population. This is a serious mistake according to Ekmekçi, to which I agree. The attitudes of Turkish individuals towards Kurdish nationalism is not indicative of what he expects; it is the nationalism of the opposite group, nearly always adopted by Kurdish individuals, not Turkish ones. It can not be treated as the same as Kurdish individuals' attitudes towards their own nationalism. Instead, Ekmekçi treats the 'language spoken at home question' as an indicator of ethnicity and creates a subsample of Kurdish individuals according to that. Yet, I do not agree that this is a perfect way to distinguish ethnic groups of people if we consider the level of assimilation of people whose native language is Turkish. If we consider this aspect, Ekmekçi's sample may be including only unassimilated Kurdish individuals who are fond of their identity and therefore this sample may be biased. Moreover, native language of many radical Kurdish nationalists, activists, or politicians in Turkey is Kurdish, the most important example of whom is Abdullah Öcalan, founder of the PKK.

The results found by Ekmekçi can be important if their validity is accepted. Contrary to Sarıgil, he finds no significant effect of socioeconomic indicators such as education and income. Similar to Sarıgil, religion fails to achieve any significance. The only factor that has significance is ideology of the individual in his first model. A problem with this ideology variable can be that it is a self-placement on the left-right ideological scale and this is a problematic issue for the constituency in Turkey, it does not fit the western standards (Başlevent, 2011). In another model, Ekmekçi removes ideology and without ideology as a

control variable, religion has a negative effect on voting for the Kurdish party. Lastly, he tests the effects of satisfaction of the individual with the level of human rights and democracy in the country with the support for the ethnic Kurdish party. The results indicate that the levels of satisfaction with these variables are significantly negatively correlated with the support for the Kurdish party. A corollary of this can be that human rights violations and lack of rights of Kurdish population may be effective in the ethnic mobilization of the Kurdish nationalism, strengthening their ethnic identity.

3.3.2 Discussion: Which Theory does the Kurdish Case fit?

My argument in this subsection is that the rise of the radical Kurdish nationalism in Turkey do not exactly fit the stories in any of the diffusion, or conflictual modernization theories of ethnic conflict. Rather, it fits some aspects of both of these theories and in addition is exacerbated by political factors, which have nothing to do with the process of modernization, or the level of modernization of the individual. Thus, considering that the ethnic conflict in Turkey fits some parts of the both theories one of which expects a positive effect of modernization, and the other a negative effect, and also the political factors, having no relationship with the level of modernization, were also effective, I will argue that the level of modernization of Kurdish people should have no effect on their attitudes towards the ethnic conflict and the other group.

Another crucial aspect I would like to underline here, before going on to the discussion of the ethnic conflict in Turkey, is that I do not believe any of the theories between the level of modernization and ethnic conflict can be used to explain every case universally. Every case has its own dynamics, sometimes similar, but sometimes very different from other cases; therefore one of these theories can not account for each and every case. One theory may be more useful for explaining one case while another case may better fit another theory. I

believe that Anthony Mughan's discussion of the ethnic conflict in Belgium can be helpful for this argument. After a thorough examination of the ethno-nationalist movements of the Flemish and the Walloons, he concludes that Flemish nationalism was a cultural one, and the Walloon nationalism had more economic essences, since they were relatively poorer than the Flemish (1979), the former fitting social-psychological theories and the latter fitting rational choice theories, such as relative deprivation.

In my opinion, this phenomenon also applies to the ethnic conflict case in Turkey, not only at group levels, but also at the individual level. Every individual may have different responses to same variable and the reason of developing an ethnic consciousness and radicalization along this line may be different for different persons. "[F]or some individuals or groups non-material motivations may play a much greater causal role than material questions" (İçduygu, Romano & Sirkeci 1999, 997), while for some other individuals material questions may play a greater causal role (Horowitz 1985).

Moreover, it would be wrong to consider Kurdish and Turkish nationalists as homogenous groups. There are very different sub-groups which have very different attributes and therefore examining these groups as single, monolithic entities would lead us to wrong conclusions. Three subgroups of Kurdish nationalists exist, Somer notes. One is secular-revolutionary, another is traditional elite based group, and the last is religious and conservative group (2011, 273). Each of these groups may be affected from the modernization process differently. Therefore, I do not agree that it is correct to say that any of the grand theories discussed above will explain whole story of the ethnic conflict. Maybe each theory can explain some parts of it, and when we bring it altogether it will make much more sense.

3.3.2.1 Discussion of Diffusion Theories

As discussed above, both Kurdish and Turkish nationalisms started as elite projects and continued as such for a while. Radical Turkish nationalism emerged and took shape as a

response to the shattering empire, as a means for saving it, and was adopted by the elites who came to power in the last years of the empire and the first years of the republic. It took decades before Turkish nationalism diffused among the ordinary citizen, and this diffusion could only be achieved by continuous nationalist propaganda in the educational curriculum, mass media and daily life. The transition and assimilation from other ethnicities to Turkish ethnicity is relatively easy. As long as a person does not speak his/her native language – that is except for Turkish – and does not emphasize his/her ethnic identity, he/she is perceived as a Turk and faces no discrimination because of ethnicity. With assimilation through modernization, being educated at the schools of the state, getting into more contact with people from other ethnic groups, abandoning Kurdish and starting to use Turkish in the daily life, reading newspapers and watching TV in the Turkish language, modernization results in assimilation and therefore in a decline in the intensity of ethnic conflict, as Deutsch argued. For some segments of the population, who can be assimilated, modernization, as social mobilization can fit the diffusion theories of ethnic conflict. Yet, this assimilation only works for some people, not all Kurdish population (Somer 2004), and therefore diffusion theories can not be enough to explain the whole story.

3.3.2.2 Discussion of Conflictual Modernization Theories

3.3.2.2.1 Internal Colonialism Model

Although modernization results in an assimilation of some individuals, for others modernization may have an effect of mobilization along ethnic lines and therefore may have a positive effect on the intensity of ethnic conflict. The Kurdish regions are the most underdeveloped in Turkey and the Kurdish population is lacking far behind other ethnic groups in the level of material well-being. Many scholars and politicians relate the Kurdish

insurgency to the material deprivation of the Kurdish society (mentioned in Sinmazdemir 2012, 20); the notion in the argument fitting the internal colonialism argument of Hechter.

