TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

School of Economics and Business Administration

Department of International Relations

Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies

Juhana Pajari

KURDS: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Bachelor Thesis

Supervisor: Vlad Vernygora

Tallinn 2016

I declare I have written the bachelor's thesis independently.
All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

……

(signature, date)

Student's code: **a130257**
Student's email address: **juhana.pajari@hotmail.com**

Supervisor
The thesis conforms to the requirements set for the bachelor's theses

……
(signature, date)

Chairman of defence committee:
Permitted to defence

…….
(Title, name, signature, date)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This paper is an analysis of the discourse revolving around Kurdish issues. The Kurds, often referred to as the world's largest nation without a state, have been denied statehood since the aftermath of the First World War. Contemporary developments in the Middle East have brought the Kurdish quest for statehood back to attention. This paper analyses the discourse on Kurdish issues, keeping to a singular question in mind – how is the Kurdish problem understood? In exploring this question, it will become apparent that the contemporary Kurdish discourse is fragmented. This fragmentation is demonstrated through comparing and contrasting different representations of the Kurdish problem. Fragmentation is thus observed on two levels; firstly, within the discourse that takes place over the Kurds in Turkey, and secondly, between the discourse of Turkish Kurds and the Kurds outside Turkey. The analysis will finally be placed in the context of the theories of international relations. In that regard, it will be argued that the fragmentation between the theories themselves contributes to the fragmented nature of the discourse.

Keywords: *discourse analysis, Kurds, Turkey, Iraq, states, ethnic conflict, theories of international relations*

INTRODUCTION

The political landscape in the Middle East is in the midst of experiencing drastic change, and such changes have once again raised the question of what to do with the Kurds. Despite being promised an independent state of Kurdistan in the aftermath of the First World War and the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, this never came to pass, and the Kurds have remained the largest nation without a state ever since. Relatively recent developments have altered the Kurdish condition; Syria as a state has broken, and its Kurds have wrestled control over their own territories, fulfilled with the sentiment of breaking away from oppression and being finally able to determine their own fate.

In Iraq too, since the government of Saddam Hussein was deposed, the Kurds inhabiting the areas of northern Iraq have managed to slowly carve out for themselves a properly autonomous Kurdish region with a democratically elected government. In Turkey, the conflict between the Kurdistan Worker's Party, the PKK in short, and the Turkish state is seemingly not showing any signs of becoming resolved, despite apparent attempts to bring the decades long conflict to a close.

In light of these developments, there is speculation about the coming of age of a Kurdish state, and a very clear desire to understand the Kurdish conflict in general. While scholars have been quick to offer views, ideas and stories about the Kurds and their shared plight, it is worthwhile to question, how coherently the scholarly community is actually able to address the Kurdish predicament. For example, a key normative assessment is pointedly missing in the debate – should the Kurds be entitled to their own state? It is the purpose of this paper, therefore, to present analysis of the prevailing discourse on Kurdish issues in order to bring to light its fractures and discrepancies.

Methodologically, this is achieved through mapping the various representations of the Kurdish discourse. This results in the various representations of the discourse to be clustered into groups, where they share similar underlying assumptions and findings about the conflict.

Through identifying the shared themes, and thus identifying the clusters, or positions in the discourse, the differing views are then qualitatively compared and contrasted. Through this process it is possible to see how well these clusters of discourse fit together, or complement each other.

Theoretically, it is possible to think of four levels on how various positions can meet; they might fully complement each other, they might partly overlap in their explanations, they might not meet at all, neither complementing nor challenging each other, or they might be in blatant contradiction of each other. However, this paper will come to find the two latter positions to apply most often in the Kurdish discourse, particularly on the point of simply not meeting. For this reason, the Kurdish discourse as such is assessed to be fragmented.

This paper will begin by addressing the larger part of the discourse that revolves around the Kurdish question in Turkey. It will identify the unifying themes within that discourse, then point to its discrepancies. Next, ethnographic studies looking to build an image of the Kurdish identity, within the discourse of the Kurdish question in Turkey, will be presented as a key position. The discourse relating to outside Turkey is then introduced, and the discourse in Turkey will be put in contrast to it.

Finally, as all research within the field of international relations ought to be informed by the theories of international relations, so too this paper will place the discourse it analyses within the context of the theoretical frameworks and arguments that have emerged in the long debate over the nature of international relations. Because internal divisions within the theoretical spectrum of international relations exist, such divisions can ultimately be seen as contributing to a distorted image of the Kurdish discourse.

1. TURKEY AND KURDS: DISCURSIVE THEMES

1.1. Historical Representations Play a Role in the Conflict

There are a few general impressions that may be derived from the sample of works that this paper will come to analyse more deeply. These impressions do not claim to be informed on the entire scope of discourse on the Kurds, which for the purpose of this paper is far too much to cover, but they are from a sample of works that represent such discourse. As such, though impressions they may be, they may offer some vestige of truth concerning the matter at hand.

To begin with, when it comes to the Kurdish disputes, the problems in Turkey appear most prominently discussed. While the research material for this paper was being determined, articles concentrating specifically on Kurdish-Turkish relations appeared to be presently most in abundance. Often too, perhaps, these papers seemed to analyse the conflict from quite a narrow and well-defined perspective, perhaps more so than papers focusing on other Kurdish regions. Because of such a Turkish focus, it seems also appropriate for this paper to start by analysing the trends involving the discussion on Turkish Kurds.

As a further impression, there seems to be a striking tendency for Turkish scholars, coming from Turkish institutions, to concentrate on this issue in particular. But this should not be anything too surprising, because Turkey has been severely afflicted by the Kurdish conflict for a long time. This means that they should want to understand it too. The Kurds are, to be sure, quite a sizable nation, often referred to as the largest nation without a state (Gunter 2014), and as such, their population in Turkey is quite significant too. For example, in the estimates represented by Gunter (2014), the amount of Kurds living in Turkey is around 15 million, 6.5 million in Iran, 5 million in Iraq and 2 million in Syria. This is to say that Turkey is hosting by far the largest mass of the Kurds, a relative 20% of the entire Turkish population. Logically, the more people involved in a conflict, the larger the conflict.

But there is another, perhaps more convincing argument as to why Turkey may be so invested in studying the conflict. It might have to do with how the conflict is understood, or

more specifically, how there seems to be an apparent lack of understanding the conflict. First and foremost, in order for any conflict to be potentially resolved, there has to be at least an understanding of why the conflict really exists in the first place. In Turkey, however, the Kurdish conflict is quite as old as its modern state. Although it is true that some periods in its history have been less violent than others, the military struggle between the Kurds and the Turkish state is today as alive as ever. Because it should be far from the sphere of interest of Turkey to suffer from a never ending armed insurgency within its borders, there is a compelling argument in that it fails to resolve this conflict stemming from a lack of understanding it, rather than a lack of will to resolve it.

This argument may indeed be explored further in examining the different ways in which the conflict is explained. As will be demonstrated further on, the views on the conflict are as varying as the writers. However, certain major themes can be identified underlying most writing, the first of these manifesting as paying respect to the history of the conflict. For instance, Yegen (2009) writes about the conflict from the point of view of what kind of a role citizenship plays in Turkey, or what the Turkish citizenship actually means. To present his point, he relies almost exclusively on historical sociology. This is to say, he explores how the meaning and understanding of citizenship has evolved in Turkey over the history of its modern state. What the paper gives to understand, is that the current condition is the result of historical processes.

Similarly, Gunter (2014) likes to write in terms of statistical facts and historical data. But whereas in Yegen (2009) the main focus is on the idea of citizenship, Gunter (2014) specifically sticks to explaining only history, which might indeed be the entirety of his understanding of the conflict. This is apparent in that Gunter (2014) does not write about any specific aspect of the conflict, but rather he speaks of the conflict in general. To him then, the conflict seems to be a chain of events in history. In this way, he covers not only the Kurds in Turkey, but in all their respective regions in Iran, Iraq and Syria too. Thus his paper is perhaps meant to be generally informative.

But it does pose a problem too, because such an approach leaves an impression, where the entire Kurdish struggle is reduced into a few handpicked events from history. When practising such discourse, major themes, such as dynamics of identity become entirely excluded. Not to mention all the other potentially relevant historical events that end left out of

the description. But there is an even deeper theoretical problem, which is best described by the post-structuralist argument (see Devetak 2009a).

Based on a post-structuralist view, all representations of history are always made by someone, for some purpose. Sometimes the powerful decide which historical representations are deemed correct, which are false, and which are to be entirely forgotten. The words used in creating a historical account matter too, as one and the same event may be described in an infinite amount of different ways. For example, in the modern world this problem has a tendency of manifesting in a way, where pictures and videos end up being spread over the Internet so that the background context is presented in different ways, or it is sometimes entirely fabricated. The point of the argument is that history is always used subjectively. (Devetak 2009a)

The point here is not, however, to undermine the importance of understanding history, but merely to emphasise the pitfall of basing an entire analysis on it. In most other works historical accounts are used too, but they are usually not provided as important in themselves, but rather to demonstrate deeper underlying dynamics at work. When writing about the mechanisms for the spread of ethnic conflict, Brathwaite (2014) traces historical processes to identify how such mechanisms might function.

Similarly, Balci & Kardaş (2016) establish a model for explaining the workings of the Turkish security environment leading to the failure of the Kurdish Opening in 2009. But because the modelling exists on a theoretical level, they make use of some historical representations to demonstrate how the model can be seen in the actual world. In their work, history is also used to help understand perceptions, and how those perceptions have led to certain outcomes.

In her reporting of the Kurdish struggle in Syria, on the border with Turkey, Krajeski (2015) is also heavily invested into the Kurdish perceptions of the conflict. While she primarily stays within the realm of present, she too paints a picture of the recent history of Kurds living in northern Syria. But again, history is perhaps not so much used for its own sake, but rather in an effort to create a deeper understanding of what the circumstances have been that have shaped the Kurdish experience and their perceptions. This is apparent in that Krajeski (2015) quite focuses on the different ways Kurds have suffered from repression and how they have resisted repression – it aims at creating an image of the Kurdish experience.

