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Media and Democracy in Turkey: The Kurdish Issue

By
Ekmel GECER

A Doctoral Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

September, 2014

Supervisors: Professor David Deacon and Dr Sabina Mihelj
Department of Social Sciences

Abstract

Over recent years, there has been an intense and polarised debate about the extent of democratisation in Turkey, although this has tended to be defined in institutional terms (for example, in the supposed reduction in military tutelage of the political system and the institutional recognition of minority rights). This study seeks to widen the terms of reference by examining the current challenges confronted by the Turkish media within the media-democracy relationship and, using the Kurdish question as a case study, examines the extent to which mainstream Turkish Media are contributing to deliberative democracy. It also seeks to identify where the Turkish media should be most appropriately located within competing models of media and democracy.

This analysis of the challenges confronted in achieving and protecting media freedoms in Turkey is based on three empirical exercises. Semi-structured elite interviews were conducted with representatives from most of the mainstream media organisations in the country. Interviews were also conducted with political party representatives, NGO members and academics to ascertain their opinions of the media's democratic performance and credentials and also explore the extent to which they engage with journalists and news organisations routinely in their work. Finally, a content analysis of the coverage/content of two specific events related to the Kurdish Issue (the launch of the Kurdish language TV Channel TRT6 and Uludere Airstrike) in five mainstream Turkish newspapers was conducted.

The interviews reveal sharply contrasting views about the extent to which democratisation processes are progressing in Turkey, and identify a range of barriers that continue to inhibit the democratic performance of the mainstream media (e.g. commercialisation, state censorship, and other forms of political pressure). The detrimental impact of these factors is to a large degree confirmed by the content analysis of coverage of the Kurdish issue, but the analysis also shows that news output does contain a degree of diversity and difference. For this reason, it is not appropriate to conceive of the Turkish media as acting entirely as a closed message system for political elites.

Key Words: Media, democracy, press freedoms, media models, deliberative democracy, Turkey, Kurdish Issue, multiculturalism

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List of Abbreviations

AA	Anatolia News Agency (Anadolu Haber Ajansı)
ADD	Association of Kemalist Thought (Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği)
AFP	Agence France Press
AIRC	American Information Resource Center
ASALA	Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDP	Peace and Democracy Party (Baris ve Demokrasi Partisi- Kurdish Party in the Turkish Parliament)
BIANET	Independent Communication Network
BYEGM	General Directorate of Press and Information
CHP	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi- Main opposition party in Turkey)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIVICUS	World Alliance for Citizen Participation
CNN	Cable News Network
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
CYD	Association for Supporting Contemporary Life
DEP	Democracy Party (Pro-Kurdish/Demokrat Parti)
DITAM	Tigris Communal Research Centre (Dicle Toplumsal Araştırmalar Merkezi)
DTK	Democratic Society Congress (Demokratik Toplum Kongresi)
DTO	Diyarbakir Commercial Union
DYP	True Path Party (Dogru Yol Partisi)
EJC	European Journalism Center
EU	European Union
FMP	Former Member of Parliament
FP	Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)
GONGO	Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organization
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
GYV	The Journalists and Writers Foundation
HADEP	People's Democracy Party (Halkin Demokrasi Partisi)
HE	Higher Education
HEP	People's Labour Party (Halkin Emek Partisi)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
HSP	Voice of People Party (HAS Parti)
IHD	Human Rights Association (Insan Haklari Dernegi)
IRA	Irish Republican Army
KCK	Kurdistan Societies Union
KESK	Confederation of Public Labourers' Unions
KRG	Kurdish Regional Government
MAZLUMDER	The Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People
MGK	National Security Council (Milli Guvenlik Kurulu)
MHP	Nationalist Movement Party (Turkish Nationalist- Milliyetci Hareket Partisi)
MIT	National Intelligence Service of Turkey (Milli İstihbarat Teskilati)
MNP	National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi)

MP	Member of Parliament
MSP	National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi)
MTTB	National Turkish Students' Association (Milli Türk Talebe Birliđi)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODP	Freedom and Solidarity Party (Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi)
OHAL	State of Emergency Region
OHAL	Extraordinary Security Situation
OSSREA	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and South Africa
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkera Kurdistan)
PM	Prime Minister
PR	Public Relations
RP	Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)
RSF	Reporters without Borders
RTE	Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish PM's name
RWB	Reporters without Borders
SEJA	South East Journalists' Association in Turkey
SETA	Foundation for Political Economic and Social Research
SP	Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi)
SPK	Capital Marker Board of Turkey
TBB	Turkish Medical Association
TBV	Turkey Informatics Foundation (Turkiye Bilisim Vakfi)
TCK	Turkish Criminal Code (Türk Ceza Kanunu)
TCS	Turkish Foundation for Environmental Problems
TESEV	The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation
TGC	Turkish Journalists Association
TOBB	The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
TRT	Turkish Radio and Television Association
TUSEV	Third Sector Foundation of Turkey
TUSIAD	Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association
TUSKON	Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organizations
USA	United States of America
YOK	Higher Education Council of Turkey (YukseK Ogrenim Kurumu)

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I hope this study will make a meaningful contribution to media studies and will help to acquire a greater insight to understand the media and communication environment in Turkey.

EkmeI GECER
Loughborough, 2014

Introduction

The rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to power in 2002 has heightened hopes for a new, more democratic Turkish constitution and politics that would be more inclusive and tolerant of cultural and ethnic diversity in the country. However, although the AKP government (which has been in power ever since) is being praised for its efforts to overcome long-standing problems such as military tutelage in the country and improving minority/diversity issues, various social and occupation groups including media professionals in the country have criticised the government for creating an ambiance of pressure through their conservative policies (Akan, 2013: p. 318). The accusation is that although the government looks more democratic and determined to overcome the Turkey's problems, it still seems bound by the deep-rooted insular nation-state or conservative ideology which is resistant to more thorough democratization (Akyol, 2013: p. 251). The government was accused of obstructing institutions such as the media in their efforts to voice minority and oppositional opinions, which then led to a more extensive questioning of the democracy model (representative) in the country. In this debate the opposition, including the president Abdullah Gul (2007-2014), urged the government not to take the election results as the only base of democracy but also to consider the protests and the process in between the elections which are held every four years.

On the other hand, the delay in fully implementing democratic changes in Turkey has prolonged the challenging relationship between the state and the media which has existed since the establishment of the first daily newspapers during the last days of the Ottoman Empire (Kamali, 2012: p. 254; Baskurt, 1964: p. 81). The structure of the nation-state in the 1920s has been used as a disciplining tool against the press. Media professionals who were believed to disagree with the official *state ideology* have been put under political or military pressure as control of the media was deemed to be in the national interest (Brummet, 2000: p. 86; Crimmins, 2000: p. 209). After the 1980 military coup, Turkey's economic policies changed and liberal ideas started to dominate economic life in the country. This meant the ownership structures in the media sector altered as the private companies were allowed to enter the media marketplace. The state monopoly was broken, especially after the 1990s, and big holdings started to control the media outlets (e.g. Dogan and Bilgin) (Christensen, 2007: p. 186). However, the loopholes in existing legislation allowed the media owners to try to gain control of the country's politics by portraying themselves as legitimate political actors and exert pressure on political elites (Ari, 2004: p. 124).

On the other hand, it has been claimed that the absence of internal control mechanisms aimed at avoiding discrimination both in the news discourse and in employment policies, makes it

difficult to have a fully democratic media in Turkey and prevents the media from covering controversial stories in an unbiased way (Elmas and Kurban, 2011). Furthermore, the lack of support among the journalists and the obstructions in front of syndication give rise to self-censorship and disregard for ethics, impartiality and accuracy (Sozeri and Guney, 2011).

One such controversial issue in Turkey which the media has been accused of not acting impartially and not allowing public issues to be deliberated in a multidimensional way is the so-called 'Kurdish Problem'. I need to explain from the outset that I have major objections to this term, not least in the ideological assumptions that reside in defining a community as a 'problem'. For this reason, I shall forthwith use the more neutral descriptor of 'the Kurdish Issue', but in doing so I do not mean to underplay the hugely contested issues that surround this subject. As shall be shown, the rights and aspirations of this minority community have been subjected to major political, cultural and linguistic prohibitions by the Turkish state, involving in all kinds of public domains, including education, politics and public communication. 'The Kurdish issue' has also created a protracted military conflict that has led to thousands of deaths over the last thirty years. In short, it is difficult to conceive of a more controversial and contested issue within Turkey over recent decades, and it is this criticality that makes it such a valuable case study for testing the wider performance and resilience of Turkey's mainstream media and democratic system. It is no exaggeration to state that the Kurdish issue has been one of the main catalysts for democratic transformation in the country in recent years raising wider debate about issues of national security, human rights and principals of cultural recognition and respect (Ensaroglu and Kurban, 2011).

It is my further contention that the mainstream media have played a very significant historical role in both the suppression and emergence of this issue, and continues to have a very important role in either ending the conflict or maintaining it (Erdem, 2013: p. 48). Appraisal of their role invites a range of questions: What kind of language has the media used to frame discussion of this issue? Has Turkish media ignored the problem or tried to reveal it? How do the Turkish Media cover an issue related to democracy? To what extent is there evidence of some degree of independence and impartiality in journalists' work, or do they predominantly behave as though they are representatives of the state? These questions are not just of importance to the Kurdish issue, they also raise fundamental questions about the realisation and relationship between democracy and the media in Turkey.

In this context, the key aims of my project are to use the case study of media coverage of the Kurdish Issue in order to (a) investigate *whether and to what extent the mainstream Turkish media*

are contributing to democratic deliberation and (b) to identify *where the Turkish media almost appropriately located within computing models of media and democracy*. To achieve these aims, this research will focus primarily on identifying the key patterns of media reporting on the Kurdish Issue, as well as on providing an understanding to the agenda-building dynamics of Turkish news reporting that can help explain these patterns. To be able to interpret these patterns and dynamics in light of the state of democracy in Turkey, the study will also discuss the democratization process in Turkey, combining theories of democracy and communication through analysing specific events tied to the Kurdish Issue. Through that, the study will also touch on more general questions about the relationships between the media, society and politics in the context of democratic change in Turkey; cultural diversity and nationalism in the media, the efficiency of the media as a tool for democratic transformation in the context of political and military pressure, and the factors that may have influenced media reporting on the issue (e.g. media ownership, media and state ideology, legal frameworks, minority problems media and government dealings; public/state broadcasting; legal frameworks surrounding the press and expression freedoms).

Of course, it cannot be claimed that this is the first attempt to explain the relationship between the media and democracy in Turkey (see Aydin, 2008; Bektas, 2000) or the only study that examines the representation of the Kurdish Issue within the mainstream Turkish media (see Durna and Kubilay, 2010; Bulut, 2005; Bilgic, 2008). However there are some points that make my study original. First of all, this thesis seeks to situate the Turkish media and their relationship with democracy among the competing media and democracy models. Secondly, in none of the existing studies has the relationship between the media and democracy been studied in relation to a sensitive issue such as the Kurdish Issue or specifically in relation with the deliberative public sphere. Although Bulut's *Kurds in the Turkish Press* study seems similar to mine, the book has not been based on an empirical research and it has also not considered the experiences of journalists whilst covering the Kurdish Issue. Finally, this project is the first extensive, empirically grounded study of the relationships between the media and the Kurdish Issue, which examines both media coverage as well as the wider processes of news production, agenda setting and deliberative democracy debates that can help explain particular patterns in media coverage. While some journal articles on media representations of the Kurdish Issue do exist, their empirical and methodological scope is significantly more limited than the scope of my study.

In terms of methods, this project combines the analysis of the Turkish media's coverage of the Kurdish Question with *semi-structured elite interviews* with politicians, academics, NGOs and media professionals. For the analysis of media coverage, the principal method in this project has been

quantitative content analysis. One month of coverage of two specific events (launch of TRT6 in January 2009 and Uludere airstrike in December 2012) has been analysed, drawn from five mainstream Turkish Dailies (Cumhuriyet, Hurriyet, Ortadogu, Taraf, Zaman). To gain insight into the political and professional factors that have combined to structure this coverage, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with seven politicians, ten academics, six NGOs and twenty eight media professionals (51 elite interviewees in total). More specifically, the analysis of media coverage and elite interviews were designed to answer the following research questions:

- What are the Turkish elite opinions about the relationship between media and democracy in Turkey; their approaches regarding possibility of the mainstream media in creating a deliberative public sphere, and specifically about the media treatment of Kurdish Issues?
- What kinds of barriers do news media professionals face especially while establishing news stories regarding sensitive issues?
- Do we see any increased evidence of improved news access for Kurdish sources in the news?
- Do we see also any increased evidence of improved news access for the civil society organisations such as NGOs and academic sources in the news?
- Does the tone of coverage regarding the Kurdish Issue reproduce governmental perspectives? Has this coverage increased or decreased after both events and in which direction?

Together, answers to these questions will provide the empirical basis for addressing the two aforementioned key research aims.

Chapter-by-Chapter Outline

The dissertation opens with *Chapter 1*, which provides an overview of the general approaches to the media-democracy relationship, democracy itself and news construction debates in terms of media and public opinion. The last section of *chapter 1* examines the media-democracy relationship and the background of democratic development in Turkey. In this regard, *chapter 1* will outline different democracy concepts and their critiques with a view to identify what I believe to be the most appropriate functioning democracy model, namely the *deliberative democracy*. The media theories of different scholars are examined in order to better locate the media-democracy relationship and to identify the appropriate measures for assessing the democratic performance of media systems in Turkey.

Chapter 2 turns to multiculturalism and media debates, discusses their application in different countries and the different critiques of multiculturalism policies. After focusing on multiculturalism theories in relation to the media, *Chapter 2* will also handle cultural diversity and minority policies and problems in Turkey to set out the background of the Kurdish Issue and its reporting.

While *chapter 2* deals with general theories and policies of multiculturalism, and with their application in Turkey, both in the context of the political sphere as a whole and within the media; *chapter 3* looks at the Kurdish Issue (both in the political sphere generally and in the media sphere) as a particular example of how the Turkish state is dealing with the challenges of democratization and multiculturalism. The chapter discussed both present and past debates about the Kurdish Issue and identifies milestone events such as Leyla Zana's arrest in the Turkish Parliament and the launch of TRT6 in 2009.

Chapter 4, outlines the chosen methods, considers their strengths and weaknesses and explains procedures involved in data gathering, sampling and data analysis. With regard to elite interviews, the chapter describes who was interviewed and what the aims of interviewing were. With regard to content analysis the chapter describes which newspapers have been used and which events have been looked at. In subsequent chapters, I have tried to explain the meaning of the data collected during my field study in Turkey; endeavoured to find the relations between the findings, make inferences from them and tried to explain their importance for the research. Therefore, while chapters 5 and 6 are mostly based on the interviewee statements, *chapter 7* dedicated to the content analysis which both chapters have been organised according to the aims and research questions of

this study. The elite interviews transcriptions in these two chapters have been thematically analysed to find answers for the research questions mentioned above.

In this regard, *chapter 5* covers much wider issues about the media and democratisation of Turkey such as media freedoms, their political and commercial dealings (ownership) and their relation and ability to represent the civil society (NGOs and academics). This chapter will provide useful feedback into the initial debate in *chapter 1* which is about democratisation in Turkey and development of the media. Being the first section of elite interview analysis, *chapter 5*, will focus on (a) the interviewees' (news sources and professionals) view of democratisation in Turkey generally, (b) their view of the performance of their own organisations/institutions in enabling or restricting democratic progress and (c) their assessments regarding Turkish media performance in democratic terms. This chapter discusses and integrates the approaches of the news sources and producers together as results of the elite interviews. After discussing the findings about media freedoms and the democratisation of Turkey, *chapter 6* tries to validate the approaches through discussing media freedoms and democracy within in the context of the representation of the Kurdish Issue.

Providing the debates about the media and democracy and the media and the Kurdish Question relation, I wanted to use content analysis in *chapter 7* as a way of testing the legitimacy of the claims of various news sources and producers given in *chapters 5* and *6*. Therefore to be able to examine the extent to which mainstream Turkish media are contributing to deliberative democracy, I have tried to investigate the representation of two events regarding the Kurdish Issue that were most prominent in the 2009-2012 period: the establishment of the TRT6 Kurdish language broadcast system and the Uludere airstrike in very late 2011, which killed 35 Kurdish citizens. In this chapter I seek to establish who represented the Kurdish Community in media coverage; whose voices were heard; how was the Kurdish Issue addressed or ignored; how much and in what way they have been covered and in what context was the Kurdish Issue handled by the newspapers from diverse intellectual and ideological backgrounds.

In the discussion part, I have tried to examine the results from both the elite interviews and the content analysis together in the light of the earlier literature review about media and democracy relation, democracy models, media concepts and multiculturalism theories. The results of the elite interviews in this discussion part will be compared with the content analysis. Through this discussion and the literature review the study will try to find out (a) the location of the Turkish media within the competing models of media and democracy and (b) the possibility of debating the Kurdish Issue in a deliberative democracy context.

CHAPTER I

MEDIA, POLITICS and DEMOCRACY

1.1 Introduction to Literature Review

This chapter, along with the next two, is intended to provide theoretical context for the findings chapters that include thematic elite interview analysis and content analysis regarding the media debates in Turkey and representation of the Kurdish Issue. In order to structure the background of the upcoming discussions, this chapter focuses on general debates of democracy and media, news construction and then moves more specifically towards the Turkish context. In this regard, this part comprises three sections. The first section will be outlining different democracy concepts and their critiques with a view to identifying what I believe to be the most appropriate normative model for assessing the democratic health of Turkish society. Constituting a background for the whole project, these descriptions of democracy will particularly help us analyse the elite interview chapters (5 and 6) which will help to assess whether mainstream Turkish Media are contributing to deliberative democracy. Having examined media and democracy debates, the chapter tries to give the existing categorisations of international media systems to set the background for the second question of the research: where the Turkish media should be most appropriately located within the existing media models.

After debating the media and democracy relation in general, handling the media models and examining the news construction and power relation; the last part of *chapter 1* goes towards the reflection of these debates in Turkish case and explains the historical background of democratic development and the phases of the media through this change in the country. Although the position of the media in the latter part of the Ottoman Empire era has been tackled very briefly, these media phases started from the establishment of the Turkish Republic which also marks the start of modern Turkish history (Mardin, 2006: p. 260). Looking at the chronological background of Turkish democracy and media will give us insights about today's press freedoms issues and along with their close examination in chapters 5, 6 and 7, (elite interview and content analysis) these visions will help us to answer main research questions of this study mentioned above.

1.2 Democracy: Deliberation is the Way out?

'Democracy' is frequently invoked rhetorically in public discourse as a value, a requirement, and an ideal, but defining its precise features and functions is a matter of great complexity and no little controversy. There are a range of different models of democracy (e.g. liberal, representative,

deliberative), which contain competing values and assumptions of what should be most prominently emphasised in 'good democracy' (individual rights, collective responsibilities, the reduction of differences, the valorisation of difference, engaged and accountable political representation, direct citizen engagement, etc.). This section, reviewing various models of democracy and highlighting their inherent assumptions and limitations, will focus on deliberative democracy which I believe to be the missing point of Turkish democratisation with regards to the media relations and overcoming the Kurdish conflict.

Representative democracy (parliamentary system) is the commonly known type of democracy, which refers to the usage of authority through representatives selected by the people (Wilson et al, 2011). Here the elections are the main element and although the people seem to participate in the government only at election time, they are able to participate via other applications such as petitions outside election times as well (Onis, 1999: p. 108; Pharr, 2000: p. 173). At this point *deliberative democracy* has become more focused on negotiation to solve problems and participation in establishing institutions and rules (Ochoa, 2008: p. 6). As will be discussed below, deliberative democracy has been highlighted in recent years since it allows citizens to be influential in governing rather than representation only. Here the legitimacy of legal regulations is provided by open and free negotiation through proposals of the NGOs, civil and non-civil actors although the limits of these negotiations are determined by the state itself (Moeckli, 2007: p. 107).

In this context, recent political protests in Turkey, Brazil, USA, Germany and Greece have caused further questioning of democracy and "showed the deep crisis in representative democracy model" (Akbaba, 2013: p. 29) along with other debates such as reduction in voter turnout, growing public disaffection with political classes; (Auel and Rittberger, 2006) as large crowds of demonstrators have occupied public places urging the governments to more quickly respond to public demands rather than waiting for the next election. Other manifestations of this representative crisis include reductions in citizen engagement with elections and a growing, generic antagonism towards the political classes (Ferguson, 2012: p. 162; Green, 2013: p. 181). Therefore criticizing the representative and liberal democracy models, recent studies have favoured deliberative democracy as a model which may satisfy modern public demands (see for example Porta, 2013: p. 80; Ochoa, 2008: p. 6). Those who present the deliberative model as an alternative to representative democracy focus on deliberation and discussion that is structured through the contribution of all citizens while identifying the common/public good. It is the democracy model "in which citizens come together on a regular basis to reach collective decisions about public issues" (Chambers, 2009: p. 332) and "a discursive

system where citizens share information about public affairs, talk politics, form opinions, and participate in political processes” (Kim et al, 1999: p. 361).

Deliberation helps societies to overcome the tough political problems, helps alternative ways to emerge and thus provide an atmosphere in which members of a heterogenic community can express their views (Sanders, 1997: p. 348). In this regard, studying the political/social/economic/military pressures on the Turkish media which may obstruct the establishment of a deliberative public sphere and the pre-assumption that the Kurdish Issue has not being deliberated in this public-sphere due to censorship allegations, made me think that the model of deliberative democracy is the most comprehensive model which can answer the current critiques of democracy in Turkey, because it allows citizens to be influential in governing through deliberation rather than representation only (Moeckli, 2007: p. 107).

Deliberative democracy states that liberal democracy, “a governmental form based on popular majority votes, competition between potential political representatives, separation of powers, minority protection, freedom of the press speech and public association” (Wang, 2003: 19; Hobson, 2009: p. 385), is not able to respond to the problems that societies face (Hendriks, 2010: p. 107 Dahl, 1989: p. 222; Held, 1993: p. 74). This model is incapable of producing solutions regarding minority rights and gender/ethnic discriminations due to its individual feature. Although there are periodic elections in liberal democracies, citizens are not very influential in decision-making as politics in liberal democracy is an area of activity for individuals’ personal interests and social rights are determined by subjective personal approaches (Nielsen, 2002: p. 186). Through majority support the government controls all governmental bodies which may conclude with injustice, inequality and social instability and negatively influences other civil organisations which ultimately causing a representation crisis (Srubar, 2000: p. 230). The elected politicians and the bureaucrats, in order to be closer to the governmental idea, may lose their impartiality and fail to act against social injustices (Nyamnjoh, 2009: p. 42).

On the other hand, although voting behaviour mostly provides democratic knowledge and procure majority demands to be reflected in government, the elections in representative (parliamentary model) democracy, the most common type of democracy, (Wilson et al, 2011; Strom et al, 2006), have been accused of not voicing minority rights or subcultures as the election system may not include some marginalised groups into parliament (Anderson, 2002: p. 18; Mouffe, 1993: p. 176) due to limitations such as election thresholds (Wheatly, 2010: p. 181). The referendums in representative models can be the way out but the people cannot still intervene in the issues directly related to their social/individual life. Therefore the politicians may enforce the regulations for their

organisational/individual interests without public approval (Habermas, 1975: p. 76). This, in the long run, may cause political decisions fail to recognise the heterogeneity of society and the people who think their views do not count become disengaged in politics and start to distrust in elected politicians despite their belief in democracy (Fishkin, 1993: p. 20; Klingmann and Mochmann, 2000).

Deliberative democracy, however, focuses on communicative politics, envisages people's political participation through negotiation and dialogue rather than joint voting behaviour (Renger, 1997: p. 60). Everybody in the deliberation sphere has right to contribute to debate and one of the prominent aims is to create political equality for those who are not being represented well enough. This looks more democratic in terms of state-people relations and looks more ethical as people can decide what they think useful for their lives (Cohen, 1996: p. 109). The important idea is not the most-voted one nor does the legitimacy of a regulation only depend on balanced representation. Rather, they depend on decisions taken and accepted after mutual, logical critiques and reviews which are conducted under no pressure (Vitale, 2006: p. 746). Thus, an informed deliberative sphere, free public mind and impartial decision making are requirements for, and indicative of, deliberative democracy (Held, 2006: p. 232). Here democracy does not only emerge as a way of free deliberation but also as a process in which the citizens can test executive decision making and develop new approaches that can alter the governmental verdicts (Held, 2006: p. 249). Benhabib, in this regard, states that the source of legitimacy is not in decisions but in the decision-making process which is a deliberative one (Benhabib, 1996: p. 70). Deliberative democracy therefore sees democracy as a public procedure and urges citizens to actively partake in this political process (Cohen, 2003: p. 21).

Nonetheless, deliberative democracy has also been criticised for degrading democracy into the deliberation alone and approaching human rights as being determined only after this deliberation (Galston, 1999: p. 47; Sathanapally, 2012: p. 66). Therefore it is claimed that deliberative democrats exaggerate the role of deliberation in politics and ignore other factors such as psychological feelings, solidarity and passions (Walzer, 1999: p. 59) which makes the possibility of achieving consensus after a deliberation questionable. It is also claimed that attendees' personal abilities and intellectual backgrounds may also affect the negotiations, as those who are skilful and more knowledgeable may talk more than others and the polarization may increase at the end of debates. Therefore, the equality of the attendees is not only about their social or political status but also about their educational/intellectual background which recalls the critiques of deliberation to be an elitist activity. The deliberation process may end with ignoring the non-elitist or non-mainstream views to remain outside of the consensus (Owen, 2011: p. 18; Makariev, 2008: p. 125; Walzer, 1999: p. 68). How will we be able to know that those who support a specific idea are not under pressures of any political

group or individual (Bellamy, 2007: p. 150)? Furthermore, what if the deliberations create a deeper polarisation after people declare their opinions; how can we be sure of the tolerance for diversity of views within the deliberation arena (Shapiro, 1999: p. 32; Pakulski, and Körösényi, 2012; Bader, 2010: p. 84)?

Manin, while discussing deliberative democracy, states that scientific studies cannot always find solutions for political conflicts but deliberation is the way that is compatible with the nature of these conflicts. Although there may emerge some views which are stronger than others, it is possible to convince the participants about the strengths of these opinions because the decisions need to be explanatory for a consensus to be formulised (2001: p. 504). However, for this better idea to emerge and persuasion to be secured, those who attend the discussion should be able to express their views coherently and a common approval should be constructed to some extent (Gutmann and Thompson, 2004). Greif, ordering the principles of deliberative democracy, says that the negotiation between the state and the people should be in a critical way and be open to all of the public. The subject should be open to all parts, everybody should equally be able to attend the discussions, should aim for reconciliation and they should not be against freedoms and fair opportunity standards (Greiff, 2000: p. 403). Deliberation regarding political conflicts will provide alternative views to be considered and increase the possibility for a heterogenic society to voice its opinions (Setala and Schiller, 2009). It might be said that the deliberation is voluntary and this may cause decreasing attendees' numbers and that will make discussion non-comprehensive (Grzeszczak, 2010: p. 125) but because a decision taken after the deliberation can always be questioned this decision can be re-deliberated when the major attendance is provided (Benhabib, 1996: p. 72).

Deliberative democracy in the long run encourages people to learn and respect other views as deliberation is also a process of persuasion. Furthermore, deliberation helps people to learn about their own rights and freedoms as they will be able to compare their views with others. However, the aim in such deliberation is not to find the correct idea but rather to establish the sufficiency of some opinions (Weinstock and Kahane, 2010). In this regard, Gaus, referencing Habermas, states that people are part of a social contract and therefore they should be actively able to join in the governmental democratic process. The norms which will be applied in a democracy are those which have been agreed upon after public deliberation and this healthy deliberation can only be accessed only through creating a public sphere that favours equal participation and free communication that will help to access a rational consensus (Gaus, 2003: 125).

In sum, deliberative democrats aim to consolidate the democratic life, procedures, decisions and institutions via deliberative courses. But they firstly apply deliberation to legitimate the social

decisions (Held, 2006: p. 236). While doing this they aim to increase interest of citizens in political and governmental issues and create respect between different groups through the deliberation rules that open ways for the agreement (Gutmann and Thompson, 2004). However, for this deliberation to be provided in a healthy way the rules of communication should be very carefully applied and media outlets are crucial in making deliberation accessible by the public (Steiner, 2012: p. 170) as will be debated below.

1.3 Media and Democracy: Constructing a Deliberative Public Sphere

One of the aims of this study (focusing on the representation of the Kurdish Issue) is to examine whether the mainstream Turkish media are contributing to structuring a plural public sphere when representing the Kurdish Issue or if they are imposing the nationalist-statist ideology more representative of an authoritative model. Therefore discussions of the different democracy models above along with the forthcoming media and democracy debates and the appearance of the media development in the country, below, will allow us to (1) refer to the democracy debates in Turkey, (2) examine whether Turkish democracy functions in a deliberative manner and (3) predict the extent to which the media assist in the realisation of deliberative democracy. In this regard this section will try to give the background of media and democracy relations with a specific consideration of their role in deliberative democracy.

Democracy theories suggest that for citizens to engage with political decisions a certain level of communication or public opinion expression (communicative interaction) is required (Kaid et al., 2009). The notion of deliberative democracy and its meeting-point with mass communication emerges here where scholars such as Habermas, Curran and McQuail who, in Walsh's words, argue that "media do not only represent the public opinion but also shape it" (Walsh, 2011: p. 46). Without doubt, media outlets in deliberative democracies are not the only courses through which citizens develop democratic awareness; as political participation, social movements, NGO membership are some other ways of building a capacity to effectively participate in deliberations (Bhattacharjee and Chattopadhyay, 2011). However, in providing deliberative components of democratic politics, the media have a special role as they provide, in Thompson's words (1995: p. 257):

The principal means by which individuals acquire information and encounter different points of view on matters about which they may be expected to form personal judgement. They also provide individuals with a potential mechanism for articulating views which have been marginalised or excluded from the sphere

of mediated visibility. The cultivation of diversity and pluralism in the media is therefore an essential condition in the development of deliberative democracy.