Indeed, several aspects of the structure in the society of Turkey indicates an existence of internal colonialism situation. Very similar to Hechter's story of internal colonialism (1975), an uneven modernization exists due to the modernization project of the early republican elite between the Kurdish and non-Kurdish areas (Yavuz, 56), and the Kurdish population is highly disadvantaged compared to the rest of the population. This disadvantage causes an uneven distribution of resources and power between the Kurds and the Turks. Hechter's model expects the next phase of internal colonialism situation to be a stage when the advantaged group has attempts towards stabilizing and monopolizing these advantages through institutionalization of the stratification. This aspect also fits the this case; for instance it can be argued that the ban on the use of Kurdish language and the fact that the only official language is Turkish is a part of institutionalization of the Turkish advantage in the regime. This created a situation in which Kurdish people either had to abandon their language and start to speak Turkish, or if they wanted to speak their own language, they would not be educated, since the language of instruction is Turkish and they could not find jobs in the national market. Moreover, it was impossible for a Kurdish citizen to be a high-class state officer unless he/she renounced the Kurdish identity and was assimilated. I believe that we can call this an institutionalization of the cultural division of labor; unless one was willing to be assimilated one would have to be at the bottom of the social strata while high status occupations were in the reach of the Turkish speakers and the Turkish ethnic group. In addition, the internal colonialism theory also predicts this advantegous position of the periphery to be protected by "juridical, political and military measures" (Horowitz 1985, 33) and I think that we can say that this description resembles the post 1980 coup era where these measures were effective. There was a brutal military presence in the Kurdish regions, highly

oppressing the Kurdish population, relying on the military regime and later the non-democratic 1982 constitution.

After this point, Hechter's expectation is that modernization process, increasing the inequalities between the core and the periphery, and reinforcing the cultural division of labor, would mobilize the peripheral group, who has an expectation of obtaining more power and a larger share of resources. This overlaps with the motivation of many Kurdish individuals towards radicalization. For example, it is declared in the manifesto of the PKK that Kurdistan is a colonized region by several states and the Turkish state is called a colonizer (PKK Manifesto 1984; cited by Özcan 2006, 100) and the material deprivation of the Kurdish society is emphasized.

Since my analysis will be on the modernization at the individual level, I should also mention the specific group of individuals who participate in the conflict themselves, or are a part of it. As mentioned in the subsection 3.2.6 of this thesis, there is no agreement in the literature on the social bases of the PKK. Some stress that the PKK draws most of its support from poor peasants (White 2000, 156) or the other most marginalized groups (van Bruinessen 1992). If we consider this aspect, internal colonialism model seems fit for the Kurdish nationalism. But, several works in the literature challenge the view that the PKK militants and supporters consists of the people only from the lower strata. Özcan argues that PKK militants have very different backgrounds, such as rural and urban middle classes, decommodified people, students, educated professionals and wealthy families (2006, 235). The participation and support of the relatively well-off and modernized individuals here can not be explained by their material deprivation. The prediction of the model was that while overall modernization level increases, the groups who fall behind that pace of modernization mobilize along ethnic lines. Therefore, for this case, internal colonialism theory should be complemented by some theories that can explain why more modernized groups mobilize, or

the theory is unfit to account for the mobilization of the Kurdish population. In order to make it a more complete analysis, I believe that we need to complement the internal colonialism argument with socio-psychological theories

3.3.2.2.2 Socio-Psychological Theories

Like Turkish elites were highly influential in the rise of Turkish nationalism, modernized Kurdish elites were the pioneers of the Kurdish nationalist movement. Some of them who were educated in the big cities in the west adopted a Kurdish nationalist world view and founded the basis of today's Kurdish ethno-nationalist movements. Especially after the 1960's, these new Kurdish elites, who were products of socio-economic development and a relative social mobility, were less dependent on the traditional ties such as religious and tribal, and they were secularized (Somer 2011, 272-3).

“[E]thnically differential modernization is a highly useful starting point for analyzing the collective psychology of ethnic conflict” (Horowitz 1985, 102). Modernization at the individual level, being exposed to the means of mass communication, contact with the people from other ethnicities, and being educated at the state institutions made these elites aware of their identity and the internal colonialism situation that existed, in which the Kurdish population was the disadvantaged group. Some discrimination, or discriminatory attitudes in their daily lives they were subject to might also be an influential factor in the rise of their ethnic consciousness. Also, even if they were not personally effected from this inequality or discrimination, seeing that people who shared a common identity, such as ones who spoke the same language and came from the same region, with them were victims of a deep discriminatory cultural division of labor can also be an important catalyst of their mobilization on the ethnic lines. So, we can say that the materially disadvantaged situation of the Kurdish society can have two parallel effects on the mobilization of the Kurdish society. One is the mobilization of the least well-off and least modern individuals due to material

inequalities and another effect is strengthening the identity of the more modern strata, after they become conscious of the inequalities and the discrimination. Therefore, it can be concluded that the mobilization of the relatively more affluent strata of the Kurdish society and the elite who are educated in the big cities can be better explained by Connor's model. In an environment of modernization, being aware of the distinctions between their group and the other group, people start to develop a feeling of belonging to this group and, when they see that this group is in a disadvantaged position, they get mobilized along the lines of their ethnic group.

Lastly, according to Connor, material theories are also inadequate in explaining the motivations of Kurdish guerillas in purely rational choice terms, there must be additional factors that lead them towards conflict (1994, 74). In the process of recruitment of the PKK, there were no material benefits for the militants who joined, on the contrary they lived in very harsh conditions and also there were no abductions or forced recruitments by the PKK, therefore Tezcür also concludes that individuals joining PKK must have more than material motivations, there must be emotional aspects (2010, 777).

3.3.2.3 A Neglect of Political Factors?

Although theories of conflictual modernization and diffusion can explain the paths of assimilation, or ethnic mobilization and radicalization through modernization of the individuals and the society, I believe that they can not tell the full story of the ethnic conflict. The analysis would be more complete if we included the political variables, and also the attitudes of the state towards the Kurdish population, which increased the political frustration of the Kurds which led them towards an ethnic mobilization and radicalization. Several scholars have pointed to the "political grievances" (Ekmekçi 2011, 1612) as the major, or at

least highly effective factors of Kurdish nationalist mobilization (Ergil 1995 and 2010; Gürbey 1996; Olson 2009; Yavuz 2007).

Making a four category distinction in the ethnic group formation process (Horowitz 1985, 65), Horowitz classifies the emergence of the Kurdish ethnicity in Turkey as differentiation (ibid, 72), that is two or more ethnic groups are formed from one group. His argument is that the boundaries between the Turks and the Kurds were “porous” and “acculturation to the norms of the neighboring group was common” (72). But, in the latter phases these groups had an ethnic revival and group identities gained strength. In the next stage, the sharpening of group differences – probably with an differential modernization – group identities got sharpened and “the distinctiveness of groups believed to be in danger of assimilation ultimately became stronger”, eventually making people participate in insurgencies (72).