Nevertheless, the root theoretical problem does not quite go away. Because the history of the Kurdish conflict is already quite long, it is understandable that scholars and other writers too, in their search for understanding the conflict, look to history for clues. However, each writer has a tendency to display events and instances that they view to stand best in support of their claims, while excluding all else.

As a result, the validity of basing arguments on historical data may become problematic, when such support may end up only including favourable data and excluding such events that may challenge the arguments that are presented. But perhaps more importantly an environment is easily established, where everyone is talking about a different history. To elaborate, researchers create their own models based on their assumptions and understanding of the world, and they then make history fit those assumptions as if to prove them right. The result is a number of quite original views that do not necessarily compete, but do not exactly complement one another either, because they seem to exist in a world of their own.

1.2. Understanding Perceptions Matters

The role of history aside, there is another element that clearly surfaces in the assessment of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey. This one namely has to do with differing perceptions on the conflict by its relevant parties, the Turks and the Kurds. In this regard, the particular event called the Habur Incident becomes central in a few writings. In Balci & Kardaş (2016), the Habur Initiative is described as "designed as part of the Kurdish Opening to facilitate the cohabitation and peaceful return of the PKK (Kurdish Worker's Party) militants from Turkey's Iraq border gate (Habur) as a gesture of peace upon the recommendation of Öcalan."

In other words, the initiative was the by-product of the Kurdish Opening in 2009, an attempt by the government to soothe tensions between the Turks and the Kurds and to potentially find a final solution to the conflict. The Habur Incident, then, seen as both the initiative and its aftermath, was somewhat widely credited with putting to rest the whole Kurdish Opening (see Balci & Kardaş 2016; Pusane 2014). Yet the reasons for why it did so are not necessarily obvious; there was no real act of violence of any kind committed by either side of the conflict.

But the underlying theme, which has to do with perceptions and, perhaps more precisely, the politics of identity, is quite central to the Habur Incident. The incident itself

revolved around Kurdish PKK militants being allowed entrance to Turkey from the side of Iraq (Habur) as a sort of 'peace envoys' (Balci & Kardaş 2016). The militants, significantly wearing military uniforms, were welcomed as heroes by large masses of Kurds (Balci & Kardaş 2016). Balci & Kardaş (2016) then described the initiative as "[having] constituted a clear case of misperception by all political blocs."

This misperception was apparent in the Turkish nationalist backlash to the incident; according to Pusane (2014), the Turks and particularly the Turkish government misperceived the festive welcome of the PKK militants as a display of ethnic nationalism, or consequently separatism from the Turkish state, as opposed to the mild cultural nationalism that was perhaps hoped for. Balci & Kardaş (2016) also observe a misperception of the incident by the Turks in general, but they note more specifically the reactions of the different factions within the Turkish society. They place these reactions accordingly under the framework they have established about a Turkish security trilemma, where the pro-Islamic government, the state parties and the PKK all display individually their views about their security needs in relation to the others. But both seem to agree that the incident displayed a wide scale misperception, confusion or ambiguity in the Turkish understanding of Kurdish motivations.

Though his writing missed the consequences of the Habur incident, Yegen (2009) too makes note of a singular event where the actions themselves are seemingly unremarkable, but how the actions were perceived is of essence. Yegen (2009) speaks of the flag incident relating to the 2005 Newroz demonstrations, where a Turkish flag was 'desecrated' by two young Kurds. As a response, Turkish officials and media portrayed the perpetrators of these actions as 'pseudo-citizens' of the Turkish community. Remarking this incident and its consequences is of course in line with Yegen's (2009) assertions that there is a very clear distinction between having Turkish citizenship and being Turkish as such.

Indeed, understanding how the matter of citizenship is perceived in Turkey is perhaps quite relevant to the conflict, because the Kurds do not appear to perceive themselves as Turkish, nor do the Turks really seem to accept the Kurds as Turkish (Yegen 2009). For instance, the flag incident shows that the Kurds strongly display their own symbols, such as pictures of Abdullah Öcalan and their own flags, and at the same time desecrate the Turkish flag, all of which would imply a Kurdish resentment for being considered Turkish (Yegen 2009). The Turkish reaction, on the other hand, is rooted in the concept that Kurds are some

kind of quasi-citizens, invited to become Turkish but far from having achieved the status of what is considered Turkish (Yegen 2009).

On this note, the conflict has been described by Başer & Çelik (2014) to perhaps be the result of a wide scale misperception of each other by the entire communities of Turks and Kurds, which the previous remarks about citizenship might appear to support. This misperception is also described as a social gap, or a gap in understanding that exists between the two societies, and it is at the heart of how Başer & Çelik (2014) have researched the issue. But a similar notion of a cognitive gap can also be found in Balci & Kardaş (2016), though they seem to explain it as a natural result of the environment created by the security trilemma, which is presented in their writing.

Regardless, Başer & Çelik (2014) give critique of views that only regard certain limited range of actors or agents as relevant in the conflict, such as the state authorities and the PKK, in the Turkish case. In this event, both the problems and the solutions are always looked to originate in the particular institutions established to represent the two peoples respectively, but less defined groups, such as the youth (in Başer & Çelik 2014), are excluded from considerations altogether.

Such criticism by Başer & Çelik (2014) would definitely fall on Pusane (2014), who strictly sticks to the Turkish government and the PKK as being the only relevant parties to the conflict. Pusane's (2014) view in this regard is clear, because the core understanding in his writing of why the conflict persists is centred on the political dividedness of both the Turkish and Kurdish representation. For example, the Turkish government is divided in its approach to the conflict resolution, because the voters themselves are divided between the spectrum of hard-line Turkish nationals, who might view the Kurdish struggle as nothing short of treacherous to the state, and more liberal Turks, who might support Kurdish cultural freedom (Pusane 2014). Particularly in fearing to alienate the support of those carrying a strong nationalist sentiment, the Turkish government has been reluctant to make too radical concessions to the Kurds (Pusane 2014).

And yet the same problem may be observed on the Kurdish side, where the PKK has numerous sub-divisions in the form of various institutions and political parties (Pusane 2014). In this respect, the Turkish government has primarily been carrying out negotiations with the imprisoned Abdullah Öcalan, who has been imagined to be the absolute leader of the PKK (Pusane 2014). Yet Öcalan might in fact have much less influence in the PKK as a whole than

he has been given credit for, and the different factions carrying their own leaders within the PKK are sometimes divided in their views of how to react in response to the developments that happen within the conflict (Pusane 2014).

Undoubtedly Pusane (2014) makes a valid observation about the conflict. However, this observation includes merely the bodies of leadership representing both the Turks and the Kurds. When the argument is drawn, which states that the inability to solve the conflict arises from political dividedness within both the Kurds and the Turks, it excludes every other factor contributing to the continuation of the conflict. This is effectively what Başer & Çelik (2014) criticise much of the scholarly writing on the issue for. What Başer & Çelik (2014) then want to emphasise, is a larger misunderstanding and distrust that exists between the Turkish and Kurdish peoples as such, i.e. the social or cognitive gap.

The notion of a cognitive gap arises then as the result of a common misperception of the Kurds by the Turks and vice versa (Balci & Kardaş 2016; Başer & Çelik 2014). Başer & Çelik (2014) identify that, for the Kurdish youth, social exclusion is perceived to be a major contributing factor to the conflict; the Turks tend to visualise all Kurds as part of the PKK and as terrorists, because they have little contact with Kurds in their daily lives and their image is hence solely formed on negative impressions of the Kurds and Kurdish terrorism portrayed in Turkish mainstream media. Because the Turk will act based on this impression, he will further not wish to interact with any Kurds, nor to do business with them, nor to invest in their region, nor to potentially work or live in the Kurdish dominated regions (Başer & Çelik 2014).

Also as a result, the Kurds experience racism and the need to hide their Kurdishness whenever they meet Turks (Başer & Çelik 2014), which can be expected to lead to a Kurdish image of the common Turk as a racist oppressor. These false images effectively create structures of oppression too. The economic hardship experienced by the Kurds was quickly attributed to Turks being unwilling to invest into the Kurdish region (Başer & Çelik 2014). But understandably a Turk, who already views Kurds in general as violent terrorists, does not wish to invest his money into a predominantly Kurdish region.

According to the Kurdish young interviewed by Başer & Çelik (2014), these misperceptions might be corrected if the Turks moved into Kurdish areas and met with the Kurdish people in a meaningful way. But regardless of whether that would be true, the real point about the cognitive gap is not only that misperceptions exist, but that they inherently create structures where they will continue to not be corrected.

Yet one final theme remains to be covered, specifically relating to threat perception. Threat perception comes up as central to understanding the conflict in the texts by Balci & Kardaş (2016) and Brathwaite (2014). There is perhaps a particular theoretical distinction that needs to be understood specifically concerning how Balci & Kardaş (2016) write about the issue, because they talk about the conflict largely under the frame work of inter-societal security dilemmas, which they transform, for their own purposes, into the Turkish security trilemma. Typically, security dilemmas are related to a rather realist thinking, where the increase of material capabilities of one group causes a reaction in another group to take measures, so as to guarantee its security (see Donnelly 2009).

Distinctly, what Balci & Kardaş (2016) seem to put forward is that a change in the security perception of one identity group causes a reaction in another identity group, while the latter perceives the change as incompatible with its own perception of security. Such a notion perhaps has more to do with constructivism, because it concentrates more on identities and how they perceive threats (see Reus-Smit 2009). How this would function in the Turkish case, for example, is that if the Kurdish identity perceived the creation of a sovereign Kurdish state within Turkish territory as necessary for its security, the Turkish identity would perceive this as intolerable within its own perception of security (Balci & Kardaş 2016). As a result, the two identity groups would enter what Balci & Kardaş (2016) describe as a loose security dilemma, which could potentially be resolved through nothing short of war.