The politics of deliberative democracy are expected to be comprehensive and the collective decisions should be taken after negotiation. Therefore, those affected by these verdicts should be able to access the channels through which they contribute to the decision-making process (Howley, 2005: p. 20). The role of the media in deliberative democracy counters the criticism that one person cannot make her/his voice heard among thousands but through mass communications can still be involved in decision-making (Parkinson, 2006: p. 175). Media organisations at this point are the conduits through which individuals construct their thoughts before involving the political process, or channels which mediate deliberation and thus close the gap between the informed minority and the uninformed majority (Fishkin, 1991: p. 95). As a consequence, media outlets are significant to deliberative democracy for their roles in providing, or prohibiting, an egalitarian and participatory public sphere; in creating a critical approach to hegemonic ideologies; in structuring public opinion regarding social issues and allowing people to encounter marginal/opposition groups (Park, 2002: p. 241; Lawson, 2002: p. 190; Bourrie, 2012: p. 261; Gamson and Wolsfeld, 1993; Hackett and Carroll, 2004).

Curran and Seaton in this regard summarise the responsibilities of the media in a democratic political system in four basic conditions: (1) Media systems must carry the necessary information to help citizens understand the public or political concepts enabling them to make independent choices. (2) The media, while conveying the actual and recent news to the people, must aim to create points of view which consider both collective and individual approaches. (3) At the same time, the media must provide pluralism in ideas, comments and debates and must help this plurality to be considered in the communication world. (4) The media, giving people information when they need it, must provide information in a timely way, and must produce content to encourage diversity in cultural expressions (Curran and Seaton, 2009).

In view of that, Raymond Williams, in his *democratic media concept* refers two different democratic rights in relation with each other. These rights are the dissemination of the news and the right of accessing information. These two rights are the bases of the democratic media systems and they cannot be used against minorities. This theory both opposes the authoritative pressures and the commercial/income aims to dominate the media organisations (Fralely and Roushanzamir, 2006). It refers to the necessity of existence of a 'public sphere' in which people should be able to discuss and exchange views regarding political, economic and social issues for democracy to function properly (Rutigliano, 2007: p. 226).

McQuail, in a similar vein, centralises the audience and in this connection freedom of information in his *democratic participant media* theory and states that the primary element of media existence is not the 'media groups' or the 'professionals' but the audience (Beachboard, 2007: p. 368). Hence the media must provide the possibilities for the audience to express their views. This approach determines the function of the media in a democratic society as helping people to participate in governance. The media in this theory are localised under control of the audiences and provide them the courses to make their voice heard (McQuail, 1987: p. 95). For this participation to be realized everyone should be able to access mass communication and diverse groups should interact with each other which also contributes to the deliberation of social problems (Isik, 2002: p. 41) Therefore the primary element of media existence is not the 'media groups' or the 'professionals' but the audience including the minorities (Beachboard, 2007: p. 368). The governments must not interfere with the media organisations or news content. Also the local or small media organisations, which are more participatory, are better than those which are so wide and professional. The media expectations cannot be explained by governmental approaches as they are more about the people than the governments (McQuail, 1987: p. 123; Baran and Davis, 2012). Therefore McQuail opposes the monopoly and commercialisation of private media and bureaucratic centrism in public broadcasting (McQuail, 1987: p. 95).

In this model of media and political participation, the role of the news media in providing information is deemed to be the central point (Uhr, 1998: p. xiii). While in some societies, the media play a much more developmental role (development media theory), in more established political systems the media are expected to observe events as a third party to enable the flow of information to the people to help them express themselves and contribute to construction of public opinion in a liberal manner (Stromback and Kaid, 2008; Buckley, 200: p. 181; Baran and Davis, 2012; Onwumechili and M'Bayo, 2013; McQuail, 1987: p. 84-98). Thus they enlarge the boundaries of political debate and force political elites to consider public opinion (Nawawy and Powers, 2010). In the *radical democratic media theory*, developed by James Curran, the media is the arena for alternative views transmitted to diverse groups of people who will benefit from such opportunities in an equal way, as this will form the balance between ethnic/religious/cultural groups (Curran, 2005: p. 29). However, for the public to properly participate in deliberation, the information they receive from the media needs to be unbiased. For this reason, the source and the context of information are also important in relation to news construction, i.e. source and producer relations, ideologies and objectivity which especially is visible while reporting conflicts (Dahl, 1989: p. 221). Therefore, for deliberation to work and for democracy to function properly the stress is on the quality of journalism/news media for their role in

providing information which allows the people to develop an open-mind through considering opposing viewpoints and vantage points (Anderson, 1998: p. 497).

Recognition of this role of the media also raises issues about political communication strategies where politicians promote their values and policies and seek to convince people about their legitimacy (Rawnsley and Gong, 2012; Windsch, 2008: p. 87). Here the main threat is that the partisan tendencies among political groups and different ideologies may degrade the informational quality and range of media content (Jacobs and Shapiro, 2000). According to Kim and his colleagues, the news media are especially closely connected to political communication as they lead people to engage and structure political debate in daily life which may end with an increase in the quality of political opinion, participation and public deliberation (Kim et al, 1999). However, at this point theories of deliberative democracy have been accused of not understanding the modern-day media as they are claimed to be the channels which do not convey the accurate news to the electorate but they are manipulated or misdirected as extent result of political communication strategies or public relation campaigns by those who are known as *spin doctors* and thus are mostly representing the views of particular political groups or vested interests (Elkon, 2007: p. 22; Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2006; Curran et al, 2010).

On the other hand, the mass media is often described as the 'fourth estate' in democracies (Kieran, 1997: p. 25), referring to their role in monitoring the actions of the powerful and holding them to account which is again linked to enhancing the background of the audience before participating in deliberations (Elkon, 2007: p. 22; Deutsch et al, 2006). Self-determination is crucial for the media to undertake this role and these freedoms are not only related to the governmental, political or other external elements but also related to media ownership and editorial independency (Kalyango and Eckler, 2010). The type of freedom for the media to contribute to democracy, according to Peterson and his collaborators, is 'positive freedom', which involves defending the media against exterior intervention and supporting them with the tools they need to undertake their responsibilities (Peterson et al., 1963). Karklin and others in this regard states that media professionals through internal education should learn how to resist political/economic pressures to avoid biased story-telling for fulfilling their democratic role (Karklins et al, 2011).

Curran's approach to public service broadcasting also needs to be considered while discussing the media's role in creating a deliberative public sphere. He indicates that public service media are where people get together to discuss the management of society and therefore the input in public service media needs to be impartial and should give voice to diverse opinions (2002: p. 245). Public broadcasting channels must be responsive to the demands and problems of diverse social/cultural groups and non-governmental organisations (Straubahar et al, 2011). The objectivity in

public broadcasting points its independency from any kind of social, political, religious and financial pressures. However, public service organisations on the other hand have some conditions which are related to public broadcasting principles and discussions. Here the public service idea should not be entangled in an authoritative monopoly (Heble, 1997: p. 82). In order to realise a proper public service, new establishments should be structured and the governments must not place pressure or control on these organisations (Fraley and Roushanzamir, 2006).

Thus, public broadcasting institutions which are controlled and pressured by the state organs or governmental bodies rather are called *state broadcasting* channels through which those in powers endeavour to make people accept their policies. Although state broadcasting policies were mostly being applied in Eastern Bloc countries (e.g. Soviet Union, Poland, Romania) before 1990 (Manning and Wyatt, 2011; Cull et al, 2003), there are examples where public broadcasting is regarded as a state propaganda service through which the minorities and opposition groups are discriminated against such as in Iran, Syria and Turkey (Browne, 2007: p. 109; Price and Raboy, 2003; Mattelart, 2010: p. 63). Although these countries claim to have proper public broadcasting organisations, their biased news productions and tendency towards governmental authorities make it difficult to categorise them in the *public broadcasting* concept. In these countries the governments set the policies regarding the public broadcasting policies, appoint the managers in these institutions directly or indirectly (Yilmaz, 2010: p. 46).

Beside these state/governmental pressures, because “the media in modern democracies are embedded in a political economy in which information and cultural production are more or less marketized” (Parkinson, 2006: p. 177) they are claimed to be open to manipulation also by political and economic actors, especially in countries (e.g. Greece, Turkey) where media owners receive business from the state bodies (Haynes, 2009: p. 108). For these reasons the relation between media and business organisations and the state and public broadcasting channels became very complicated (Kellner, 2009: p. 96). All these factors have led financial/political elites to become influential in influencing, some would say manipulating, the activities of news producers (Chomsky and Herman, 1993). When such influence on the media increases, distortion in the flow of information to the public occurs preventing the media from challenging powerful political and economic interests (Negrine, 1994: p. 25; Keane, 1991: p. 89; McChesney, 1999: p. 2). The Berlusconi case in Italy is the one of the most obvious examples of this political power and media ownership, where Silvio Berlusconi used his media organisations in an overtly propagandistic way to promote his political party *Forza Italia* and eventually achieve his personal election as Prime Minister (Calise et al, 2010; Reljic, 2006: p. 77; Chapman and Nuttall, 2011).

Advocate of free-market values may suggest that this is in essence the realisation of liberal values, as anyone has the right to establish communication organizations. However, in practical terms this requires economic power, which means media coverage will be dominated by the views of the economic elites which threatens their ability to inform audiences in a diverse and inclusive manner (Karpinnen, 2008: p. 30). Furthermore, having a multitude of media channels in a country does not necessarily mean media diversity or freedoms and does not guarantee democratic contribution on their own (Raycheva, 2009: p. 83). Recognition of this only enhances the importance of questions about the possibility of the media contributing in a meaningful way to the realisation of deliberative democracy. Parkinson states that “it is not that the media do not transmit some kinds of information, but that they cannot. If that is the case, then we need to know what kinds of information are filtered out, and the impact that has on the exchange of reasons between deliberators and audiences” (Parkinson, 2006: p. 177). If the media market and the information transmitted to the people is under the influence of diverse factors such as commercial concerns, elitist views and propaganda, how can this information be capable of contributing to free deliberation? Is it possible to change the nature of the news traditions? Can mass communication be re-organized free of these fears which affect impartiality (Gutman and Thompson, 1998)?

1.4 Concepts Describing Political Roles of Media

After setting out discussions related to the possibility of media to structure a deliberative public, to be able to have a further understanding of media and democracy relation through a wider perception it is necessary to look at media theories which allow us to understand media power and demonstrate how the media operate according to contextual political and cultural factors in particular national contexts. Furthermore, identifying ways of thinking about different typologies of media systems will help me categorise the Turkish news media using empirical evidence is provided through elite interview analysis and content analysis of selected events in specific Turkish papers (chapters 5, 6 and 7). Here it is also important to note that because some part of the discussions regarding different typologies of media systems have also been touched upon within the media-democracy context above in this chapter and in media and public sphere debates in chapter 2, only Siebert et al’s four theories of the press and Hallin & Mancini’s three media models are concisely conveyed in the relevant section below. While Siebert et al’s theories have been specifically touched upon here because they are not tackled above under the media and democracy title, the reason for particular attention to Hallin & Mancini’s models is their *polarized pluralist or Mediterranean model* which I foresaw to be the media model that best encapsulated features of the Turkish media.

1.4.1 The Four Theories of the Press

Although Siebert, Peterson and Schramm's (1956) *four theories of the press* has been criticised as outdated they also claimed to be "the best known typology" (Norris and Inglehart, 2009: p. 138) and still influential (Humphreys, 2012: p. 162). This is because they highlight different dimensions of media: "historical development of media and politics-relation, the degree of media freedom and the different functions of media in contemporary societies" (Nord, 2008: p. 97). The *authoritative media approach* has been described within the context of patriarchal governing ideology in which people who deserve to know the truth are those who govern the state and they must hold the control on behalf of the people (Duffy and Jacobi, 1993). In political regimes where authoritative understanding is dominant 'authoritarian media', theory is applied because the media are under subservient to the power of political power. The press serve the interests and continuation of the government and communication in this concept is vertical and single-sided (Siebert, 1963: p. 25).

Liberal theory states that the course to access to the essential truths is the press that is described as the market of opinions by Milton (Ognianova and Scott, 1997). Therefore media must free of state intervention (Fourie, 2008: p. 34). Although *Social responsibility media theory* philosophy was based in the USA after free market theories were deemed incapable of delivering press freedoms and social expectations (Baran and Davis, 2012), after the Second World War it was mostly practiced in especially Western European countries (McQuail, 2010: p. 171). For democracy to continue, the media should undertake some duties, meet social expectations, accept social interventions where/when the public interests are at stake and should develop a strategy that promotes social pluralism. To avoid conflict in society the media must report the violence news carefully and with minimal coverage (Biagi, 2010: p. 354; Peterson, 1963: p. 80). Although here the freedom of the media is highlighted, the media should accept to be intervened by the government to protect the public benefits (McQuail, 2010: p. 171). There are aspects of these themes in soviet *communist media theory* (e.g. the promotion of cultural improvement), but the role of the state is far more significant, aligning it more closely to the authoritarian model. In this system, the media represent a means of propaganda for the party, censorship is applied and the media professionals, deemed to crimes against the state, are punished (Fourie, 2007: p. 197; Williams, 1983: p. 200; Negri, 2011: p. 30).

1.4.2 Three Models of Hallin and Mancini

Hallin and Mancini based their media theories (liberal, democratic corporatist and polarized pluralist) on the critique of Siebert et al's media approaches (1956) and state that Siebert and his colleagues' model does not cover the media as an independent institution within their socio-political

context (Nofri, 2011: p. 70). It is claimed that media systems are becoming increasingly independent, professionalised and strong enough to cope with the surrounding (political, economic, social) pressures (Hadland, 2010: p. 87). Hallin and Mancini's three media models examines media structures in eighteen countries in North America and Europe and their assessments are formed of four main dimensions: (a) state role/intervention, (b) (journalistic) professionalism, (c) political parallelism (media and politics dealings) and (d) media markets (state funding, commercialisation and market) (Richani, 2012: p. 2). Hallin and Mancini, while examining these models, do not favour any of the three models but highlight that the countries which forms these groups are heterogeneous, include both similarities and differences and media models may have features of other systems and thus, unlike Siebert and his colleagues, historical contexts/backgrounds and developments of the media systems in the mentioned countries needs to be considered (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). Although they also indicate that the difference between these models are decreasing, they focus on three different media systems as summarised in the table below:

Table 1.1: Media Models of Hallin and Mancini (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: pp. 67-68)

Model	Description	Countries where models based
Liberal or North Atlantic	Relative domination of market and commercial media. State role is low and public broadcasting tradition is strong. Newspaper circulation is at medium-level. Journalism is professionalised.	UK, Ireland, Canada and USA
Democratic Corporatist or North/Central European	Media are linked to commercial and socio-political groups. State role is limited and positive freedom for the media exists. Encouragement for the representation of cultural diversity. Organisational and professional quality. Commentary and information-oriented journalism. Newspaper circulation is high and local media is influential. Public broadcasting service is strong. Media is supported by the state to provide the participation of all groups in social life.	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Scandinavian countries
Polarized Pluralist or Mediterranean	Newspaper circulation and professionalism are low. Media are linked to the political elites. Politics is influential in media. Press freedoms development is slow. Commentary journalism is conducted. State role is strong and censorship is visible.	France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Greece

In spite of being developed to debate the Western media, many studies have referred to them to analyse the media in diverse countries (Vartanova, 2011: p. 120). However, these three models have also been accused of not being able to cope with the rapid changes in democracies, not understanding the influence of commercialisation in increasing political dealings of media organisations i.e. in news production and not very well estimating the ways of state intervention in the media as they have usually talked about the more mature democracies (Hadland, 2010: p. 78). They ignore that change in a political system may have a wide impact upon the media system. In democracies, states may find diverse ways to increase the pressure on the media. Furthermore they state that the commercial bodies have weakened their links with the political organisations (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 253) which is not the case in many countries such as South Africa, Greece and Italy (Hadland, 2010: p. 90). However, Hallin and Mancini highlighted the possibility of exterior factors influencing the media on the development of media organisations. The more advanced the organisation is, the less it will be influenced by the commercial or political frameworks while producing their contents (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). Unfortunately, the lines are not always that clear,

as will be discussed in the next section; for instance the process of news production is more complex as being influenced by many other factors such as personal ideologies and wordiness.

Although Hallin and Mancini (2004) seem to have a westernised media perspective and usually deal with these models within the connection of the European and American countries and in the background of Euro-American political culture, their models still offer a way of framing my analysis through which I can try to locate the Turkish media within the media models examined in a media and democracy context. For instance, even though their *Polarized Pluralist or Mediterranean model* present some similar features with the Turkish media, there are some points where the fit does not work well. For example, the media in Turkey has not been an extension of “the long and conflicted transition to capitalism and bourgeois democracy” (p. 138) as in other Southern European countries. Furthermore, excluding religiously oriented media, there have been no media organisations controlled directly by religious institutions as seen in France, Italy and Spain (p. 95). Additionally, the Anglo-American “news and information based” model and “American forms of professionalism” have not been as directly influential on Turkish news production as in other countries (p. 105). Rather, the media, as tools of nation-state ideology, have been established on minority ignorance in Turkey (Elmas and Kurban 2012). On the other hand, as will be debated in findings chapters of this study (5-6-7-8), unlike South-European countries, although the Turkish media seem to have a politically dominant news production, it is not easy to see direct and manifest support for a specific political party through headings like “vote for A party” as has been in European countries (p. 103). Having said this, and in contrast to most of the European countries, political parallelism and polarization seems to be increasing in Turkey, exposing the absence of “formal systems for monitoring representation of political parties” (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 109) and the inadequacy of existing regulations to protect the public interest (p. 122).

Despite of these dissimilarities, as will also be disputed in the discussion part of this study, the first implications suggest that the Turkish media in many terms (e.g. problems related to media freedoms, low newspaper circulation, media and politics relation, state intervention, biased public broadcasting, less extensive subsidy system, media ownership issues, lack of journalistic autonomy) resemble Hallin & Mancini’s *Polarized Pluralist or Mediterranean* media model (2004: p. 21). Hallin & Mancini’s statements regarding the problems related to public broadcasting policies in Spain (where politicians are influential) or in Greece (where the rich media owners use their media organisations in their relation with politics and close relations of both journalists and media organisations with the politicians) (2004: p. 98) can easily be applied to the Turkish media system (Papathanassopoulos and Negrine, 2011). Or, as will be debated below, in historical background of the Turkish media, “there is a

strong tradition of regarding them (media outlets) as means of ideological expression and political mobilization” (2004: p. 90). In summary, I believe that this analysis of the situation in Turkey may well provide some important qualifications to what could be seen as an over-generalised (and over simplified) typology for categorising media systems. However, before going into a deeper analysis or a comparative approach it is necessary to see the background of the Turkish media (detailed in the last section of this chapter) and the results of the empirical works done for this study (see chapters 5, 6 and 7).

1.5 News Production and Ideology: A Power-Balance Perspective

After giving the background of media and democracy debates and the existing media models (to be able to accurately answer the questions of this research which asks whether the Turkish media are able to create/contribute a deliberative public democracy/sphere, in connection with the thematic elite interview and content analysis) it is also necessary to cover the news production debates before taking a specific look at the Turkish media. At the same time, while discussing the representation of an issue within the media it is necessary to tackle how the relevant news is constructed, the kind of procedures it goes through and what/who is influential in this news production process. This procedure is also related to debates about media and democracy since it is the news content and their way of production which affect the democratic role of the media. On that note, this part of the chapter will examine the news production processes, the influence of the political and economic surroundings on this production and their character in reflecting the reality within this power-balance context.

News has been defined as the latest accurate information about things, person(s) and events (Busa, 2013: p. 25). It is described within the media-society relationship and generally linked to the financial and political powers that influence news production and mainly handled through the operations and policies of the press organisation itself (Baldasty, 1992: 144; Klaidman and Beauchamp, 1989). In creating the news stories, journalists are supposed to provide an objective and pluralistic view of the world. But numerous empirical studies have shown how news tends to over-access powerful corporate and official sources (Curran, 2012: p. 127; Morris and Francia, 2010; Allan, 2010: p. 91). This recognition, however, does not mean that news discourse is completely closed to less powerful sources. As Schlesinger convincingly argues, there are occasions where successful strategic action by non-official sources can lead to a disruption in the natural order of news presentation. But these sources operate in an imperfectly competitive field, where the odds are stacked in favour of those organisations and institutions with statutory authority, economic power and cultural capital (1990: p. 75).

Journalists, whilst constructing news texts, use various discursive strategies to avoid partiality. For instance when reporting a political statement, they often use quotation in order not to add any personal comment. Thus the 'subjectivity' (in terms of the person who is quoted) in the news is structured through using quotation marks and the audience may read/watch objectively planned news (Bernhard, 2003: p. 217; Harrison, 2006: p. 145). However, it is not easy to say whether the media can really structure impartiality as the selection of the elites or the official institutions is again related to their own decision since this is also related to the news producer and the source connection (Allan, 1997: p. 309; Cottle, 2006: p. 23). Case in point, when there is a strike on the streets, why do the media cover what the official bodies say more than the labour unions' protests?

Apart from the political elites or official sources, the journalists also apply the opinions of 'experts' such as academics or other professionals to "give the aura of authority and objectivity to the story" (Hinds, 2004: p. 13). These experts along with other elites are described as 'primary definers' (Wurff, 2012: p. 248). However, there is the danger that such primary sources can control the news structure as they establish the main body of the story and may make other approaches appear insignificant or secondary in the minds of the audience. News reporting, where the voice of ordinary people or dissidents becomes secondary to the voices of the established elites and their supporters, creates a hierarchy in news production (Fiske, 2011: p. 123; Fulton et al, 2005). Deacon and Golding (1994) in this regard develop a distinction between news sources approached as advocates (who are linked to a specific ideology and have something to say or to sell) and 'experts' who arbitrate over matters being discussed as supplier of information. Actually these experts help specific advocates to have privileged media access and thus to have their words heard whilst controversial subjects are on the agenda (Deacon and Golding, 1994: p. 203):

Although all news sources can be thought of as 'advocates' -who each have a preferred image or message they would like to convey in media- some are selected by journalists to act as 'arbiters' on particular issues. The views and opinions of these arbiters -provided they are comprehensible to journalists and, crucially, can be broadly assimilated within their inferential framework- are treated with greater deference than those of even the most senior advocates and play a very important part in shaping media evaluations of the issues upon which they are invited to comment.

Hall et al's *primary definition model* is one of the most influential media model, which discusses relations of media with the elites and the former's reproduction of the ideologies as secondary definers. In *Policing the Crisis*, Hall and his colleagues state that media in overstating and

constructing a moral panic about social deviation, reproduced the ideology of the powerful elites although they are not any more in direct relations with these elites (1978: p. 57). Here the authors suggest that because the power elites are privileged in accessing the media, journalists approach them as source of information and the news coverage is being structured on the information provided by the elites. In this relationship while the power elites (e.g. governments, advisers, bureaucrats) are the *primary definers*, media professionals who disseminate the news are the *secondary definers* because of “tending to play a secondary role to the dictates of primary definer and positioning themselves in subordination to the primary definers” (Berry, 2004: p. 135). The reporters, as secondary definers in Hall’s primary definition model, have relative autonomy along with their ideological commitment to the status quo. Here journalists are not showing their ideological commitment; rather their professional commitment to produce impartial, balanced and objective reports leads to an over accessing of elite sources (Jarman and McClune, 2007).

In other words, the construction of the news is not independent from the traditions, culture, genre, discriminative approach or gendered discourse of a society that is manufacturing the hegemony or superiority within the community (Cotter, 2010: p. 173; Rohn, 2010: p. 66; Gauither, 2010: p. 221; Larking, 2007: p. 108). Hall and his colleagues (1978), in this parallel, explain that the news discourses are constructed:

- in daily journalism practices which try to overcome time, place and economic limitations/deadlines
- by the professional ideologies which are formulised by the commercial relations of the media organisations
- within the historical and present conditions and the political, economic and governmental relations at that time are reflected in the news
- by the financial policy of the media organisations. The profitability aims force the news reporter to produce an extensive content which will attract a wider audience. However, this may cause to limit the diversity in news production but preferring those which sell more.

There is a continuum in theorising the role of journalists in their relation with the power. The *primary definition model* sees journalists as having a significant degree of relative autonomy, but still ultimately sees them as being locked into the power structure (Hall et al, 1978). However Schlesinger’s model sees much more fluidity in the politics of media access. In the main, powerful elites dominate, but there are occasions when subaltern competitors manage to successfully challenge and redefine the terms of the news agenda. Here Schlesinger, criticizing Hall et al’s primary

definition model, recommended a *culturalist perspective* which he also calls a *source-centred approach* (McNair, 2011: p. xv). According to him, the *hegemonic model* developed by Hall and his colleagues focuses on dominant ideology ignoring other surroundings such as changing socio-political and cultural influencers. Hence, it is difficult to talk about a specific primary definition of news or an event through which the powers make themselves visible. These primary definitions are subject to alter over time and they are sum of a complex competition between the socio-political actors. Therefore, in his words, the primary definition model “tends to understate the amount of conflict among those who principally define the political agenda in polyarchic political systems; it is largely atemporal; it ignores how new forces may reshape definitional space and overstates the passivity of the media” (1991: p. 64). Thus, the news-creating process is somehow related to selections of the journalist as it is the “production of journalistic activity” (Schudson, 2011: p. 4). Reporters tend to see the powerful as a credible source of information and they give them regular coverage while the powerless are not seen as the same (Reich, 2011: p. 21). However, Schlesinger relates this tendency to the socio-cultural suppositions but not necessarily direct interest into the ‘powerful elites’ which he calls *definitional power* (1991: p. 64). The source-centred model changes the directions of the news producers and sources relations from only being power elites and reporters to the new actors such as public relation managers, different types of professionals, lobby groups who are claimed to have a specific mission to shape the news content and to persuade the media professionals what is more preferable than the other (Schlesinger and Tumber, 1994). Curran therefore sees the *culturalist approach* as being more optimistic because it considers the change within the power circle (1989: p. 117) and summarises this as (1989: p. 120):

The culturalist thesis assumes that authority within the media organisations is developed to relatively autonomous journalists. Their reporting is structured by cultural and ideological influences - whether inscribed in news routines, relayed through sources, mediated through market influences or simply absorbed from dominant climate of opinion - rather than by hierarchical supervision and control.

McNair states that the relative autonomy of the reporters refers to the power clash outside of the media outlets to shape the news coverage and thus affect public deliberation (2009: p. 67). While explaining the news, he argues that news cannot be defined solely through journalism or ownership. On the contrary it is a process in which many other elements/organisations such as “news organisations, source of their output and other social institutions” interact (2013: p. 66). Shoemaker in this context also highlights the influence of public relation actors who work on behalf of interest groups as they are able to create a long-term impact on news content through “providing a socially acceptable forum for the discussion and introduction of news ideas” (1989: p. 215; Kovacs, R. 2003: p.

20; Cohen, 1989: p. 206). Turow adds that the news production process is a form of *cultural argumentation* where differentially powerful non-official parts (e.g. pressure/voluntary groups, NGOs) can sometimes be influential which therefore analysis of news needs to take account of non-official sources (Turow, 1989: p. 206).

From this point of view it is possible to state that there are different approaches which debate the influence of various power groups in structuring news production (Allan, 2010: p. 90; Jorgensen, 2010: p. 21). However, as has been mentioned above, Schlesinger's cultural framework, subsequently examined by Curran and McNair has changed the news production and sources debates through a much wider perspective that highlight the interaction between many other powers/factors who have impact on the agenda-building and ideology construction role of the media (Deacon, 1996: p. 173). In this context, the next sections of this chapter will give us the theoretical/historical background of the Turkish case (media and democracy) as after the empirical evidence is provided, this section will enable us to assess the extent to which Turkish news is 'open' or 'closed' to alternative voices in; also to identify occasions which might affect the degree of openness and closure.

1.6 Democratization in Turkey: Setting the Background

To understand Turkey's democratisation and its relation to the EU accession process it is essential to review the history of Turkey's attempt towards Westernisation. Without acknowledging the past phases of democratisation in Turkey, it would be difficult to understand the 'resisting stance' against democracy or delayed approval regarding democratic change. Therefore, after debating general issues concerning media and democracy, this section will firstly give a historical background of the story of uncompleted Turkish democratisation and will then analyse the situation of today's media, media professionals and other related media and communication issues such as press and politics.

The modernisation of the Turkish Ottoman Empire can be regarded as starting in 1839 by the official declaration of 'Gulhane/Istanbul Statement' which aimed to both learn from Western civilisation especially technology, science and industrialisation, and to join the European states systems by adopting constitutional improvements such as introducing parliament and democratic elections to structure equality according to contemporary developments (Agoston and Masters, 2009). However, such attempts were criticised as being a 'weak imitation' of Westernisation in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire (Tas, 2002: p. 89; Unver, 2013: p. 201).

After the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, during the 'single party' period (1919-1949) Turkey still did not succeed in structuring Westernised democratisation apart from

enforcing an authoritative modernisation of the nation (Kamali, 2012: p. 246). This also relates to the powerful 'nation-state' and 'centrist government' ideology in the country that makes the political parties act on behalf of the people without their consent. In this point of view, people are those who sometimes are not able to think in an accurate way and thus the political elites are those who have a responsibility to make decisions on their behalf (Mardin, 2012: p. 37).

The transition to a multi-party system in 1949, which played a crucial role in Turkish democratisation, occurred for two main reasons. The first was political interaction with European countries after the Second World War and the second was changing political ideas that highlighted people's participation in the governance of the country (Adaman and Aarsal, 2005). The most influential factor in Turkish democratisation during the 1950s was the attempt to align the Turkish constitution in accordance with Italian, French and Swiss constitutions (Baslevan et al, 2004; Szyliowicz, 1966: p. 282). Accordingly, Turkey's subsequent membership application to the European Community in 1959 was a continuation of this modernisation process (Ozyurek, 2006: p. 13).