Murat Somer insists that a distinction between the “the Kurdish question and the Kurdish conflict” (2011, 254) should be made. According to him, Kurdish question was a result of the developing of nationalist ideas of the Kurds, but “the Kurdish conflict emerged because the Kurdish question was not resolved peacefully and successfully” (ibid, 255). Had the state followed the right policies to resolve it, probably there would not be a radical Kurdish nationalism, at least not to this extent. The oppression and denial of the Kurdish identity by the state made Kurds express their demands through violent rebellion (255). What is worse, in turn, this rebellion and the attitudes of the state “reinforces a mutual distrust between two sides” (255). Therefore, it can be argued that political variables, and the policies, together with the attitudes of the state are among the most important ones in the radicalization of the Kurdish question.

İçduygu, Romano and Sirkeci also agree that the political dimension of the Kurdish issue, such as “struggle over the political rights, administrative autonomy, language use,

schooling and cultural discourse” (1999, 992) is the core reason. Nevertheless, they also argue that other dimensions of this issue, such as “the patterned socio-economic inequality” can not be avoided in an analysis of the Kurdish nationalism (ibid, 992). They call this environment of Kurds “an environment of insecurity” which encompasses both material and non-material – psychological – dimensions (994). The material dimension has factors such as “income, possession, education, health, state services and life” and the psychological dimensions include “language, culture (identity), and belonging” (992). They underline the multidimensionality of the Kurdish issue “Certainly one aspect of the issue can be labelled an ‘ethnic problem’, another an ‘economic’ and another a ‘separatist terror’” (992), and they emphasize the need for addressing all these dimensions while examining the issue. Otherwise, one will be employing a reductionist approach which results in missing many variables due to the complexity of the subject.

I already discussed the material aspects of the Kurdish mobilization in the previous subsections, therefore I will only discuss what the authors of this article argue about the material insecurity aspect of the mobilization, related to the political grievances of the Kurdish population. I have focused on the language aspect of the suppression most of the time, again discussing the non-material insecurity in the light of the language rights will be an appropriate choice here. The authors argue that the legal ban on the Kurdish language until 1991 and its suppression ever since “probably causes considerable feeling of insecurity and alienation towards the state in which they are citizens” (ibid, 997). Therefore, I believe that I can say that this non-material insecurity environment creates an alienation of people from any modernization level. Kurdish language was spoken by Kurds from any social strata, the ban on the language must have effected them all, for instance more educated one at the school, the rich merchant at the business life and encounters with the population from the west, the laborer at the factory, the unemployed while seeking a job and so on.

M. Hakan Yavuz, also, related the policies of the state to be decisive factors in the “evolution and the modulation of the Kurdish ethnonationalism” (2007, 56). He sees the “new order of homogenization” as the “major source of conflict” (ibid, 56). In the first stages the centralization attempts were effective in the mobilization of the Kurdish elites, and in the later stages the attitudes of the state, like homogenization attempts of population in a way that everybody was desired to be assimilated under Turkish ethnicity, and the maltreatment of the Kurdish population by the state and the other ethnic groups was effective in the ethnicization and the spread of the ethnonational consciousness and radicalism. Of course, it was not the only source, there were material and psychological factors as argued above, but it is difficult to deny that political factors and the policies of the state can be ignored. Indeed, even if one sticks to the argument that Kurdish nationalism was an elite based nationalism from the first years until 1980’s, the situation would change if we consider the phase of radicalization and the spread of nationalism to other strata of the society. “The oppression of the 1980 coup had ...impact by further politicizing and strengthening the Kurdish sense of identity, and this ...was used by the PKK. The policies of the Turkish military ...further consolidated Kurdish seperatism and the PKK launched an armed uprising...” (2007, 64).

Another scholar who defends that political factors and the attitudes of the state were highly effective in the radicalization of the Kurdish nationalist movement is Gülistan Gürbey. She clearly states that “the causes of the Kurdish issue must be sought in the political and legal system of Turkey itself” (1996, 10). Although there was a very wide ethnic and religious diversity in the population, the state made attempts of homogenization and was unsuccessful in handling the minorities in the correct way. According to her, the extremely nationalist and centralist policies were the wrong policies to be followed in such a state (ibid, 10). Moreover, she argues that “ This policy of assimilation and homogeneity has influenced and continues to

influence the forms of Kurdish resistance and is a cause of the open use of violence ...the emergence of the ...PKK must be viewed in this framework” (10).

Other scholars also relate the rise of PKK to the factors created by the lack of other political alternatives and the policies pursued by the state. I mentioned the difficulties that Kurdish parties in the political arena faced. They were constantly declared illegal and in 1994 several Kurdish politicians, members of the Turkish parliament, were imprisoned. Nigogosian says that the popularity of the PKK among the Kurdish population was the result of these. The ban on the legal means of politics for the Kurdish nationalists and, the impossibility of any means of dialogue or expressing their demands rendered PKK as the only institution that was seen as the “defender of Turkey’s Kurds” so that its supporters reached millions (1996, 39). Like Gülbey, he directly blames the “inappropriate Turkish policy” that is forced assimilation through military violence, without any alternative of dialogue (ibid, 22).

Güneş Murat Tezcür, also, notes that the repression and “the indiscriminate violence” of the state and the suppression of the Kurdish population resulted in an alienation of the Kurdish population from the state, and also resulted in more number of recruits for the PKK (2010, 778). He says that throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s “the counter insurgency operations and violence by paramilitary groups” drove many Kurdish individuals towards joining the PKK (ibid, 778). He gives the example of 2008 Newroz traditional festival events in Yüksekova, a Kurdish town in the South-Eastern borders of Turkey. He concludes, based on some interviews with local elites, that “the state’s heavy-handed response to the demonstrations fueled feelings of revenge and exclusion among young people who found the radical and confrontational discourse of the PKK appealing” and specifically just because of this response of the state, several individuals had joined the PKK (778).

A common discourse in ethnic conflict literature that Horowitz criticizes is the assumption that policy outcomes are consequences of the conflicts. It is accepted that there is

a sequential and unidirectional cause and effect relationship. Yet, Horowitz disagrees with this discourse and underlines that these phenomena are reciprocal, both cause each other (1985, 73-4). While policy outcomes may be influenced by the existence of the conflict, conflict can be increased, or decreased according to the policy that is followed. He mentions four processes that policies influence ethnic conflicts. The first is that the boundaries of ethnic groups are not firm, especially before the conflict. The construction and reconstruction of these boundaries partly happens during the conflict (ibid, 74). Second, the ethnic conflict may effect the shape and firmness of the boundaries, for example by pressuring endogamy (74). The third process is that “group boundaries are not simply product of common culture. Emerging boundaries can alter cultural patterns, for example homogenizing...” (74) and lastly, policy is not only an end product of the conflict, “it reacts in turn upon conflict and upon boundaries and upon culture” (74).