Brathwaite (2014) also recognises threat perception as an important element, although her paper covers it in something of a different light. She focuses on mechanisms for the spread of ethnic conflict, and what her text finds central, is how governments may perceive ethnic groups within their own territory as threatening, if members of that ethnicity are already a party to a conflict in a neighbouring state (Brathwaite 2014). It is for this reason a government may fear that the ethnic group is prone to inciting conflict, and so it takes repressive measures to pre-empt a conflict from arising within its own territory (Brathwaite 2014).

As a result, the repressed ethnic group will perceive its host government as oppressive, and counter-react by resisting the repressive measures, ergo spreading the conflict (Brathwaite 2014). To be sure, Brathwaite (2014) does not specifically concentrate on the Kurdish conflict in Turkey, but the Kurdish conflict in general. Yet this thinking may be applied to the Turkish case as well, as Brathwaite (2014) identifies specific events in Iraq, Iran and Syria too, which have led to repression of Kurds in Turkey.

However, beyond this underlying theme of how threats are perceived, both Brathwaite (2014) and Balci & Kardaş (2016) talk ultimately of rather different things. And this seems to be a problem too, when looking generally at how the conflict is understood; despite the connecting themes between writings that have been established until now, each of the papers seems to look at the conflict from more or less a unique perspective. It seems very difficult, therefore, to draw special attention to anything singular or specific, which might bring support to a general understanding of the conflict. Instead, such understanding seems currently fairly fragmented, as will be the topic of the next chapter.

2. TURKEY AND KURDS: DISCURSIVE DISCREPANCIES

2.1. What Non-academic Views Tell about the Discourse

This short section will compare the understanding of the conflict by two Washington based analysts. In comparison to the works presented so far, these papers represent the views of non-academic analysts. In principle, this means that these views tend to be more politically stacked, striving to shape or influence political opinion. Although it may just the same be questioned, whether a scholarly work in the field of political sciences is able to escape the influence of the political motivations of its author. After all, a scholar is inseparably a part of the world he or she studies (Devetak 2009b).

Regardless, these papers can be argued to be fairly well more opinionated than their scholarly counterparts, and as such, it may be justified to inspect them separately. Nevertheless, it is a worthwhile exercise to see how well they fit in with the picture painted by scholars; whether their analysis can complement that picture, or whether there is a complete mismatch between the academic view and the non-academic expert. The two views examined here are those of Totten (2015) and Marcus (2012), both published in World Affairs.

Totten (2015) expresses his understanding of the conflict in what can arguably be seen as quite a realist view. In his analysis, he prioritises hard power, which is mostly apparent in whom he chooses to regard as relevant actors. This means that only state powers and armed groups appear meaningful internationally. The Kurds, who lack a state of their own, have their interests represented through whom they fight militarily – Turkey and the ISIS. Under such framework, Totten's (2015) argument is formed; the Kurds want secession from the Turkish state, which is represented by the PKK's military struggle against the state. This in turn, is something Turkey does not allow, and so tries to prevent through the use of military power (Totten 2015).

Quite on the contrary, Marcus (2012) argues that despite initially beginning as an armed resistance against Turkey, the PKK has evolved its strategy to pursue its interests through the

civilian layers of politics, trying to influence Turkey's Kurdish policy through its democratic institutions. But such a view inherently suggests that the Kurdish struggle against Turkey is not primarily of the aim to seek secession, but rather to gain positive changes for the Kurds within Turkey. Central to this story is Kurdish democratic parties being arrested and placed on trial, accused of links to terrorism (PKK) (Marcus 2012).

Contrasted against each other, these views appear almost as night and day, one placing the Kurds under a hard-power framework where the fight is to carve out an independent, internationally recognised state (Totten 2015), and the other focusing on soft attempts to make a nation's identity heard under repressive measures (Marcus 2012). It becomes quite quickly clear then that these views have little to nothing in common, which is not surprising, because the starting points for both papers are so very different. But what is perhaps more interesting, is how well they sit with scholarly works on the subject.

In this regard, Marcus' (2012) view does fit in somewhat well with other ethnographic studies concerning the conflict (e.g. Başer & Çelik 2014; Demir 2012; Sonnenschein 2013), which in fact seek to discern an understanding of the Kurdish identity itself, thus viewing the matter of identity central to the conflict. But this will be explored more, further along the paper. Identity seems to be, nevertheless, also key for how Marcus (2012) understands the conflict. This becomes apparent in her observations regarding members of Kurdish democratic parties being placed under trial.

One central aspect to these trials is the use of language; the accused Kurds often defiantly address the courts in Kurdish, while the courts demand they speak Turkish (Marcus 2012). As a result, the whole judiciary process tends to drag, which arguably works well for the Turkish government, who does not always seem certain about what to do with the Kurdish political prisoners (Marcus 2012). Significantly, what Marcus (2012) then remarks is "most days it seems that what's really on trial is Kurdish identity itself." Such a statement perhaps neatly summarises, what in Marcus' (2012) view the conflict is all about.

When it comes to Totten (2015), at first glance his somewhat extreme realist position may seem difficult to fit in with anything else. However, state security and a state's unwillingness to compromise on territorial sovereignty in general are themes that can be attributed to a wider range of works. For example, when Balci & Kardaş (2016) speak of a Kurdish movement to secede from the state leading to a loose kind of security dilemma between the Kurds and the state, resolvable by nothing short of war, these themes are ultimately

expressed. They are also apparent in the real world, when considering some of the Turkish President Erdogan's statements, where he makes it clear that Turkey will not tolerate the establishment of a Kurdish national state along its borders (Totten 2015).

Totten (2015) also draws very high attention to alliance politics. The US is committed to fighting ISIS, and because the Kurds especially in Syria are the only effective ground force also fighting ISIS, the US should consider the Kurds their allies (Totten 2015). On the other hand, Turkey is a NATO-member and a US ally, yet it favours apathy in its efforts against ISIS and focuses instead on fighting the Kurds (Totten 2015). An apathetic stance toward ISIS is in fact beneficial to Turkey in this way, because it hurts the Kurds when ISIS is allowed to fight them without further opposition (Totten 2015). This observation, more than anything, is of importance to Totten (2015).

Interestingly, when it comes to the Kurds of Iraq, a good amount of thought has been put to what the position of state powers, such as the US and Israel, has been toward the Kurds (see Bengio 2014; Stansfield 2013; Anderson & Stansfield 2009), which is a topic this paper will return to. Totten (2015) is perhaps trying to bring the Kurdish situation in Turkey under similar light. To be fair, none of the other articles under the scope of this paper, which dealt with the matter in Turkey, concerned themselves with how Western states, or any other states for that matter, align themselves to the Kurdish question.

Both views of Totten (2015) and Marcus (2012) can thus find their places within the broader discourse of the Kurdish matters. Yet managing to do so while being such polar opposites in their approach is, more than anything, a statement of how the broad discourse lacks unity. While the juxtaposition of these two papers has been a minor point, it serves to build for the case this chapter is presenting, which is to say that the current state of discourse on Kurds in Turkey is essentially made up of disparate lines of questioning.

2.2. Diverse Views Create Fragmented Discourse

Contemporarily, there is definitely a fragmented discourse revolving around the Kurdish problem in Turkey. It may be difficult to assess why exactly that might be; it could be that scholars become easily concerned with a somewhat narrow focus, which might end up giving little in terms of understanding a larger picture. Or perhaps the conflict itself has swollen to such complexity that it is difficult to identify anything of general nature about it. Whatever such

reasons may be, it is seemingly difficult to make most of the opinions regarding the conflict in Turkey meet.

An example of a narrow focus can be found in Başer & Çelik (2014), who provide some fairly interesting insight into the minds of young Turkish Kurds through something of an ethnographic study, interviewing young Kurdish students living in Diyarbakir. The argument they present is that young people are often not viewed as actors in a conflict in their own right. If they are not ignored altogether, they may be portrayed as tricked or manipulated into action by a more relevant actor, or in the Kurdish case, the PKK might be blamed by Turkish parties for using young people to commit acts of terrorism (Başer & Çelik 2014). Yet Başer & Çelik (2014) argue that the young people often behave as actors in their own right, their motivations based on their everyday experiences of life and how they perceive the world around them.

But their findings alone, in their own words, "reflect lower-income young Diyarbakırlı Kurds' frames of the Kurdish issue, and does not claim to represent all Kurdish youth in Turkey" (Başer & Çelik 2014). This means that their study is basically a sample in a very arduous line of questioning; to get a better picture, more interviews would have to be conducted among all sorts of Kurdish youth from all around Turkey, and what would be left in the end, is an image of Kurdish youth's framing of the conflict in Turkey – still a very narrow piece of the entire conflict.

Moreover, to get back to the problem at hand, it is difficult to see how understanding the mind of the Kurdish youth fits in with the illustrations of inter-societal security dilemmas and the trilemma presented in Balci & Kardaş (2016). The point is not that these two views conflict each other, because this is not what they do. Rather the point is that they do not exactly complement each other, i.e. they contribute to a fragmented overall view of the conflict.

Obviously, these papers do not stand alone in this issue. As previously described, Brathwaite (2014) has focused on the mechanisms for the spread of ethnic conflict through the lens of the Kurdish struggle. It is truly a difficult task to attempt to distinguish such large scale mechanisms in the field of international relations, where actors and events may at times seem absolutely chaotic, and undoubtedly Brathwaite (2014) has done a competent job of it. But it remains unclear, how far the conflict between Turks and Kurds is due to it 'spreading' from cross-border Kurdish regions.