However, the relationship between the Democrat Party (which came to power in 1950 after securing 52% of the votes) and the opposition Republican People's Party between 1950 and 1960 revealed the slowness in democratic development as the government was acting just as during the previous single-party period and they were also applying pressure on the media and opposition (Hursoy, 2012: p. 53). This could also be regarded as a resistance to change caused by the hegemonic state ideology that prioritized the state rather than the people (Donmez, 2013: p. 14). The execution of the Democratic Party leader PM Adnan Mendres and other two MPs (Fatin Rustu Zorlu and Hasan Polatkan) by the military coup governments in 1961 also highlighted the problematic and tenuous democratisation process in the country (Mavioglu, 2006: p. 19; Mohapatra, 2011: p. 152). Thus, while Turkish democratisation has been internationally influenced since the 1830s, the political changes have been affected by 'local/domestic factors' such as militarist traditions, which has manifested repeatedly in actual and threatened military coups, such as in 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1998 (Aksoy, 2009: p. 482).

After the 1980 military coup, the first democratic election was held in 1983, which was won by Turgut Ozal as leader of the Motherland Party. During the time of his government (1983-1989) the ban in using the Kurdish language in daily life was lifted (detailed in *chapter 3*) and economic development and transmission to the market economy began (Sezen, 2011: p. 329; Sokhey and Yildirim, 2012). However, the 1990s came to be described as the country's 'lost decade' due to a range of political and social crises. This chaotic decade started with the jailing of five Kurdish politicians including Leyla Zana (detailed in *chapter 2*) and continued with the closure of the religious

Welfare Party in 1997 by the constitution court because of its alleged 'focus point of anti-secular opinion' after the so-called 'post-modern' military coup. This decade is also called the 'dark years' in terms of Turkey's Kurdish Issue as the pressures on the Kurdish people increased. Many Kurds were killed in unsolved murders and Kurdish villages burned because of the so-called 'terrorism/security problems' (Birand, 2012: p. 33).

For all these reasons, Turkey's application for membership of the European Union and its predecessors became, and remains, a highly controversial and contested matter. Turkey's associate membership application to the European Community in 1959 entered a different phase in 1987 under the rule of PM Turgut Ozal and when Turkey joined the 'customs union' in 1996 (Mohapatra, 2011: p. 157). The conditions, which the EU wanted Turkey to fulfil, were the *Copenhagen Criteria* as a rule to EU accession, which concern human rights, market economy and democratic politics (Eder, 2003: p. 208). The most important thing to be said about this Copenhagen Criteria and the EU accession process as a whole was that they focused attention on politics and the responsibility of the Turkish state to promote democratic government (Onis, 1999: p. 109; Faucompret and Konings, 2008). The EU subsequently elevated Turkey to conditional candidate status at the Helsinki Summit in 1999. No doubt this has played a special role in Turkey's democratisation; the political parties all had the same will towards EU accession as reflected in their respective political manifestos (Tekin, 2010: p. 2; Christensen, 2005: p. 117).

In December 2004, the EU started membership negotiations with Turkey, which was met with great joy in the country and regarded as one of the first international successes of the AKP government (Negrine, et al, 2008; Negrine, 2008: p. 629). Since then, in order to accommodate the requirements of EU membership, Turkey has tried to introduce new legislation) related to freedom of expression and organisation, minority rights and political party legislations provided Turkish government to commence negotiations with the EU(Dervis et al, 2004; Tur and Han, 2011. Since then the 'progress reports' prepared by EU authorities has provided a democratic check-point for the country and also given impetus to attempts to improve democracy in Turkey. The regulations to EU accession have been called as a 'harmonization package' by the Turkish government and nine of these packages have been prepared so far. These legal regulations are mostly related to constitutional change such as lifting the death sentence (third harmonization package), allowing Turkish state TV and radio channels and other private media organisations to broadcast in other languages (sixth), and closing state security courts that caused human rights violations (seventh) (Faucompret and Konings, 2008; Ak, 2008: p. 77). The current Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, despite concerns about their alleged Islamist tendencies, have taken visible steps towards democratisation

such as in reducing military influence in socio-political life and initiating improved minority rights in the country. At the same time, the civil actors such as NGOs or commercial unions have more actively begun to voice for/against regulations through the last decade (Keyman, 2006: p. 212; Mohapatra, 2011: p. 158).

Despite the efforts of the current government, the long waiting time to join the EU seems to have made both the people and the government feel hopeless in completing the journey. While EU commissioners blame Turkish governments for slowing down the democratic improvements (e.g. minority rights, press freedoms, freedom of religion and expression) (Soner, 2013: p. 303), the governmental authorities accused EU organisations of discriminating against the country for its high population and religious roots, claiming the EU to be a Christian Union (Karlsson, 2008: p. 104). In this regard the complexity in Turkey's secular establishment was also highlighted by the EU, as the country on one hand claimed to be secular and on the other hand had institutions such as a religious affairs department (Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi) which claimed to be a Sunni-Muslim organisation putting pressure on other religious or non-religious groups (Senturk, 2010: p. 335).

During the same period, the threat to close down the current government party in 2008 increased doubts about Turkish democratisation (Rodriguez et al, 2014). Nevertheless the court's decision not to close the party but to warn them increased the support for the government which continued to rule the country after securing 39% of the votes in the 2009 local election and 50% support in 2011 (Mohapatra, 2011: p. 159). However, especially after the economic crisis, the government on different occasions criticised the weakness of the EU and stated that Turkey would not wait too long to receive membership (Hale and Ozbudun, 2011; Ertem, 2011: p. 68). Accordingly, the increasing government support and decreasing EU hope made the government turn its face towards other unions such as the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, suppress the opposition and jail the 'criticising' journalists. Lastly, after the *gezi parki protests* around the country, European authorities and organisations criticised the government for using excessive police power against the protesters. This made government supporters think of 'hypocrisy' of the EU after the 'conspiracy' claims of the government which described the protests as an 'international plot' to overthrow the Turkish government (Russell, 2013: p. 183).

The problem with the EU accession process is that democratisation seems to be imposed by the EU on Turkey just as civilisation/modernisation was forced upon the people in the latter period of the Ottoman Empire. Turkish state ideology has long ignored human rights and pressured the religious and minority groups under the name of modernisation (Hursoy, 2012: p. 55). Although the new EU regulations in the new era are accepted by most of the people and helped expedite

democratisation, the policies pushed by the foreign authorities caused the change in the country to be questioned. As the Turkish government remains incapable of convincing the people of the importance of respecting human rights and because the EU wants Turkey to solve the problems related to the 'nationalist mind-set' (such as Armenian massacre, Kurdish Issue and Cyprus Problem) the Turkish national identity sees these demands as a threat to its existence (Nikbay and Hancerli, 2007). These fears accompany separation anxieties and national security issues in Turkish society and thus has obstructed the consolidation of democratisation in the country (Lundgren, 2007: p. 22).

Having noted this, in recent years, Turkey has passed through a series of democratisation processes in socio-political, administrative and economic areas with the influence of internal and external dynamics. Despite the critiques regarding pressures on press freedoms and other liberties (Usul, 2011: p. 100), the manifest sign of this change has been the visibility of these critiques both in the media and in the public sphere that suggests there is some degree of openness in Turkish news discourses on certain occasions and in certain circumstances. However, there is a long way for Turkey to go as the concept of democracy has not yet been totally implemented. Although all governmental parties pledged to solve the democratisation problems in the country since Turkey passed into a multi-party system in 1950, because of political, social and economic traditions and organisational interests (such not decreasing the election threshold after seeing the high level of votes received) they have not fulfilled their democratisation promises (Keyman and Icduygu, 2012). One prime example is that today Turkey is still discussing the modernisation of the constitution established by the military government in 1982 as the current AKP government is accused of acting slowly in restructuring a new constitution.

1.7 Understanding the Turkish Media: A Chronological View

The previous section outlined the wider uncertainties and vicissitudes concerning the realisation of democracy in Turkey. It is now necessary to consider in more detail the development of the Turkish news media and their role in this uncertain legacy. Therefore, this part of the study will provide a historical perspective of the media-state relationship in order to make a connection between the current media debates and the historical structure of the media in Turkey and to examine the role that the Turkish media have played in these historical processes which then will be linked to the discussion of the results of data analysis. While building this connection, the development of the Turkish media-democracy relationship will be studied within a socio-political context. Starting from the establishment of the Turkish republic, the development of the media and their roles will be examined, looking at the single-party period, multi-party era, military coups years and the recent EU accession processes credited for increasing liberalisation policies in the media and

political sectors. The historical perspective will extend until the recent Turkish protests, as they have focused attention upon media debates in Turkey, with many elite journalists being fired because they criticised the government's stance towards the protestors.

1.7.1 The First Years of the Turkish Press

One of the very first missions of the Turkish journalists especially during the very last days of the Ottoman Empire and the first days of the Turkish Republic was reconciling Turkish society with so-called Western values such as modernisation, civilisation and secularism. Therefore, from the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, until the end of the single-party period in Turkey, journalists were pushed or were employed by the state to promote its reform plans to Turkish society (Shaw and Shaw, 1977; Selvik and Stenslie, 2011: p. 39). While conveying the news, journalists also became commentators for state policies. The opposition press therefore started to suffer even at these very early days. For instance, while the famous journalist *Namik Kemal* (1840-1888) preferred to live in London and publish *Hurriyet (Freedom) Newspaper* with his friends in 1867 in the last years of the Ottoman Empire (Sav, 2001: p. 57; Karpaz, 2002: p. 54; Agoston and Masters, 2009), the writer of the national Turkish anthem, *M. A. Ersoy* (1873-1936) was forced to leave the country in 1925 (Ersoy, 2010: p. 120).

The Turkish Independence War was based on both military actions and employing journalists in making propaganda of the state to persuade the people. The first Turkish President Kemal Ataturk also used the press to convince society of the transition from empire to nation-state and he led *Hakimiye-i Milliye daily* (superiority of nation) to be structured in 1920 (Bek, 2010: p. 174). The *Anatolian News Agency* (also established in 1920 by the president) aimed to be the way to convey accurate news about the war to the national and international community (Catalbas, 2007: p. 22; Howard, 2001: p. 14) but is even today being accused of acting as the state's propaganda channel. During the Independence War years Mustafa Kamal Ataturk (1881-1938) and his friends travelled around the country and met people to address their nationalist feelings. Because the modernisation and republic plans were being practised as state ideology, being pushed from above to the society below, Ataturk invited the press to these meetings as he thought the print media would play an important role in this transformation (Hughes, 2011: p. 38; Ayhan, 2009: p. 149).

Once the opposition groups were established in 1924 against Kemal Ataturk and his government, the pressures on the press suddenly increased as the opposition groups were being supported by the press and this was regarded as a threat to 'national-security' concerns as is evidenced in today's Turkey (Massicard, 2013: p. 91). When the protests and armed insurgences

started in different places of Turkey (among which was the first Kurdish uprising led by Kurdish religious leader *Seyh Said* in 1925) against the government especially in Kurdish cities of the country (Celik, 2012: p. 244), many press professionals were jailed. The law - called *Takrir-i Sukun* (Law for the Maintenance of Order) - to silence the opposition journalists was enforced in 1924 by the PM Ismet Inonu (1938-1950) (Gokay, 2006: p. 41). Through this legislation, the opposition members were sued in recently established *Istiklal Mahkemeleri* (Tribunals of Independence) and five dissident newspapers were closed (Ozoglu, 2011: p. 105).

During the 'single-party' period of Turkey (twenty-seven years) the Republicans' People Party (CHP), which is still active as the main opposition parliamentary party, governed the country and the press was under pressure. Although the first radio broadcasting was set up in 1927 (Bahadir and Danisman, 2005) based on the organisational structure of the BBC, according to the 10-year agreement with the government, it was used as a propaganda channel and a constructor of official ideology (Tekinalp, 2011: p. 59). The best example of this was the ban on broadcasting Turkish classical music in 1935 and 1936 in order to Westernise Turkish society. In 1939 Turkish radio started broadcasting in English as well to express Turkish impartiality to the world during the Second World War (Akarcali, 2003: p. 79).

1.7.2 Post-1950s: Setting Hegemony

Despite the small opposition groups (Liberal Republican Party in 1930 and National Development Party in 1945) before the 1950s, Turkey was ruled by the single party (CHP), until the Democratic Party (DP), led by right-wing leader Adnan Menderes, won the 1950 elections getting 53.3% of votes against its rival CHP (Republican Peoples' Party) (Morrison, 2009: p. 100; Ozmen, 2011: p. 78). Actually, the political development that opened the way to a multi-party democratic system was the United Nations (UN) agreement, which Turkey signed in 1945 and which required Turkey to obey the democratic rules of the UN (Ozkan, 2012: p. 178). Therefore, this obligation provided the opportunity for the DP to open and join the 1950 elections, which would keep them in power until 1960 when Staff Colonel Alparslan Turkes (later the leader of Nationalist Movement Party, 1969-1997) announced on the radio that the Turkish army had taken power from the government due to so-called secular considerations (Jung and Piccoli, 2001).

Despite the doomed end of the DP and the execution in 1961 of its leaders, the government had established good relations with the media contrary to the expectations that emerged after the 1950 elections (Yucel, 2001: p. 330). In first years of government, the DP tried to meet the democratisation anticipations and prioritise the freedom of the press. In 1950 a liberal press law was

regulated which would acknowledge the rights of the journalists. However, just after three years, the pressure on universities and the press increased and the opposition newspapers were started to be censored and the journalists were being prosecuted in 1955 (Reich, 1990: p. 337; Christensen, 2010: p. 181; Topuz, 2003: p. 57).

The Turkish political arena continued to be under the threat of military coups until the 2000s; the army ruled for different periods e.g. 1960, 1971, 1980 and in 1997 in what was called the post-modern military coup. One of the most important steps of the Turkish media was taken and in 1964 the *Turkish Radio and Television Cooperation* (TRT) opened as the public/broadcasting channel. In this era, the military tutelage increased its influence on politics despite of democratic elections (Sterling, 2003: p. 163; Harrison et al, 2008; Ogan, 2001: p. 133). TRT, as it did until its latter years, started and closed its broadcasting with the national anthem; the news coverage during those years as today was called 'protocol journalism' as the news mostly covered the daily routines of the President, PM, military chiefs and other politicians (Bek, 2004: p. 382). However, it is necessary also to mention that although CHP stayed in opposition after the single-party period, it could have kept its influence on state/public broadcasting as it was related to Ataturk, and his party should also be protected as a result of manufactured political holiness (Devran, 2011: p. 43; Ayata, 1992: p. 316). On the other hand the military governments, just like the political parties, also tried to take the control of the media organisations after each coup. The 1960 and 1970 coups were declared through radio but the 1980 coup had been the first coup d'état announced on TRT television. After the 1980 coup, there were attempts to silence all opposition members and standardise citizens using state channels as way of shaping public opinion through news manipulation (Erkol, 2013: 124).

The military regime ended in 1983 and the *Anavatan Party Government* (Motherland party) led by Turgut Ozal (1989-1993) started a series of democratisation and economic liberalisation policies. These new free-market approaches influenced the media sector and caused media ownership to pass from the 'journalist families' to 'holdings' or big companies (Duman, 2010: p. 33). The first private TV channel established in 1990 was only allowed by law to broadcast from Germany thus maintaining TRT's status as the sole broadcaster in Turkey. The other point is that the owner of this first private TV channel was Ahmet Ozal, son of President Ozal and that this 'political relation' could break the TV monopoly (Oncu, 2012: p. 128; Tekinalp, 2011: p. 23). In 1993, *Article 133* about monopoly of state on broadcasting was amended and the news regulation was enforced allowing private broadcasting in 1994. The breaking of the media monopoly caused tens of new TV channels to open and the first private radio station opened in 1992 (Kars, 2010: p. 67).

1.7.3 Increasing Diversification, Maintaining Standardisation

The financial transformation of the country after the 1980s caused big media holdings to emerge, which were also active in other business sectors such as energy and construction (Tunc, 2002: p. 50). This raised the possibility that, the political relations of these owners have put the media freedoms debates in a more complex circle, which are detailed in *Chapter 6* of this study. This fast commercial change and growth produced increased tabloidization in journalism, with greater sensationalism in media content and less regulation of commercialisation. The uncontrolled commercialisation in the media also caused media owners abusing their powers to receive business from the government or to pressure the government on diverse issues. It has been claimed this problematic relation caused the media to lose their 'controlling' feature on politics and obstructed the proper dissemination of information (Nohl, 2011: p. 327; Algan, 2003: 170).

However, 'national concerns' remained the same during this period and there were many occasions when mainstream media collaborated with state powers or the army when national security issues were claimed to be at stake. For instance, in the 1997 military coup attempt the big media organisations such as Dogan and Bilgin Groups acted with the army and produced inaccurate news stories to convince people that the country's secular system was under threat. During this process the Islamist *Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)* was forced to step down and religious media professionals were jailed (Ozcan, 2010: p. 72). It was claimed that not only was Islam threatening the national security but also the Kurdish Issue constituted a threat to the Turkish nation. Therefore, journalists such as M. A. Birand and C. Candar (among the interviewees) writing about Kurdish rights were fired and even the media organisations they were working for joined the army in denigrating them as being 'spies of the PKK terror organisation' because the owners could not withstand the state pressure against them (Arikan, 2011: p. 144; HRW, 1999: p. 34).

After this military coup attempt, the Welfare Party (RP) was closed by the constitutional court because of being the *focus-point of anti-secular ideologies* (Bolgi, 2013: p. 97). The coalition government in 1999 was unsuccessful and the reformists of the closed Welfare Party formed the current government, *Justice and Development Party (AKP)* which came to power in 2002. The first years of the AKP were, as with the pre-mentioned DP, regarded as the most successful years of the government in terms of democratisation despite of the accusations of being Islamist but not being democratic (Cinar, 2013: p. 43). However, although the government took democratic steps (as covered in chapter 6) the claims about curbing media freedoms peaked in their last years. It has been claimed that the AKP government either created their own supporter media group or pressured

others to support their policies (detailed in chapter 6), which resulted in tens of journalists being fired and/or jailed (Baydar, 2013: p. 140).

1.7.4 Recent Turkish Protests as Reflecting Current Media Problems

In June 2013 Turkey saw countrywide protests that started as a rejection of a government plan to transform a small green park in a historical part of Istanbul into a shopping mall (Russell, 2013: p. 183). This was soon transformed into anti-government protests around the country (Huffington Post, 2013). While the rights of the protesters and their behaviour were at the government's political agenda, the claims regarding the pressures of the government against the media organisations or journalists who covered these protests were also being discussed (Mishra, 2013).

At the time of the increasing protests and clashes between the protestors and the police, the mainstream media channels claimed to ignore the conflict and aired 'penguin documentaries' which then became a symbol of media censorship in Turkey. The coverage of CNN Turk of a penguin documentary while CNN International was covering the protests in Istanbul, was the basis for this claim (Oktem, 2013). At the same time, the interest of international media to cover the protests caused the government to make a statement saying that the protests were an extension of plots to overthrow the government engineered by foreign powers which are supported by international media outlets such as CNN and the BBC (Abdela, 2013).

Because the media owners in Turkey have business in banking, energy, telecommunication and construction sectors (Candar, 2013a: p. 10) and they receive high income business from the state bodies (and there is no press regulation regarding the media ownership that limits the areas of activity) media owners are claimed misuse economic interests and may pressure their employees not to cover the news stories against the government or state bodies (Sozeri and Guney, 2011; Oncu, 2012: p. 129). This might be the reason for media organisations to stay distant in covering opposing ideologies. But the question here is whether this point is completely related to governmental pressures and media ownership problems or journalistic traditions and habits (Altan, 2012a: p. 12).

Sometimes the newsrooms may face direct pressure from the government or there is automatic self-censorship in order not to annoy the government (Meyer, 2013: p. 21). However, one of the interviewees claimed that, there were material examples of censorship and pressures; the government members and their supporters deny it saying that there are opposition newspapers and media courses in which the media professionals can criticise the government as much as they like as has also been stated by one government party member interviewee (interviewee profiles table

number 19). After the *Geziparki protests*, it is possible to count journalists who are internationally renowned such as Yavuz Baydar, Hasan Cemal, Mehmet Altan, Can Dunder, Kursat Bumin, Ceyda Karan, Banu Guven and others who were informed by their media groups that they would not be able to write or work for them any longer (Gardner, 2013).

According to international reports media ownership problems are not restricted to Turkey as some Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Albania and Greece also have similar problems (Kushomov et al, 2006; Lani, 2011: p. 53). The question is how will these countries including Turkey cope with this media and governmental dealings which harm democratisation, freedom of expression and news access? Without doubt there must be legal amendments that regulate media ownership rights, creating a fairer atmosphere and which limit governmental influence on media organisations due to the business they have. Maybe the owners should not be able to bid for governmental business. Alternatively, independent managers must manage the media organisations and their rights should be protected by legal regulations against media owners and government pressure. These kinds of questions along with the afore mentioned chronological background actually allow us to relate Turkish media debates to the earlier typologies about different media systems examined at the beginning of this chapter and give us the preliminary assumptions that we can place the Turkish media system on Hallin and Mancini's third model: Polarized pluralist or Mediterranean media model.

While examining the media models of different scholars (e.g. Curran; Hallin and Mancini) in which I can locate the Turkish media, to be able to find the support which will answer the second research question, whether and to what extent the mainstream Turkish media are contributing to democratic deliberation, after discussing the media-democracy relationship, here, I have also given a summary of news construction debates because this theoretical background will subsequently explain the media problems and journalism practices in Turkey (e.g. ownership, politic, economic pressures and media) especially while reporting the Kurdish Issue which has been particularly examined in *chapters 6 and 7* both via thematic and content analysis. Having presented the media and power relations, the debates have more specifically examined the democratisation and media development in Turkey in a chronological perspective. As will be observed in this outlook, the historical improvement of the media in the country also reveals a lot about media and power relations. The above debates here suggest that the elite powers are ideologically determining the media content out of diverse competing interests (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013). However, as McQuail indicates, the relevant question in media-power relations and also the media-democracy relation is to ask if the media are able to provide "opportunities for politically diverse audiences or audience interests to flourish" (1986: p. 143).

To be able to answer the McQuail's point and to give the background for examining the debates and analysing the coverage of the Kurdish Issue, the next chapter will debate the multiculturalism policies in general and Turkey. While examining the multiculturalism applications in different countries under diverse political approaches, particular attention will be paid to the relationship between deliberative democracy and cultural diversity. After giving this theoretical background *chapter 2* will try to examine how the mainstream media and public service broadcasting deal with cultural diversity in Turkey after discussing the examples in European countries and around the globe.

CHAPTER II MEDIA, DEMOCRACY and MULTICULTURALISM

2.1 Introduction

Multiculturalism is at the forefront of public debates in today's world as well as in Turkey where it is typically discussed in terms of minority rights and democratisation. To offer relevant background for examining these debates and analysing the coverage of the Kurdish Issue in light of democratization processes, this chapter will start by providing an overview of key theoretical approaches to multiculturalism, discuss their policy applications in democratic countries, and examine different critiques of multiculturalism. This will be followed by a discussion of the relationship between cultural diversity and different models of democracy, drawing on the typology introduced in the previous chapter, and considering them alongside other sub-types of democracy advocated by proponents of multicultural and related policies. Particular attention here will be paid to the relationship between deliberative democracy and cultural diversity.

The chapter will then look more closely at the relationship between the media and multiculturalism, approaching it from two angles: first, the different systemic or institutional approaches to cultural diversity in the media; and second, the role of the media (and in particular media texts) in reproducing nationalist discourse and in structuring the national identity and practices. Finally, the last section of this chapter will provide an overview of approaches to cultural diversity and minorities within the Turkish context. This section will start by providing a historical overview of cultural diversity politics, which will help provide the context for understanding the contemporary controversies related to the Turkish attempt to introduce multiculturalism policies. The final part of this section will examine how cultural diversity is dealt with in the context of Turkish media.

2.2 Multiculturalism: Theories and Policies

The term *multiculturalism* was first advanced in Canada and Australia and "to a lesser extent in Britain and USA" (Modood, 2007: p. 3106). It is not a surprise that the countries at the forefront of debates about multiculturalism are immigration societies. Multiculturalism has almost been the natural feature of modern society due to globalisation, diverse cultures and ethnic identities (Giroux, 1998: p. 257) and arises either from national minorities wishing to maintain themselves as a different society alongside the majority culture or from individual immigrants wanting to integrate into larger society by becoming accepted as full members (Glazer, 1997: p. 37, Bennett, 1998, p. 2). Theorists and politicians in these countries have responded to the challenge of cultural diversity in different

ways (Kymlicka, 1995: p. 11). Thus, this section offers a brief outline of key theoretical approaches and political practices.

Cultural diversity has been a major challenge for researchers and one of the main subjects of scholarly debates of the 21st century. When researchers try to define cultural diversity they focus on *culture* – which a study identified at least 156 definitions of (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952) – and usually highlight the frame of culture that formed an individual's interaction with society. Cultural diversity, in this regard, is usually tackled with the term *multiculturalism* and the related subjects like identity, ethnicity and nationalism. Accordingly, both *cultural diversity* and *multiculturalism* have been used to refer to the recognition of and respect for different cultures that is not premised on a separation or hierarchy between cultures (Dilworth et al, 2007).

Theoretical approaches to multiculturalism typically revolve around the contrast between approaches that favour individual rights over group rights (i.e. usually referred to as liberal or classic liberal approaches) and approaches that favour group rights over individual rights (usually referred to as communitarian approaches). The Canadian society is often a key case study in these debates, and it is perhaps not surprising that Canadian scholars specializing in multiculturalism, such as Will Kymlicka – the author of books such as *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (1991) and *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1996) – and Charles Taylor – the author of *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition* (1992) have become very influential in debates on the topic. Both Kymlicka and Taylor are critical of classic liberal approaches to cultural diversity, which stress individual over collective rights, but differ in the alternative solutions they offer; while Taylor sides with communitarianism, Kymlicka seeks to find a compromise between the two models, which he terms liberal multiculturalism. It is worth having a closer look at each of the approaches to appreciate the arguments at stake.

Liberal theory describes the individual as one who chooses, examines, observes and changes his/her life when needed. Thus, society must offer different life options and social/governmental organisations' primary mission should be to protect and preserve these options (Ustel, 1999: p. 64). According to liberal theorists like Locke, Hobbes, Montesquieu and Kymlicka, the state should not enforce multiculturalism or force people to behave following a predefined set of moral or cultural values as these are not comparable and cultures have differing definitions of what constitutes the 'good life' with no one type being superior (Gray, 2000, p. 37). In this regard, liberalism strives to design society in which people from different backgrounds/ethnicities can reside, believing and trusting in the justice system they are dependent on, but not interfering in each-other's cultural or

moral values (Gray, 2000: p. 67). Liberal theorists are against state-supported multiculturalism which they regard as 'interventionism' and believe it leads migrants to form ghettos and become resistant to any positive change (Stratton and Ang, 1998). In sum, liberal theory favours cultural diversity without state intervention as it enhances the alternatives in hand but maintains that the individual should also be able to reject cultural diversity if it acts as an obstacle to positive change (Bali, 2001: p. 170).

In contrast, communitarians like Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer criticise liberalism's narrow focus on 'individuality' stating that it ignores social and group features, ignores the social good and rejects other ways of life, which may not be centred on individualism. So, while liberal theory opposes group rights in order to champion individual rights, the communitarian theory stresses group rights and the collective good while limiting individual rights (Bauman 1997: p. 268). Communitarians celebrate and encourage diversity especially as a cultural value and support representation of difference as a positive social good (Kymlicka, 1995: p. 151) but criticise liberals who they believe isolate the individuality of different groups from their historical, social and political contexts (Bennet, 1998: p. 4). In this regard Taylor, while describing identity, stresses its relation with history, environment, society and citizenship duties (Taylor, 1994: p. 40; Ustiel, 1999: p. 69). Kymlicka agrees with some of the arguments put forward by Taylor and for instance suggests that states should help ethnic identities to express themselves and be proud of their cultures. However, he also emphasizes individual rights, as he believes these should be combined with group rights, and maintains that groups have responsibility for their own members and to the society they live in. To put it differently, Kymlicka argues that liberalism can be modified to incorporate elements of multiculturalism – giving rise to what he calls 'liberal multiculturalism' (Kymlicka, 1995: p. 35; Bauman, 1997: p. 267).

Policy approaches to cultural diversity are similarly varied – a topic we shall look at more closely in the next section, which will examine the relationships between democracy models and cultural diversity. Multiculturalist policies have emerged in the twentieth century (Touraine, 1995: p. 208) as a state policy to ensure the integration of immigrant groups without loss of their original cultures (Joppke and Lukes, 1999) and are seen as a response to the failure of modern nation states, which tend to emphasise unity and uniformity over difference and cultural identity (Stratton and Ang, 1998). The leading political principles of the multicultural model are tolerance among different ethnic groups, the recognition and respect for individuals' cultural identity, the idea of communal representation and the primacy of ethnic identity (Koundoura, 1998: p. 79; Bohman, 2003: p. 96; Parekh, 2005: p. 16).

Multiculturalism does not only offer special services to minorities but also promises to make people live together with the awareness of cultural diversity (Stratton and Ang, 1998). Therefore, it has been seen as a means of stopping ethnic or cultural conflicts and increasing tolerance in the modern world (Giddens, 1998: p. 149; Habermas, 1998a: p.27). Today, most countries are culturally diverse and the multiculturalist model offers a vision where differences between groups are not only appreciated but also institutionalized in formal power-sharing coalitions (Sears et al, 1999). Its application in Australia, for example, makes it possible to say that cultural diversity has “provided a medium for dealing with identity and difference which is neither separatist nor assimilationist” (Stratton and Ang, 1998: p. 131). This cultural diversity will increase the alternatives for an individual and contribute to freedom of choice in the society he or she lives in. Moreover, it will enhance the quality of life through enriching the experience, expanding cultural resources and creating more alternatives in terms of social life (Falk, 1992: p. 25). However, not all assessments of multiculturalism are equally positive, and specific multicultural policies differ significantly from country to country. The following section first looks at different theoretical and policy responses to multiculturalism in the context of democratic states. This is followed by a consideration of some of the criticisms of multiculturalism as a theory and political practice.

2.2.1 Multiculturalism in Democratic States

Ethnic or cultural conflicts have always been one of the biggest problems democracies have confronted. Although they are viewed as belonging primarily to the Third World, they still exist in ‘First World’ countries as well (Mbaku et al, 2001; Diamond and Plattner, 1994). Each state has developed its own political strategy towards cultural differences within the context of democracy. While doing this, countries have not aimed to negate the conflict between opposing cultures completely, rather they have tried to find the best way “to moderate their rivalry” (Austin and O’Neill, 2000a: p. 1). They acknowledge how harsh the level of conflict between ethnic minorities can be. Therefore, they endeavour to find social, political and economic solutions to meet the demands of pluralism (Austin and O’Neill, 2000b).