All in all, I do not think that without the maltreatment and the assimilationist policies of the Turkish state, the Kurdish population would be this much radicalized and resort to violent means of expressing their demands. A question in Doğu Ergil’s report (1995) based on a survey made with the Kurdish population in Turkey reveals valuable clues about this aspect. In the report, it is written that “the ‘overwhelming majority of those surveyed said they wanted to stay in Turkey, but as Kurds’” (cited by White 2000, 174). In addition, in the survey *Perceptions and Expectations in the Kurdish Question* only 26.4% of the Kurdish respondents said they would choose to live in another country other than Turkey. Therefore, I believe that it is clearer that absent the maltreatment and the wrong policies of the Turkish state, the Kurdish nationalism would be less radical and violent, and separatist demands would decrease.

To summarize all, I feel the need to reemphasize the argument that the radicalization and intensification of the ethnic conflict was not dependent on factors that can be explained

by only one of the theories above. According to Kirişçi and Winrow, modernization of the society had two opposite effects on the Kurdish ethnic mobilization. One was an assimilation of some individuals (1997, 89), what I argued to be a result of the social communication, as diffusion theory of Deutsch predicted, which means a decline in the number of the people who are involved in ethnic conflict becomes less and therefore a decline in the intensity of ethnic conflict happens. The other effect was an increase in the ethnic conflict, firstly due to new, growing elite who “sought recognition” (ibid, 89), and secondly as a reaction to the uneven modernization by the less modernized portions of the Kurdish population, or an identity based mobilization due to the inequalities, by the more modernized and well-off Kurdish individuals. But, as elaborately discussed above, the political variables would be neglected if we only considered the issue from the perspective of these theories. All things considered, I believe that I have been able to demonstrate the effect of political factors, and the policies and the attitudes of the state strengthened the rate of mobilization and radicalization of the Kurdish nationalist movement and considering the total effect of modernization, with the influence of state policies and attitudes, there should be no effect of modernization on the level of ethnic conflict.

3.4 Hypotheses

H1–Kurds: Modernization at the individual level has no relationship with the attitudes of the Kurds towards Turks and the ethnic conflict, as an indicator of likelihood of getting involved in conflict.

H2–Turks: Modernization at the individual level has a positive relationship with the attitudes of the Turks towards Kurds and the ethnic conflict, as an indicator of likelihood of getting involved in conflict.

Chapter 4: Research Design

4.1 Sample and Data

The dataset that is used for the statistical analysis is from the survey *Kürt Meselesi'nde Algı ve Beklentiler*. It was conducted in July 2010 by the Konda Research and Consultancy firm, based in Istanbul, Turkey. The sample is random, the survey was conducted in 59 cities out of 81 total, throughout Turkey, in 374 counties and city centers and in 902 neighborhoods and villages. The total number of respondents were 10393 (Konda 2010).

The most important reason I chose this dataset is that it was specifically designed to reveal the perceptions and expectations of the Kurds and non-Kurds on the Kurdish question in Turkey. The writers of the report, that was based on the survey, explain that the aims of this survey were understanding what the ordinary citizen thought about the conflict and other developments that were at issue at the time of the survey, and also exploring their perceptions on the issues of identity and citizenship (Konda 2011, 12), which can be closely related to the conflict. Also, since the survey is aiming to reveal the causes of the ethnic conflict on the level of ordinary individuals, it asks specific questions about the degree of the involvement of the individuals with the conflict, or the degree that they were effected by the conflict, such as the question that inquires if the individuals were directly effected by the conflict, and if yes, how. Therefore, this survey is far better for the purposes of my study, compared to other large scale surveys conducted in Turkey such as *European Social Survey* or *World Values Survey*.

4.2 Operationalization of the Variables

4.2.1. The Independent Variable

The independent variable is the degree of modernization at the individual level. I operationalize this variable from five different questions for people of Turkish ethnicity and seven questions for the Kurds, two extra in addition to the ones I used for the Turkish people. The independent variables are constructed partly considering Inkeles' (1974), and Inkeles and Smith's (1999) works, discussed above, from attitudes, values and socio-demographic variables. The independent variables are income level, education level, the kind of building one lives in, the number of people who live in the same household and secularization level for all sample and feeling of a belonging to a clan and giving one's own political decisions, in addition to the former five, for the Kurds.

1) Income level: Level of income is usually positively correlated with the level of modernization. With a higher level of modernization, for instance living in the city and being highly educated, we can expect a higher degree of income. Also, it can be argued that a higher income level can modernize an individual after some period of time, such as leading to a more educated next generations within the family and exposition to a western life-style. Income level constitutes a very important place in the diffusion theory of Deutsch, with employing it as an independent variable, it is easier to test his expectation.

2) Education level: The level of education is one of the key factors in the level of modernization. As an individual is more educated, we can expect a higher degree of modernization. In addition to this, the education level of the father of the individual should also be highly predictive of the level of modernization of the child. The children of more educated parents can be expected to be exposed to more modern ways of life thanks to the kind of place they live or the things they can afford to do because of the high income that higher education indirectly provides.

The numeric value of the education level of the individual and his/her father is added and a single variable of education level is constructed.

3) The kind of building one lives in: It can be argued that people with a higher level of modernization live in better houses. It makes sense that people who are more modernized live in better life conditions and therefore better houses while less modernized will live, for example, in shanty towns or other buildings with worse conditions.

4) The number of people who live in the same household: The traditional Turkish and Kurdish families normally live in crowded households, with their extended families. With modernization, more and more families abandon this lifestyle and start to live with the nuclear family, only consisting of the parents and the children.

5) Secularization level: Secularization is another key factor of modernization theories. A modern society is secular and the individual is expected to be more secular when modernized.

I construct this variable from two different questions in the survey. I will add the numeric values of the answers to these two questions in order to construct a single variable of secularization.

6) Feeling of belonging to a clan (only asked to Kurds): This question should be indicative of the level of development of the individual since as one modernizes, the ties to the clan, which is not a modern type of social organization, should be weakened.

7) Giving one's own political decisions (only asked to Kurds): An important property of the modern individual is the ability to give one's own political decisions, without being under influence of traditional power figures (Inkeles and Smith 1999, 290). Another factor that the modern individual possesses is politization (Inkeles 1983, 31), so I accept individuals who give their own political decisions and who give political decisions under the influence of

their party as more modern and the rest, being under the influence of traditional figures are coded as non-modern for this variable.

Table 1- The Independent Variables, as asked in the questionnaire.