Relating to the study by Başer & Çelik (2014), the modern Kurdish youth at least seem blissfully ignorant of the consequences of such mechanisms, nor does it factor into the

modelling of security dilemmas by Balci & Kardaş (2016). Neither does it enter the considerations of Pusane (2014), who solely focuses on the political dividedness in both the leadership of Turks and Kurds. Pusane (2014) also likes to emphasise the military nature of the conflict, but going back to Başer & Çelik (2014), this is not the impression that sticks to the reader. On the other hand, Pusane's (2014) argument about political dividedness would almost seem to run counter to that of Balci & Kardaş (2016), because the latter seems to assume that there is a single security perspective shared by the members in any one of the three parties in the security trilemma; the nationalist Kurds, the Islamist government and the state party.

Yet that is not necessarily true; while the Islamist government and the state party may be argued to represent the political dividedness within the Turks, the impression remains that the Kurds are of a singular mind (in Balci & Kardaş 2016). Pusane (2014), however, explicitly makes the case that the PKK, existing as the primary organisation representing the Kurds, is divided into multiple centres of power. He further argues that while Abdullah Öcalan is the undisputed leader of the organisation, he is still unable to control all the elements of it, sometimes perhaps giving statements that have more to do with the prevailing mood in the organisation rather than representing his own thoughts (Pusane 2014). In addition, due to the relative autonomy they enjoy, many parts of the organisation are not prevented from acting out on their own from time to time (Pusane 2014).

Furthermore, it is also observed by Gunter (2014) that while the sentiment for Kurdish statehood does generally exist, it is not at all desired by all Kurds, and some Kurds would rather prefer to stay loyal to the existing governance, thus preferring a milder form of cultural autonomy. He also notes that "despite their common dilemma, the Kurds [not in Turkey specifically, but in general] themselves are notoriously divided geographically, linguistically, and tribally" (Gunter 2014). Such notions place under question, what it is that Balci & Kardaş (2016) specifically mean when they talk about nationalist Kurds. If it is those Kurds that desire a separate national state for the Kurds, then a very significant part of the Kurds as such are excluded from their model. If, on the other hand, the whole Kurdish society is represented, then it is bold to claim that they have a single shared perception of security needs.

To further mix things up, Yegen (2009) makes a specific study about the meaning of citizenship in Turkey, and how it stands in relation to the Kurdish question. In fairness, his point is quite relevant, because it says much about how the Turks actually perceive the Kurds and the Kurdish role within the Turkish state. In this way, it is perhaps surprising that the issue of

citizenship was not built upon, or even mentioned in passing by any of the other writers that fell under the scope of this paper. Similarly to the aforementioned issue with Brathwaite's (2014) study, the extent of what the questions regarding the Turkish citizenship actually mean for the conflict remain vague, and Yegen's (2009) efforts appear to remain as a standalone point of view.

When it comes to the approach taken by Balci & Kardaş (2016), though, it is apparently somewhat novel, yet well justified. In their paper, they state: "Although no explicit adaption of the framework of the societal security trilemma offered here has been suggested before vis-à-vis the Kurdish question, some studies do address the main contours of the societal SD approach" (Balci & Kardaş 2016). But perhaps the problem with the incoherent understanding of the conflict, which is previously demonstrated, is precisely rooted in that there may be a lot of ideas and approaches that are relatively new, and have simply not had enough time to meet or grow.

In a way, Brathwaite's (2014) study is a prime example of research that bridges a gap between two existing branches of literature that work in the same field. Studying the spread of ethnic conflict, Brathwaite (2014) draws on two existing literatures; one that deals with how ethnic kin affect each other's behaviour across border, and the other about how repression dynamics work. Her work demonstrates that the two are linked, in that repressive measures by a state may be produced by the actions of a cross-border ethnic group, which is applicable in the case of Kurdish conflicts. Potentially, such bridging would be needed amidst all these different views.

As concluding remarks then, the understanding of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey seems to be fractured in the sense that while many explaining factors that contribute to its persistence may be identified, most of them seem to stand alone without effectively receiving or giving support to other views of the conflict. In spite of this, there are some underlying themes that may constitute toward a general approach to the conflict, if not a general understanding. Such themes primarily have to do with looking for answers from the history of the conflict, and through the perceptions of the people involved in the conflict. More specifically to the latter, in some views threat perceptions in particular rise to the surface.

Yet these particular themes in the approach also present some problems that, while there are not necessarily many remedies to them, they ought at least to be noted. In regards to history, the problem rises that it is always subjective; an event or detail in history may be presented in

many number of ways, each potentially changing its meaning, and sometimes certain events may be emphasised while others are left out. On the other hand, when it comes to interpreting perceptions, it may not always be clear whose perceptions are those that matter. Sometimes too, the perceptions may be divided, as while the Kurds in Turkey may be argued to be part of a single identity group, their perceptions regarding their security situation may differ significantly.

Finally, despite the similar themes in approach to the conflict, every writer seems to more or less present a standalone view in respect to it. This may mean a few different things, such that the conflict has become so filled with different factors that it has become impossible to distinguish a set of major characteristics to it. It may also mean that scholars look at it from such narrow fields that they do not meet. It might, therefore, be worthwhile to build new research in an attempt to bridge the 'cognitive gaps' that seem to exist with current findings, to potentially gain a more holistic view of the conflict.

3. CONTRASTING DISCOURSES

3.1. Deriving Identity from Ethnographic Studies

This chapter will focus on the contrast that emerges when examining the approaches to the Kurdish struggle both in Turkey and in Iraq. A notable difference may indeed be observed, as will be demonstrated, in how the Kurds are seen in between these two areas. The previous chapter sought to demonstrate the discrepancies within the discourse concentrating on Turkey. Building on the theme of perceptions, which was already touched on earlier in this paper, this section will try to overcome discrepancy in the sense that it will identify one dominant characteristic in the studies focusing on Turkey, which can be put to contrast with those that inform on Iraq.

It is true that studies on Kurds outside of Turkey do not appear quite as diverse as those that cover Turkish Kurds, and as such, they may for the most part evade the dilemma put forth in the previous chapter. Yet there exists one dominant characteristic present in the studies of Turkish Kurds, which the counterparts of Iraq do not seem to be sharing. This has to do with the focus of trying to understand the perceptions and the public images held by both Turks and Kurds within Turkey. What follows is that there is a desire to understand what constitutes for the Kurdish identity in Turkey, whereas in the case of Iraqi Kurds, such a desire seems more or less non-existent.

Başer & Çelik (2014) are one such example of carrying out an ethnographic study in a quest to gain insight into the Kurdish sense of identity, but they are not alone in this respect. Of course, even outside the spectrum of ethnographic observation, studies may still concern themselves with public images at least, as in the case of Yegen's (2009) examination of the Kurdish citizenship status. But particularly an ethnographic focus seems like something relatively well embraced in the question of Turkey, which would indicate an interest to understand the mind of a Turkish Kurd.

Sonnenschein (2013) has specifically presented ethnographic findings in an effort to explain the identities of Turkish Kurds. Here the word identity is rather used in the plural form, as the findings would suggest that there is indeed no single identity adopted by all Kurds. Instead, Sonnenschein (2013) speaks of multiple layers of identity. This means that the whole issue of identity is more complex than simply owing to, for instance, either a Turkish identity or a Kurdish one. But in fact a person may express a Turkish identity, after having established that they are a Kurd first (Sonnenschein 2013). Or in another example, they may deny being Kurdish at all but rather prefer being distinguished as Alevi (a Kurdish sub-sect), yet in the conflict between Turks and Kurds, they would feel belonging to the Kurds first (Sonnenschein 2013).

When studying the Kurdish expression of identity abroad, namely in the UK, Demir (2012) similarly noted the apparent multiplicity of identity among Kurds from Turkey. For them, it is not unusual at all to think of the entire country of Turkey as their homeland (Demir 2012). In this regard, Demir (2012) speaks of the word *memleket* and its usage, and it also appears in the studies by Sonnenschein (2013). *Memleket* is crudely translated into English as the homeland, and Sonnenschein (2013) notes that within Turkey, it may freely be used to refer to Kurdistan without having to use the controversial word itself.

But this idea of *memleket* is more complex than that, and it may be seen to go strictly hand in hand with the sense of identity, because what a person identifies as his or her roots and land of origin is a key factor to the formation of identity. As was already mentioned, Demir (2012) observed that Kurds abroad often refer to the whole of Turkey as *memleket*. However, within Turkey, Kurds may use the word to refer to the province they are from, or even more specifically their hometown, or village (Sonnenschein 2013).

The usage of this word then rhymes with the idea of multiple layers of identity, and could as such represent an important piece in the understanding of Kurdish identity; just as a Kurd may identify as Turkish in the broader sense, and Kurdish specifically, the meaning of *memleket* may refer to Turkey as a whole, or a Kurdish area or city specifically (Demir 2012; Sonnenschein 2013). Demir (2012) also noted that the usage of this word abroad often brings to light the distinction between Turkey as a country geographically, and the Turkish state. Of these, the Kurds abroad identify with belonging to the first, while they reject the latter (Demir 2012).

In a concrete example given by Demir (2012), Kurds can easily find themselves supporting the Turkish football teams, but after going to celebrate a victory, they might come into conflict with Turks waving nationalist symbols. In addition, Demir (2012) also observed that the Kurdish support communities in the UK often coexist and are sometimes even intermixed with the Turkish communities. These could serve as key arguments for that among Turkish Kurds, separation from the Turkish country is not the starting point, but instead opposing the Turkish state attitude toward Kurds. This is good to bear in mind, because further on, within the studies that look into the Kurds in Iraq, the underlying assumption will be for the Kurds to wish for their own state.

The argument ethnographic studies seem to put forward is that the political conflict in Turkey is a struggle between the Kurdish and Turkish identities, and the expression of those identities has become a political statement. Sonnenschein (2013) for instance, describes this struggle appearing in the form of negative stereotypes, which may be used by the Turkish media to portray the Kurds. The Kurds in turn combat the negative images by attributing Kurdishness with positive qualities, and by denouncing a poorly behaving fellow Kurd as not really being Kurdish in the first place (Sonnenschein 2013).