Debates about cultural diversity are often intertwined with debates about nationalism and the nation-state. Nationalism is here understood, following Ernest Gellner (1983), as a political principle that assumes states are indeed nation-states in which state and nation coincide. Understood in this way, nationalism “uses pre-existing historically inherited proliferation of cultures, though it uses them very selectively and most often transforms them radically” (Gellner, 1983: p. 55). However, while states were adopting various policies to give citizens a common national language and culture,

minorities in these societies mobilized to demand a state of their own. Hence two kinds of nationalism emerged in a conflicting ambience; one is 'state nationalism' the other is 'minority nationalism' (Kymlicka, 2001: p. 222; Held, 2004: p. 139).

During the last two decades, most Western European countries have received many immigrants from Asia and Africa (Lucassen et al, 2006) but found it difficult to establish a stable, common strategy valid for all immigrants in all states. Countries like Germany, France, Switzerland and the UK have responded to immigration and cultural diversity in different ways. More recently, debates over immigration and multiculturalism in these countries are often influenced by the context of economic recession and the tendency in some circles to perceive immigrants as a drain on public resources. In France, the public recognition of religious and ethnic differences has traditionally been perceived as a threat to the fundamental unity of citizenship (Koopmans and Statham, 2000). This is linked to the fact that in France, political views regarding multiculturalism and democracy have mostly been tackled in the context of laicism and religion (Martinez and Lazaro, 2007). The religious difference or the tolerance based on the separation of the state and church was thus used as a model for dealing with ethno-cultural diversity. According to this view, ethnic identity, like religion, is something which people should feel free to express in their private life but which should be left alone by the state. However, after the bans for wearing religious symbols at public schools, the debates have intensified. Could Muslims really become French without at the same time relinquishing their religious and cultural identity? Were these bans aimed at integration or assimilation? The problem of public recognition of cultural diversity faced opposition from both left and right wing actors. Right-wing commentators said that a multicultural France will not be able to protect its union and will face the fate of Austria-Hungary or the Ottoman Empire (Evans, 1996: p. 46). Left-wing commentators criticized minority rights on different grounds and opposed integration along with multiculturalism. They believed that multiculturalism will lead to the "Lebanonization of France" (Mathy, 2000: p. 187).

According to Parekh (2002: p. 10) the debates that see religious and ethnic diversity as damaging the unity of citizenship (Koopmans and Statham, 2000; Walzer, 1997: p. 54) are based on the nationalistic/nation-state tradition in France which only recognises republican citizenship – that is, the model of citizenship that is based on a classic liberal approach to citizenship rights as discussed earlier, and which hence gives preference to individual rights over collective rights. Thus, immigrants in France believe that integration is equivalent to cultural assimilation (Kymlicka, 2001: p. 162) which makes them culturally invisible in the long run. The debate on the headscarf ban for Muslim girls and links to terrorism are presented as examples of this marginalisation (Gabriel, 2010: 184). Feminist groups also supported this ban as they thought that allowing the scarves in schools would cause the

oppression of non-Muslim girls (DeGroat, 2001: p. 89). The observance of Muslim symbols not only in France but also in other Western countries has led some multiculturalists to suggest that “religion is a feature of plural society that is uniquely legitimate to confine to the private sphere” (Modood, 2010: p. 415). However, the opposition stated that a religious society was being forced to give up its culture and thus the requirements of integration were unequal (Valdes, 2000, p. 237). Others have stated that the French government must do its best to protect cultural diversity and the freedom of religion and expression (Evans, 1996, p. 46). The principles of multiculturalism say that the state should not oppose the freedom of people to express their culture but it should also not feed their differences. However, when there is a separation of state and ethnicity it is not possible to say how these differences will live if they do not have governmental protection (Dyke, 1982: p. 30; Rudder et al, 1994).

Not all countries approach cultural diversity in the way France does. In some countries under citizenship education, people are taught to do their best for the good of society regardless of their ethnic identity (Bhattacharyya: 1998, p. 252). Because preserving ethnic and cultural motifs increases the loyalty to the country, Switzerland and the UK for example believe that cultural diversity does not cause weakness but strengthens the national identity (Austin and O’Neill, 2000b) and contributes to its vibrancy. Despite this, both countries have also experienced waves of anti-immigrant sentiments (Solomos and Back, 1995; Modood et al, 1997; Home Office, 2005, p. 42).

The situation in immigration societies such as the USA or Canada tends to be somewhat different. Unlike the non-immigrant minorities whose homeland has been incorporated into a larger state, immigrant minorities do not think that they are or will be a separate nation in mainstream society, and do not want to establish their own autonomous homelands or have their own political structure (Fraser and Boot, 2004). The reason an immigrant group would have a nationalist agenda would be to prevent them integrating into society through legal discriminations or mandatory division. Because the immigrants from Europe, Asia and Africa do not have an agenda of separation, they rather preferred to integrate into the existing Anglophone society. This of course helps the American government manage diversities more easily, and fosters the recognition of ethnic identity in mainstream institutions (Kymlicka, 2001: p. 243).

Canada, with its multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework and its recognition of Aboriginal rights, is one of the few countries that have officially endorsed multi-nationality (Cairns, 1993: p. 188). Whilst protecting cultural diversity, Canada developed a policy of inclusiveness, equality and preserving cultural diversity that all Canadians could share, providing grounds for social unity.

However, even this solution is not necessarily ideal. As Kymlicka points out, it is not clear that these values provide a reason for different national groups to stay together in one country (Kymlicka, 1995: p. 187).

Given that multiculturalism continues to be a thorny issue even in countries with long histories of democratic rule, it is not a surprise that countries with a shorter track record of democratic achievements are also struggling to decide how to deal with cultural diversity. Countries that have built their modern identity on the model of a unified and culturally homogeneous nation-state are often suspicious of multicultural policies, since they perceive minorities as a threat to national unity. In this regard, some states, such as Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, still seem to have problems with coping with multiculturalism as they are overwhelmed by their own history (Orusbaev et al, 2008; Ozturkmen, 2007: p. 25). On the other hand, it is also the case that countries with significant minorities are in danger of social breakdown. Indian, Mexican, Nigerian, Lebanese, Sri Lankan are democracies scarred by violence. In India, despite some notable successes in managing cultural diversity, communal conflict goes on and groups turn against each other, which is a problem that should not be underestimated (Austin and O'Neill, 2000b).

As evident from this brief overview, ethnic minorities in different countries are subjected to rather different government policies, from managing relations between provincial jealousies in Canada and struggling with caste hatred in India to protecting minority rights in Switzerland and Belgium and helping governments to overcome minority problems in Central and South America (Austin and O'Neill, 2000b). While trying to provide minorities with resources to help them to progress and contribute to their societies, different governments need to be mindful of the sensitivities among majority populations (Parekh, 2002: p. 333). Although it is important to respect cultural diversity in democracies, ethnic or cultural diversity is not the only aspect of equality and freedom modern societies are striving for. For instance, what would be the value of full minority rights in a society divided by deep-seated and unsurmountable economic inequalities, and profoundly unequal opportunity structures? Furthermore, the principle of justice and equality regardless of cultural and ethnic diversity brings a number of difficulties with its application such as the need for a clear criterion for what qualifies as cultural or ethnic difference or how to reconcile principles of individual human rights and collective rights at the level of practical policies. Therefore taking differences seriously in social life requires more than basic principles of justice (Gould, 1996: p. 180; Horowitz, 1994: p. 35). Moreover, democracy in multicultural societies is made difficult by three facts of pluralism. The first is the absence of a unitary and homogeneous political community; second is moral and cognitive incommensurability and the third is significant inequalities among various ethno-

political groups (Bohman, 2003: p. 87). It is precisely these difficulties that are often at the forefront of critiques of multiculturalism, which will be reviewed in the following section.

2.2.2 Critiques of Multiculturalism

The political opposition to cultural diversity is often rooted in the argument that in the long term diversity destroys the unity of the people and harms the nation-state. Therefore multiculturalism policies in some countries are approached with much doubt and diversity is considered as a threat to the existence of the nation which will create a never-ending conflict (Parekh, 2002: p. 249). If any ethnic group receives 'private treatment', it becomes difficult to prevent conflict between them and other groups (Grillo, 1998: p. 194). A related line of critique stems from the assumption that multiculturalism leads to insularity, ghettoises minorities and delays their integration into mainstream society (Joppke, 2008: p. 535). Moreover, reducing identity merely to ethnicity (Erdogan, 1998: p. 197) leads, according to some authors, to the suppression of 'individuality' and even feeds into 'conservative policy' that shelters a 'secret nationalism' that has the potential to lead to a new racism in the long term (Yeegenoglu, 1998: p. 295). Linked to this is the argument that the protection of minority rights can actually lead to a reduction of diversity within the minority itself as members of the community are forced to conform to a particular type of minority culture that is supposedly worth preserving and protecting (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 123).

Another criticism of multiculturalism is rooted in a critique of capitalism and exploitative economic relations between states and groups. From this point of view, multiculturalism is not about providing freedom for people but is a cover for states to import cheap labour, allowing them to cope with their economic problems more easily (Fong, 2009: p. 43). Zizek goes even further and relates multicultural policies to 'global capitalism' and the changing nature of racism. He states that Western European imperialism uses multiculturalism to stay alive. Moreover, because it humiliates immigrant cultures and puts its own culture against them, it should be named as a 'new form of racism' (Zizek, 2006: p. 151). This line of criticism is also related to the rejection of integration itself, because it sees integration as a form of nationalism that demands all diversities to be assimilated and assumes that there is only "one mainstream, normal set of values, practises and other procedures that other people can learn and adapt to" (Kivel, 2002: p. 234; Kundnani, 2012: p. 114).

Multiculturalism is also criticised for promoting segregation and preventing the freedom of speech and expression, because it gives rise to a situation where people do not feel free to criticize another's culture for fear of being perceived as offensive or intolerant (Schmidt, 1997: p. 16). Furthermore, cultural diversity is sometimes also believed to threaten liberal democracy because the

politics of freedom can gradually become supplanted by the politics of fear, in the context of which non-political institutions such as religious or ideological groups become politicised and then prefer to act as pressure groups which misuse multicultural freedoms to achieve their own ends through pressuring weaker groups or minorities. In such a context, civil discourse ends and peaceful debates around culture become impossible (Sacks, 2009: p. 153). Finally, another argument against multiculturalism is that every group believes in their own truths, which leads to a situation where there is no agreed moral truth and all truth becomes relative which makes it difficult for different groups to form common opinions on an issue (Leong and Rivera, 1999).

Although cultural diversity policies are mostly mentioned within the equality and justice context, it has been claimed that cultural diversity does not close the gap between the social classes but on the contrary deepens the divisions. Africans coming to the EU can live within mainstream society but they can only work in low-degree jobs and face difficulties if they seek to work as lawyers or doctors (Forrest and Dunn, 2006). On the other hand, multiculturalism is presented as the 'highest level' of social morality. However, some immigrants remain wedded to their old cultures as they struggle to cope with the new mainstream culture which they feel is imposed on them via official establishments such as schools or other political institutions (Hefner, 2001: p. 3). Another point is that government, as in the British context, usually presents religious leaders as the representatives of the diverse groups. This leads to multicultural societies being described as 'multi-religious' or 'multi-belief' societies. This point of view ends up reducing cultural diversity to religious diversity. Another point is that immigrants are always mentioned by their cultural background to prove cultural diversity in society. That limits immigrants to their ethnic identity even if they want to escape from it (Rai, 2011: p. 232).

While many of these criticisms point to important weaknesses of multiculturalism and heighten our awareness of the limits of multicultural policies, it would be difficult to argue that scholars voicing these criticisms are opposed to cultural diversity as such. Rather, what they take issue with is the extent to which multiculturalism has become the dominant policy of a society, or the extent to which a commitment to cultural diversity is balanced by a commitment to other forms of equality and justice in a society. Even the most vocal critiques of multiculturalism do not accept a complete denial of ethnic and cultural rights. What they say is rather that cultural diversity should not be the determining value that drives our social structure. Nancy Fraser's (1995) criticism of what she terms 'politics of recognition' is a good case in point. In the contemporary world, she argues, the politics of redistribution, aimed at achieving justice and equality by means of promoting socioeconomic redistribution, is being supplanted by the politics of recognition, aimed at achieving

justice via ensuring ethnic, racial, cultural gender etc. equality. However, rather than arguing for a return to the politics of redistribution, she concludes that the tension between redistribution and recognition cannot be resolved once and for all, and that instead, “the best we can do is try to soften the dilemma by finding approaches that minimize conflicts between redistribution and recognition in cases where both must be pursued simultaneously” (Fraser, 1995: p. 92).

2.2.3 Democracy Models and Cultural Diversity

How are the different approaches to cultural diversity adopted in different countries and outlined in the previous sections related to the different democracy models discussed in the previous chapter? Both liberal and representative democracies have been criticised by proponents of multiculturalism policies for their inability to accommodate and sustain cultural diversity. While representative democracy has been criticised for not being able to represent minorities because minority parties are unlikely to pass election thresholds (Kaya, 2013: p. 300), liberal democracy – as argued earlier – is typically reproached for its emphasis on individual rights and its dismissal of collective rights (Kymlicka, 2001: p. 35).

Multicultural democracy, in this context, is another type of democracy especially designed to address and support cultural diversity, and is influenced by both liberal and consociational democracies (James and Redding 2005). This model of democracy, just as the consociational one, recognises ethnic minorities and their languages, and favours “the reallocation of resources for those who have been systematically excluded and denied” (Marable, 1992: p. 13). However, the difference here is that *multicultural democracy* does not offer official recognition of ethnic rights and does not institutionalise ethnic or cultural autonomy, equality and veto rights as done in consociational democracy (Berghe, 2002: p. 441). South African and Dutch democracies can set an example for multicultural democracy but other European countries also tend to apply this model to deal with cultural diversity issues. For instance local cultures and languages are being taught in public schools in France and the teaching of the Welsh language in Wales is a way in with British government’s supports the local media to preserve the native language (Smooha, 2002: p. 425).

How about the relationship between deliberative democracy (discussed in the previous chapter) and cultural diversity? I argue that deliberative democracy can be seen as another possible democratic approach to multiculturalism. Dryzk indicates that; Habermas, after criticising liberal theory for degrading democracy into an electoral rivalry, favours *deliberative democracy* which enables all citizens to talk about their common problems under equal and free conditions (Dryzk, 2002: p. 26). This model allows a powerful communication between the people and the state which

provides a legitimate sphere to secure individual freedoms and rights. It also leads to a better political culture in a diverse society because it does not give people only political or formal freedoms and rights to participation (e.g. by means of voting) but also provides them with the means for a deeper socio-cultural involvement (Scholz, 2011: p. 244). Because democracy is a system through which different features of the groups are shared, deliberation here serves as a means for finding or establishing these shared values and for structuring a more tolerant togetherness. Or, as Benhabib argues, deliberative democracy allows cultural minorities to struggle for or uncover their demands through the political process (Benhabib, 2002: p. 106).

Glaser, drawing on Habermas' theory (Habermas, 1998b) and applying it to a multicultural setting, argues that a liberal culture which has been based on (1) *constitutional patriotism*, (2) a high sensibility for communication and (3) an effort for mutual understanding will serve the aim of living together with diverse ethnic and cultural groups in democracy (Glaser, 2007: p. 27). Following this, Stiliz and Soutphommasane state that, Habermas distinguishes between two kinds of assimilation enforced by the mainstream society on immigrants. The first one requires the immigrant to recognise the political system of the host country (political socialisation), while the second one describes a complete adoption of the local culture and/or life style (Stiliz, 2009: p. 169; Soutphommasane, 2012: p. 62). For a democratic state, only the first form of assimilation, namely *political socialisation* is acceptable. This effectively means that effective deliberation in a multicultural society will need to be based on a mutual understanding and recognition between different religious, ethnic and cultural groups (Ercan, 2011: p. 79).

However, building consensus in today's culturally complex societies is not an easy task, and some groups might easily feel discriminated (Kukathas, 2006: p. 590). Some authors have also criticised the aim of reaching a consensus in a multicultural context as a means of homogenization (Gaus, 2003: p. 123). To put it differently, the consensus might lead to a suppression of differences as it is one decision taken on behalf of all groups and the demands of decision makers to reach a consensus may reduce the options available (Pennington, 2012: p. 182). Furthermore, if the ultimate aim of deliberation is to reduce cultural differences in order to enable consensus, then it can easily result in a form of suppression whereby stronger groups marginalise weaker ones, and end up fostering polarization rather than understanding and collaboration (Bellamy, 2007: p. 150).

Nevertheless deliberative democracy has been favoured because it considers underprivileged ethnic and minority groups and provides opportunities for them to voice their rights and views in the public sphere rather than just engage in voting (Bashir, 2008: p. 49). Criticizing liberal

democracy, this model states that legislation should not only protect the interests of different social groups, but also that the legitimation of legal regulations depends on the approval of those who will be influenced by them and this can only be provided through liberal and transparent public deliberation involving the affected groups (Arabella, 2013: p. 9; Dryzek, 2002: p. 12). Therefore along with allowing minority voices, the deliberative forums are also able to afford a freer/safer environment for group/ethnic conflicts to be criticized in a wider perspective and even open the way for self-governance via converting local decision-making into a public agreement, as seen in some racially diverse local government areas in the UK (Deveaux, 2003: p. 790; Stewart, 1996: p. 51).

2.3 Media as Vehicles of a Multicultural Public Sphere?

Media representations are significant parts of the communication circuit that select, reproduce and disseminate different images of reality and create a representation or a stereotype of the 'other' in the society (Erdal, 2009: p. 216). Therefore, given that this project deals with multiculturalism and democracy in relation to the media, it is necessary to examine different approaches to cultural diversity within the media. This section discusses the different institutional or systemic approaches to cultural diversity in media systems as a whole, and considers the pros and cons of a multicultural or multi-ethnic public sphere. This will be followed by a section looking at the debates on the media's role in representing the other.

Curran emphasizes the importance of the diversity of opinions offered to audiences by media outlets. After receiving the information and different perspectives from media channels, argues Curran, audiences become able to comment on their social experiences and question the hegemonic culture imposed by the elites. Furthermore, the pluralism of opinion constructed by media outlets allows people to access diverse views, to judge their own positioning, and to determine their future together (2000: 147). These general points were emphasized by Charles Husband in his article where he examined the role of the media in a multi-ethnic public sphere. Drawing on Curran's arguments, he stated that the civility in multicultural societies needs to be supported through institutionalised values such as institutional pluralism and multicultural rights. According to Husband, the communication systems, both in entertainment and news media, should be able to reflect the ethnic diversity within society. Therefore, some form of minority media is one of the requirements if a multicultural society is to function in a democratic way. However, Husband also indicates that because the target audiences of minority media are often narrowly defined by their gender, identity and culture the interaction of such media with the mainstream public sphere might be minimal,

hence raising the question of whether or not minority media can actually engender a truly democratic deliberation (Husband, 1998: p. 136).

This leads us to raising questions regarding the necessity and scope of minority media: How will the relationships between minority and majority media be structured? How will the united public sphere operate if different groups follow different media content? Should a democratic state allow such minority media if they might be hindering integration by ghettoising and distancing minorities from mainstream society (Siapera, 2010: p. 97; Hallin, 1994: p. 3)? And, more generally, how exactly should the communication needs of a culturally diverse society be met? Should the states fund different small minority media organisations or instead empower public broadcasting to cover issues relevant the ethnic/cultural/religious minorities (Mihelj, 2011: p. 172)?

Husband sees public service broadcasting as the best framework within which to address the communicative needs of a multi-ethnic society and suggests it needs to be developed with this aim as a tool to facilitate multi- or cross-ethnic dialogue which is necessary for a multicultural public sphere. He also states that ethnic rights need to be clearly indicated in public service employment and production in an affirmative way (Husband, 1998: p. 145). Husband, in another article (2005) after pointing to the role of the media in establishing a civil society, argues that minority media have emerged to struggle against the discrimination within society as the minority media professionals while working for their organisation gain practical knowledge of equality and rights and reflect this in the media stories they produce (Husband, 2005: p. 465). Furthermore, minority media are there to contribute to the public sphere through providing different kinds of information, opening new debates and representing ethnic, cultural and opinion diversity (Downing and Husband, 2005).

In relation to this the necessity of minority media has also been debated within the context of *positive discrimination* as a means to resist the pressures of assimilation into mainstream culture. Bellamy, pointing to the necessity of positive discrimination to protect minority rights from majority pressure, refers to Kymlicka's approach regarding the governmental quota for minority representation in official organisations (Bellamy, 2004: p. 205). Some groups in a society may need special consideration as they are not equal with their mainstream counterparts and thus these groups should receive preferential treatment (Delanty, 2000: p. 139). In multicultural societies minority media are crucial for democratic functionality as they critically contribute to the public sphere since they enable many diverse voices to be heard (Bailey et al., 2007). Therefore there should be active constitutional support for minority media to continue and contribute to the public sphere. The ethnic communities should be able to operate their own media and the state must offer funding to these

media organisations. As to the question why taxpayers should support the minority media, it needs to be said that minority media are crucial for ethnic voices to be included and this what the media should be doing. Furthermore, the main reason for the states to support the minority media is the *right to communicate* (Downing and Husband, 2005) that has been accepted as an ultimate human right by UNESCO in 1980 (Birdsall and Rasmussen, 2002).

However, the non-mainstream ideas conveyed through the minority media may obstruct the people to debate the issues to find solutions for common problems and to contribute to the formation of shared ideas, which may be particularly problematic in deeply divided societies and may deepen existing ethnic conflicts (Mihelj, 2011b: p. 182). For instance the television programming accessed by communities through satellite links may cause fears amongst mainstream society, if the society has undergone a period of recent ethnic tensions. This was seen in Macedonia where the potential harm of the minority media was debated in the 1990s. Minority use of satellite television in Macedonia was looked at with fear as it was seen to have potential of dividing society further and delaying the integration of smaller groups with the major community. Furthermore, satellite TV channels allegedly caused people in Macedonia to link themselves with neighbouring Kosovo, Albania and Serbia which resulted in the fragmentation of society (Kolar-Panov, 2004: p. 80). Similarly, the existence of the Russian satellite TV channels in Estonia was met with concerns as it was claimed that these channels were preventing the Russian-speaking minority from integrating with the Estonian community (Vihalemm, 2008: p. 73). These kinds of debates are not special to European states. Turkey, where Kurdish people could not have any broadcasting in Kurdish for a long time, Kurdish people could access Kurdish diaspora media via satellites from Denmark and this resulted in heated debates about the so-called Kurdish separation. The same applies in India where satellite channels addressing religious and cultural communities were treated as threats to the unity of society (Mihelj, 2011a: p. 173).

In response to arguments about the potentially divisive impact of minority media it is worth pointing out, as Mihelj does, that in some cases minority media may offer more universal values compared to the mainstream ones and thus they may contribute to a more open and integrative public sphere (Mihelj, 2011a: p. 174). For instance the African-American newspaper the *Chicago Defender* in the USA did much to build a peaceful community and to offer support to African-Americans wherever and whenever they faced serious obstructions in political and public participation (Herbst, 1994: p. 79; Jaggar, 1999: p. 326). Furthermore, even if the minority media isolate themselves from mainstream society, this does not necessarily equate to alienation of the minority audience which may continue to follow the mainstream media (Mihelj, 2011a: p. 174).

As evident from the debates presented above, there is no agreed-upon, one-size-fits-all approach to cultural diversity in the media. As Mihelj (2011a) argues, the actual consequences and effectiveness of a particular model may differ depending on the specific cultural, historical and political context in which it is implemented. "To be able to evaluate cross-cultural communication from a normative standpoint we have to ask what kind of inclusion and exclusion it engenders. [...] When evaluating which approach to the mediation of cultural diversity may be best for a particular society at a particular moment, we need to be mindful of the broader political, economic, historical and demographic factors that are likely to influence the mediation of cultural difference and determine its social consequences." (Mihelj, 2011a: p. 178). Building on this argument, this thesis does not embrace one particular model a priori, but rather seeks to empirically establish whether and to what extent existing Turkish media, when debating Kurdish Issues, are able to engender democratic deliberation.

2.3.1 Media: Representing the Other

While producing media texts, media professionals also tend to engage with stereotypes, prejudices and attitudes against some groups. In literature, these processes are described as othering, alienation or marginalisation (Pietikainen, 2003: p. 583). Social science and media studies have focused on the representation of cultural diversities, minorities or opposition groups in different contexts to offer a critical angle on these processes. Studies that examine these processes suggest that the media representations are those which reinforce the existing norms and discrimination in society (Ogan, 2001: p. 43; Guner et al, 2010). Chomsky and Herman in this regard state that the media standardize the information through disseminating it and because the audiences do not oppose this communication they also contribute to this standardisation. They then relate this to *manufacturing consent* that refers to moral and ideological dominance of the media over the people (Chomsky and Herman, 1994).

In this context media aid the mainstream in standardising information through promoting the interests of established power groups, de-politicising and pacifying audiences via masking the historical processes of the news stories (Benoist, 2011: p. 82). Gitlin says even while covering the opposition groups or protests media try to abuse them and choose the opposition leaders or members who best match their clichés (Gitlin, 2003: p. 48). Furthermore media representations often fail to distinguish between small opposition groups and merge them into bigger, simplistic categories such as 'acceptable' opposition groups or 'terrorists' which can threaten social security (Hartley, 2002: p. 19). For instance Akca, in his study analysing the representation of the political crisis involving

Turkey and Greece in 1996 (Imia Military Crisis) in the mainstream Turkish media, suggests that the Turkish media re-produced Turkish nationalism and othered the Greek people by drawing on notions and labels such as 'historical enemies', 'patriotism' and 'holiness of the Turkish nation' and by represent Greece as 'never cooperating' (Akca, 2007: p. 40). An integral element of othering is the use of stereotyping (Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005) which often combines elements of racism, sexism and nationalism. Such stereotyping can be used to underscore existing economic, social, cultural or political hegemony and serve to strengthen the effect of dominance (Bonilla-Silva and Dietrich, 2011).

It is also important to note the particularly powerful role of elites in influencing social representations of minorities through the media. According to Lewis, media elites present an ideological sieve for social groups and events which mainstream society has less information about (Lewis, 2011: p. 78). Van Dijk states that media elites shape the approaches regarding the minorities because they are sufficiently influential to access the public sphere (Van Dijk, 2008: p. 107). He also states that as the mainstream is not really in touch with the minorities within their society, they structure their approaches through the media representation rather than interacting directly with them. He found that the immigrants were usually represented in English and Dutch newspapers as immoral or linked to contexts such as crime and violence. His conclusion was that racism was being reproduced and people were directed by the press for how to think and speak about the ethnic minorities (Van Dijk, 1991: p. 254). These arguments can be applied to the Turkish context as well. For instance although Turks are aware Armenians living in Turkey, their frame of reference is largely influenced through media representations of issues regarding the Armenian minority such as the media coverage of the assassination of the Armenian journalist Hrant Dink (Gelisli and Kapril, 2012). In the research conducted by Haynes and others it was demonstrated that the Irish print media caused misrepresentation of immigrants within Irish society based on fear (Haynes et. al, 2006). In parallel with this study, Murji also found that the representation of foreigners was not different from the existing mainstream stereotypes in his study which examined the imagination of others in the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) advertisements (Murji, 2006: p. 278). Again Ocampo in this context suggests that pro-asylum campaigns by NGOs in the USA also "tend to frame pro-asylum seekers in terms of race" (Ocampo, 2010: p. 116).

The phenomenon of *Islamophobia* has also been examined by researchers in terms of media and cultural diversity relations especially after the 9/11 USA attacks. Hollander, in her research, suggests that the 9/11 attacks have increased 'discrimination' towards Muslims in America and that this discrimination has been fed by white racist traditions (Hollander, 2010: p. 80). Islamophobia has also been treated in several book-length studies such as Hussain and Miller's *Multicultural*

Nationalism: Islamophobia, Anglophobia, and Devolution (Hussain and Miller, 2006); Allen's *Islamophobia* (Allen, 2010) and Feket's *A Suitable Enemy: Racism, Migration and Islamophobia in Europe* (Feket, 2009). Again, in this context, in the article examining racism and Islamophobia in Australia, Dunn and his colleagues state that the current Muslim stereotypes are recreated through racialization supported by the perceptions of threat and othering. Following this, they also indicate that destructive media representations of Muslims in the country are intensely associated with the antipathetic political discourse (Dunn et al, 2007).

Before going through the historical background of multiculturalism policies particularly in Turkey, it is also necessary to touch upon a few studies done in Turkey investigating the representation of cultural diversity in the country. For example in a study which examined the structure of Turkishness in a religious daily (Vakit), Bakir found that Islam as a religion was used as cornerstone of Turkish national identity and thus the 'others' (non-Muslims and non-Turks) were categorised as 'not of us' (Bakir, 2008: p. 93). In a different study that looked at the representation of the 'other' in mainstream Turkish films, it was concluded that the Kurds, in parallel with existing nationalist ideologies, were linked to the criminal world and represented as those who could harm society (Alankus, 2007: p. 47). In another piece of research, which focused on the representation of the 'other' (non-Muslim, non-Turk etc.) in Turkish cinema, it has been concluded that non-Turks are strictly categorised and differentiated from the mainstream society e.g. Greeks being the prostitutes of the city, Jews being tricky tradespeople and Armenians being the housekeepers. The artists who are not Turks have been forced to adopt Turkish names and their Turkish accents have been ridiculed and used as a basis for comedy. Furthermore non-Muslims in these films could only play supporting roles and never appeared in one of the main roles (Balci, 2013: p. 230).