Variable	Question in the Survey	Coding and Level	The Group the Question Applies to
Income level	What is the average income in your household, including everybody's and all kind?	Ordinal 1-6 (Under 300 TL, 300-700 TL, 701-1200 TL, 1201-2000 TL, 2001-3000 TL, Over 3001 TL)	Both Kurds and Turks
Own Education Level	What is your educational background; what is the highest degree you obtained?	Categorical 1-6 (Illiterate with no schooling, Literate with no graduation, Graduated primary school, Graduated middle school, Graduated high school, College or above)	Both Kurds and Turks
Father's Education Level	What is your father's educational background; what is the highest degree he obtained?	Categorical 1-6 (Illiterate with no schooling, Literate with no graduation, Graduated primary school, Graduated middle school, Graduated high school, College or above)	Both Kurds and Turks
The kind of building one lives	The kind of the building inhabited (To be filled by the interviewer)	Categorical 1-6 (Shanty house, Traditional detached house, Apartment with no external coating, Apartment with external coating, House in a building complex, Luxurious building or villa)	Both Kurds and Turks
Number of people living in the same household	How many individuals (including children) live in this house?	Ordinal 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, more than 9	Both Kurds and Turks
Secularization – a	Everyone defines oneself according to the features they care about most. How important is it for you to define yourself by: Your religion / religious sect	Continous 1-5 (Lower value means less important)	Both Kurds and Turks
Secularization – b	According to you, how necessary is it to be a Muslim in order to be a Turkish citizen?	Continous 1-5 (Lower value means less necessary)	Both Kurds and Turks
Feeling of belonging to a clan	Do you feel that you are member of a clan?	Dichotomous (Yes-no question)	Kurds only
Giving one's own political decisions	What is your political "kible" ⁴ ? In other words, which of these are more influential in your political evaluations and decisions?	Categorical 1-6 (My tribe and tribal chieftain, My religious leader – sheikh – religious community, Elderly of the family whom I respect, Local administrators like muhtar ⁵ or mayor, My party, None; I give my own	Kurds only

⁴ Kible is the direction to which Muslims orient themselves while praying. Here, it is used as a metaphor of asking the most important figure while one gives political decisions.

⁵ Muhtar is the head of the village or the neighborhood.

Table 2- The Independent Variables - recoded

Variable and Abbreviation	Coding and Level	The Group the Variable is Operationalized for
Income level (income)	Ordinal 1-6 (Under 300 TL, 300-700 TL, 701-1200 TL, 1201-2000 TL, 2001-3000 TL, Over 3001 TL)	Both Kurds and Turks
The sum of own and father's education level (edu)	Categorical 0-10	Both Kurds and Turks
The kind of building one lives in (building)	Categorical 1-6 (Shanty house, Traditional detached house, Apartment with no external coating, Apartment with external coating, House in a building complex, Luxurious building or villa)	Both Kurds and Turks
The number of people who live in the same household (household)	Ordinal 0-3 (more than 9, 6-8, 3-5, 1-2)	Both Kurds and Turks
Secularization (secularization)	Continuous 0-8	Both Kurds and Turks
Feeling of belonging to a clan (clan)	Dichotomous 0=Yes, 1=No	Kurds Only
Giving one's own political decisions (pol_dec)	Dichotomous 0= Traditional figures, 1= According to the party or own decisions	Kurds Only

4.2.2. The Dependent Variables

The dependent variable is the attitudes of the individual towards the ethnic conflict and the other group. There are 4 dependent variables: accepting an individual from other ethnicity as, child-in-law, neighbor, and business partner; how one perceives Turkish ethnicity necessary in order to be a Turkish citizen; the level of agreement if military solutions is the only way for solving the Kurdish question; and the the willingness of the individual to live in Turkey. The first three of these are operationalized for Turks, and first, second and the fourth are operationalized for the Kurds.

1) Accepting an individual from the other ethnicity (Turk/Kurd) as their, child-in-law/spouse, neighbor and business partner: I believe that this question is a good indicator of willingness of the individual with the people of other ethnicity and therefore it is a decent indicator of attitudes towards the other group. For instance, if one says he/she will be

uncomfortable with a spouse from the other ethnicity, it can be expected that these people will be less willing to accept to live peacefully with people from other ethnicity, which can be an indicator of a possible conflict.

I operationalize this variable from accepting people from other ethnicity as : i- spouse or child-in-law, ii- neighbor, iii- business partner. If answers to all these are positive, then I code this variable as positive. If answer to at least one of these questions is negative, then I code this variable as negative.

2) Perceiving Turkish ethnic origin necessary to be a Turkish citizen: The answer to this question also should reflect how open individuals are to live with the people from other ethnicity. If an individual who says she is an ethnic Kurd is not accepted as a Turkish citizen in the perceptions of other people, this could lead to a conflictual environment and decrease the chances that people of different ethnicity live together peacefully. Also, from the point of view of Turks, it shows how they perceive cultural demands by Kurds, which is one of the leading sources of the conflict. “Largely psychological ‘boundaries’ between ethnic groups are not fixed” (Kirişçi and Winrow 1997, 121), therefore an inclusive attitude towards the Kurds may help two groups live peacefully. On the other side, from the perception of Kurds, the answer to this question shows the degree of their feeling of belonging to the country. This is important since if they feel that they do not belong to the country, secessionist demands could increase, which will further increase the conflict.

3) Agreeing whether eliminating ‘terror’ is the only way to the solution of the conflict (Operationalized for Turkish individuals only): Considering that eliminating the ‘terror’ means eliminating the PKK, which is military operations, which, in turn, intensifies the radicalization of the Kurds, this variable reflects the willingness of the people for a peaceful solution to the conflict. If an individual sees military operation as the only solution, ignoring the problems and demands of the other side, it is highly unlikely that that person will be open

to a peaceful solution and it is unlikely that he/she can live peacefully together with Kurdish people. In addition to this, if this is the most popular view in the public, the state and the government will have more incentives to follow a violent strategy.

I use this question for only Turkish people because this question will not be indicative of attitudes of Kurds to violence. The violence implied by this question is directed towards Kurds themselves.

4) Degree of willingness to live in Turkey and be a Turkish citizen (Operationalized for Kurdish individuals only): If the Kurdish individuals do not like being a minority in Turkey but still have to live here since they have no opportunity of living elsewhere, they would be more likely to get involved in a conflict, but if they are content with living in this country, the likelihood of radicalization will be lower.