As described by Sonnenschein (2013): "Mahsun [an interviewee] protected his Kurdish identity by attributing the bad behaviour of a fellow-Kurd to another identity. For Mahsun, the Kurdish identity was not necessarily constituted by blood or kinship, but instead revolved around values and qualities such as hospitality, family, friendliness, and hard work."

A similar problem of having to deal with negative stereotypes can also be found in Başer & Çelik (2014), wherein the Kurdish youth were described to complain about the Turkish attitude to think that all Kurds are terrorists, or belong to the PKK. Yet the study by Başer & Çelik (2014) found that the Kurdish youth did not know how to correct this issue, because according to them, Turks rarely visited or lived among them. Başer & Çelik (2014) thus describe the similar problem of negative stereotyping as does the study by Sonnenschein (2013). However, the difference that Sonnenschein (2013) finds a more sophisticated response to such stereotypes likely stems from the subjects of her study living and working in Istanbul, where contact with Turks and Kurds would be much more commonplace.

Indeed, Sonnenschein (2013) argues that the identity of her subjects in Istanbul was that of a Turkish Kurd, which implies a real sense of difference between a Kurd in Turkey and a Kurd elsewhere. This was apparent in her interviews, where it was not uncommon to hear the

subjects speak of Kurds in Iraq and elsewhere as being different as such, or possessing a different culture. Similarly, Demir (2012) reported to have found little to no connection from the Turkish Kurds in the UK to the greater region of Kurdistan. On the contrary, "when prompted, it was never verbalised as a place of belonging" (Demir, 2012). Interestingly, despite such an apparent lack of identifying with Kurdistan as a whole, Demir's (2012) interviewees might have had maps of Kurdistan hung up on the walls, yet their presence was claimed to be merely symbolic. In short, both studies found the Kurdish identity to be rooted in Turkey first.

Symbolic unity may be found in Sonnenschein (2013) too; regardless of the subjects considering the Kurds outside of Turkey to be different from themselves in general, when it came to the history that was perceived as significant for the Kurdish identity, the subjects expressed solidarity to the suffering of Kurds everywhere, not only in Turkey. An expression of such solidarity manifested, for example, in the way the subjects listened to Kurdish music and remembered the victims of Halabja, a town in Iraq that fell victim to a devastating chemical attack committed by Saddam's regime (Sonnenschein 2013).

This suggests an understanding that the Kurdish identity is multi-layered in the way that it is capable of relating to the imagined Kurdish community as a whole, after it primarily identifies with the community locally (within Turkey). In this respect, Sonnenschein (2013) refers to the work of Anderson (2010), who has established a concept of such an imagined community. This idea in principle means that an individual will never know, meet or have any contact with all the members of his or her nation, yet the person imagines a greater sense of communion nonetheless (Anderson 2010). A Turkish Kurd will not come to know every other Turkish Kurd in this way, however, the amount of Turkish Kurds this person would come to contact with would be significantly more than with Kurds from elsewhere. Therefore it makes sense for them to relate to Kurdishness in Turkey primarily and elsewhere as secondary (Sonnenschein 2013).

But the studies recognise that the fracture between the sense of Kurdish in Turkey and elsewhere is also constituted by some other barriers than mere geographical location, namely the internal divisions between the Kurds themselves. Sonnenschein (2013) makes note of diversification of the Kurdish language, which obstructs communication. Because shared language may often be seen as contributing to shared identity, it makes sense that linguistic differences serve as a barrier for a more unified Kurdish identity. Moreover, Demir (2012)

remarks that most Kurdish immigrants in the UK actually speak Turkish among each other, and follow mainly Turkish TV channels and online content in their everyday lives.

The issue is not, however, presented only between the division of Kurdish and Turkish languages, but Kurdish is also a diverse language within itself. Mostly this diversification is seen to manifests in not-so-different dialects of the same language, though, so in principle it does not constitute a too significant a barrier to communication (Haio & Matras 2002). Yet the Zaza language spoken by some Kurds within Turkey is quite a bit more controversial, as pointed out by Sonnenschein (2013). The controversy is related to the question of whether Zaza should be considered as a distinct language of its own, or rather a specific dialect of Kurdish. For example, Haio & Matras (2002) explain that there is very clear disagreement between scholars themselves over this question, although Haio & Matras (2002) admit subscribing to the latter position themselves.

Sonnenschein (2013) highlights this disagreement too; she draws attention to ethnographic studies, according to which some Zaza speakers are self-identified as Kurds, while in another example given by her, Alevi Kurd Zaza speakers in Germany prefer to identify as linguistically and culturally distinct from the Kurds. But the idea is that in Turkey, where the battle is between the Turkish and Kurdish identities, the notion of whether Zaza is a Kurdish dialect or not becomes a political statement (Sonnenschein 2013). To say that it is not, highlights the fractures within Kurdish unity, which serves the cause of the Turkish state (Sonnenschein 2013). On the other hand, to grant that it is so serves to mend such fragmentation.

It is remarkable, however, that those who preferred to think of Zaza as a distinct language in Sonnenschein's (2013) example were Alevi Kurds. And this observation is really in line with Dermir's (2012) findings, because he makes note that Alevis often prefer to identify as Alevi first, and only in second place as a Kurd, if at all. It should be noted that Aleviness is distinct religious branch within Islam, and in Turkey its followers may comprise either of Kurds or Turks (Demir 2012). Demir's (2012) findings suggest that the identity provided by religious grouping, i.e. being Alevi, overrides that of the ethnic identity – being Kurdish.

This makes sense, because the Alevi community is multi-national, comprising of both Kurds and Turks (Demir 2012). Furthermore, it is well-known that the relations between the Alevi and Sunni are sometimes hostile (Demir 2012). This in turn may explain a desire for Alevi to distinguish himself from the rest of the Kurds, the vast majority of whom are Sunni

(Demir 2012). Because Demir (2012) noted that most of the Kurds in the UK are in fact from the Alevi regions of Turkey, it makes perhaps more sense why they would also be more easily inclined to identify with the Turkish language and culture. It is also presented by Demir (2012) that many Kurdish Alevis have come to voluntarily assimilate into the Turkish language and culture. In this context, it also makes sense why the AKP government has sought to bridge the ethnic distinction between Turks and Kurds through emphasising Islamic unity (Balci & Kardaş 2016, among others).

There is a difference here when contrasted to the study by Başer & Çelik (2014), where the subjects were from Diyarbakir. To them, identifying through the Kurdish ethnicity and culture was more important than religion. This becomes apparent in how the subjects of the study constantly struggle with the everyday problems faced when trying to express themselves in the Kurdish language (Başer & Çelik 2014). Furthermore, some subjects reportedly even expressed that they might be more forthcoming, had the authors of the study been able to speak at least a little bit of Kurdish as a symbolic gesture (Başer & Çelik 2014).

In conclusion, despite the discrepancy shown in the previous chapter over the studies of Kurdish conflict in Turkey, this section has demonstrated that such discourse is nonetheless unified by a strong ethnographic approach. It is argued that the purpose of such an ethnographic line of inquiry is to discern an understanding of the Kurdish identity in Turkey. The desire to understand this identity likely represents an underlying assumption that the entire conflict is based on identity politics before anything else.

Of course, this assumption is not applicable to every study concerning the conflict, as the previous chapter well demonstrated. Another major starting point for these studies was that of security. Within such a line of approach, discerning identity is relevant only insofar as in understanding whose security is in question, but the dynamics of security and threat perception shift into the main focus of the lens. However, the point here is to emphasise that an ethnographic, and in fact quite a human-level starting point is much more visible in Turkish-Kurdish studies than in those that concern the Kurds elsewhere.

3.2. Discourse outside Turkish Matters Differs

Apart from taking Turkey as the starting point for the study of Kurds, some scholars have given thought to the situation in Iraq, and to Iran and Syria in a lesser extent. Curiously, as became

apparent in some of the previously mentioned studies, the Turkish Kurds often consider themselves different from those in Iraq. A similar understanding can be seen to arise from the discourse centred on Iraq, though it manifests in a slightly different way. For example, when Bengio (2014) writes about the Israeli relations with the Kurds in Iraq, she outlines a distinct position Israel has toward the Kurds in Turkey. Also, in Stansfield (2013) and Anderson & Stansfield (2009), the Kurds are referred to in the context of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq or Erbil respectively, as opposed to an imagined Kurdish unity.

This does not apply to all authors, though; for example, Little (2010) gives an impression of Kurds as a unified entity, when he writes about the US relations with the Kurds. This is apparent in how he describes the Kurds in the first place, establishing an idea of a Kurdish land "beneath the snow-capped Zagros Mountains." He also portrays the Kurdish interests to be of a singular nature, in striving to obtain a state of their own (Little 2010). But Little's (2010) view exists separately in this regard, in comparison to the views presented above.

In papers dealing with the Kurds in Iraq, and to some extent in Syria and Iran too, speculation of a Kurdish state is quite common. In the paper by Anderson & Stansfield (2009), numerous points of contention between the governments in Baghdad and Erbil are outlined, which include laws, contested territories and oil. Mainly, the prediction offered by the paper is that unless measures are taken in relation to the points of conflict, the governments are locked in a collision course that will result in the break-up of the state (Anderson & Stansfield 2009).

Across the border in Iran, Gresh (2009) actually gives a similar prediction of Tehran heading to conflict with Iran's Kurdish population. Gresh's (2009) argument is that the increased availability of communication technology, satellite TV and the Internet for Iranian Kurds is making them increasingly connected with the Kurdish movements outside the country. According to this argument, the Kurdish nationalist sentiment and activity in Iran is bound to increase, unless Iran takes measures to improve the Kurdish condition within its borders (Gresh 2009). Anderson & Stansfield (2009) and Gresh (2009) thus represent views of brooding unrest in the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Iran.