In sum, existing research on cultural diversity in the media suggests that public attitudes to cultural diversity and ethnic minorities are closely intertwined with the representations of the media (television, cinema, print and online media) and their ability to produce a positive image of the national self while stigmatizing minorities (Demertzis et al, 1999). Undoubtedly it would be incorrect to claim that the media professionals are doing this intentionally. However, because they usually benefit from the daily pre-determined formation and clichés while constructing the news they contribute to the reproduction of discriminatory discourse. In order to make a full assessment of the relationship between the media, cultural diversity and democratization in Turkey it is therefore important to examine whether and to what extent the coverage of cultural diversity (and, in this case Kurdish Issues) is contributing to the reproduction of existing stereotypes. To develop such an assessment, however, we also need to take into account the history of multicultural policies in Turkey

and understand the current arrangements for minority media in the country. These are the subjects of the remaining two sections of this chapter.

2.4 Multiculturalism Policies in Turkey: A Historical Perspective

The subject of cultural diversity in Turkey is often discussed in relation to the Ottoman Empire era when society was based on cultural and religious diversity. Through the autonomous system in Ottoman times, social differences were protected and diversities were not regarded as a problem (McGarry, 2010: p. 57). As stated by some academics interviewed for this study, to this day, some academics still tend to use Ottoman- era harmony and multiculturalism policies as an excuse to ignore the problems of the minorities who currently live in Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 12 and 25). However, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire the subsequent establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 witnessed the introduction of nation-state policies including forced national assimilation (Turkification) of minorities, and abandonment of imperial forms of cultural diversity management. The protection of the remaining minorities in the Republic was now dependent on international agreements such as the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, which however did not cover the rights of all minorities or ethnic groups (O'Brien, 2007: p. 221).

Therefore, *Lausanne Treaty*, being one of the core international agreements of Turkish republican establishment, has a unique importance having determined the basics of minority politics in the country. Although 'minority' status was given to all non-Muslim groups, Turkish application limited this only to Armenians, Greeks and Jews. "Although the treaty makes reference to the rights of other Non-Muslim minority groups (i.e. Assyrians, Yezidis), these groups have never been afforded specific rights; religious institutions of any minority, including Armenians, Greeks and Jews, do not possess legal personality" (Bilirakis, 2012: p. 221). Moreover, because the 'minority status' was given only to those who were non-Muslims, the nation-state policies have somehow found legitimacy to suppress those who were Muslims but ethnically/culturally or religiously different (Oran, 2010: p. 63). For instance Kurds or Alewis have been regarded as Muslim and their ethnic or cultural demands have therefore been ignored by state policies as they were not described as a 'minority' in international treaties which would force the politics to acknowledge their rights. In this nation state ideology Islam, actually Sunni Islam, has been taken as the basis of standardisation and other cultural groups have been forced to live within this circle (Soysal, 1983: p. 92).

Although Armenians, Greeks and Jews have been recorded as 'minorities', they have also faced difficulties and violation of human rights and discrimination in the context of education and private possession. Despite recent regulations regarding returning their properties (glebes or private

real estates) that have been confiscated by the state, only 16% of the applications have so far been successful, according to recent news coverage (Kasparyan, 2013: p. 1). Furthermore, other small ethnic/religious/cultural groups such as Assyrians, Nusayris and Chaldeans have been ignored, their religious and cultural rights have been dishonoured and those who wanted to have freedom of religion and education (in native languages) have been forced to leave the country (Oran, 2010: p. 52).

Another point is that because the word 'minority' has usually gone with discrimination, the ethnic groups have not been keen to describe themselves as 'minority' and thus their rights have been ignored. The constitution preferred to not to mention minorities in order to avoid further discussions and the successive governments, while regulating 'violated rights' of the ethnic groups, have not used the word 'minority' but tended to present these kinds of developments in a 'democratisation' context (Oran, 2010: p. 47).

Of course it is possible to find the reasons for this kind of treatment of minorities in Turkish history. Therefore when considering the challenges posed by cultural diversity it is necessary to discuss the traumatic feelings existing in the society such as fear of separation, which could be mentioned as one of the 'root' pressures on the minorities (Migdal, 2004: p. 330). International agreements created to protect the rights of the minorities have actually in some cases increased social discrimination against them. That is very much so with the Turkish case. Because minority, ethnic or cultural groups are protected by international agreements these minorities in Turkey have been seen as extensions of 'foreign countries' and spies of international powers and thus they had to be isolated. Such policies caused the minorities to become ghettoized and prevented them from integrating into mainstream culture. Therefore, the minorities in Turkey have usually been afraid to speak out for fear of attracting pressure from political or social groups (Demirler and Kayhan, 2005).

In a nation-state context, the people depend on the state for ties of citizenship but those who do not fully meet the requirements of such citizenship somehow become marginalised (Barkey, 2006: p. 192). Because Turkey's nation-state policy forced the Turkification of all groups and discriminated against those who resisted, the term 'minority' and other related expressions such as multiculturalism, cultural diversity and international human rights in Turkey have been judged as negative. Although other nations have also experienced multicultural, integration and diversity problems, some authors argue that these problems are more deeply entrenched in Turkey than elsdewhere (Saraçlı, 2012: p. 13).

Due to the historical anxieties regarding assimilation and separatism Turkish socio-political and economic elites in republican Turkey tended to regard multiculturalism as a threat (Altınordu,

2010: p. 529-532; Keyman, 2007: p. 222; Yildirim, 2010: p. 240). Turkish society wanted to be seen as culturally unified and it was thought that this would improve the future of the nation (Baskaya and Cetinoglu, 2009). For instance, although the state has described itself as being based on secularism and national equality, even the mainstream Muslim community has suffered from political pressures (Cagatay, 2006: p. 13; Tepe, 2012: p. 471). Ironically, while the successive governments have pressured Muslim communities, they have also used the same Islamic religion as a reason to pressure non-Muslims (Armbruster, 2010: p. 125; Rumford and Turunc, 2011).

The Turkification policies were implemented through legal and organisational regulations in Turkey and they aimed to standardise the people and create loyal citizens for the state. These policies had two main legs. One was nationalism and the second was secularism (Carkoglu and Bilgili, 2011). The nationalist approach actually was not based on race but on religion – The Turkish nation was defined as a Muslim nation (Bayir, 2013: p. 131). The paradox here was that although the nationalist strategies used Islam as a ‘supportive motive’, it did not mean that Islamic demands would easily be met. Here the laicism was limiting these kinds of religious requirements (Oran, 2005: p. 27). The loyalty of different ethnic groups, especially those that came from Arab Muslim countries, was supported through using Islam as part of Turkish nationalism; however, secularism was conflicting with this (Bali, 2006: p. 46).

The non-Muslim minorities were being excluded from the Turkish nation within these definitions and therefore they started to leave their small villages on Anatolian land (traditional name given to Turkish land) and moved to the European countries or main cities of Turkey such as Istanbul and Izmir in the first years of the Republic due to the pressures they felt. Due to these waves of emigration Anatolian cities and towns lost their culturally diverse structure and started to become homogeneous. Although the treaties such as Lausanne guaranteed their rights, the non-Muslim minorities did not feel secure in Anatolian cities. In the last years of the Ottoman Empire era, the minorities were forced to leave or sell their properties to the Turkish state for different ‘legitimate’ reasons. Although the Wealth Tax (which aimed to increase the funding for the country’s defence and to restore the economy after the Second World War), was enforced in 1942 and required all rich people to pay sudden high taxes to the Turkish state, higher rates were imposed in particular on the non-Muslim minorities. Those who could not pay the taxes were arrested and sent to labour camps in different Turkish cities (Aktar, 2009: p. 42). The 6-7 September Istanbul Riots in 1955 were another material manifestation of minority problems. In these events, local residents looted the belongings of non-Muslim minorities, especially Greeks, and police forces were accused of not preventing the

marauding. Via these kinds of riots, the minorities were forced to leave the country and their life as a community was obstructed as they lost their properties (Grigoriadis, 2013: p. 69).

Of course, the internal political problems of Turkey such as the Kurdish Issue (detailed in the following chapter) are closely related to these historical developments and in particular the introduction of nationalist, assimilationist policies in the country. During the Kurdish conflict years, especially in the 1990s, non-Muslim communities emigrated to Western Europe and their schools and other institutions were closed (Kirisci, 2008: 178). This is actually another conflict in the 'cultural diversity' policy of Turkey. The Turkish governments used to say that Kurds were not a minority in the country as guaranteed by the Lausanne Treaty and therefore they did not suffer from pressures. However, as confessed by the current government, they did. The second point was that minority rights would be protected anywhere in Turkey but even the non-Muslim groups were forced to leave Kurdish cities; they were not protected either.

Here the main point is not to demonstrate the problems of the minorities in Turkey but to highlight the problematic background of cultural diversity in the country. The nation-state structure in Turkey has produced the exclusionary mottos such as 'Turkey is for Turks' and 'love or leave'. However, in a modern society, affected by processes of migration and cultural exchange, establishing or maintaining a homogeneous national culture is not feasible. Developments over the past century have demonstrated that the nation-state principle in Turkey has not been successful in overcoming ethnic, religious and cultural differences but has instead resulted in turning minorities into 'threats' (Faucompret and Konings, 2008).

2.4.1 Minorities in Turkey Today: Policies, Problems and Media

2.4.1.1 Policies

As mentioned above, the status of minorities in Turkey was based on the *Lausanne Treaty* in 1923. Although this treaty provided minority status to non-Muslim groups, only Armenians, Jews and Greeks were subjected to this legislation and non-mainstream ethnic/cultural/religious groups (i.e. Kurds, Alawites, Assyrians and Protestants) have been excluded from the frame of this agreement (Bayir, 2013: p. 91). Furthermore although the term 'minority' has been mentioned within the context of this treaty, the Turkish Constitution avoided using this word since the establishment of the Turkish Republic (Hoffman, 1996: p. 193). Despite legal reforms which took place predominantly in the last decade there are still articles which limit political, educational, language and religious rights of minorities (Kurban, 2007: p. 2). However, the paradox is that although Turkey's foreign policy calls for

Turkish minority rights in other countries such as Greece, Germany, Bulgaria and Iraq, Turkey itself has preferred to remain deaf to the demands of its own minorities (Kurban and Hatemi, 2009).

Due to these kinds of distancing of the state from minorities, official surveys have not been conducted regarding minorities in the country. The only research on minorities dates back to 1965 and was done by the Turkish Statistical Institute (Mango, 2012: p. 247). However, apart from the Kurds which have been one of the focus points of this study, there are other ethnic/linguistic minorities in Turkey. The first of these minority groups are the *Circassians (Caucasians)* whose number is known to be over two million and who mostly live in western Turkey (UNPO, 1997: p. 67). The second group is called the *Lazi people* whose background is claimed to be Orthodox Christians converted to Islam in the 15th century (Pelkmans, 2006: p. 80). These ethnic minorities speak *Lazi (Lazuri) language* which is also related to Georgian language. Their number is supposedly 250,000 and they mostly live in the Black Sea Region in northern Turkey (Khanam, 2005: p. 518; Sheehan, 2004: p. 56). The other groups are the Roma whose number over one million and live in different cities. Although they speak their own dialect (Romany or Abdoltili), Turkish has become their daily language. Religiously most of them are Muslim but there is also a small number of Christians (Marushiakova and Popov, 2000; Creed, 2011: p. 195). Apart from these large minority groups, it is also possible to mention *Arabs, Bulgarians, Bosnians* and *Albanians* who live in different cities in Turkey (Crisis, 2008: p. 70; Kaya and Tarhanli, 2006).

There are also religious minorities among which the biggest one is *Alewites* whose religion is close to the *Shia* faith/sect. They speak Kurdish, Azerbaijan Turkish and Arabic and their number is estimated to be three million (Dogruel, 2009: p. 92; Aksut, 2011: p. 35; Ozmen, 2011: p. 73). Another group called *Caferi*, described as Shia, is estimated to be three million in the country (Ozturk, 2011: p. 57; Ozmen, 2011: p. 73; Ozmen, 2013: p. 150).

Armenians, on the other hand, as a religious and ethnic minority in Turkey, have been a subject of national and international debates and were claimed to have been massacred by Turks in 1915 (Rafter and Walklate, 2012; Ungor, 2012a: p. 174). Although their numbers were known to be 2 million in the latter period of the Ottoman Empire (1900) (Myhill, 2006: p. 238; Forsythe, 2009: p. 98) today only 60-70 thousand of them remain in Turkey due to political and social pressures. Most of them are Catholic Christians but some follow the Orthodox Church (Ozdogan and Kilicdagi, 2012). As they are officially acknowledged by the Lausanne Treaty they have their own schools educating in the Armenian language (Cagatay, 2013: p. 28; Ors, 2009: p. 607). *Assyrians* as another Christian religious minority that used to live in south eastern cities in Turkey (Mardin and Hakkari) and are thought to

number 150.00 in population but 95% of them have been forced to leave their lands and the country (Erdemir et al, 2013; Aboona, 2008: p. 6; Kaya, 2007: p. 46). Most of the *Jews* in Turkey are supposed to be the descendants of the Jews who were banished from Spain in 1492. They still speak Ladino (Spanish Dialect) and live in Istanbul and their population is estimated at 23.000 (Falk, 1996: p. 455; Cagatay, 2013: p. 26). They also have their own schools because they are officially acknowledged in the Lausanne Treaty (Akgonul, 2013: p. 84). However, almost all of the *Yezidi* people (a polytheistic religious group) who used to live in the Kurdish cities of Turkey have left the country because of the Kurdish conflict since they are ethnically Kurds. Although their numbers were estimated to be over 50000 in the 1980s this cannot be confirmed in later years (Meho and Maglaughlin, 2011; Sever, 2006: p. 37). After the peace process started in terms of the Kurdish Issue some groups of Yezidis started to return to their abandoned lands (Halis, 2013: p. 3).

2.4.1.2 Minority Rights Problems

When discussing minority rights in Turkey one of the leading subjects is *education in native language* which is also very intensely debated in terms of the Kurdish Issue. There are constitutional limitations in using minority languages in education (Mowbray, 2012: p. 33). For instance the 42nd *Article* in the Turkish Constitution states “no language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institutions of training or education” (Balci, 2008: p. 110; Yagmur, 2001: p. 423). The 3rd *Article* says that the language of Turkish citizens is Turkish. This Article also led the courts to refuse recognising minority languages. Accordingly, it suggests providing funding to protect the Turkish language, culture and history which lead judges to behave within the nation-protecting limits (Romano, 2006: p. 119). Both these laws have nothing to do with minority rights, as Lausanne treaty allowed non-Muslims to establish all kinds of charities, foundations, schools and use their native languages without limitations. However, the vice-heads of these minority schools are nominated by the Turkish state and these managers need to be Turkish and Muslim and these schools are not allowed to accept students from other minorities even if they have the same religion (Grigoriadis, 2010: p. 138; Kaya and Tarhanli, 2006).

In the last decade after Turkey’s EU accession process, education in the native language has been more widely debated. In 2002 a law was enforced which allowed minority language to be taught unless it does not contradict with the ‘indivisible unity of the country’ (O’Neil, 2007: p. 79; Yildiz and Muller, 2009). After this legal amendment some private courses were opened especially in Kurdish cities but they were soon closed due to lack of applications. Kurds and other ethnic minorities have occasionally declared their demands for their native languages to be taught in public schools. However, these demands have not yet been met by the Turkish government (Kaya and Tarhanli,

2006). As a follow-up to these debates, on 30th September 2013 the government in Turkey (AKP) declared a new democratisation package which allowed minorities to have education in *private schools* and use the letters such as *x, q, w* which are not in the Turkish alphabet. Although this package has been praised by the EU commission it has also been criticized as the government still does not provide equal opportunities for minorities (Gurcanli and Alp, 2013).

Again in relation to the 3rd Article of the Turkish constitution and the Law 1353, which requires the Turkish alphabet to be used, personal and place names have been forced to be in Turkish although the article does not clearly state the prohibition of using non-Turkish names (Peroni, 2013: p. 447). In the 1930s most of the Kurdish, Armenian, Caucasus names were changed into Turkish (Oktav, 2013: p. 40). However, in 2002 this limitation was lifted but the names which include the letters not from the Turkish alphabet remained among the *banned names* (O'Neil, 2007: p. 79). The latest democratisation package in 2013 has widened these freedoms as well. Because letters not known from Turkish alphabet are no longer banned, the previous historical names for the Kurdish cities have started to be used again (Gurcanli and Alp 2013).

The other problem related to minority rights is using their native language in their communication with governmental organisations and benefitting from public services (Rumelili, 2011: p. 230). Although there is not a clear legal regulation which bans using native languages in public services and although the Lausanne Treaty has suggested minorities should use their native language in courts, respondents have not been able to have interpreters (Topidi, 2011: p. 99). Nevertheless, after the long debates of the right to defence in the Kurdish language during the process of Kurdish journalists' prosecution, the ban on using native languages, at least for Kurds, in the courts was lifted in 2013 (Rumelili and Keyman, 2013; Pope, 2013: p. 127).

Without doubt, there are other issues to be debated within the context of minority rights such as right of possession; limitations on establishing political parties which defend minority rights (the 81st article regarding political parties bans political activities which aim to protect non-Turkish culture and language as they may lead to the formation of new minorities and this will harm the indivisible integrity of the nation), freedom of conscious, expression and thought (Bayir, 2013: p. 173) which has been pointed to in relevant parts of this study and which can also be counted within the general/mainstream democratic problems of the country.

2.4.1.3 Minority Media

The Lausanne Treaty is the only resource for Turkish media policy regarding minority media rights. Actually not only minorities (non-Muslim) but all citizens have been granted the right to use

'any language' in the media (Yanardagoglu, 2009: p. 201). However, as has been the case with other issues neither non-Muslim minorities nor Muslim groups have been able to use these rights. As has been stated by one minority media member interviewee the minorities do not have the possibility to own radio or television stations due to the economic/political/social pressure they receive (interviewee profiles table number 41). On the other hand Muslim groups such as the Kurds waited until 2009 to have a state TV channel (TRT6 detailed in chapter 6) but their press organisations received pressures and clear threats such as bombings and killings (interviewee profiles table number 9).

In this regard, minority media issues in Turkey have usually been debated again within the context of Kurdish rights as the non-Muslim community already had an ineffective press (only newspapers) which had a very low circulation targeting the minority community itself (Baris, 2009: p. 291). The first time the ban on using Kurdish language in the media was lifted was 2002 (Arakon, 2011: p. 57). However, when making the change in these laws (Radio Television Supreme Council law), the *indivisible unity of the country* has always been a *hazardous area* (Kaya and Tarhanli, 2006). For instance although Kurds have been allowed radio and TV broadcasting since 2004 for a limited time, with the accusation of making propaganda of the so-called PKK terrorist organisation the radio stations and TV channels have faced many legal prosecutions including permanent closures (i.e. Anadolu'nun Sesi Radio, Sanliurfa TV) until 2009 when TRT6, the first TV channel in Kurdish language, was launched (Ensaroglu and Kurban, 2011). Furthermore the law regarding broadcasting in minority languages (Kurdish, Arabic, Circassian, Bosnian) that was applied between 2004 and 2009 had some other limitations: "There would be no children's programs and no minority language teaching programs, and all programs would be subtitled or simultaneously translated into Turkish" (Grigoriadis, 2009: p. 141); not to be against Turkish moral values and the state's national security and to be for 30 minutes per day on radio for five days and 45 minutes per day for 6 days on television (Kaya and Tarhanli, 2006; Bayir, 2013: p. 171).

EU countries have similar minority media debates. For instance France and Latvia also allow broadcasting in minority languages for a limited time (Brun et al, 2008; Jones, 2007: p. 195). On the other hand countries such as Holland and Croatia provide support for broadcasting in minority languages (Awad and Roth, 2011; Perusko, 2013: p. 719). Turkey is distinctive in its approach to minority media in two respects. The first is that although the Lausanne Treaty has allowed non-Muslim minorities to have print and broadcast media, due to economic/social/political pressures they could only have print media (more on that in chapter 5) and they still do not have radio or TV broadcasting. Secondly because the Lausanne Treaty mentioned only non-Muslims (Armenians,

Greeks and Jews, no other non-Muslims) Muslim minorities were ignored until 2002. Although today there are state TV channels broadcasting in Kurdish and Arabic (also private in Kurdish – detailed in chapter 3) there is still no constitutional guarantee for such broadcasting although the constitutional amendment is on today's Turkish political agenda (Isik, 2013: p. 4). In this regard, the next chapter will look more closely at the history of the Kurdish Issue in Turkey and also offer more details about the Kurdish media in the country.

CHAPTER III

THE KURDS and the KURDISH ISSUE

3.1 An Introduction to the Chapter and the Kurdish Issue

The origin of the approximately 40 million Kurds worldwide is a matter of scholarly dispute (Kinnane, 1964: p. 22; Gunter, 1990: p. 5). Because the Kurds usually inhabit a marginal zone between international powers, their presence even in the academic studies could cause unexpected pressure, and thus there has been only a modest amount of information about them until recent years. However, during the past decades this ethnic community has steadily grown in importance and can now no longer be ignored. They deserve to be much better understood, especially with the intensification of democracy and human rights debates (Mcdowall, 2000: p. xi).

Thus, the Kurds have been repressed for a long time and the Kurdish Issue has been described as the “Cinderella of third world liberation movements” (Manafy, 2005: p. 5; Challiand, 1994: p. 3; Laizer, 1991: p. 1). In this sense, the issue increasingly confronts the international community with the question of how to satisfy an ethnic group’s desire for “self-determination within their existing borders” (Gurbey, 2000: p. 57). Kurds could not have their cultural and identity rights for years especially in Middle Eastern countries like Iraq, Syria, Iran and Turkey (Meho and Maglaughlin, 2001). Furthermore, academics in these countries studying the Kurdish Issue were prohibited and labelled as Kurdist and separatist, forcing some of them to flee abroad to continue their research (Gunes, 2012: p. 8). In addition, performing artists such as Siwan Perwer and Ahmet Kaya (originally from Turkey), who wanted to sing in Kurdish, have left their homeland choosing instead to perform in the US, Canada or Europe (Akrofi et al, 2007). The reasons for the Kurdish conflict in the Middle East are now subject to international studies (Ballance, 1996: p. 18). Kurdish people, like other ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities, demand their right to preserve their own identity (Challiand, 1978: p. 8; Strohmeier, 2003: p. 9; Riggins, 1992: p. 1; Gillespie, 1995: p. 8). In this regard, one of the most important, and possibly the truest, reasons for the Kurdish Issue lasting so long is its ethnic feature. The problem is hotly debated whenever it relates to the people’s longing for identity and cultural rights (Natali, 2005: p. xxii; Bulac, 2008: p. 23).

Because of its multi-dimensional (i.e. psychological, sociological, democratic, political and economic) nature and long history (Yegen, 2009: p. 600) the Kurdish Issue is a difficult subject to analyse. Therefore, this chapter seeks to synthesize some of the most important aspects of this issue to provide the relevant context for understanding the subsequent analysis. The chapter starts with a short introduction to the historical, social and geographical background of the conflict and the

reasons that caused the Kurdish Issue to be referred to as a *problem* in Turkey. This will be followed by a description of the key milestones in the history of the Kurdish Issue in the country, an overview of key Kurdish political parties, with a focus on PKK, and a discussion of the latest developments in relation to the Kurdish Issue in Turkey, linked to the recent political developments and the *peace talks* initiated by the existing AKP (Justice and Development Party) government at the beginning of 2013. Finally, the last section of the chapter will outline the history and problems of the Kurdish media.

After the Turkish republic was founded in 1923, the Kurdish Issue of Turkey (which remained unanswered until early 2013) was, from the beginning, regarded by Turkey as an economic problem and an issue of underdevelopment (Gunter, 2012: p. 182). However, after the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party), also referred to as the "29th Kurdish Insurgence" (Ozcan, 2012: p. 16), commenced their armed attacks in 1984 (Kurban and Ensaroglu, 2011: p. 32) the perception of the problem changed and it was increasingly seen as a national security/terrorism problem (Bayir, 2013: p. 122). Thus, the Turkish army started a concerted struggle against PKK guerrillas, which, according to official sources, led to more than 40.000 people being killed (Albright et al, 2012). Between 1990 and 2005, due to the particularities of the Turkish nation-state ideology and history, the Kurdish Issue was not discussed as a human rights or democracy problem. Rather, it was always mentioned in the context of terrorism and national security. Although the national and the international human rights and democratic institutions such as the EU and Human Rights Watch urged the Turkish authorities to change the approach to the conflict and to focus on democratic rights violations (Joseph, 2013: p. 119), the state organs kept referring to the issue in terms of national security. This perception was strengthened further by the introduction of security measures such as OHAL (which established extraordinary heightened security in Kurdish cities), and the assumption that the solution to the conflict lies in the killing of PKK rebels (Ekici et al, 2013: p. 348).

The multilateral assimilation procedure established by the Turkish state and the arrest of PKK leader Abdallah Ocalan in 1999 has transformed the discourse about the Kurdish Issue considerably, and raised its international profile (Updegraff, 2013: p. 123). Furthermore, as the Kurdish people had political autonomy in northern Iraq and established an officially acknowledged Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in 2000 (Yegen, 2009: p. 613), the Turkish government started to consider new ways of overcoming the problem which could otherwise end with a larger Kurdish autonomous territory which would include Iraqi, Iranian, Syrian and Turkish Kurds (Olson, 2006: p. 49). Thus far, the proposed solutions to overcome the Kurdish conflict have not been successful but have instead deepened it, as they ignored the human rights aspects of the issue and, despite all the changes, still remained largely with the framework of the republican nation-state ideology.

Nevertheless, after 2009 when the current government opened a new *democratic initiative* to improve the democratic standards of the country and particularly to end the violation of Kurdish rights (Celik, 2012: p. 252), the academics and media professionals started to analyse the problem more widely. The security measures in this regard were supposed to evolve into democratic improvements aimed at bringing the crisis to a peaceful end. However, Turkey faced many ups and downs and the Kurdish conflict remained a serious problem (Ertem, 2011: p. 68) until January 2013 when the Turkish government started *peace negotiations* with the jailed PKK leader and the guerrillas (Kurban, 2013: p. 183).

3.2 Socio-Historical and Geographical Background

In the 12th century, Kurdish people were concentrated in the areas of modern-day Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey - the area named as Kurdistan by the Seljuk Empire (Ozoglu, 2012: p. 37). The Ottoman Empire also established a Kurdistan Province with the capital Diyarbakir (now heavily populated by Kurdish people in East Turkey) (Nikitin, 1976: p. 59). The gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire culminated in the establishment of several nation-states (such as Turkey and Iraq) in the Middle East. Although the Treaty of Sevres envisaged a Kurdish nation-state in 1920, such a state was never created and, following the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, (detailed in chapter 2) Kurdish populations were largely distributed between Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria (Demir and Zeydanlioglu, 2010). Small groups spread out into Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia and other European countries because of suppression they faced in the Middle East (Bois, 1966: p. 4). In Armenia (which today has a significant Kurdish population comprising mostly Yezidi Kurds) the Kurds were given autonomy by the Soviet Union between 1923 and 1929. However, Stalin subsequently expelled the Muslim Kurds to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Georgia. Unlike other groups, the Kurds in Kazakhstan, despite being a small minority, have newspapers, books, TV and radio channels and school classes in their language (Tan, 2009: p. 30).

For many Kurdish people living in northern Syria along the Turkish border, community politics and cultural life remains challenging, as some members do not even possess identification papers (Tejel, 2009: p. 51). Most of the Kurds in Syria follow Sunni Islam (Tejel, 2009: p. 83) while others living in northern Iraq are Yezidis which is a spiritual movement influenced by Islam and Christianity (Allison, 2001: p. 17). Most of the Iraqi Kurds moved to the northern region after intense suppression by the former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein (Duncan et al, 2013). Iranian Kurds also dwell along the Turkey-Iraq frontiers. Most of them follow Sunni Islam but there are also Shi'a Islam followers as a territorial sect (HRW, 2009: p. 6) along with a minority who are Jewish Kurds (Meho, 1997: p. 247).

The heavily oppressed Iraqi Kurds, among others, are mostly discussed in the context of the Gulf War in 1991, and the USA-led war in 2003. The Gulf War was especially important in Kurdish history as it led to an autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), which could have its voice heard internationally (Ahmedzadeh, 2012: p. 72). However, for years, the Turkish state opposed this autonomous self-ruled state claiming that: 1) it was a threat to Turkey's unity as Iraqi Kurds might influence Kurdish people in Turkey, (2) the PKK (Partiya Kerkeren Kurdistan/Kurdistan Workers' Party) deployed members to attack Turkey, and (3) Turkmen's rights in Iraq would be violated by Kurdish powers (Tarık, 2005: p. 73). Therefore, since the 1990s the Turkish army had on several occasions launched cross-border incursions into Iraqi Kurdistan in pursuit of PKK guerrillas (Demir and Zeydanlioglu, 2010; Yildiz and Breau, 2010). Despite this opposition, Iraqi Kurds strengthened their federal state in 2005 and Massoud Barzani became the president of KRG (Ahmed, 2012: p. 51). However, since the AKP government came to power, Turkey has started to officially acknowledge the Kurds in the country and has now started diplomatic negotiations with Iraqi Kurds and the PKK rebels to end the conflict after long years of opposition (Kurban, 2013: p. 183).

Kurdish people's social culture and their individual effort to keep their language are two major factors in shaping Kurdish identity (Dashefsky and Shapiro, 1976). Religion is also important in structuring their socio-cultural life. About 75% of all Kurds in the region follow Sunni Islam, and the proportion rises to 99% among Turkish Kurds (Nisan, 2002: p. 34; Lilleker, 2006: p. 92). However, both nationalist and religious politicians have misused the religious sensitivities of Kurds in Turkey to suppress Kurdish democratic rights by claiming that: 1) such rights threaten the unity of the *umma* (Islamic community) and Islam brotherhood, and (2) Islamic devotedness goes against the aim of achieving cultural diversity (Sarigil and Fazlioglu, 2013: p. 3). Yet, some Islamic scholars who voiced their support for Kurdish rights were represented as non-Muslims but PKK members. These imams led Juma Prays (Muslim congregational Friday prayers at mosques) in the Kurdish cities calling it civil disobedience and objected to pray with the imams at the mosques as they were officers of the state ideology and would have the same discriminative approach towards the Kurds (Sunar, 2011: p. 1).