Table 3 - The Dependent variables, as asked in the questionnaire

Variable	Question in the Survey	Coding and Level	The Group the Question Applies to
Accepting an individual from the other ethnicity as spouse or child-in-law - a	Would you accept an individual from other ethnicity (Turk/Kurd) as your: spouse or child-in-law?	Dichotomous	Both Kurds and Turks
Accepting an individual from the other ethnicity as business partner - b	Would you accept an individual from other ethnicity (Turk/Kurd) as your: business partner?	Dichotomous	Both Kurds and Turks
Accepting an individual from the other ethnicity as neighbor- c	Would you accept an individual from other ethnicity (Turk/Kurd) as your: neighbor?	Dichotomous	Both Kurds and Turks
Perceiving Turkish ethnic origin necessary to be a Turkish citizen	How necessary is it to be an ethnic Turk in order to be accepted as a Turkish citizen?	Continuous 1-5 (Lower value means less necessary)	Both Kurds and Turks
Agreeing if eliminating the 'terror' is the only way to the solution of the conflict	Do you agree that eliminating 'terror' is the only way to the solution of the conflict?	Continuous 1-5 (Lower value means more disagreeing)	Kurds only
Degree of willingness to live in Turkey and be a Turkish citizen	I would choose to live in Turkey even if I had the opportunity of living in another country	Continuous 1-5 (Lower value means less willing)	Kurds only

Table 4 – The Dependent variables, recoded

Variable and Abbreviation	Coding and Level	The Group the Question is Operationalized for
Accepting an individual from the other ethnicity as spouse or child-in-law / neighbor / business partner (living_together)	Dichotomous 1= Accepts, 2= Does not accept	Both Kurds and Turks
Perceiving Turkish ethnic origin necessary to be a Turkish citizen (perceiving_tr)	Continuous 1-5 (Higher value means more likely to get involved in conflict)	Both Kurds and Turks
Agreeing if eliminating the ‘terror’ is the only way to the solution of the conflict (eliminating_terror)	Continuous 1-5 (Higher value means more likely to get involved in conflict)	Turks only
Degree of willingness to live in Turkey and be a Turkish citizen (living_in_tr)	Continuous 1-5 (Higher value means more likely to get involved in conflict)	Kurds only

4.2.3. Control Variables

1) Age: Older age may be argued to decrease the radicalization of the individual. Yet, I do not expect any effect of the age of the respondent on the dependent variable.

2) Gender: Male individuals may be argued to be more radical and mobilized than the females. But, I do not think that the gender of the individual has any significant effect on his/her propensity to ethnic conflict.

3) Vote Choice: It is possible that the party choice is effecting the perceptions of the individuals on this specific issue. Therefore, I will control for past and possible future votes.

4) If the interviewee was directly effected by the conflict: The people who are directly effected by the conflict can be more radical since they are personally hurt. I construct this variable from six sub-questions: i- If someone from their close family was injured or died, ii- If they were subject to forced displacements(my village was burnt by the army or I was threatened), iii-If they migrated due to the conflict, iv- If they economically suffered, v- If they were taken to the police station and/or put on trial because of a reason related to the ethnic conflict, vi- If they received maltreatment from the people who lived in the same place with them.

This variable is reconstructed as such: If at least one of the answers to this question is yes, then this variable is coded as positive. If answers to all of these questions is no, then the variable is coded as negative.

Table 5 - The Control Variables - recoded

Variable	Coding and Level	The Group the Question Applies to
Age (age)	Interval 1-3 (18-28, 29-43, more than 44)	Both Kurds and Turks
Gender (gender)	Categorical, Nominal 1(Female), 2(Male)	Both Kurds and Turks
Future Vote choice (vote_f)	Categorical 1(AKP), 2(CHP), 3(MHP), 4(BDP), 5(SP), 6(DSP), 7(DP), 8(ÖDP)	Both Kurds and Turks
Past Vote choice (vote_p)	Categorical 1(AKP), 2(CHP), 3(DYP), 4(GP), 5(MHP), 6(ÖDP), 7(SP), 8(DTP)	Both Kurds and Turks
Being directly effected by the conflict (effected_conflict)	Dichotomous 1 (Not effected), 2(Effected)	Both Kurds and Turks

4.3 Methods and Model Building

Since there are independent and dependent variables which only apply for one ethnic group, different models are tested according to which group the variable applies, first in subsets according to ethnicity and afterwards with interaction variables. Another reason for creating subsets is that there are two questions that were only asked to Kurds and can not be included in a model with Turks. So, I created two subsets from the dataset, Turks and Kurds. In the first three models, I tested the *living_together*, *perceiving_tr* and *living_in_tr* variables only for the Kurdish subsample. I tested all three dependent variables for the subset of Kurds since it was the only way to include *clan* and *pol_dec* variables, that only applied to Kurds, in the analysis. In the last model, I tested the *eliminating_terror* variable, which was only operationalized for Turks.

In the latter part, I built two models from the whole sample, using interaction variables, calculating the interaction between being a Kurd and the independent, and control variables. The advantage of this method is that it is very easy to see if there is a difference between being a Kurd and Turk for that specific variable. The dependent variables are *living_together* and *perceiving_tr*; the variables that apply to both groups. These models did not include the two independent variables that only applied to Kurds since doing the analysis with interaction variables in this case would not be meaningful due to the independent variables that are specific for the Kurds.

Two different methods are used for different dependent variables. For *living_together*, I used logistic regression because the dependent variable is dichotomous. For the other three dependent variables, I used OLS regression since they were continuous and the variables satisfied the OLS regression assumptions.

Chapter 5. Empirical Results and Discussion

5.1 Results

5.1.1 The Analysis with the Subsets

Table 6- Results for Willingness to Live Together

Dependent Variable: living_together	Sample: Kurds Method: Logistic Regression		
Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	p-value
intercept	0.961	0.449	0.032*
income	0.153	0.098	0.120
education	0.132	0.059	0.025*
building type	-0.148	0.085	0.082 .
household size	-0.208	0.144	0.149
secularization	-0.208	0.069	0.002**
clan (no)	-0.431	0.266	0.105
pol_dec (modern)	-0.189	0.224	0.398
age2 (29-43)	0.303	0.272	0.265
age3 (>44)	0.532	0.322	0.099 .
gender (male)	-0.704	0.223	0.001**
effected_conflict (yes)	-0.644	0.242	0.007**

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

Table7- Results for Perceiving Turkish Ethnicity as a Prerequisite

Dependent Variable: perceiving_tr	Sample: Kurds Method: OLS Regression		
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
intercept	2.152	0.182	0.000***
income	0.023	0.041	0.563
education	0.022	0.024	0.357
building type	0.053	0.034	0.123
household size	0.076	0.058	0.193
secularization	-0.165	0.028	0.000***
clan belonging (no)	0.389	0.112	0.0005***
pol_dec (modern)	-0.306	0.091	0.0009***
voting for BDP	-0.576	-1.192	0.0006***
effected_conflict (yes)	0.239	0.098	0.015

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

Table8- Results for Willingness to Live in Turkey

Dependent Variable:	Sample: Kurds Method: OLS Regression		
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
living_in_tr			
intercept	1.653	0.213	0.000***
income	-0.040	0.047	0.392
education	0.040	0.028	0.154
building type	0.120	0.040	0.002**
household size	0.100	0.068	0.144
secularization	-0.164	0.032	0.000***
clan belonging (no)	-0.335	0.129	0.010*
pol_dec (modern)	-0.055	0.106	0.605
effected_conflict (yes)	-0.213	0.129	0.010 .