Furthermore, Stansfield (2013) has proposed a scenario of imaginary events happening twenty years into the future, leading to the transformation from the Kurdish Autonomous Region in Iraq to the Republic of Kurdistan. The paper, partly titled the "unravelling of the post-First World War state system", identifies state-like characteristics that the Kurdish Autonomous Region already exhibits (Stansfield 2013). Namely, these include a territorially

defined space, which contains a permanent population and a government recognised as legitimate by that population, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states (Stansfield 2013).

Stansfield (2013) also identifies the growing financial independence of Iraqi Kurdistan, which is necessary to achieve in order to lay foundation for an independent Kurdish state. The extensive oil fields and reserves of natural gas are the resources available for the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), yet more important than having these resources within the Kurdish controlled territories is the ability to trade them independently of Baghdad (Stansfield 2013). This is essentially what Stansfield (2013) demonstrates; the KRG has, in recent years, been signing production sharing agreements with major international oil companies, such as Exxon Mobil, Chevron, Total and Gazprom Neft (Stansfield 2013).

Beyond these agreements, Stansfield (2013) also writes about the KRG attempts to circumvent Baghdad control over pipelines. In this context, it is mentioned that the KRG has made an unlikely alliance with Turkey, which is desperately trying to answer to its own energy needs (Stansfield 2013). Because of the converging national interests of Turkey and KRG, namely that Turkey needs to address its growing energy needs and that the KRG needs to be able to sell its oil and gas, cooperation between the two has emerged in effect granting the KRG more autonomy (Stansfield 2013).

The increased autonomy is the emerging result of an 'energy corridor' that would circumvent Baghdad control, which means building oil and gas pipelines directly from the KRG controlled regions to Turkey (Stansfield 2013). Another example is presented by Blanche (2013), who also imagines a potentially Kurdish state arising from such increased financial autonomy, coupled with the concurrent break for autonomy by the Kurds in neighbouring Syria. Furthermore, Blanche (2013) makes remark of Turkey being worried about Maliki, the then Iraqi Prime Minister, exercising close ties to Iran. To counter this, Turkish national security interests curiously have coupled with increased Kurdish autonomy in Iraq (Blanche 2013).

Blanche (2013) writes it as a plausible scenario to combine the newly emerging autonomous position the Kurds in Syria are achieving with that of the KRG in Iraq, thus forming the potential Kurdish state. However, Blanche's (2013) speculation is perhaps in conflict with the observations made by Krajeski (2015), who recognised that the Kurds in Syria are more aligned to the political ideologies of the PKK in Turkey, and more precisely their leader, Abdullah Öcalan. According to Krajeski (2015), what the Syrian Kurds are striving to achieve

is some form of a revolutionary leftist system of communities, whose leading bodies would be networked to create a more unified governance, as opposed to the prevalent Westphalian state system in the world.

Such aspirations are not exactly compatible with how the creeping state-like characteristics, institutions and governance are being formed in the Kurdish Autonomous Region in Iraq, as described in Anderson & Stansfield (2009) and later Stansfield (2013). Furthermore, such speculation leaves unclear what the Turkish reaction would be. Blanche (2013) recognises that despite the ongoing cooperation between the KRG and Turkey now, the transformation of the KRG to an actual Republic of Kurdistan may cause those ties to disappear as quickly as they came to be.

From the considerations so far, it may be drawn that the discourse outside Turkey is very much dominated by state-centric and geopolitical considerations. The geopolitical aspects revolve around the politics that emerge from the KRG oilfields, which are given extensive thought in Anderson & Stansfield (2009), Blanche (2013) and Stansfield (2013). The state-centrism, on the other hand, emerges from two factors; a struggle for an actual Kurdish state, or political autonomy in the least, and state relations with the Kurds. So far the state relations with Kurds were demonstrated in how Turkey has dealt with the KRG.

However, both of these factors become combined in Little (2010), who writes a historical Cold War story of the Kurdish fight for autonomy or independence, and how the US has been a factor in that fight. Bengio (2014) does in fact the same, only instead of examining the US-Kurdish relations, she explores the Kurdish-Israeli relations. Bengio (2014) also makes the distinction between Israel's relations with the Kurds in Iraq and those in Turkey. Here, the former of those relations have usually been good, with a history of Israel supporting the Iraqi Kurds against Saddam Hussein's government, while in the latter, Israel has often been quick to denounce the PKK activity due to having enjoyed good relations with Turkey (Bengio 2014).

Little (2010) elaborates this point further, by quoting a Mossad agent, who described Israel's Kurdish policies as having been nothing but Realpolitik, seeking to balance against the aggressive Hussein government. Such a statement would seem to be well in line with the differing attitudes of Israel toward KRG and PKK, as described by Bengio (2014). Although Bengio (2014) does mention that the Kurds and Israel do share some similarities as a nation; for instance, both exist as relatively small nations in a region that has a generally hostile stance toward them (Bengio 2014). Bengio (2014) also seems to indicate that there is a generally

friendly attitude owned by the Kurds of Iraq toward Israel, although perhaps that attitude has been formed precisely by the initial Realpolitik of Israel's armed support to the Kurds. In this respect, it may be noted that both in Bengio (2014) and Little (2010) the foreign relations to Kurds are measured in terms of material assistance that has been granted to the Kurds.

In conclusion, it may be stated that hard power aspects dominantly characterise the discourse of Kurdish matters outside Turkey. The hard power is represented in such ways, as the armed struggle to define a Kurdish state, keeping hold of oil fields, turning oil to profit and state-centrism, which is present also in the inquiry into the international relations between various states and the Kurds.

3.3. Contrasting two Discourses

Previously in this paper, when Totten (2015) was said to write about the problems related to Turkey's stance toward the Kurds, he took a rather state-centric approach, meaning he considered it most significant, how the US should regard its alliance relations toward Turkey and the Kurds. While within the Turkish discourse his view is one that stands out of place, it appears less so among the views concerning the Kurds of Iraq, bearing in mind the state-centrism also just presented in this paper. This suggests a fundamental difference in how the Kurdish issues are talked about in regards to Turkey and outside it. But this difference in understanding what is significant may arise from the differences in the Kurds themselves, reflected by the various studies.

Examples of where it becomes clear, are when Bengio (2014) distinguishes between Israel's position toward the Iraqi Kurds and the Turkish counterparts. It is also apparent when Gunter (2014) separates Turkey's Kurdish question from those in Iraq, Syria and Iran. It may be observed, when both Sonnenschein (2013) and Demir (2012) report their interviewees with identifying more with Turkey as a part of their identity and homeland, rather than an imagined whole of Kurdistan.

Kurdish nationalism and desire for national autonomy is also at the heart of this distinction. From Turkey's ethnographic studies (Sonnenschein 2013; Demir 2012; Başer & Çelik 2014) it may be derived that the Kurdish desire is rather weighed toward cultural autonomy, and thus for the Turkish state to recognise Kurds as a distinct ethnicity, yet a part of Turkey. In this context, the conflict arises from the Turkish state's position to convert Kurds

into Turks, so as to treat to an ideal of a Turkish nation state. Yegen (2009) too makes particular note of Kurdish assimilation policies of the past, and the Kurdish resistance to them, which would favour such an understanding of the conflict.

This understanding is essentially different in the studies of Kurds outside of Turkey, where the conflict is rather understood as originating from the Kurdish drive for national autonomy, vis-à-vis the milder form of cultural autonomy that seems to be preferred in Turkey. As presented under the previous subtitle, this view is exemplified in writings, such as those by Blance (2013), Little (2010), Stansfield (2013) and Bengio (2014) to an extent. This view is not only restricted to the situation in Iraq, though.

For example, some authors make note of the short-lived historical uprising in Iran to create the Mahabad Republic (see, for example, Little 2010; Gresh 2009). The Kurds made the attempt to create their own break-away republic from Iran in 1946, after grasping greater autonomy following the removal of Reza Shah from power (Gresh 2009). Despite the movement toward the Mahabad Republic being squashed after only 11 months of its initiation, it is a powerful indicator for Kurdish desire for national autonomy (Gresh 2009). Moreover, Gresh (2009) remarks that its memory still serves as a symbol of national unity for the Iranian Kurds.

The question of whether the Kurds wish more to practise cultural or national autonomy is inherently one that asks, whether the Kurds wish to be granted a state of their own. Two differing views can thus be identified identified; if the conflict is understood on the basis of a Kurdish desire for national autonomy, then it follows that the formation of something akin to a Kurdish state is necessary to reach lasting peace. If, on the other hand, the starting point is that the conflict may be treated through satisfying a Kurdish desire to express themselves culturally, then a Kurdish state is not necessary but rather political reforms in the host countries.

It is easy to see that in the papers by Anderson & Stansfield (2009) and Stansfield (2013), the state-like characteristics of the KRG receive detailed attention; the slowly creeping move of the KRG toward greater autonomy seems inevitable, which hints at the emergence of a future Republic of Kurdistan. What is made less clear, however, is what the regional security landscape will look like if it does come to pass. It is well to remember here the assessment by Balci & Kardaş (2016), which all but predicts that an emergence of a Kurdish state within Turkish territory will automatically result in an all-out war between the Turkish and Kurdish states.

Apart from this example of Balci & Kardaş (2016), the studies that cover the Turkish side of things do not generally even begin to speculate about Kurdish secession. On the contrary, the ethnographic studies of Turkish Kurds, such as the ones by Sonnenschein (2013) and Demir (2012), rather imply the opposite; the Kurds of Turkey do not generally wish to be separated from the state. Though Başer & Çelik (2014) do present an ominous warning about the possibility of the Kurdish youth becoming too radical to reason with. But in general, the Kurdish demands are not seen to involve secession from the Turkish state.