Voicing support for Kurdish rights was itself seen as unreligious and anti-Islam behaviour by the mainstream society in Turkey, which points to the misuse of Islam within a nationalist context. Turkish-Islam in this nationalist background is "always state centric, was utilized as a national ideology and form of identity in nation-building process" (Yavuz, 2009: p. 39). Therefore, the religious leaders who supported Kurdish rights were accused of overstepping their boundaries. Moreover the PKK/Kurdish rebels were branded as 'non-believers', 'fire-worshippers' or 'pig-eaters' (Bilgic, 2008: p. 34). Even the Turkish PM Erdogan (2002 to present), who initiated the Kurdish peace process, labelled

the PKK members as Zoroastrians (Aktifhaber, 2012). After this speech by the PM, religious newspapers such as *Milli* and *Yenisafak* dailies started to publish photos of PKK members supposedly fire worshipping and said that the Kurdish revolt was in fact a movement against Islam and Muslims (Yenisafak, 2012, p. 1; Kilic, 2013: p. 1). However, the PM was opposed at that time and a few columnists indicated that violation of human rights was not a matter of religious backgrounds and that people should not be discriminated against in that way (KucukSahin, 2012: p. 14; Evin, 2012: p. 17). These kinds of discourses have tried to portray the Kurdish community as a peaceful one, and pointed out that one of the prominent Islamic principles is to defend human rights regardless of religious, cultural or ethnic background; as stated in the Quran, 'Allah delights in diversity' (Houston, 2001: p. 177; Quran Chapter 30- Oxford World Classics, 1998: p. 413).

3.3 The Kurdish Issue in Turkey: Reviewing the Milestones

Kurdish-Turkish relations go back to 1514 when the Kurdish army supported the Ottoman army against the Persians (Jwaideh, 2006: p. 17). Apart from some problems, the Kurds did not face much pressure under the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning of the 19th century, when the Ottoman Empire commenced to centralize its structure, the autonomy of Kurds was also limited. This caused rebellion that lasted until the end of the Empire (Chaliand, 1993: p. 15). Ironically, after the Republic of Turkey was founded the Kurdish people experienced more suppression than before. Although at first the new Republic vowed Kurds equal rights, promises were not kept, which resulted in several rebellions, such as the Kocgiri Insurgence (1920) and Dersim Insurgence (1937) (Entessar, 2010: p. 114). The state quashed these ruthlessly. In 1924 the new government banned Kurdish language in all public buildings through *The Law on Unification of Education*, thus completely excluding the Kurdish language from public spheres (Tan, 2009: p. 294).

In 1924, the new constitution described every person in Turkey as Turkish, denying legitimacy to all other ethnic groups in Turkey (Akyol, 2007: p. 14). Soon after, another legislation called *Plan for Restructuring the East* (Sark Islahat Planı-1925) was implemented (Yayman, 2011: 76) that banned the use of Kurdish altogether and advised the evacuation of Kurdish people to western cities in order to Turkicize eastern cities (Aksoy, 2012: p. 79). While Turkish politicians in support of this regulation described this as a reform plan, Kurdish historians on the other hand deem it a plan of assimilation and forced migration or massacre (Bayrak, 2009: p. 23). Those who were expelled from their lands and settled in western Turkish cities, took their traumatic memories, culture and languages along with them and thus caused the Kurdish Issue to spread all over the country. Several other legislations such as *Forceful Deportation* (Mecburi Iskan Kanunu-1934) have since been declared but none have achieved their aim (Ungor, 2012b: p. 166) until the Turkish state officially

recognized the Kurds and their cultural rights in 2013 and started approaching the issue within a democratic regulatory framework.

Kurds in Turkey have fully integrated into the political, economic, and social life of the nation. Therefore, the Turkish government does not consider them a discriminated minority and stresses in international meetings that it does not apply a *minority law* to the Kurds as they are “original members of the nation” (Rygiel, 1998: p. 110). However, with a huge population spread unevenly (Gunter, 2011, p. 84) across Turkey, Kurds have not been allowed to use their cultural rights in the public sphere for years or speak their languages, nor have publications in Kurdish. On the other hand, although political parties have usually mentioned the Kurdish Question in their political programmes, they preferred to name it using different labels such as the ‘south-eastern/ economic/ terrorism/ underdevelopment’ rather than calling it Kurdish Issue. Thus, the issue was misused as a way of political propaganda, but remained unaddressed due to its controversial nationalist context (Yayman, 2011: pp. 175-389). Because of this political experience since the start of the Turkish Republic, the name *Kurd* has usually been synonymous with the idea of resistance to national suppression and human rights violations (Wahlbeck, 1999: p. 41). Many Kurdish parties were shut down and activists imprisoned because of addressing Kurdish rights (Watts, 2010: p. 69). Anything related to Kurdish history, culture or ethnic identity has been treated as extremist or criminal (Ekici et al, 2007). Because of this perception, there have been cases of arrest due to singing and speaking in Kurdish in public. In this regard, the limits or bans on cultural expression amongst many Kurds in Turkey, especially in the economically less-developed southeast where the majority reside, are easily recognizable and deserve to be studied further (Cottam et al, 2009).

In sum, the different stances on the Kurdish Issue in Turkey discussed so far fall into one of the following five categories:

1. There is no Kurdish Issue in Turkey.
2. The Kurdish Issue is a problem of terrorism/ separatism/ national security. This approach claims that the Kurdish Issue was inflated by international powers whose aim is to weaken Turkey through the support of terrorism and separatist movements.
3. The Kurdish Issue is an economic problem. Since the establishment of the Turkish republic, the state has not supported its eastern cities and thus encouraged resentment, separatism and ultimately terrorism among many of the inhabitants of these cities.
4. The Kurdish Issue is an ethnic problem, which should be resolved democratically.

5. The Kurdish Issue is a national problem. Those supportive of this perspective say that the problem can be overcome only through establishing a new Independent Kurdistan (Tan, 2009: p. 16). The advocates of an independent Kurdistan have usually been members of the PKK or those who supported PKK activities but after the peace process that started in January 2013, the PKK itself has also declared its desire for a democratic Turkey without separation (Lundgren, 2007: p. 49).

To understand the Kurdish Question in Turkey, it is important to consider specific events and times in recent history between 1990 and 2012, which greatly influenced political attitudes to the Kurdish Issue as well as turned it into a major and highly controversial issue on the media and socio-political agenda. A selection of these events is presented below. The history of these events embodies a gradual shift from a military to a cultural frame and ultimately to framing the Kurdish Issue as a democratic issue that is mostly debated in the context of regaining cultural rights:

3.3.1 Turgut Ozal: Liberating a Language

The time of Turgut Ozal (PM 1983-1989 and President of Turkey 1989-1993) represented a significant period for Kurdish rights. In contrast to his predecessors Ozal uncoupled the Kurdish Issue from notions of terror and security and argued for a solution of the problem through democratic means (Gunter, 2011: p. 87). In his reports 'Kurds' were officially recognized and people of eastern Anatolia were called Kurds. The ban on speaking in Kurdish was lifted in 1991 and there was an effort in his political programmes to recognise Kurds officially and describe their identity as a "private Kurdish ethnic identity" (Romano, 2006: p. 121). Although the ban on using Kurdish language was lifted in parts of the public sphere, it was still prohibited in government institutions such as the courts, schools and the parliament. After Ozal's death in 1993, his Motherland Party changed its policies and started to mention the Kurdish Issue again within the national security context and avoided the use of the word Kurd (Yayman, 2011: p. 299).

3.3.2 Leyla Zana: Speaking Kurdish in the Turkish Parliament

Although Kurdish MPs have occupied seats in the Turkish Parliament on many occasions, only a few of them have been able to speak out clearly about the Kurdish Issue (Barkey and Graham, 1998). Leyla Zana who was elected into the Turkish Parliament in 1991 as a member of the SHP (Social Democratic Populist Party) was the first Kurdish female politician to win a seat in the Turkish Parliament (Karrlsson, 2003: p. 158; Congressional Record, 2000: p. 4817). However, she created a scandal by speaking Kurdish in the Turkish Parliament as soon as she took her parliamentary oath

saying, “I take this oath for the brotherhood between the Turkish people and the Kurdish people”. By speaking Kurdish in public buildings - hence breaking Turkish law - and taking a controversial political stance, her actions were interpreted as an attack against the unity of Turkey (Yildiz and Muller, 2008; BBC News Online, 2004).

This event was widely covered by Turkish newspapers and other media and is regarded as one of the milestones of the Kurdish Issue in Turkey. Therefore, it is still examined as it is supposed to affect today’s Turkish politics. Zana was one of my interviewees for this study. I wanted her to tell her story and what motivated her to speak Kurdish despite of the risks:

Since the Kurds used to be the object of this denial and holocaust, the Kurdish voice should have been raised in the Turkish Parliament. If laws banned the Kurdish language, if these laws were made in this parliament and if the Turkish education system was set up on this denial, the place to debate the Kurdish Issue was the parliament. Before we were elected in 1991, we decided to make at least a sentence in Kurdish. We, in our group meeting, before the oath in the parliament, had a long discussion and had determined the person who would make the sentence in Kurdish. However, this friend somehow desisted from speaking in Kurdish at the last moment and did not attend the oath-taking ceremony so I undertook this historical task. We kept working as MPs in the parliament but the circumstances were getting worse every day. We were being threatened, discriminated against and were exposed to verbal and physical attacks during this process. One of our MP friends, Mehmet SINCAR, was assassinated in Batman (a Kurdish city in South- East Turkey). The parliament and the PM at this time were against Kurds and preferred suppressing Kurds although they had said that they had been acknowledging Kurdish reality. The Kurdish protests and rebels have been negatively and wrongly portrayed to the world by the Turkish media. Kurdish people have been humiliated and presented as primitive barbaric tribes by the Turkish state and the state wanted the world to identify Kurds in this way. Tansu Ciller, the PM at this time (1993-1996), from the parliament rostrum declared that whoever was supporting PKK was on their target list. Just after this speech our jail process started. At the beginning, we, arrested MPs, were nine. However, five of these arrested MPs were acquitted in order to pretend that they have conducted a fair trial. As a matter of course I and my three other friends were imprisoned for 10 years, 3 months. I am sure we were not judged legally but were sentenced politically.

Many in mainstream Turkish society still believe that Leyla Zana took her parliamentary oath in Kurdish because of misrepresentation by the media. On the contrary, as evident from the quote above, she took the oath in Turkish according to parliamentary rules but only added the sentence

above in Kurdish. Democracy Party which Leyla Zana was member of was closed down by the Constitutional Court in July 1994 and her own parliamentary immunity from prosecution was removed. She was then imprisoned for ten years along with four other Kurdish Parliamentarians: Ahmet Turk, Hatip Dicle, Selim Sadak and Orhan Dogan (Barkey and Graham, 1998) between 1994 and 2004 (Anand, 2005: p. 118). During her prison years, she wrote political letters, which were later published in a book (Zana, 1999). Nevertheless, at the last parliamentary elections in June 2011 she was again elected as Member of Parliament and took her oath in a controversial atmosphere.

3.3.3 Arrest of Abdullah Ocalan

PKK, which was established in 1978 by a leftist Kurdish group of university students and is officially known as a terrorist group in Turkey, has been in conflict with the Turkish army since 1984, which caused ten thousands of deaths to date (Robert, 2007: p. 22). Although the PKK claims to fight for Kurdish rights, because of its terrorist attacks and the use of indiscriminate violence against both Turkish and Kurdish people, some Kurdish people have not accepted it. On the other hand, because the PKK is portrayed as a terrorist organization, the state manipulates this to justify its own policies, which has included the destruction of villages, repression of Kurdish people and the murder of Turkish soldiers and Kurdish citizens (Steven and Gunaratna, 2004).

After twenty years of fighting the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, was captured in Kenya and returned to Turkey when the Democratic Left Party (DSP) was in power as a minority government in 1999. Although he was at first sentenced to death, EU pressure forced Turkey to repeal the death verdict and thus he was sentenced to life imprisonment (Uslu, 2008: p. 100). This news was welcomed with great joy in the Turkish media and with the capture being covered internationally in detail (Anderson and Sloan, 2009). Without doubt, the Kurdish conflict moved into another phase with the sentencing of the PKK leader, although it remained unresolved and the grievances continued in Turkey. Today, after 14 years of imprisonment, Ocalan, who was usually portrayed as the *baby killer* by the mainstream media, is now leading the *peace process* between the Turkish government and the PKK (Saracoglu, 2010: p. 58). The Kurdish MPs are delivering his messages from the isolated island jail to the PKK guerrillas at Qandil Mountains (a mountainous area close to the Iraq-Iran and Turkey borders where PKK rebels are mostly deployed). The Kurdish rebels and society carefully consider his messages, which influence Kurdish society and the guerrillas.

3.3.4 PM Erdogan: Voicing for Rights in an Unstable Democracy

Diyarbakir, the largest city in southeast of Turkey, is usually regarded as the informal capital of the Turkish Kurds (Gunter, 2011: p. 31), and predominantly comprises Kurdish people and thus it has always been at the centre of Kurdish Issue debates (Romano, 2006: p. 154). As Turkey aims to join the EU and because the Kurdish Issue was on the agenda of EU debates, the AKP government led by PM Erdogan began to decrease the pressures on the Kurdish people. Since the party came to power in 2002, they have performed a series of extensive reforms to democratise the country and acknowledge the Kurdish Issue. In this regard, PM Erdogan delivered a very important speech in Diyarbakir in August 2005 and described the “Kurdish Issue as my problem, our collective problem” amid wild applause. During his speech, he did not only address the Kurdish Issue but he also added that “mistakes have been made” which attracted the attention of the Kurdish people in Diyarbakir (Duran, 2008: p. 97). The Kurdish Mayor of Diyarbakir (member of the Kurdish party) said that it constituted the foundation for turning a new page in relations between Kurds and the government. However, this speech also caused a nationalist backlash that weakened public support for future reform (NTVMSNBC Online, 2005). Despite its risky feature, this speech was described as the first *high status* speech, which acknowledged the Kurdish Issue that clearly (Khalil, 2007: p. 397). This, as a first-step of democratic *initiative* together with peace negotiations, is the mode of reform, which the government intends to use to solve the Kurdish Issue. Therefore the speech was widely reported by both the Turkish and international press (Kucukkaya, 2010: p. 13).

3.3.5 TRT 6: Material Manifestation of Kurdish Acknowledgment

In the past Turkey’s Kurds were not able to produce radio or TV broadcasting in Kurdish. However, on 1st January 2009 TRT 6, an official state-owned TV channel, which forms part of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation, started broadcasting in Kurdish. This was described as the very first positive step for acknowledging the Kurdish Issue and an important expression of tolerance towards Kurdish ethnicity (Eccarius-Kelly, 2011: p. 34; Zaman, 2009: p.14). However, this event was not only opposed by right-wing Turkish nationalists, but also criticised by the Kurdish people who were wary of this development, which they regarded as just another ploy by the Turkish government, and as yet another attempt to exert pressure on the Kurdish people (see interviewee contributions in chapter 6).

3.3.6 Uludere Airstrike: Going Back to the Dark Days?

The event took place on the Iraq-Turkey border on 28th December 2011. A Turkish aircraft killed 34 Kurdish-origin Turkish civilians, assuming they were PKK guerrillas, while they were smuggling oil and tobacco from Iraq to Turkey. One villager survived injured from the aircraft strike (Baransu, 2012: p. 1). While the mainstream Turkish media started to cover the 'airstrike on the civilians' after 12 hours due to alleged pressures and censorship surrounding the Kurdish Issue, some Turkish and Kurdish media professionals and NGOs called the killings a *massacre* and claimed that it was a result of decades-long pressure on the Kurdish people (BIANET, 2012).

Although it is now two years since the event occurred, Turkish officials have not yet found the criminals who caused this murder and therefore the liberals and NGOs are forcing the government to find and punish those who were responsible for this violent aircraft attack on the villagers. However, after the government started peace talks with the PKK the critiques regarding the 'massacre' decreased. While the relatives of the murdered villagers are still pressing the government to find those who were responsible for this massacre, army members or political representatives, government members and supporters remain defensive blaming the international and 'national-deep' powers who were against the AKP, against democratisation and development in the country (Yilmaz, 2013).

Both the opening of TRT6 and the Uludere Airstrike will be the two main points of focus in this study and will be specifically examined in the content analyses and elite interviews chapter (chapters 7 and 8). The Uludere Airstrike will only be used in the content analyses part to understand the capability of the mainstream Turkish media to cover sensitive issues under pressure. The launch of TRT 6 will be used both in the elite interviews section to understand the professional approach regarding the channel and will also be analysed in the content analyses to gain insights into the media coverage of Kurdish rights in Turkey.

3.4 The Kurdish Political Movement and PKK

The starting point of Kurdish politics and its struggle in Turkey is closely related to the ideology and political goals of the Turkish Republic, which were initially aimed at establishing a nation-state and therefore exerted socio-political pressure on each ethnic or religious community forcing them to merge into a Turkish melting pot (Fuller, 2008: p. 88). This standardisation, it was believed, would bring a quicker and happier future. However, Kurds opposed this and wanted to live in the country without giving up their own identity (Laber and Whitman, 1988; Yildiz and Breau, 2010).

After Turkey adopted a multi-party system in 1949, Kurdish politicians have tried to struggle for Kurdish rights through democratic ways, but their demands were ended undemocratically on many occasions. In 1959, forty-nine Kurdish politicians were arrested. Furthermore, Kurdish politicians and intellectuals suffered from military coups in Turkey (1960, 1971 and 1980) (Karpaz, 2010: p. 471). Before the 1960 coup, most Kurdish intellectuals could be elected to Parliament through the Turkish Labour Party; however, the party was closed down for describing Kurdish as a different ethnic identity. The 1971 coup sought to quash the Turkish Left, Kurdish organisations and hundreds of Kurds were imprisoned but many illegal Kurdish organisations were created (Beytar, 2009: p. 71). 1978 saw the birth of the PKK (Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan - Kurdistan Workers' Party) as a political party established by a leftist university student group in Diyarbakir. The emergence of the PKK had a great influence on the Kurdish political movement and has since become the most important Kurdish subject in Turkish politics (Romano, 2006: p. 88).

The 1980 coup is described as a point when the Kurdish struggle evolved into violence, which also prompted the PKK to find support for its armed insurgency (Cay, 2010; Akyol, 2007; Ozdag, 2009; Korucu, 2009; Gerger, 1994). The demands of Kurds for equality and freedom were not met and military powers attacked all democratic organisations, arresting thousands of Kurds. Many political arrangements were applied to assimilate them systematically. Those imprisoned Kurds incurred cruel torture in Diyarbakir Jail for years. Many died and most of those who survived directly joined the PKK to avenge their suffering (Celik, 2012: p. 252). Although the PKK began in 1978 it was not until the Diyarbakir jail trauma that it effectively started its armed struggle in Siirt (another Kurdish City in eastern Turkey) (Ozcan, 2006: p. 73). When the PKK started its armed struggle, the Kurdish Issue could not find proper representation in Turkish parliament. Many of the parties that promised to solve the Kurdish Issue as part of their political agenda were closed down by the Supreme Court for supporting terror organisations. Meanwhile, the PKK itself did not allow any other political parties to voice Kurdish rights (Tan, 2009: p. 489). Ever since then, Turkey has been suffering from increasing terrorist attacks by PKK, led by Abdullah Ocalan (Ergil, 2000: p. 128).

Turkish State policies favoured to approach the Kurdish Issue as a problem of security, seeing the end of the PKK as the solution. In the struggle against the PKK the successive governments violated democratic rights and punished innocent civilians. These violations provided the PKK and its leader Abdullah Ocalan with the opportunity to receive support from the international community. For years, PKK members have been trained and supported in Syria, but in 1998, the Turkish government forced Syria to surrender estranged Ocalan – who then fled to Kenya. In 1999, Ocalan was arrested in Kenya and was brought to Turkey (Kruth, 2006: p. 20). Just a few days after his arrest,

Ocalan talked about the transformation of the Kurdish movement into a political process provided Kurdish rights were recognized. He added that if Kurdish rights were not met through a political procedure the violent attacks could continue as he thought that the Turkish army would not offer them any other alternative but only 'armed' conflict (Kutschera, 1999). In his statement in State Security Court in 1999 Ocalan indicated that the PKK would relinquish its goal of an 'independent Kurdish state' and that they demanded a federative democratic structure as in the EU but that the first condition for this was the recognition of Kurdish identity (Pir, 2001: p. 9).

Although Ocalan was initially sentenced to death, in 2002 the government lifted the execution order because of EU pressure. He has since been living in prison on an isolated island (Imrali Island in the south Sea of Marmara close to Istanbul) and declares his opinions via his lawyers. These declarations range from democratic cultural equality to confederation (Ergil, 2009a: p. 339) and since then Kurdish politicians have been debating the choice of democratic autonomy and education in the mother tongue (Taraf, 2010: p. 1). Despite Ocalan's arrest, armed and violent struggles between the Turkish army and the PKK continued in Turkey. However, the ongoing conflict has caused some to question whether all those involved in the conflict actually want to end the conflict as they benefit from increasing party votes or income (Mandry, 2012: p. 212).

Although it was not legally acknowledged by the Turkish authorities, PKK became the only political Kurdish organisation which could keep its existence. The first Kurdish Party *People's Work Party* (Halkın Emek Partisi- HEP) successfully entered the Turkish Parliament joining the elections as the Social Democratic People's Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halk Partisi- SHP) in 1991, and gained eighteen seats (Ergil, 2009a: p. 348). However, after the Leyla Zana scandal and HEP's closure, other Kurdish parties have shared the same destiny although new parties have been created to replace outgoing ones. *Democracy Party* (Demokrasi Partisi- DEP) was founded just after HEP but was banned in 1994. The *People's Democracy Party* (Halkın Demokrasi Partisi- HADEP) was created and won local elections across many eastern cities in 1999. Nevertheless, it was also banned in 2003. *Democratic People Party* (Demokratik Halk Partisi- DEHAP) was banned in 2005 despite winning local elections in sixty-four Eastern cities and towns. All these parties were given the same reason for closure – having close links with PKK's leader, Abdullah Ocalan (Mimrow and Krişçi, 1997; Barkey and Fuller, 1998).

Another Kurdish party *Democratic Society Party* managed to gain entry into the Turkish Parliament in 2007, through the election of independent candidates in the general election. Since the Turkish Election Threshold is 10%, DTP members could overcome this obstacle (as usually done by Kurdish politicians) with independent candidates and then set up their groups as soon as the elections were over (Yavuz, 2009: p. 195). In local elections in 2009, DTP did better and increased their

municipal seats to 98 (Gunter, 2010: p. 81). Although Turkey had just started a reform package on Kurdish minority in 2009, the largest Kurdish party (DTP-Democratic Society Party) was closed by the Constitutional court, because of their promotion of Kurdish separatism and links to Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) (Romano, 2011: 345; Aksam, 2009: p. 1; Taraf, 2009. p. 1) in the same year. This closure sparked riots and criticism and undermined reform efforts. Moreover, it could also strengthen the illegal Kurdish activities and gain new members to the outlawed Kurdish Workers' Party (Güven, 2009: p. 11; Bayramoğlu, 2009: p. 21; Birand, 2009: p. 23).

A new Kurdish party founded just after DTP's closure set up a group in the National Assembly. The Peace and Democracy Party (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi- BDP) actually already existed before DTP's closure but DTP's members joined this party and carried the Party to Parliament. Now there are 29 BDP MPs in Parliament (TBMM, 2013). However, Kurds were still kept being under pressure as stated by an interviewee (interviewee profiles table number 44).

There are now hundreds of Kurdish politicians and people in jails. On one hand we tell the Kurds to leave the guns, on the other hand we close the ways for them to civil politics. This is a completely wrong way. If they use violence yes they will be arrested but if not why; because they do politics, because they express their thoughts?

The increasing political conflict after the establishment of the PKK also created an intellectual opposition to the assimilation process and contributed to Kurdish enlightenment. Although the Kurdish intellectual awakening could usually find place in countries such as Sweden and the UK, the same philosophical opposition was alive in Turkey despite pressures (Özöğlü, 2004: p. 18). The children of those who were evacuated from their villages, second generation, spread all over Turkey, participated in political movements and improved in commercial and intellectual terms although they faced manifest social discrimination where they lived. As a psychological reaction, Kurdish people looked for ways to struggle against this discrimination and preferred to improve themselves intellectually. This awakening contributed to the Kurdish politics becoming more open, to react to other suppressed rights and create a voice for all other minorities (Ray et al, 2008). Furthermore, the enlightenment of Kurdish society caused democratic rights to be more widely discussed such as equal citizenship and freedom of organisation, and awakened a respect for cultural and ethnic diversity in the country. The demands of the Kurds actually contributed to Turkish democratisation and encouraged other suppressed groups to voice their rights more loudly.

Therefore, Kurdish politics, especially in recent years, found considerable support from Turkish intellectuals and liberals as well (Tulgar, 2013: p. 39).

3.5 Latest Developments: Towards Conciliation or a Separation?

In recent years, either because of internal (modernity and democratization) or external (EU accession process) factors, the Turkish media and citizens – of Turkish or Kurdish origin - have started to question the limits, restrictions and dogmas that surround the Kurdish Issue. The mainstream Turkish media, despite being among the most open in the Middle East (Barkey and Graham, 1998), have not been that open when the Kurdish Issue is concerned. However, at present, nearly every day, the Turkish media cover the issue from different angles.

Until recently, most of Turkish political parties have not given enough importance to the Kurdish Issue and wanted bureaucracy to deal with it (Beytar, 2009). However, the Turkish government, especially after entering the EU accession process, has begun to change its politics of discrimination (Paech, 2000). In this regard, PM Erdogan's speech in Diyarbakir acknowledging the pressures and assimilation policies on the Kurds has been regarded as the first sign of a changing approach towards Kurds in Turkey. After this clear description the media could more freely cover the Kurdish Issue from diverse angles (Kaya, 2013: p. 307).

Furthermore, the establishment of the Kurdish Regional Government in 1992 in northern Iraq (Stansfield and Ahmadzadeh 2008; KRG, 2013) and the possibility of losing other Kurds in Turkey, pushed the Turkish authorities to have clearer ideas on how to end the Kurdish conflict. Meanwhile, the effort of *Taraf Daily* to reveal the secrets behind the Kurdish Issue had an important role in changing the direction of the Kurdish Issue. In 2008, this newspaper covered some details about the previous attack on a PKK military base in Hakkari in 2007 (the eastern Kurdish city of Turkey) and disclosed the delinquency of the army that caused 12 soldiers to be killed even though they had information about the attack beforehand (Baransu, 2008: p. 1). This disclosure by *Taraf* led other members of the media to question the problem more widely and clearly. It also caused the state authorities to review their past policies towards the Kurds and realised that the abuses in the army and other official organisations caused human rights violations and prolonged the Kurdish conflict.

This kind of media coverage was followed by President Abdullah Gul's (in office since 2007) statement on the Kurdish Issue in which he described it as "the first problem of Turkey" (Star, 2009: p. 1) and "the most important democratic problem" (Cumhuriyet, 2010: p. 1). Then in 2009, the government declared a reform package. The main aim was to stop Kurdish rights violations in Turkey

despite great military and nationalist opposition (Elanchenny and Marasliyan, 2012). The democratic initiative package included the easing of restrictions on private Kurdish-language televisions and Kurdish language faculties in universities (Gunter, 2010: p. 33). The Kurdish channel (TRT6) opened in 2009 as the first step of this democratisation strategy (Ertem, 2011: p. 68). This package would allow speaking in Kurdish in prisons, decrease the need to control identity cards on the roads of south eastern Kurdish cities, as well as allow towns and villages to use their original Kurdish names (Vatan, 2010: p. 1). This “political reform package has increased hope that Turkey is on its way to finally implementing a civilian - rather than military - solution to its decades-long Kurdish Issue which has stood as a roadblock along Turkey's road to democratization” (Schleifer, 2009: p. 13).

The courageous stance of the government and the President (Saylan, 2012: p. 409) led the army to change their hostile discourses for the Kurdish Issue. The head of the Turkish Army in 2009 also talked about the Kurdish Issue in Turkey and said that equal individual rights should be acknowledged for all people in society (Ongun, 2009). However, this declaration did not lessen the heated conflict between the army and the government as the Turkish army, since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, regarded itself as the protector of the country and thus it staged coups against the elected governments (Douglas, 2001: p. 219). After growing national and international critiques regarding army pressure on politics in Turkey and because of the ongoing prosecution of army staff for partaking in coup attempts to overthrow the government (Ergenekon case), the head of the Turkish army, Isik Kosaner, with three other commanders, resigned in 2011, which was again described as the success of the government over the army (Celik, 2011: p. 19).

On the other hand, just a few months after this democratic package another Kurdish political party DTP (Democratic Society Party) was closed down and many Kurdish politicians and journalists including elected mayors were arrested and accused of being members of the KCK (Kurdistan Societies Union) which was an urban PKK organisation (Gunter, 2010: p. 81). Therefore, this democratic package attracted enormous criticisms from both Turkish opposition parties and nationalists (UPI.com, 2009) who said the Kurdish initiative was being done without the Kurds. The government was also blamed for not being strong-willed since there was no article about the democratic initiative in the Constitutional amendment package (Yukus, 2010).

These initial cultural steps towards acknowledging the Kurdish Issue were very important and were the first signs of the Turkish elites accepting Kurdish democratic rights. Nonetheless, they have not been powerful enough to allow Turkey to end the conflict. Actually Turkish authorities focusing on the cultural rights have ignored the political demands of the Kurds regarding Kurdish identity and instead wanted Kurdish people to be content with the cultural aspects of the Kurdish

Issue, which have already been acknowledged by the state authorities (Ete, 2009: p. 21). Although Kurdish rights were in the focus of the governing party and the media, the media professionals were still not able to cover the Kurdish Issue and Kurdish MPs were not invited to TV programmes to communicate with the rest of the Turkish society. The journalists who opposed this censorship such as Banu Guven and the columnists Nuray Mert and Ahmet Altan were being fired from their jobs (Tekerek, 2011: p. 13). Altan claimed that, a shocking event like the *Uludere Airstrike* in 2012 could not be questioned as the government supporters blamed the examiners for being “terrorist friends” (Altan, 2012a: p. 12).