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

Table 9- Results for Thoughts on Eliminating Terror

Dependent Variable:	Sample: Turks Method: OLS Regression		
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
eliminating_terror			
intercept	4.238	0.068	0.000***
income	-0.022	0.012	0.078 .
education	-0.001	0.007	0.833
building type	-0.021	0.010	0.045*
household size	-0.006	0.020	0.742
secularization	-0.104	0.008	0.000***
age2 (29-43)	0.025	0.034	0.470
age3 (>44)	0.093	0.038	0.014*
effected_conflict (yes)	0.035	0.028	0.216

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

5.1.2 The analysis with Interaction Variables

Table 10- Results for Willingness to Live Together, Interactions Added

Dependent Variable: living_together		Sample: Both Kurds and Turks Method: Logistic Regression	
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
intercept	1.529	0.143	0.000***
kurd	-1.607	0.044	0.0003***
income	-0.028	0.027	0.303
income*kurd	0.026	0.103	0.016*
education	0.027	0.016	0.099 .
education*kurd	0.083	0.061	0.171
building type	-0.099	0.022	0.000***
building type*kurd	-0.026	0.091	0.775
household size	0.0005	0.043	0.989
household size*kurd	-0.288	0.148	0.051 .
secularization	-0.231	0.017	0.000***
secularization*kurd	0.010	0.072	0.880
age2 (29-43)	-0.086	0.076	0.255
age3 (>44)	-0.203	0.082	0.013*
gender (male)	-0.124	0.057	0.030*
gender (male)*kurd	-0.063	0.229	0.005**
effected_conflict (yes)	0.092	0.062	0.139
effected_conflict(yes)*kurd	0.610	0.251	0.015*
vote for MHP	0.666	0.150	0.000***
vote for BDP	-0.671	0.338	0.047*

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

Table 11- Results for Perceiving Turkish Ethnicity as a Prerequisite, Interactions Added

Dependent Variable: perceiving_tr		Sample: Both Kurds and Turks Method: OLS Regression	
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
intercept	3.421	0.065	0.000***
kurd	-0.775	0.202	0.0001***
income	-0.054	0.012	0.000***
income*kurd	0.108	0.047	0.022*
education	-0.001	0.007	0.839
education*kurd	0.002	0.027	0.929
building type	0.006	0.010	0.551
building type*kurd	0.038	0.040	0.337
household size	0.051	0.020	0.010*
household size*kurd	0.070	0.065	0.281
secularization	-0.285	0.007	0.000***
secularization*kurd	0.140	0.031	0.000***
age2 (29-43)	0.059	0.034	0.086 .
age3 (>44)	0.068	0.037	0.071 .
gender (male)	-0.002	0.026	0.935
gender (male) *kurd	-0.194	0.103	0.059 .
effected_conflict (yes)	0.008	0.028	0.774
effected_conflict(yes)*kurd	-0.210	0.106	0.048*
vote for MHP	0.241	0.064	0.0002***
vote for BDP	-0.303	0.122	0.013*

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 . p<0.1

5.2 Discussion of Results

Discussion of results for willingness to live together

In the subset for the Kurds, four independent variables, *belonging to a clan*, *giving one's own political decisions*, *income* and *household size* do not have a significant effect on the willingness to accept Turks in their daily lives, as expected. Other three independent variables have statistical significance. The variables *education* and *building type* are positively correlated, the former at the 0.05 level and the latter at 0.1 level of significance. This means that as the individuals have more education and live in better housing, they are less willing to live with the other ethnic group. A possible reason for this can be provided by the socio-psychological theories: being educated longer, people can become aware of the inequalities between the ethnic groups, probably get exposed to some discrimination and therefore ethnically radicalize. Interestingly, *secularization* variable has a negative significance at the 0.01 level of significance. More secular people are less likely to get involved in conflict, different than all other variables. The explanation for this relationship can be that secularization of the individual can lead to diffusion, as predicted by Deutsch and create a new identity, above religious and ethnic affiliations. Lastly, two control variables attract attention. First is *gender*, that is the males, surprisingly, are more willing to live together with the Turks and second is people who are directly affected from the conflict are less willing to live with the other.

The analysis of the same dependent variable on the whole sample, with interaction variables also reveals important results. First and most importantly, Kurds are more willing to live with Turks than Turks are willing to live with Kurds. The variable *kurd* is significant at the 0.001 level. For the Turkish sample, *income*, *building type* and *household size* variables have no significant effect, in contradiction to my expectations and only the *edu* variable has a significant positive relationship. Again, interestingly, secularization increases the willingness

to live with Kurds. Two points that are remarkable is the different relationships of the dependent variable with the nationalist party for the Kurds and the Turks. While voting for the Turkish nationalist party, MHP, has a positive relationship with the likelihood of being open to conflict and rejecting to live with the Kurds on the 0.001 level, voting for the ethnic Kurd party, BDP decreases the likelihood of rejecting living with Turks. BDP voters are more willing to live with the other group than any other party voter. Some control variables are also worth mentioning. While all other independent variables have no difference between the Turks and the Kurds, the effect of income on Kurds is significantly higher than the effect of income on Turks. Also, the effect of gender on Kurds is significantly lower than the effect of gender on Turks. Male Kurdish individuals are more likely to be willing to live with Turks.

Discussion of results for perceiving Turkish ethnicity as a prerequisite of Turkish citizenship

For the subset of Kurds, four independent variables, *income*, *education*, *building type* and *household size* have no significant effect on the dependent variable, as expected. The variable *belonging to a clan* has a positive effect on the 0.001 significance, which means individuals who do not feel belonging to a clan are more likely to get involved in conflict. On the other hand, *secularization* and *giving own political decisions* have a negative significant effect, on the level of 0.001 significance for both. The individuals who are more secular, and the ones who give their political decision independent of the influences of traditional figures are less likely to get involved in conflict. These results contradict each other, while some variables, which I expected to imply level of modernization has positive effect, have effect in a certain direction, some other variables have effect in the opposite direction.