Also, the identity, perceptions and public images have been stated in this paper to be of great significance in the study of Turkish Kurds. Here again, exemplary studies include those of Sonnenschein (2013), Demir (2012), Başer & Çelik (2014) and Yegen (2009). These may be called soft dimensions of study, whereas the studies that focused on Iraq in particular can be seen more involved with the hard dimensions; military power, strategic resources, rational actors as opposed to sentimental ones and state relations. Studies that can be seen to be more immersed with the hard dimensions could be those of Anderson & Stansfield (2009), Bengio (2014), Little (2010) and Stansfield (2013).

This divide in the Kurdish discourse may also be illustrated as what this paper will introduce as bottom-up mentality in the Turkish question vis-à-vis a top-down mentality in the Kurdish question elsewhere. The bottom-up may refer here to the approach of observing individuals who live as parts of the conflict in their everyday lives, and how their attitudes serve as a sample of a wider, shared mentality that gives rise to the large forces of the conflict. Reversely, the top-down approach means observing the behaviour of states, governments and significant leadership figures, and extracting the nature of the conflict from their decisions.

The case being made here is that the state-centrism in the discourse of Kurds outside Turkey is indicative of such top-down mentality, while in Turkey the strong presence of ethnographic methods, and focus of perceptions and identity indicate a bottom-up mentality. Both may also be criticised in their ways; the bottom-up approach may be considered to over-estimate the influence of the ordinary people as agents in the conflict, while the top-down approach can just the same be criticised for failing to take into consideration the sentiments and popular movements of the people, and identity as a factor of shaping behaviour, which the ruling bodies and individuals may be affected by.

Of course, the divide between the discourse of Kurds in Turkey and elsewhere is a crude one, because some studies, like Pusane's (2014), can be quite state or governance centric, and

heavily invested in the hard power spectrum of things, despite studying the conflict in Turkey. There is no discussion of Kurdish identity in Pusane (2014). On the other hand, though outside the Turkish border and looking into Syria, Krajeski (2015) exercises a rather ethnographic touch. But of course, the distinctions presented in this chapter rely more on the overall image created by the papers as a whole.

4. THEORY AND DISCOURSE

4.1. What Theory can explain about the Discourse

So far this paper has introduced divergent views on the Kurdish predicament, and made comparisons and conclusions in order to discern a whole picture of the Kurdish discourse. This section will rather immerse itself in what this picture means in the context of the theories of international relations. Theory can often be seen as informing research, but also being in turn actively shaped and perhaps consolidated by it (loosely related, Burchill & Linklater 2009). This paper first demonstrated discrepancies within the discourse of Kurds in Turkey, and followed with a contrast of a larger division between the prevailing discourse in Turkish and Iraqi matters.

When put to the context of the Theories of International Relations, the discrepancies in the research can arguably be rooted in the disagreements within the International Relations Theories, which provides the framework for studies. What is explained by Burchill & Linklater (2009) to represent a fundamental division within the theories, is that of positivism and post-positivism. According to Burchill & Linklater (2009), such diversity has also been classified as explanatory and constitutive theories, but in principle the meaning is the same. Positivism can be identified as the key characteristic between what have been referred to as either 'traditional' or 'problem-solving' theories, and it is constituted by two principles; the separation of facts and values, and the assumption that it is possible to separate subject and object (Devetak 2009b).

Post-positivism emerges as the critique that these underlying assumptions are not viable in the realm of social sciences in general, and international relations in particular, because it "takes the world as it finds it" and has the effect of consolidating the prevailing order of things (Devetak 2009b). To put this point more elaborately, as Robert Cox was quoted in Devetak (2009b), the problem solving theory is "value-bound by virtue of the fact that it implicitly accepts the prevailing order as its own framework." In the long history of the debate between positivist and post-positivist views then, the typical positivist response has been that "critical

theorists [have] little of any substance to say about 'real-world' international relations" (Reus-Smit 2009).

The previous chapter concluded with distinguishing a kind of bottom-up and top-down approaches to the Kurdish question, and this distinction is perhaps just another way of the positivist – post-positivist dilemma of manifesting itself. Indeed, in the articles subject to the analysis of this paper, this dilemma is easily identifiable. In the previous discussion about Kurdish identity in this paper, where Sonnenschein (2013), Demir (2012) and Başer & Çelik (2014) were used as examples of ethnographic studies that seek to understand such identity, the papers are very much representative of a post-positivist take on international relations, whereas the history recital by Gunter (2014) and Little (2010) is an example of a rather positivist mind.

The state-centrism prevalent in many of the studies which examined Kurds in Iraq, is one hallmark of adhering to the traditional, rationalist theoretical framework. A neo-realist framework, for instance, understands the motivations of international actors from the basis of defensive positionalists, which means their motivations revolve around, at minimum, trying to keep their power relative to others the same, and at best they try to increase their power relative to others (Donnelly 2009).

This explains the thinking regarding the Iraqi Kurds well; the Kurds are seen as attempting to create a state of their own within the borders of Iraq, thus they are striving to increase their power relative to others, and the Iraqi government is bent on suppressing the Kurds so as to prevent them from achieving that goal (studies that apply here, Anderson & Stansfield 2009; Stansfield 2013; Little 2009). I.e. the sought increase in Kurdish power would result in the decrease of Iraqi power. Iraqi government therefore, as a defensive positionalist, acts accordingly hostile toward the Kurds.

When Bengio (2014) describes the Israeli position to support the Kurds in Iraq against Baghdad and at the same time condemn PKK terrorism in Turkey, and furthermore to shift to a more lenient stance toward the PKK after observing its relations with Turkey worsen, the neo-realist view is well satisfied. The same is also true, when Stansfield (2013) explains how Turkey is building cooperation with the Kurdish Autonomous Region in Iraq in order to satisfy its growing energy demands, while at the same time it is militarily engaged with the Kurdish PKK guerrillas within its own territory and beyond.

But many of the studies covered early on in this paper fall outside the framework of a rationalist theory. When Yegen (2009) writes about what Turkish citizenship means in terms of

the inter-societal conflict with the Kurdish population, a rationalist framework might fail to understand why even to study such a premise in the first place. More clearly, the same applies to Sonnenschein (2013), when she explores what role language, values, religion and perceived history play in terms of the Kurdish identity.

But the problem with the rationalist framework is precisely that it does not consider identity, or any immaterial structure as worthwhile of study, where international relations are concerned (Reus-Smit 2009). What would only matter in this case is that unless drastic changes happen to the existing power disparity favouring the Turkish state, the armed nature of the Kurdish struggle against it is futile. Never mind whether secession is really what the majority of the Kurds even want.

What has come to emerge as the most widely embraced theoretical alternative to rationalist theories, however, is that of constructivism (Reus-Smit 2009). Constructivism, stemming from the epistemological insights of critical theory, provides a framework that argues for the significance of immaterial structures, such as the social dimensions and identity shaping an actor's interests and motivations (Reus-Smit 2009). In respect to the previous point, where a Kurdish desire for statehood is taken to be self-evident, a constructivist would be interested in what factors give rise to the interest-formation of a Kurd to actively seek a Kurdish state.

Also, in dealing with this paper, it is the constructivist argument that is preferred by the author, because international relations are ultimately based on human behaviour and human interaction, and constructivism best addresses such complex cognitive dimensions that inform this behaviour. Rationalist theories are fine insofar as the actors are considered purely rational utility seeking machines, or perhaps psychopaths, but these are not what human societies are mostly made up of.

Furthermore, following a rationalist theory perspective, this analysis would likely have trouble explaining the vast amount of studies dealing with public images, perceptions and the Kurdish identity. After all, rationalist theories typically focus on the material dimension of things (Reus-Smit 2009). The significance of military power is perhaps more prioritised by the modern, neo-realist view (Donnelly 2009), whereas economic benefits achieved through cooperation is better emphasised by the neo-liberal (Burchill 2009). Either way, the constructivist point is built on recognising the importance of both the material dimension and also those non-material structures that shape an actor's identity.

While it is true that the studies concerning the Kurdish interests in Iraq mainly did not much care to elaborate the elements that might be at play in shaping the Kurdish identity, they are by far not outside the framework of a constructivist mind to understand. But where the rationalist theory does not explain the value of identities and perceptions, as previously demonstrated, the constructivist framework is particularly suited to explaining why understanding them is essential. In a conflict where, borrowing the words of Marcus (2012), "it seems that what's really on trial is Kurdish identity itself", understanding the constructivist position is perhaps the best approach to understanding the conflict itself.

4.2. Where Historical Sociology does and does not Matter

At the beginning of this paper, some thought was given over how history is often perceived as the starting point and the most dominant aspect to studying the conflict. Though this was discussed with respect only to the papers that dealt with the conflict in Turkey, it could be observed to a lesser or wider extent on almost all studies examined by this paper. For instance, because Ofra Bengio and Douglas Little are both primarily historians, it makes sense that their articles (Bengio 2014; Little 2010), though having to do with international politics, almost exclusively end up exploring historical developments and their significance to the conflict.

Earlier in this paper, some theoretical pitfalls related to a historical approach to international relations were touched upon, such as the problem posed by the post-structuralist argument (see Devetak 2009a). This argument mainly states that there is no such thing as an objective account of history, but that history is rather a set of competing narratives, where the most powerful narratives become the accepted norm, while displacing the less powerful ones (Devetak 2009a). This section will further explore the theoretical problems related to the dominant role of historical sociology in the studies, but also what reasons exist to help justify such an approach.

Unlike studies that stick with the realm of the contemporary, and may therefore collect their data presently, a study that seeks to examine historical events will have to rely on scholarly accounts of that history (Linklater 2009). Therefore these studies may only be as good as the accounts they rely on (Linklater 2009). Moreover, controversies between different accounts may often distort the larger image the scholar is trying to piece together, leading the scholar to make selective decisions over which stories best fit the scholar's research (Linklater 2009).