In other words, although the government’s steps were appreciated and praised by the Kurds (SETA, 2009: p. 15), the contradictions in its behaviour could be read as the demand of the Turkish authorities to perceive the Kurds only in regards to cultural rights in order to make them stop the fight against the Turkish army. The government, however, ignored the Kurds’ political demands such as education in Kurdish and/or democratic autonomy, and their request for constitutional guarantees for acknowledged rights. The state authorities, through this, might have wanted to continue the conflict with the PKK in a controllable way and then prepare a new constitution which would enable them to protect the present secular-Unitarian structure of the state. The traditional statist redlines and governmental strategy to progress democracy in a balance between the old statist/militarist reflexes and the new modern liberalism might have caused the government to take steps more carefully (Altun, 2009: p. 13; Ergil, 2009b: p. 16).

In early 2013, the government declared that they had started ‘peace processes’ and that Kurdish MPs would mediate between the PKK and the jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan. Although print and online media revealed the talks between Kurdish authorities and the government in *Oslo* in 2011 (BIA, 2012), this announcement was more transparent as the public were being updated through the media. After this declaration, the armed conflict between the PKK rebels and the Turkish army stopped, the media professionals covered the Kurdish Issue extensively and their discourse has changed completely. After 29 years of armed struggle against the Turkish authorities (Aydin and Usta, 2013), PKK and their leader Ocalan started ‘peace talks’ with the government. BDP (Peace and Democracy Party- opened after closure of DTP) sent their three MPs to convey imprisoned Abdullah Ocalan’s messages to the PKK members in the Qandil Mountains and this traffic is continuing to this day. Ocalan, according to media reports, wanted PKK guerrillas to complete their withdrawal and the PKK members officially started to leave Turkey in May 2013 (Tahincioglu, 2013: p. 1). The PKK leaders at Qandil declared their loyalty to Ocalan on many occasions, which could be read as an ongoing

influence of Ocalan on the PKK guerrillas and on Kurdish society despite of 14 years of imprisonment and isolation on an island (Gursel, 2013).

For society to be persuaded and updated on the aims of the peace process, the government set up a group called 'wise people'. According to the PM's office, these people were chosen based on their intellectual background about the Kurdish Issue and based on the respect they enjoy by mainstream Turkish society. This group comprises 63 elite members including former politicians, businesspersons, academicians, media professionals, NGO members, actors and singers. These 63 people were divided into 7 categories according to 7 geographical regions in Turkey and each category would be responsible for their own territories (Radikal, 2013a: p. 12). These 7 groups are holding meetings in their areas but are facing protests from the 'nationalists' who sometimes force them to postpone or cancel the meetings (NTMSNBC, 2013).

Towards the end of 2013, the government took two more important steps. On 30 September it declared a package called democratisation package in which it stated that the following would be allowed: a) Political propaganda in non-Turkish languages, (b) using the letters such as *q*, *w*, *x* which are not in Turkish alphabet, (c) changing/re-giving place names (e.g. names of villages and cities that were Turkicized in 1930s) and (d) education in non-Turkish languages in *private schools* (Radikal, 2013b: p. 1). Later in November the government also invited the president of the Kurdish Regional Government/Iraqi Kurdistan Masoud Barzani (in office since 2005) along with the well-known singer Siwan Perwer (1955), who left the country decades ago (1976) due to pressures, to Diyarbakir and the Kurdish PM for the first time ever called Barzani's country *Kurdistan* in this meeting (Candar, 2013b: p. 12).

Since the peace process and cease-fire started, the media have not been covering the attacks or murders. Villagers have started to go back to their lands and tourists have been allowed to visit many places of natural beauty, which were once forbidden zones under army protection. However, the peace process is still precarious: While Ocalan says that the PKK will obstruct the Turkish army if they attack the PKK, the governmental bodies have not yet talked about a guarantee not to do so (Demirtas, 2013).

3.6 The Kurdish Media in Turkey

Press organisations in a territory are both the object of the social movements and their participants in an intellectual manner (Yucel, 1998: p. 29). However, to be able gain further insight into the role of the early Kurdish periodicals in the development of Kurdish culture, more extensive

studies need to be undertaken. Despite recent developments with regard to the Kurdish Issue of Turkey, I have not been able to find a comprehensive scholarly study done in Turkey focusing on the development of the Kurdish press in Turkish lands. Therefore, to give both a short chronological introduction to the Kurdish media and insights into the problems related to minority media, the development of the Kurdish media in this part will be analysed mostly by drawing on broader literature about Kurdish culture and history and on information gained from Kurdish participants interviewed for this study.

Historically, Kurds have lived among larger groups: Turks, Persians and Arabs. Despite these pressures, they have sought to protect and preserve their culture and language. However, because Turkish was accepted as the governing language and Persian as the language of literature, Kurdish could not find a common usage for itself when under the control of Seljuks, Ottomans or Persians. Nevertheless, Kurdish authors and poets such as Ahmede Xani, Tahiri Uryan and Mela-i Cezire have left written works through which the Kurdish language has been protected until today (Kurdo, 2010: p. 103). The pressure surrounding the language issue has made it difficult to talk about the issue. In this regard, one of the main reasons for the lack of development of Kurdish media is the fact that Kurdish media largely functioned also as political institutions. Since they were usually under pressure or directly dependent on other nations they could not have their own media for a long time. The few Kurdish media that did emerge, such as the Hawar Journal published in 1932 in Syria for 57 Issues, and the Kurdish newspapers discussed further on, were short-lived (see below). Furthermore, because the intellectual effort and organisations of the Kurds were dedicated to political propaganda rather than contributing to language, arts, philosophy and press, a professional media experience could not be developed for a long time (Tan, 2009: p. 280).

The media problems the Kurds faced in Turkey meant that they at first preferred to publish Kurdish newspapers abroad, far from their local governments. In this regard, the first known Kurdish newspaper is *Kurdistan*, which was published fortnightly in Egypt by Mithat Bedirxhan in 1898 who was exiled to Egypt by the Ottoman authorities. The Bedirxhan family had an important role in Kurdish modernisation in 1845. They opened dozens of education institutions in Istanbul and their lands in east Turkey such as the *Kurdish Foundation of Powerful Ideology* and *Kurdish Education Institution*. However, because the Ottoman Empire thought that they were supporting Kurdish nationalism the Bedirxhan family were forced into exile in Egypt. Just after its fifth publication in Egypt, because it aroused interest in among the Kurds in Syria, Iraq and Turkey, *Kurdistan Daily* was stopped by Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamit. Although the newspaper was later published in Geneva and London in 1898, it was stopped completely in 1902 because of pressure from Ottoman authorities and

economic problems. Today the publication day (22nd April) of this first Kurdish newspaper is celebrated as *Kurdish Journalism Day* (Hassanpour, 1992: p. 286; Celil, 2000: p. 26).

The Kurdish *Solidarity and Development Community* (originally published in 1908 in Istanbul by Ahmet Cemil and Suleyman Tawfik as *Kurdish Solidarity and Development Newspaper*) can be regarded as the second Kurdish newspaper. This weekly newspaper was being published in Kurdish and Turkish and covered religious, political, scientific and cultural issues. However, soon after its first publication, it was also banned but later published in Egypt and delivered in Europe as well. Again, due to economic and political pressures the newspaper stopped being published in 1909 and its workers were jailed (Malmisanj, 1986: p. 65).

The later Kurdish magazine and newspapers that were published at the centre of the Ottoman Empire also closed very soon after their first issues. *East and Kurdistan Newspaper* was published in 1908 in Istanbul twice a week. *Kurdistan* was published 1908 and closed in 1909. Other newspapers such as *Amidi Sevda-Amidi Love* (Diyarbakir, 1909, 6 issues), *Jin-Life* (Istanbul in 1918, 25 issues) and *Bangi Kurdistan-Kurdistan Call* (Iraq, 1922- 1926) were like party or organisation propaganda handouts (Amedi and Aslan, 2002). There were also Kurdish magazines or journals such as *Roji Kurd* and *Kurdish Sun* (Istanbul, 1912, 4 Issues), *Yekbun-Union* (Istanbul, 1913), *Hetawi Kurd-Kurdish Light* (Istanbul, 1913-1914). The Kurdish magazines or newspapers usually covered issues about the enlightenment, religion, history, the unity of the Kurdish people and the importance of the Kurdish language. The articles or news was not only in Kurdish but also in Arabic, Turkish and French. Kurdish intellectuals and authors such as Said-i Kurdi, Salih Bedirxhan, Necmeddin Kerkuki and Seyit Abdulkadir used to come together around these magazines and they wanted to also publish Kurdish books (Nikitin, 1976: p. 449).

Despite a long history of bans, which started in the last years of the Ottoman Empire and to some extent continued to this day, the Kurdish media has tried to keep the existence of the Kurdish language and culture in Turkey (the term "Kurdish Media" here does not refer only to media which broadcasts or publishes in Kurdish but also refers to any media organisation defending Kurdish rights in Turkish or other languages). Nevertheless, the Kurdish media have been closed one after another or somehow forced to close through financial pressures and long-lasting prosecutions of writers, journalists and columnists (Hirschler, 2001: p. 149).

As this brief history of suppression suggests, analysing Kurdish media in Turkey highlights the close relationship between the media and democracy. Until recently any media group opposing government policies faced closure threats. Before the 1980 military coup, many newspapers were

published whose names are solely a matter of study: *Demokrat Dogu* (Democrat East - 1948), *Agri* (1950), *İleri Yurt* (Developed Country - 1958), *Roja Newe* (New Day - 1963) and *Ozgurluk Yolu* (Freedom Way). After the 1980s the Kurdish media could not surface for four years until the introduction of *Medya Gunesi* (Media Sun) and *Ozgur Halk* (Free People). Both these publications were short-lived because of the prosecutions they faced and their small local readership. The 1990s saw other newspapers enter the market: *Ozgur Ulke* (Free Country - 1995), *Ozgur Gundem* (Free Agenda - 1998) (Simsek, 2002) and *Azadiya Welat* (Freedom of the Country - 2006) (Karaca, 2011). *Azadiya Welat* and *Ozgur Gundem* dailies survived despite threats, imprisonment of the journalists and several bombings. The editors-in-chief of both dailies were among the media elites interviewed for this study. They both told the same story of pressure and difficulties. Eren Keskin, editor-in-chief of *Ozgur Gundem*, explained:

The newspaper was born in 1992 but has not lasted long because of pressure. Journalists, even the children deliverers, were killed. In 1993 the head office and another office in Istanbul were bombed simultaneously. One member of staff died. Ozgur Gundem, although closed, kept being published under different names. Ozgur Gundem; by state organisations and by some parts of the public is seen as a proponent of PKK as it believes that PKK's struggle for Kurdish rights is legitimate. This is the main reason for this pressure. In 1990s there were no other news sources to get news about what was happening in Kurdistan, eastern cities of Turkey, and about Kurdish people. All news about the Kurdish conflict was covered by Ozgur Gundem but used to be ignored. As Turkey is undergoing change, other newspapers also cover the news covered by Ozgur Gundem nowadays. Ozgur Gundem does not have the equal rights with other printed newspapers. Therefore, there are huge obstructions in front of freedom of obtaining of information. For instance we are not allowed to follow prime minister's or other ministers' meetings. We are not allowed by police to follow other newsworthy events, which other press groups can easily follow. I mean above all Ozgur Gundem is a suppressed newspaper. It is often closed and withdrawn from the market by police because of expressing an opinion. Unfortunately the freedom of journalists has recently started to be debated after Ergenekon (the name given to an alleged clandestine, Kemalist ultra-nationalist organization in Turkey with possible ties to members of the country's military and security forces who are accused of preparing a military coup, Author's note) case. Ozgur Gundem is "otherised" among other press groups in fact in every respect. Of course, Turkey is changing. We of course have more freedom compared to the last years. None of us had life security in the past; we might not still, but at least psychologically, we feel more secure.

Kurdish broadcasting in Turkey is still debated today as the state ban has forced Kurds to follow overseas Kurdish TV and radio such as *Newroz TV* and *Kurdistan TV* through their satellites. “The Kurdish print media that can operate in Western Europe or other countries outside the control of the Turkish state have provided the Kurdish movement with instruments of nation-building comparable to those normally used by states” (Bruinessen, 2000: p. 14). Therefore, this practice is highly criticised by Turkish nationalists who believe that viewing such programmes is a form of supporting terrorism. London-based *MED TV*, which lost its licence because of its links with PKK, restarted broadcasting from Belgium as MEDYA. Another example, *ROJ TV* broadcast from Denmark was blamed for making propaganda for separatist PKK members and motivating violence towards the Turkish state. In response, Turkey wanted the channel shut down; the Danish Government refused (Hassanpour, 1998: p. 61; Rigoni, 2001). However, at the end it was closed but reopened under the name of Nuce TV that is now broadcasting from Denmark. The chief executive of this channel, Amed Dicle, one of the interviewees, said:

We received great pressure from the Turkish authorities although we are based in Europe. They did their best to make Danish authorities close us down. If we had the possibilities to broadcast in Kurdistan (refers to the Kurdish cities in Turkey) we would broadcast there and not in Europe. We would like to broadcast in our own country and the Middle East. Still the Turkish government tries to stop ROJ TV by using international diplomacy. Our satellite signals were blocked several times by signal sabotage by Turkey & Iran. Our programme guests are being punished in court when they return to Turkey.

Despite the debates, slightly more tolerant policies have been introduced, and the Turkish Government has also controversially launched a Kurdish-language TV Channel, *TRT 6*, (detailed in chapter 6) as part of the mainstream broadcaster Turkish Radio Television Cooperation (TRT) (Zaman, 2009: p. 14). Significantly, the first sign of Kurdish-own broadcasting was GAP TV (television for the areas of the southeast Anatolia project) in 1989, when Turgut Ozal (the president of Turkey 1989-93) ushered a hint of change in Turkish policy on Kurds (Gurbey, 2000: p. 67). After the launch of the first public broadcasting channel in Kurdish, TRT 6, the first private TV channel, *Dunya-World TV* started broadcasting in 2010; owned by Samanyolu Media Group that is allegedly close to the religious Gulen movement. The head of this channel, Remzi Ketenci, one of my interviewees, responded my question regarding the new channel:

We started broadcasting in November 2010. State-owned TRT6 (Turkish Radio Television) was established with a special law. After that, we entered the broadcasting sector as the first private Kurdish channel. We are a national TV channel and the name 'Dunya' (the World) is the decision of the board of managers. It is almost impossible to avoid such difficulties in both human resources and broadcasting materials, as there have been various restrictions on Kurdish broadcasting for a long time. Turkey has had an experience in TV broadcasting for years but not for Kurdish audiences. After the amendments to the Regulation of Broadcasting in Different Languages, we applied to establish a Kurdish channel, people found it strange. We faced some difficulties to find personnel who know Kurdish. We did not see any restrictions or preventions either while setting up the channel or while broadcasting.

Here of course it is necessary to mention the influence of the EU accession process on the development of the Kurdish media in Turkey. Receiving 'candidate country' status from the EU, along with the reforms in human rights issues and other democratisation improvements has led to a revision of the media structure and news culture of the country (Aliriza et al, 2009). The first point mentioned in the EU accession process in terms of media freedoms and regulations was 'broadcasting in native languages' which was structured around the Kurdish Issue of Turkey. In the EU accession programmes such as *Regular Report on Turkey's Accession* and *Turkey: 2000 Accession Partnership* the Kurdish question of the country was being mentioned as a problem of universal human rights although it was perceived as an 'internal security problem' in Turkey during those years (Savasan, 2013: p. 64).

The development of the media, especially the minority or opposition media, are important in understanding the socio-political and intellectual history of a country as they both include the updated information and have influence on the socio-political movements (Cormack and Hourigan, 2007). However, the Kurdish media in Turkey that survived or opened under different names, faced different kinds of pressures including killings and bombings starting from the late Ottoman Empire era until today as mentioned by the interviewees. The first newspapers or journals published in the late Ottoman years were aiming to contribute to Kurdish modernization, culture, education and national awakening and were supported by Kurdish civil organisations (Alinia, 2007: p. 17). Most probably because of the separation experiences and increasing nationalist movements in the last decades of the Ottoman empire, the Kurdish media were seen as a threat to the nation-state ideology and thus were kept under strict governmental control both before and after the establishment of the Republic. It took Kurds and liberal Turks quite some time to get to the current point, but now they can access

Kurdish media content more freely despite some nationalist opposition in the public sphere (Kelly, 2011: p. 32).

As detailed in chapter 1, democratic models mostly focus on the participation of people in governing activities via elected candidates and/or other democratic rights and applications (Bessette and Pitney, 2011; Janda et al, 2012). The role of the media in structuring this participation have been conceptualised within the context of equal representation in media and right of access to information (see media, democracy and multiculturalism discussions in chapter 2). In the previous discussion, I have shown how historically these rights have been systemically obstructed by powerful vested interests in Turkey, particularly with regard to the Kurdish question (Topuz, 2003: 53). For example, this manifested in draconian state censorship practices that sought to marginalise voices from the Kurdish community and police the parameters of political debate about their rights. Since the 1990s, there has been an active debate within Turkey about the need to challenge the hegemonic discourses that sought to push Kurdish voices out of the public sphere (Somer, 2004: 235) but, as the elite interviews amply demonstrate, opinions divide sharply as to whether there has been any significant improvement in the conditions for the realisation of something resembling deliberative democratic debate upon this matter. The role of my content analysis will in part be to provide some independent and systematic measure of the contemporary democratic performance of the Turkish media in reporting the Kurdish issue, and will do so by considering the following measures:

1. The extent of media engagement: how much attention is given to important issues concerning the Kurdish minority, and to what extent does this map onto the political and ideological orientations of different news organisations?
2. Plurality of sources: to what extent is a diverse range of voices presented through coverage? Have minority voices been able to command a significant presence in media discourses, despite the inevitable prominence of official sources?
3. Directional balance: are there any systematic patterns in the evaluation of these sources? To what extent are they seen as legitimate participants in public discourse?
4. Thematic balance: to what extent does coverage of Kurdish issues extent across a wide range of political and cultural questions? Or is coverage principally rooted within a dominant frame of reference (i.e. concerns regarding security and military issues).

CHAPTER IV METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used in this study and the research design and objectives. This investigation integrates qualitative and quantitative methods, which are related to different aspects of the study. *Semi-structured elite interviews* were used to provide (a) data about elite opinions regarding the Turkish democratisation, the media and their relationship with democracy, specifically with regard to the Kurdish Issue and (b) insights into elite opinions about the broader context of current Turkish media issues such as media and governmental relations, journalistic traditions and other subjects related to the politics of news production. *Content analysis* was used to analyse how the Turkish media covered sensitive issues related to democracy and the Kurdish Issue in Turkey. More specifically, the two main goals of content analysis were (a) to provide an overview of the key patterns of media reporting of two major Kurdish Issues in Turkey and (b) to assess the validity of competing elite opinions about the democratic performance of the Turkish media. Taken in combination, the elite interviews and news analysis were intended to enable me to reconstruct the broader relationships between the media, political and cultural elites, assess how the coverage of the Kurdish Issue is shaped by the political environment and aid me in answering the further research objective of this thesis; namely: identifying how the Turkish media should most appropriately be defined within competing models of media and democracy.

4.1 Elite Interviews

Individual interview types differ according to the numbers of people, subject and the results demanded. In *structured interviews*, the aims, the questions and the way of asking them are rigidly predetermined. Interviewers use the same question wordings and orderings and thus they have limited freedom. *Structured* survey interviews aim to obtain data allowing statistical outcomes from representative samples (Banister et al, 2011). The respondents' answers are close-ended as they select from one of the options presented to them. From these data the researcher reaches generalisations that derive from probability samples. Because of the inherent inflexibility of this method, carefully research design and piloting is essentially as respondents have no freedom to challenge or correct questions that are framed or focused inappropriately (Bryman, 2012: p. 210).

Semi-structured interviews are more flexible by comparison, and seemed more appropriate for explorative investigation. In this method, the researcher defines the questions and looks for the answers within the boundaries of his/her study, but permits the interviewee significant amounts of discretion to develop issues and frame their responses. The researcher sometimes may want the

interviewee to teach him the problem or explain the situation of the subject being studied (Dexter, 2006: p. 19). The interviews might also allow the finding of answers for different questions the researcher had before; to close the gaps of a wide area of conflict; to confirm or deny the attitude she/he had before and to restructure her/his main focus of study. Here the main question of elite interviewing is: What are the problems, the enquiry, and the circumstances about the focus of the project (Ingram, 2010: p. 1106)? For all these reasons, it was clear to me that more informal interviewing methods would be appropriate for an explorative investigation of this kind (see appendices for the personal interviewing experience).

4.1.1 Interview Details

For the interview component of this thesis, I interviewed 51 elite sources in Turkey. These were selected to represent: all mainstream media groups (28 interviewees), Non-Governmental Organisations from different ideological backgrounds (6 interviewees), academic sources (10 interviewees) and elected Members of Parliament (7 interviewees from five political parties). The specific questions that were asked are included in the appendices, but they were organised in a way that addressed the following meta-questions, which reflect the broader research objectives of this study:

1. What are the Turkish elite opinions of the media-democracy relationship in Turkey, and specifically about the media treatment of Kurdish Issues?
2. What are the significant differences in elite opinions on these issues, either between the four elite groups or within them?
3. What kind of media problems hinders media to contribute a deliberative public sphere or issues to be freely debated?
4. What kinds of barriers do news media professionals face especially while establishing news stories regarding sensitive issues?

I was aware of the possible problems such as refusal and accusations I could face, because questions regarding democratisation in Turkey, and the Kurdish Issue in particular, are highly controversial and sensitive issues. For example, before the commencement of the 'peace negotiations' started with the Kurdish rebels (see previous chapter), media professionals and academics who tried to cover the subject in terms of 'human rights' were routinely accused of being 'traitors' and were sometimes forced out of the country by far-right groups (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu, 2007). The

proximity of some news organisations to the government has also been a matter of active controversy and contestation. Despite these concerns, levels of refusal were not as great as I expected (see table 4.1). Among the prospective media interviewees I approached, only representatives from two media groups refused to participate. The first was *Yenicag Daily*, known as a pro-Turkish nationalist newspaper. However, the 'nationalist' view is reflected in my interview with *Ortadogu Daily* which is covered in the content analysis as well. The second media group representative (*Aksam Group*) and one of the important NGOs (TUSIAD: Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association) in Turkey apologized for being very busy and unavailable despite my long and insistent attempts at negotiating access.

In designing this aspect of the study I tried to ensure I accessed a diverse range of intellectual and political backgrounds. This is particularly important in a highly politically polarised country like Turkey. Table 4.1 lists the details of interviewees who were chosen based on one or more of the following selection criteria which apply to all interviewee groups (media professionals, academics, NGO members and politicians):

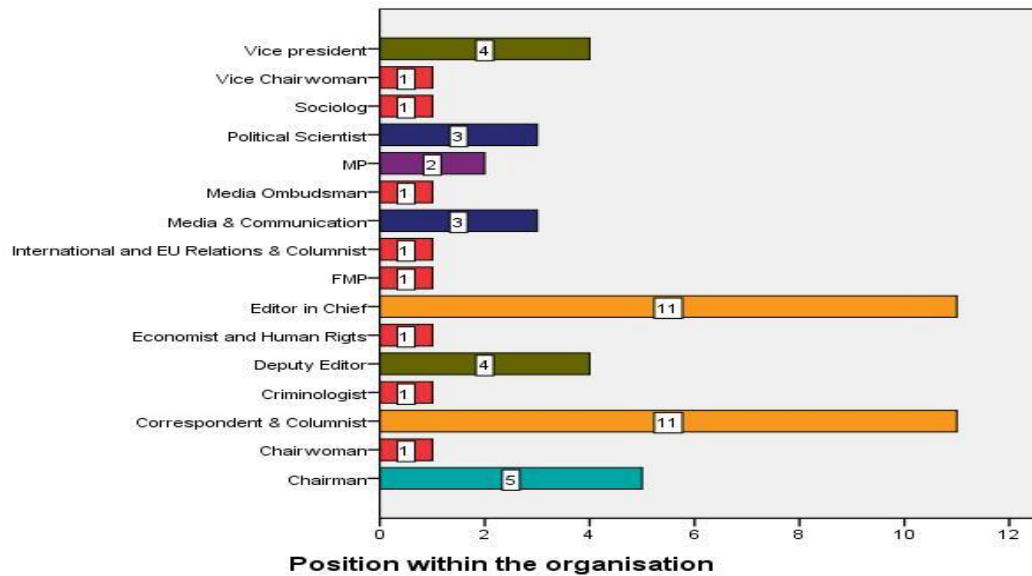
- to be an elite who is widely known by both the Turkish and Kurdish public
- to have been involved in specific studies on, or activities concerning, the Kurdish Issue and media and democracy (both for or against)
- to have suffered from any kind of pressure while expressing her/his opinion both as a media professional or civil/political representative with regard to the Kurdish Issue
- to be known as a public commentator about the Kurdish Issue, media, democracy and other subjects related to sociology of news.

Table 4.1: Interviewee Details

Interviewee Details				
Head Title	Subtitle	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Interview Status	Interviewed	51	94.4	54
	Refused	3	5.6	
Elite Group Type	Academia	10	19.6	51
	Political Representatives	7	13.72	
	NGOs	6	11.76	
	Media Professionals	28	54.9	
Ethnic Background	Armenian	1	2	51
	Dutch	1	2	
	Kurdish	17	33.3	
	Turkish	32	62.7	
Political Orientation	Centrist	4	7.8	51
	Conservative	9	17.16	
	Leftist	11	21.6	
	Liberal	12	23.5	
	Nationalist	8	15.7	
	Pro-Kurdish	7	13.7	

This sample of interviews can be subdivided into two subsets: *news producers* and *news sources*. In terms of the former, Figure 4.1 demonstrates the position of the interviewees within their organizations and shows that most of the interviewed media professionals were editors-in-chief, also called ‘general manager’ in Turkey. Those who are columnist and correspondent also have important positions in their media organizations:

Figure 4.1: Position within the organisation



As table 4.2 below suggests, I tried to access all media organisations in Turkey but only two refused to talk to me. The first was *Yenicag Daily*, known as a pro-Turkish nationalist newspaper. However, the ‘nationalist’ view is reflected in my interview with *Ortadogu Daily* which is covered in the content analysis as well. The second media group representative was *Aksam Daily* which can be replaced with another centrist newspaper representative such as *Milliyet*. It should be also noted that, because of their particular status and wide reputation in terms of democratisation and the Kurdish Issue, some journalists were especially interviewed although I interviewed another media professional from the same media organisation (two from daily Taraf, two from Milliyet and two from Ortadogu). Lastly, media organisations I applied included: 14 print; 7 broadcast and 4 work both as print and broadcast media.

Table 4.2: News Organisations Media Professionals Affiliated

News Organisations Media Professionals Affiliated			
Number	News Organisation	Organisation Type	Political Orientation
1	Agos Daily	Print	Minority Media/Armenian
2	Azadiya Welat Daily	Print	Pro-Kurdish
3	BIANET	Print	Leftist
4	Birgün Daily	Print	Leftist
5	Bugun Daily	Print	Conservative/Religious
6	Cumhuriyet Daily	Print	Secular-Leftist
7	DUNYA TV	Broadcast	Conservative/Religious
8	Haberturk TV & Daily	Print/Broadcast	Centrist
9	Hurriyet Daily	Print	Secular-Centrist
10	Kanal D/ CNN	Broadcast	Secular-Centrist
11	Kanal24/ Star Daily	Print/Broadcast	Conservative/Religious
12	Milliyet Daily	Print	Centrist
13	NTV	Broadcast	Centrist
14	Ortadoğu Daily	Print	Nationalist/Rightist
15	Özgür Gündem Daily	Print	Pro-Kurdish
16	Radikal Daily	Print	Liberal
17	ROJ TV	Broadcast	Pro-Kurdish
18	Sabah Daily/ ATV	Print/Broadcast	Centrist
19	South Eastern Journalists Association- Hurriyet	Print	Secular-Centrist
20	Sozcu Daily	Print	Conservative/Religious
21	Taraf Daily	Print	Liberal
22	TRT	Broadcast	State
23	TRT 6	Broadcast	State
24	Ulusal TV	Broadcast	Pro-Nationalist
25	Zaman Daily/ STV	Print/Broadcast	Conservative/Religious

In terms of news sources, the elected political representatives I interviewed ranged across the political spectrum:

1. AKP (Justice and Development Party): The party in power, conservative democrat (2 interviewees)
2. CHP (Republic People's Party): The main opposition party, social democrat/secular (1 interviewee)
3. MHP (Nationalist Movement Party): Turkish Nationalist, conservative (1 interview)
4. BDP (Peace and Democracy Party): Kurdish Party in the National Turkish Assembly (2 interviewees)

5. HSP (The Voice of People Party): Religious, not in parliament (1 interview)

Four of these parties are currently in the Turkish parliament and represent different ideologies. I also interviewed a representative from a party that is not in parliament (which then merged with the government party but the elite I interviewed remained in opposition), as it was a religious party and the religious approach is quite determinant in Turkish perceptions (Kalaycioglu, 2010: p. 160). There are two representatives from the party in power and two from the Kurdish party in parliament, as I anticipated they were the main contributors to the Kurdish Issue and media debates in this study in terms of political view.

Again, to be able to include diverse professional approaches from the second group of news sources, different *academics* from different universities (two from Bilgi University and two from Gazi University) and political orientations have been interviewed as can be seen in the table below. *Area of Expertise* and *Political Orientation* categories included in the table do not refer to the university but to the academic I interviewed.