The sample for the whole population, again, revealed both expected and unexpected results. Kurds are much less likely to see, with 0.001 significance, Turkish ethnicity necessary

in order to be a Turkish citizen. This means that Kurds are more likely to perceive themselves as Turkish citizens, under a civic national identity while Turks perceive assimilation to be the better way to live together. For the Turks, *income* and *secularization* have surprisingly negative effects, on the levels of 0.001 significance. More secular and richer individuals are more flexible in including other ethnic groups in the Turkish citizen definition. Only the *household size* variable has a positive effect, on the level of 0.01 significance, and *education* and *building type* have no significant effect. Two interaction variables show significant difference. Income and secularization make Kurds regard Turkish ethnicity more as a prerequisite of Turkish citizenship compared to Turks, the former on 0.05 and the latter 0.001 significance level. Again, voting for the ethnic nationalist parties makes crucial differences. While voters for MHP are much more likely to exclude people from other ethnic groups – with 0.001 significance – from Turkish citizenship, BDP voters, less often regard Turkish ethnicity as a prerequisite being significantly different on the level of 0.05.

Discussion of results for willingness to live in Turkey

Since this dependent variable was only operationalized for the Kurdish sample, I did the analysis only for the Kurdish subset. Four variables, *income*, *education*, *household size* and *giving own political decisions* have no significant effect, as expected. Variable *building type* has a negative relationship with 0.01 significance, *belonging to a clan* and *secularization* have positive relationships on the levels of 0.05 and 0.001 significances respectively. It is against my expectations and difficult to explain that feeling of a belonging to a clan and the type of the building one lives in have significant effect on the willingness of Kurdish individuals to live in the Turkish state, in different directions. While the one who feels less belonging to a clan, which should be an indicator of modernity, is less likely to be involved in ethnic conflict, the individuals who live in better housing conditions are more likely to get involved

in conflict. These two different results interestingly confirm two contradicting theories. Control variable being effected from conflict, as expected, increases the chance of radicalization, significant on the 0.1 level.

Discussion of results for agreeing if eliminating ‘terror’ is the only way to end the conflict

This variable, that was only operationalized for the Turkish sample, did not confirm any of my expectations. Variables *income*, *building type* and *secularization* have significant negative relationships while *education* and *household size* have no significant relationships. The variables that reveal a negative relationship imply that increasing modernization of the individual may decrease the intensity of the ethnic conflict, contrary to my hypothesis.

5.2.1 General Discussion of Results

On the whole, my expectation that modernization level should have no effect on the attitudes of the Kurdish individuals to the conflict and the other group, and should have a positive effect on the attitudes of the Turkish individuals is not confirmed for many of the dependent and independent variables. What is worse, some variables pointed to a relationship in the opposite direction for the Turkish subsample. But, there are also some consistent results, such as secularization decreasing the hostile attitudes of the individuals from both groups, with a high significance level of 0.001 for all dependent variables, except for one that is significant on the 0.01 level. The *level of income* and the *number of the people living in the household* also confirmed my expectations for the Kurds for all three dependent variables, it had no significant relationship with any of them. But, all other independent variables, especially for the Turks, yielded different results for at least one dependent variable.

A likely reason for getting such different results can be that my dependent variables may not be perfectly measuring what I want to measure, that is the attitudes of the individuals towards the other group and the ethnic conflict, as an indicator of likelihood of getting

involved in ethnic conflict, and therefore its intensity. These variables were operationalized from questions that are most likely to reflect the attitudes towards the conflict and the other group, but a problem may be that these attitudes are not directly implying the likelihood of getting involved in conflict. There may be other factors that intensify the degree of the ethnic conflict that were not included in the analysis.

Another problem about the operationalization may be about the independent variables. While measuring modernization, I followed the properties that the modern individual possessed that were defined in Inkeles (1983) and Inkeles and Smith (1999). As I mentioned before, the independent variables that I could pick were limited, and some of them can be argued not to be directly related to the modernization of the individual, for example the type of building. It is relatively easy to change this in short time periods, and an individual who comes from a rural background, without any education and pre-modern attitudes may earn a huge amount of money and live in better housing conditions. In addition, operationalization of the variables can be problematic in some cases. None of the independent variables were infinite and continuous in the survey, but they were mostly categorical or ordinal and I further restricted some into dichotomous categories such as the *giving own political decisions*. My recoding of some variables may also be problematic, for example again for *giving own political decisions* variable, I lose the information between the individuals who give their political decisions under influence of different figures.

One last reason I can speculate, for the Kurdish case, can be that although there are instances of all types of effect of modernization, assimilation, and mobilization, one of these can be more common and therefore more dominant, so there is significant relationship for some variables instead of no significant relationship as expected.

For the Turkish case, there is also a very high possibility that my hypothesis that, modernization increases ethnic conflict, is wrong. Although in exceptional instances we can

see positive relationship, I believe that this is only coincidence and the only solution to understand the phenomenon better and construct a more robust theory is a more detailed analysis of the complex dynamics of Turkish society, and mobilization and radicalization of the Turkish nationalism.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Having evolved into a bloody conflict that is visible in daily lives, starting from a political rivalry between elites, the Kurdish question is a very complex and multi-dimensional problem. The aim of this thesis was to explore the causes of the conflict from one aspect, on the relationship between the level of individual modernization and the intensity of the ethnic conflict. Although the results of the statistical analysis did not fit most of my expectations, I believe that this study raises important aspects of the problem to attention.

In the qualitative parts, the multi-dimensionality and the intricacies of the problem were discussed and I argued that the problem could not be understood from only one perspective, or explained by one theory. I hypothesized that, carrying examples of different causes of mobilization and different consequences of modernization, the radicalization of the Kurdish society could be understood from perspectives of several different theories. On the other hand, I expected the mobilization of the core group, Turkish society to conform to the socio-psychological approaches in the literature.

The inference that can be made from the quantitative analysis, which did not yield any single result can be that this conflict is more complicated than it seems and therefore needs further scrutiny. This study can be improved in several ways. Firstly, a more encompassing survey, specifically designed about the relationship between modernization and ethnic conflict can help overcome the possible problems of measurement. Nevertheless, the survey used here, as far as I know, is the best that fits these purposes although many variables are problematic and many questions that would be useful for measuring modernization were not included in it. Another way to obtain more robust results can be a different way of operationalization of the variables, but it still needs a different survey since the questions in this survey contained mostly categorical. Finally, regarding the complexity of the case, a more

elaborate, deep and detailed investigation and analysis of the case, in a longer study, can improve this one and overcome its weaknesses, or even negate the expectations with any findings that were not considered here.

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