Such notions are very much in line with the problem already established by the post-structuralist argument; different historical accounts, scholarly or not, represent narratives from which the historian is forced to choose the ones he or she believes to be most accurate.

Linklater (2009) also presents the point that historical sociology and the international relations are typically considered two separate fields of science. However, there has typically also been an overlapping of the two fields; IR scholars, for example, have been enticed by the idea that historical sociology might offer challenge to the classic underlying assumption within rational theories that the nature of interstate relations is unchanging (Linklater 2009). With respect to the discourse analysis at hand, the overlap between these fields is also apparent in that Bengio (2014) and Little (2010), while being scholars of history rather than international relations, still very clearly contribute to the discussion about the Kurdish pursuit for autonomy, and both have a distinct characteristic of observing the international relations between Kurdish leadership and various state powers.

Why though, it might be asked, the historical approach is so well practised, when it inherently contains such fundamental flaws as has been described above. According to Linklater (2009), historical sociology provides the alternative to what may be called presentism, which is to concentrate solely on short-term and current affairs horizons. Employing it in the context of international relations stems from "the belief that the distinctive and possibly unique features of the modern world will remain opaque unless they are placed in the broadest historical context" (Linklater 2009).

The idea is then to decipher some kind of a grand narrative of events that might better explain both the current conditions that may be observed, but also to point to a direction where, following the logic of such grand narrative, the events may also be going (Linklater 2009). Essentially the idea is to practise some sort of process tracing in the broadest sense. Yet perhaps disappointingly, many of the actual studies in this discourse analysis, which extensively sought to illustrate the historical developments of the Kurdish dilemma, did so only to arrive at what they portrayed to be the current situation.

Little (2010) contributes to the Kurdish discourse by providing a cold war narrative, where the Kurdish aspirations for independence became entwined with the Cold War politics, shaping the Kurds into mostly a proxy pawn played in the larger context of the Cold War. This narrative by Little (2010) gives the impression that the Kurds have traditionally been supported as a destabilising force against the unsavoury Iraqi government, yet they have continuously

been let down by those very supporters when the Kurds have faced extreme devastation. Such dynamics may help to understand, why despite long history of trying, the Kurds have not been able to overcome their obstacles to statehood.

However, while Little's (2010) Cold War story may be interesting in its own right, it is perhaps trivial in the sense that a history lesson is not necessarily required to see that the Kurds are currently lacking a state of their own. Little (2010) does not pretend to have obtained particular insight into what this story might say about the Kurdish future, nor does it really appear to inform about any grand structure of things that guide international relations, apart from a set of examples, where leaders have acted in a truly rationalist, self-serving manner typical to the Cold War dynamics, which in turn have informed the rationalist theory explanations of the world of international relations. If a person ever hoped to find in history counter-arguments to the notion that the nature of international relations is unchanging, then the narrative provided by Little (2010) does little in support of that.

While it is true that Little (2010) provides only one view, it is not so different when it comes to Bengio (2014) or Gunter (2014) for that matter. Exceptionally, Stansfield (2013) does provide an unravelling of potential events happening into the future, but it is not as much informed by tracing processes from history as it is by more contemporary structures he has identified to be in place, such as geopolitical realities, military capabilities and alliance relations.

The irony seems to be that despite theoretical justifications exist for charting history with respect to international relations, they do not become apparent in the actual Kurdish discourse that places such emphasis on understanding the historical context. It is a source of frustration to observe scholars typically address historical events, without really justifying or explaining why the narrative they pose is relevant to their arguments. It is as if there is a culture of assuming that history needs to be presented for its own sake, regardless of whether any argument is actually derived from it.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper demonstrated that the contemporary discourse on Kurds is fragmented. This fragmentation may be observed on two levels; firstly, within the discourse of Turkish Kurds, where many of the views struggle to complement each other so as to form a coherent picture of why there is conflict in the first place, and what the obstacles for peace are. Many of the studies in this regard seem to exist rather as lonely islands, offering together a diverse list of factors that could be considered to shape the conflict as a whole, but no understanding exists between them over which factors are more relevant than others, or if they are all equally important.

The second fragmentation exists where studies between Kurds in Turkey and Kurds elsewhere are considered. Crudely, this polarisation exists between the axis of Turkey and Iraq. One reason for its existence may be found in that the Kurds themselves are divided in such a way, where the Turkish Kurds feel themselves different from the Kurds in Iraq, and rather consider Turkey as their home country as opposed to an imagined ideal of a greater Kurdistan. Perhaps because of this, the theoretical stand points can clearly be differentiated between the studies concerning Turkey, and those focusing outside of it.

This wider fragmentation was made apparent through that there is a clear connecting theme in the studies concerning Turkey, which is related to understanding public images and perceptions in general, but more precisely the Kurdish identity itself. Such a key characteristic, which can be identified to belong with the studies of Kurds in Turkey, seems to be largely absent when Kurds are studied elsewhere. Moreover, the studies that seek to understand the Kurdish identity in particular would seem to suggest that such identity, while in conflict with, does not generally seek to secede from the Turkish state. However, the studies that deal with Kurds outside Turkey have an observable tendency to assume that the Kurdish quest is that of independence. A notable desire to understand Kurdish identity outside of Turkey does not seem common, if at all existent.

The fragmented image of the discourse as a whole can finally be put in the context of the diverse theories of international relations. There is a vast range of choices available within the theories of international relations. These choices can be seen as a strength, while they offer a wide set of tools to tackle the many diverse and complex problems that arise in the field of international relations. However, their fundamentally different assumptions about the realities of international relations may also contribute to the fragmented nature of the discourse that has been demonstrated by this paper.

In this sense, a unitary theoretical stance that is not fundamentally in conflict with itself would benefit the Kurdish discourse. Because the Kurds are not a state entity, but more like an identity group, which has experienced a long history of repression and violence by repressive governments, its identity has rather been under attack than any of its tangible institutions. Therefore constructivism is perhaps the most suitable alternative in the study of Kurds, while it is the theoretical choice that addresses the significance of identity, but also remains capable of taking into account the material structures.

But because the scholarly community in general has not been able to reach such a theoretical consensus thus far, it is unlikely to be achieved merely for the benefit of the Kurdish discourse. As such, the Kurdish discourse may be observed to be heading two ways. Firstly, more and more lonely studies characterised by multi-disciplinarity will keep emerging, consolidating the fragmented nature of the Kurdish discourse. Secondly, studies that will strive to bridge the gaps between the clusters of discourse that do not appear to be complementing each other will emerge. In so doing, the discourse might in time come to shape a widely accepted representation of the Kurdish dilemma.

REFERENCES

Anderson, B. (2010) The nation and the origins of national consciousness, in M. Guibernau & J. Rex (Eds.), The ethnicity reader: Nationalism, multiculturalism & migration, 56-63, Cambridge, MA: Polity Press

Anderson, L. & Stansfield, G. (2009) Kurds in Iraq: The Struggle Between Baghdad and Erbil, Middle East Policy, 16:1, 134-145

Balci, A. & Kardaş, T. (2016) Inter-societal security trilemma in Turkey: understanding the failure of the 2009 Kurdish Opening, Turkish Studies, 17:1, 155-180

Başer, Z. & Çelik, A.B. (2014) Imagining peace in a conflict environment: Kurdish youths' framing of the Kurdish issue in Turkey, Patterns of Prejudice, 48:3, 265-285

Bengio, O. (2014) Surprising Ties between Israel and the Kurds, Middle East Quarterly, 21:3

Blanche, E. (2013) Kurds: Attaining the Impossible Dream?, The Middle East, 1 February 2013, 13-16

Brathwaite K.J.H. (2014) Repression and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict in Kurdistan, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 37: 473-491

Burchill, S. (2009) Liberalism, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Burchill, S. & Linklater, A. (2009) Introduction to Theories of International Relations, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Demir, I. (2012) Battling with Memleket in London: The Kurdish Diaspora's Engagement with Turkey, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 38:5, 815-831

Devetak, R. (2009a) Post-Structuralism, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Devetak, R. (2009b) Critical Theory, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Donnelly, J. (2009) Realism, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Gresh, G.R. (2009) Iranian Kurds in an Age of Globalisation, Iran and the Caucasus, 13, 187-196

Gunter, M.M. (2014) Unrecognized De Facto States in World Politics: The Kurds, Brown Journal of World Affairs, 20:2, 161-178

Haio, G. & Matras, Y. (2002) Kurdish linguistics: a brief overview, University of Bamberg https://www.uni-bamberg.de/fileadmin/aspra/bib-haig/kurdish_linguistics_a_brief.pdf (Retreived, 04/2016)

Krajeski, J. (2015) What the Kurds Want, Virginia Quarterly Review, Fall/2015, 86-105

Linklater, A. (2009) Historical Sociology, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Little, D. (2010) The United States and the Kurds: A Cold War Story, Journal of Cold War Studies, 12:4, 63-98

Marcus, A. (2012) The Kurds' Evolving Strategy, World Affairs, November/December 2012, 15-22

Pusane, Ö.K. (2014) Turkey's Kurdish Opening: Long Awaited Achievements and Failed Expectations, Turkish Studies, 15:1, 81-99

Reus-Smit, C. (2009) Constructivism, In: Scott Burcill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, Jacqui True (eds), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed, Palgrave Macmillan

Sonnenschein, F. (2013) Multiple and flexible identifications and the understanding of political voices of the Kurdish self, National Identities, 15:4, 379-400

Stansfield, G. (2013) The unravelling of the post-First World War state system? The Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the transformation of the Middle East, International Affairs, 81:2, 259-282

Totten, M.J. (2015) The Trouble with Turkey: Erdogan, ISIS, and the Kurds, World Affairs, Fall 2015, 5-12

Yegen, M. (2009) "Prospective-Turks" or "Pseudo-Citizens:" Kurds in Turkey, Middle East Journal, 63:4, 597-615