Table 4.3: Universities Academics Affiliated

Universities Academics Affiliated			
Number	Affiliate	Area of Expertise	Political Orientation
1	Ankara University	Criminology	Conservative
2	Bilgi University	Media & Communication	Leftist-Liberal
3	Bilgi University	Media & Communication	Secular-Leftist
4	Bilkent University	Media & Communication	Leftist-Liberal
5	Durham University	Economy and Human Rights	Pro-Kurdish
6	Gazi University	Political Science	Centrist
7	Gazi University	Political Science	Pro-Turkish
8	Istanbul University	Political Science	Leftist-Liberal
9	Sabancı University	International and EU Relations	Liberal
10	Sehir University	Sociology	Liberal

With news sources and the producers overall, almost all presumed approaches (nationalist, secular, religious, conservative, democrat, liberal, and pro-Turkish, pro-Kurdish) have been included. Interviewees' occupations and ethnic backgrounds are also listed in the table above (4.1). As the last group of the news sources, I included NGOs to ascertain their approaches on media and civil organisation relations, the Kurdish Issue and on media and democratisation in Turkey. Without doubt it was possible to apply more NGOs to gain wider perspective. However, as stated above, in a highly

polarised and politicised country as Turkey, it would be sufficient to get perspectives of typical political/ideological orientations instead of approaching tens of different civil organisations. The table below lists the NGOs, their political orientations and the positions of the interviewees within their organisations:

Table 4.4: NGO Details

NGOs			
Number	NGO	Political Orientation	Position within the organisation
1	ADD	Secular-Nationalist	Chair
2	DITAM	Pro-Kurdish	Chair
3	IHD	Leftist	Chair
4	MAZLUMDER	Conservative/Religious	Chair
5	TESEV	Liberal	Vice-Chair
6	Turk Ocaklari	Nationalist	Chair

4.1.2 Analysing the Interviews

The interviews were transcribed fully for the purposes of the analysis. The interviews were conducted in Turkish and translated into English. However, the terms and expressions used by the interviewees were carefully noted not to miss any valuable redirection by the interviewee. The word-count for each transcription was five thousand on average which sometimes took four to six days to complete one transcription. Although time consuming, the transcription process was invaluable for familiarising myself with the data.

After the completion of the transcription, I commenced a thematic analysis, collating responses under the headings such as: the Kurdish Issue, cultural diversity and the Turkish media, civil actors and media, media and democracy relations, journalism and censorship. Throughout the thematic analysis the interviewee contributions were given in an italic form as quotations. However, although consent forms have been signed by all interviewees (consent forms have been stored), their names were not encompassed in the thematic analysis or in the entire study to respect their anonymity. Instead they were given codes (e.g. interviewee profiles table number 37, 43 or 50) and short explanations added about their backgrounds for reader to have a clearer understanding (see interviewee profiles table in appendices).

Where appropriate, I sought to collate statistics about patterns of responses. For instance, when analysing the governmental dealings of the Turkish media or looking for answers to the

question of how the mainstream media represented the Kurdish Issue, I coded the questions and overall answers and created tables using SPSS software (see tables provided in chapters 5 and 6). These statistical summations also helped facilitate comparison between the claims made by the interviewees and the content analysis findings.

4.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is aimed at providing a systematic means for quantifying textual and thematic features across a large number of texts (Hansen et al, 1998). It was originally developed in the 1920s as a result of the increase in propaganda activities during the First World War which had boosted the importance of quantitative techniques. Early communication scholars such as Lasswell, Lazarsfeld and Berelson, believed that the media was affecting political behaviour and therefore devised a method to provide ways of analysing large amounts of media content (Ozankaya; 1975: p. 61; Hansen et al, 1998). It remains a very popular method to this day, as a means of charting wider trends and patterns in coverage. On occasions, wider inferences are drawn on this basis about the production and/ or reception of this content, but these always need to be recognised as speculative at best. As Neuendorf notes, it is not possible to “make conclusions about source or receiver on the basis of an analysis of message content alone” (Neuendorf, 2002: p. 52; See also Wright, 1975: p. 126; Stone et al, 1966). There are also evident limitations in the way it analyses content. For example, it is only reliable when analysing manifest meaning, thereby neglecting important levels of textual nuance and latent meaning. Despite these limitations, I deemed this method the most appropriate to use in this particular study. Although the method cannot be said to be entirely ‘value free’, it does involve systematic measurement that can be used to analyse large volumes of content (Deacon et al, 2007). In doing so, this enables one to assess both absences and presences in aggregated media discourse over time. This kind of information auditing is essential for any appraisal of the extent to which mainstream media provide room for meaningful pluralistic and deliberative debate.

4.2.1 Questions for Content Analysis

Because it is a directive method, content analysis only answers the questions that the researches asked at the beginning. Therefore, it is paramount that questions should be clearly defined from the outset and shaping how the researcher explores the text (Deacon et al, 2007). In this regard the main questions that I have sought answers to through content analysis were:

1. How has the thematic focus changed? Do we see, for example, a shift from a news agenda fixated with military themes to one focused on civil/cultural dimensions?

2. Do we see any increased evidence of improved news access for Kurdish sources in the news?
3. Do we see also any increased evidence of improved news access for the civil society organisations such as NGOs and academic sources in the news?
4. Does the tone of coverage regarding the Kurdish Issue depend on governmental approach as while the government has launched TRT6, they were also accused of pressuring the media not to cover the Uludere Airstrike? In this regard, has this coverage increased or decreased after both events and in which direction?

4.2.2 Sampled Newspapers and Events

The starting point of content analysis is *collecting data* which is quite time consuming and repetitive (Krippendorff, 1980: p. 53). Although content analysis can be used to analyse large numbers of texts and documents, it is often not possible to cover every piece of content relevant to the study aims. Therefore, it is important to have a strategy about *sampling*.

To reflect different ideologies, I sampled coverage from five daily mainstreams newspapers in Turkey. Their selection was based on their circulations, capability of structuring the daily agenda, political tendencies and the media groups they are linked to. The specific newspapers were:

- a. **Cumhuriyet:** is known for its secular and leftist approach. Started in 1924 and described as the ‘meeting point of Kemalists’ (a philosophic movement founded by Ataturk)’. On the other hand, the paper always kept its distance from covering religious issues and based their coverage on the secularism/religion conflict, which sometimes caused it to be criticised for being ‘anti-religion’.
- b. **Hurriyet:** founded in 1948. Hurriyet has a high circulation and is known for its centre-right stance, its motto being “Turkey belongs to Turks”. Being part of the big media Dogan Group and having effective and influential coverage and contributions from columnists with differing viewpoints, it has been described as ‘flagship’ of the Turkish press.
- c. **Ortadogu:** founded in 1972 the newspaper describes itself as a ‘nationalist’ paper, having strong relations with the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and has the motto: “How happy is the one who says I am Turk” (a famous quote from Ataturk’s book Nutuk and is widely used in nationalistic contexts). Although not having a high

circulation the newspaper deserves to be analysed since it represents a far-right stance in Turkish politics.

- d. **Taraf:** initiated in 2007 this is the youngest among the analysed newspapers. Taraf has a liberal stance, handled sensitive issues and is described as the ‘catalyst of Turkish democracy’.
- e. **Zaman:** founded in 1986 Zaman currently has the highest circulation of those Turkish newspapers included in our sample. Zaman is known for having ‘religious and conservative’ attitudes and is close to the influential religious “Gülen Movement” (Aybar, 2009). Both the Turkish and English versions are also printed in the USA and Europe.

Table 4.5: Details of the Sampled Newspapers

Details of the Newspapers Covered			
Number	Newspaper	Circulation	Ranking
1	Cumhuriyet	53.461	24 th
2	Hurriyet	387.387	3 rd
3	Ortadogu	6.902	35 th
4	Taraf	73.177	18 th
5	Zaman	974.204	1 st

The content analysis was based on two sample periods. These covered the four weeks that followed two major events in Turkey. The first was the launch of the broadcast station TRT6 on 1st January 2009, which was the first to transmit in the Kurdish language station. The second was the Uludere airstrike on the 28th December 2011, in which 34 Kurdish civilians were killed by Turkish jets who claimed they thought they were targeting PKK militants. These two events presented are regarded as milestones of the Kurdish question, and respectively brought into sharp relief questions regarding the cultural rights and political status of the Kurdish community in Turkey.

The content analysis of coverage of these two events quantified the comparative amount of coverage given to these events by different newspapers, the prominence accorded to each event (i.e. front pages, designated page, other page) and type/genre of coverage (e.g. editorial, column and feature article).¹ The content analysis also quantified which political actors featured most

¹ The details of the coding schedule can be found at the appendices.

prominently and how they were presented on both occasions. Finally, I analysed which themes tended to be most prominent in coverage (i.e. democratisation and human rights, multiculturalism, crime and security, military, national unity). All of these measures were used to assess the directional and agenda balance of coverage.

While analysing the content of the newspapers regarding the events the size of the news story (cm²) have not been considered. Hansen and his collaborators indicate that if the researcher thinks that the extent of the news item does not very much affect the results of the research question, the numbers and intensity of the news items in different newspapers will be enough to start the analysis regardless of the space the item takes (Hansen et al, 1998). After collecting the related data from the newspapers, structuring the coding schedule and transferring the variables and data to the SPSS software; simple numerical analysis, frequencies, cross-tabulation and multiple response tables have been conducted to identify patterns across the sample. Through these tables, the descriptions of the data have easily been done and it is observed whether there is a relation among the variables.

Through this analyse I have tried to demonstrate how the Kurdish Issue was reported which then linked to media and democracy debates both in literature review chapters (1-2-3) and interview analysis chapters (5 and 6). As shall be shown, there were certain spaces which were more deliberative than others. We can see for instance the nationalist newspaper has a very narrow agenda and limited voices. This linkage helped me to answer my research questions: Does the coverage developing a deliberative/pluralistic public sphere or do we see dominance of certain issues, certain voices, certain topics? How this type of coverage can help me to locate the Turkish media among the competing models of media and democracy?

CHAPTER V ELITE VIEWS ON MEDIA and DEMOCRACY in TURKEY

5.1 Introduction

Building on the theoretical background on the media-democracy relationship discussed in *chapters 1 and 2*, this section will examine elite opinions on media and democracy in Turkey. The chapter starts by discussing elite views on the relationship between the media and democracy in Turkey in general, and then looks at a selection of more specific issues, focusing on the different factors that affect the ability of the media to contribute to deliberative democracy: commercialisation, national security concerns, and government pressures, including government pressures on public broadcasting, cultural diversity, and minority media. The chapter concludes by looking at opinions on how the mainstream media represent academics and NGOs – two types of sources that play an important role in extending public deliberation beyond political elites.

Here it is also necessary to note that the term ‘media’ in both this chapter and the following chapter refers to the print and broadcast media because these are the working areas of the media elites who were interviewed for this study. Other sub-sectors of the media such as magazines, online and mobile media have been tackled only if the interviewee addressed them within the context of the mainstream media; examining them in their own right would require a separate study. The local media have been excluded from the scope of this study in general as all the media professionals interviewed were from the mainstream media groups. In addition, covering local media in detail would take me away from analysing the ‘general’ media problems in Turkey. Thus, the research area is limited to national mainstream media since their sphere of influence is widest.

5.2 Turkish Media and (Deliberative) Democracy

As shown in the table below (table 5.1), the opinion on whether or not Turkish media contribute to (deliberative) democracy is more or less evenly split among the interviewees, with a somewhat greater proportion of those who believe in the positive function of the Turkish media. A total of 27 (53%) of interviewees believe that the media in Turkey have contributed to democratisation, either ‘much’ (14/27%) or ‘a little’ (13/25%). On the other hand, 13 (25%) of all interviewees believe that the media have not contributed to (deliberative) democracy of Turkey. If we add this number to those who think the media have hindered democracy the rate increases to 22 (43%). I shall point out that although the question referred specifically to deliberative democracy, the

interviewees typically talked about democracy in general. The results should be read and interpreted with this in mind.

Table 5.1: How much have the media contributed to a deliberative democracy in Turkey?
(Whole Sample)

Media and (Deliberative) Democracy in Turkey (whole sample)		
Answers	Whole Sample	
	N	%
Not at all	13	25.5
Hinders	9	17.6
Depends	2	3.9
A little	13	25.5
Much	14	27.5
Total	51	100

However, if we take into account the ethnic, political and professional differences among interviewees, we notice some interesting patterns. As shown in table 5.2, 10 (60%) of Kurdish interviewees believe that the media have made no contribution to democracy, while only 12 (38%) of the Turkish interviewees think the same. Given the close link between Turkish democratisation and the Kurdish Issue, such a difference is not surprising.

Table 5.2: How much have the media contributed to a deliberative democracy in Turkey?
(Ethnic Difference)

Media and Deliberative Democracy in Turkey (ethnic difference)				
Answers	Ethnic Background			
	Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	7	42	6	19
Hinders	3	17	6	19
Depends	-	-	2	6
A little	5	30	6	19
Much	2	11	12	37
Total	17	100	32	100

N= Number

Another interesting difference appears when we contrast responses of news sources with those of news producers, i.e. media professionals (see table 5.3). Among elite groups that constitute news sources, political representatives were most negative, with a total of 5 (70%) believing that the media have not helped democratic progress in Turkey. In contrast, media professionals have a much

more positive take, with only 10 (35.7%) expressing negative views of media’s involvement in democratisation:

Table 5.3: How much have the media contributed to a deliberative democracy in Turkey?
(News Sources-by profession/News Producers)

Media and Deliberative Democracy in Turkey (news sources-by profession/news producers)										
Answers	News Sources								News Producers	
	All		NGOs		Political Representatives		Academia			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not at all	7	30.4	-	-	4	57.1	3	30	6	21.4
Hinders	5	21.7	2	33.3	1	14.3	2	20	4	14.3
Depends	1	4.3	-	-	-	-	1	10	1	3.6
A little	7	30.4	3	50	2	28.6	2	20	6	21.4
Much	3	13.2	1	16.7	-	-	2	20	11	39.3
Total	23	100	6	100	7	100	10	100	28	100

This stark difference between the views of media professionals and their sources could be explained by the fact that as media professionals, they wanted to believe in both the power and legitimacy of their job. Furthermore, the media professionals who were close to governmental politics may also not want to criticise the current media as doing so would be tantamount to criticising the government, on which they are dependent.

Despite these differences, we shall also note some of the shared patterns in responses. Those interviewees who have a positive approach usually pointed to recent changes in Turkey and said the media have a significant role in this through questioning the taboos in the country (for instance, interviewee profiles table number 3). Likewise, one of the Kurdish interviewees related the role of the media to the changes in Turkey and stated that after the end of the state monopoly over the media, the newspapers and television channels became more courageous. They looked for solutions to social conflicts and this new media approach also forced other institutions to change (interviewee profiles table number 15). Another conservative/religious interviewee also pointed to the contributions of the media to democracy in recent years although they had been the biggest obstacle to the democratization of the country in the past (interviewee profiles table number 28). On the other hand, an executive editor related this recent change to the media employing more idealistic people and increasing the education levels of the news staff (interviewee profiles table number 32) while an experienced reporter related the positive change in media attitudes to the democratic

transformation in the country and the economic interests of the media outlets (interviewee profiles table number 10):

The media were misused by state in the past. However, now people or ethnic minorities at least are not always being humiliated. All ethnic groups are represented in a better manner. We can relate this to the democratic change in Turkey but also it is related to economic interests. Media should consider and cover all groups of people to keep their TVs watched and newspapers published. Thus media changed and are now doing more for democratic progress. Media can now talk about sensitive issues and therefore contribute to civil life.

Some other interviewees pointed out that despite the problems of the media in Turkey and their biased attitudes the development of democracy could not be realised without the support of the media and therefore it would be mistaken to state that the media had no effect on the democratisation of the country. While expressing this, they particularly emphasised the role of some columnists who wrote against the status quo and human rights abuses despite economic or editorial pressures (interviewee profiles table number 1, 2, 8). The head of the only private Kurdish TV in this regard stated the following (interviewee profiles table number 40):

No doubt, the media contributes to democracy. The media-democracy relation in Turkey is developing in favour of democracy as the media financially vary. Decreasing the effect of monopoly in the media sector starting with Özal's term (1989-1993) has led to many developments in Turkey for the last 8 years. New actors in the media have caused old manipulations to decrease. We have now the option of looking at events from various angles, which contributes to the development of the media.

In contrast, those taking a more negative view of the Turkish media's contribution to democracy tended to emphasise continuity rather than change, or alternatively suggested that apparent change is just a veil underneath which one can discern new forms of undemocratic relationships. For instance, one interviewee was referring to the historical background of media development in Turkey, and suggested parallels with the current situation (interviewee profiles table number 51):

It is difficult to say that the media have been the fourth estate in Turkey. Before the 1950s the media had been directly related to the state institutions as the Turkish Republic had recently been established and the people were being informed through the media. After the 1950s the media structure changed in parallel with other political and social changes but the media in Turkey have always been under the pressure of the political powers. They could not challenge/question the governments and the army. On the other hand the media have not yet internalized democracy. They could not reflect the society well enough.

Likewise, a media lecturer commented that media powers in Turkey, since their very early days, have been close to the governments, the status quo and the hegemonic state ideology, and little has changed (interviewee profiles table number 39):

I do not consider the mainstream media in Turkey as part of the democratic forces. They either have Kemalist (a movement founded by Ataturk- the founder of the Turkish Republic, author's note) tendencies or as it happens now they have a pro-government bias. Therefore, whatever democratic change we have in Turkey, it has been through the imposition of Western requirements. The mainstream media have not contributed to this change; they have been the ones to welcome the military juntas and they are the ones who are not reporting the realities of the Kurdish tragedy. Therefore if we look into the political economy of the media in Turkey; we will see how the state is involved in their economies, news strategies etc.

Even when critical interviewees acknowledged that significant changes occurred in the media sector in Turkey in recent years, they tended to argue that old structures and powers have simply been replaced by new ones, without giving rise to a truly democratic relationship between media and politics. As one interviewee – a media professor – suggested, old power structures, within which the media have been subjected to the army, have simply been replaced by another, where the media are subjected to political or governmental elites (interviewee profiles table number 12):

All media organisations are somehow related to powers whatever they be; the army, the government, the opposition party or the businesspersons. The media only see what the officials do; not what the ordinary people do. Turkish media in comparison with the past diversified and changed. This is a positive improvement. However, the content is more or less the same. The mainstream media used to make headlines for whatever the head of the army said. It is very good to see that

the military tutelage is being wiped out but on the other hand, we witness that a new kind of tutelage takes form. It is governmental or police tutelage.

Other critical interviewees have suggested that a different kind of change has taken place in the Turkish media sector: instead of being controlled by the army or the state, the media are now controlled by private capital and economic elites. As a media lecturer pointed out, media capital in Turkey was in the hands of a few significant companies and in his words this was in fact the biggest problem of democratisation of Turkish media. According to him, people who control the media are few: Ciner (Turgay Ciner), Dogus (Ferit Sahenk), Dogan (Aydin Dogan) and Calik (Ahmet Calik) groups. These media moguls, he commented, also have big holdings in different sectors and join governmental bids to receive high-income businesses (interviewee profiles table number 17). Other interviewees shared this view, with one arguing that the information flow is structured by the hands of the editors who have commercial relations with the powers and hence the diversity in the news is also obstructed (interviewee profiles table number 14). Another academic interviewee likewise argued that the biggest handicap here is that there is no legal regulation in Turkey's constitution that determines the roles of these moguls or limits their activities (interviewee profiles table number 49). Yet another interviewee who expressed similar opinions argued that the media are not allowed to contribute to public deliberation as they are under great commercial and advertisement pressure. Individuals or organisations (including political parties, commercial partnerships and sports clubs) that witness the power of the media in the political, social and economic arenas invest in media companies. Subsequently the media are no longer a public ombudsman but an organisation that serves its own interests (interviewee profiles table number 25).

Indeed, one can find some evidence for the influence of the commercial logic in the interviews themselves. As one of the interviewees – a media professional – suggested, the question itself (about media's contribution to democracy) was misleading, because it would be wrong to expect the media to contribute to deliberation in public sphere at all times. Although he suggested some editorial limitations to create a healthier deliberation such as omitting jargon, avoiding racist or violent content that directly attacks personal rights; he added that as a media professional he was not thinking about headlines with democratic sensibility in mind, but choose those that were sensational, striking and remarkable (interviewee profiles table number 11). This answer suggests that the primary considerations of this media professional are not contributing to democratic debate, but are guided by the goal of attracting audiences, and hence potentially generating greater revenue for owners through sales.

In the following sections I shall look more closely into elite opinions on some of the specific aspects of Turkish media and their relationship to democracy: the role of media commercialization, the relationship between freedom of expression and national security, and the role of the government. Together, these sections effectively cover interviewee's attitudes to three key sources of power likely to influence the media's ability to contribute to democratisation: economy, the army, and the state. This overview is by no means exhaustive – interviews also covered issues of censorship, the relationship between the government and public broadcasting, the legal frameworks that regulate Turkish media and others – but it should suffice to offer us an understanding of the key patterns of elite views on the role of Turkish media in democratisation.

5.2.1 Media Ownership, Commercialisation and Sensationalism

The media sector in Turkey, just as in most other countries of the world (Pringle and Marshall, 2011), is formed by commercial groups and is an influential economic actor in the country. The concentration of ownership in the Turkish media sector gained speed after the 1990s through *vertical* (controlling/owning all media phases from production to consumption), *horizontal* (owning different media fields all in connection with each other) (Sigert and Rimscha, 2013) or *cross concentration* (owning other industries along with the media organisations) (Hardy, 2010: p. 3; Noam, 2009: p. 40). Media organisations after this period preferred to merge their powers with national or international media groups (horizontal) and purchased all phases of business from production to distribution (vertical) or they became active in all kinds of media along with other sectors (cross) (Aksop, 2006: p. 36).

As indicated in the previous section, some interviewees argued that this structure of ownership, and more generally the commercial nature of Turkish media, represents an important obstacle to their contribution to democratisation. While the interviewees haven't been asked directly whether they think media commercialization and related phenomena are a problem for Turkish democracy, the following table suggests that they are at least aware of the phenomenon and that the majority thinks that commercialization and sensationalism are at least staying the same, if not increasing over time:

Table 5.4: Is commercialisation and sensationalism in the Turkish media increasing, decreasing or staying the same? (Whole Sample/News Sources/News Producers)

Is commercialisation and sensationalism in the Turkish media increasing, decreasing or staying the same?						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Increasing	21	41.2	12	52.2	9	32.2
Decreasing	15	29.4	6	26.1	9	32.1
Same	15	29.4	5	21.7	10	35.7
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

As with general views about the role of the media in democratisation, we can notice a difference between news sources and news producers, with the latter being less inclined to see commercialisation and sensationalism as a phenomenon that is on the rise. This may indicate that media producers, because of their dependence on owners, are less inclined to acknowledge the problems such a structure may entail.

Let us now look more closely at how the interviewees understand the impact of commercialisation and sensationalism. Two main lines of interpretation can be discerned. One line of interpretation focuses simply on commercial motives overshadowing political or democratic motives. This can be seen as a negative, positive or simply neutral development. As one of the interviewees suggests, if a newspaper belongs to a commercial institution then the interests of this institution are safeguarded by the newspaper's journalists (interviewee profiles table number 16). Along similar lines, another interviewee argues that such newspapers cover no negative news of the big business groups for fear of not getting advertising from them (interviewee profiles table number 39). However, not all interviewees shared such negative views of commercially owned media. For instance, one interviewee highlights the importance of having influential media owners, able to resist pressures from advertisers, saying "if you have a powerful boss, then the dependency on advertiser decreases and as an institution you can move on easily". In a somewhat different manner, an executive editor simply said that such a structure of ownership is logical: the media owner, who buys one of the media channels such as print or broadcast media, will most probably want to be active in other areas as well since the media sector by its nature will push the owner to do so. He also argued that the tabloidization of the news stories and other media products along with the sensationalism and manipulation has synchronised the broadcasting and print policies with the market-place powers, thereby turning the media into instruments of commercial profit. This development is described in a largely neutral manner, as something inevitable (interviewee profiles table number 14).

The second line of interpretation pointed to the link between media commercialisation and the growing importance of alliances between economic and political elites. This line of interpretation was largely critical of developments in Turkish media, suggesting that economic elites use the media to influence political powers in order to attain economic gains. This reasoning becomes apparent in the following excerpt (interviewee profiles table number 20):

The investment groups in Turkey learned that having media organisations would be one of the best ways to get business from the state institutions and to have strong relations with the governments. Then newspapers became the tools for commercial activities. Therefore, they are not the newspapers but the propaganda papers of the powers, the holdings and the governments. Yes it is necessary to be owned by a company in institutional terms but we need to distinguish whether we are doing journalism or trying to protect the interests of the boss.

Or, to take another example, this one from an interview with a journalism lecturer who pointed to the social responsibility of journalists “if you are a gun manufacturer, you should not have a media job at the same time. The gun manufacturers have to support wars and so they will cover the news which escalate the battle” (interviewee profiles table number 12).

5.2.2 Freedom of Expression, the Military and National Security

Media professionals in Turkey have usually faced the dilemma whether to protect national security or report the news (Aytac, 2008: p. 294). Nationalist policies and ‘nation-state’ agendas required journalists to defend ‘the salvation of the state as the supreme law’ (Merquior et al, 1991: p. 141) and forced them to consider ‘the enemies and the friends of the country’ before reporting news stories related to military, minority or international issues. A local mayor, in this context, said reporters should convey the news to the audiences as if they were reporting a national football match - enthusiastically and with passion (Tilic, 1998: p. 290). Another example of pressures guided by national security concerns is provided by the fact that TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Cooperation) anchors were instructed by the armed forces to refer to Kurdish MPs not as MPs but as ‘a member of the PKK terrorist organisation’ (Radikal, 2013c: p. 6).

Table 5.5: List of the words dictated to the media professionals

List of the words dictated to the media professionals		
What not to say	Photo of the listed words in the paper:	What to say
PKK leader	<p>NE DENMEMELİ: NE DENMELİ:</p> <p>PKK lideri Bölücübaşı Apo Terörist Öcalan PKK Kanlı terör örgütü Gerilla Terörist Örgüt karargahı Terörist yuvası İsyan, ayaklanma Terörist faaliyet Komutan Bir yetkili Yakılan köyler Halkın terk ettiği köyler Kürt milletvekili Terör örgütü elemanı Düşük yoğunluklu savaş Terörle mücadele Kürt devleti Kuzey Irak'taki oluşum Kürt Türk vatandaşı Kürt kökenli Bölücülerce Kürt olarak isimlendirilen vatandaşlarımız</p>	Head of separation
APO (the nick name of Abdullah Öcalan)		Terrorist Öcalan
PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party)		Blooded terror organisation
Organisation quarters		Terrorist nest
Revolt, uprising		Terrorist attempt
Commander		An officer
Burned villages		Villages abandoned by the people
Kurdish MP		Personnel of the organisation
Low intensity war		Struggle against terrorism
Kurdish State		The organisation in North Iraq
Kurd		Turkish Citizen
Kurdish original		Name of our citizens that is given by the separatists

Most of the interviewees, in this regard, agreed that national security concerns are being used to suppress press freedom in Turkey, with a total of 33 (65%) choosing 'totally agree' and another 5 (10%) choosing 'not always':

Table 5.6: Do you agree that national security in Turkey used as grounds to curb press freedom?
(Whole sample/News Sources/News Producers)

Do you agree that national security in Turkey is used as grounds to curb press freedom? (whole sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Totally agree	33	64.7	15	65.2	18	64.3
Not always	5	9.8	2	8.7	3	10.7
Do not agree	12	23.5	6	26.1	6	21.4
No answer	1	2	-	-	1	3.6
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

With regard to this question, no significant differences appeared between news sources and news producers, but Kurdish and non-Kurdish interviewees had significantly divergent views, with 16 (95%) of all Kurdish interviewees ‘totally agreeing’ as opposed to only 16 (50%) of non-Kurdish interviewees:

Table 5.7: Do you agree that national security in Turkey used as grounds to curb press freedom?
(Ethnic Difference)

Do you agree that national security in Turkey is used as grounds to curb press freedom? (ethnic difference)				
Answers	Ethnic Background			
	Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%
Totally agree	16	95	16	50
Not always	-	-	4	12
Do not agree	1	5	11	35
No answer	-	-	1	3
Total	17	100	32	100

Given that national security concerns have been used to suppress the coverage of Kurdish matters, or present them in a terrorist frame, such a difference is not surprising. The result suggests that interviewees of Kurdish origin are more attentive to and aware of tensions between national security agendas and press freedom than Turkish interviewees, as these tensions are more likely to affect the reporting about their own group. As one Kurdish interviewee, a media academic, explained, when a journalist or an academic talks on TV or writes about minorities, the Kurdish Issue or other sensitive issues, they are usually opposed through the claim that they are harming the nation’s

security. Therefore, he argues, the taboos about the army and other sensitivities have not been questioned by society or the media professionals despite the recent changes that are slowly taking place (interviewee profiles table number 39). Another interviewee agreed, arguing that foreign news and reports on controversial sensitive issues generally are most severely affected. This interviewee also pointed out that this situation is not necessarily a result of explicit pressure but rather that over time, journalists themselves have interiorised it (interviewee profiles table number 47). A similar argument is put forward by another interviewee, who however also argued that restrictions imposed on press freedom due to national security are not unique to Turkish reporters (interviewee profiles table number 25):

National security concerns are used in the process to limit the freedom of the press and media. This is not acceptable in any level; however, all democracies suffered due to the same policies; look at the US occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan; they created the whole concept of 'embedded journalism', embedded in what? Embedding refers to the social construction of the news as dictated by the hegemonic power. Turkey cannot avoid this.

Apart from ethnicity another factor that seems to influence interviewee's attitude to issues of national security is political orientation. As evident from the following table, interviewees with a nationalist political background and those who are close to government politics (conservatives) were least likely to agree that national security is used to curb press freedom. In contrast, pro-Kurdish interviewees were most likely to agree.

Table 5.8: Do you agree that national security in Turkey used as grounds to curb press freedom?
(Political Orientation)

Do you agree that national security in Turkey is used as grounds to curb press freedom? (political orientation)												
Answers	Political Orientation											
	Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Conservative		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Totally agree	9	82	7	100	1	12	5	55	10	84	1	25
Not always	2	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8	2	50
Do not agree	-	-	-	-	7	88	3	34	1	8	1	25
No answer	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11	-	-	-	-
Total	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

Interviewees who were not particularly concerned about the tensions between press freedom and national security thought that it was normal for the media to exercise self-restraint when national interest is at stake and argued that there were reasons to justify censorship such as during wars. For instance, one of the academics known for his nationalist background simply said the journalists should 'of course' be careful with national security issues (interviewee profiles table number 49). The political representative of the nationalist party adopted a similar approach; she said that Turkey was strategically important due to its geographic location and therefore the media regard should behave responsibly (interviewee profiles table number 42). Another interviewee with nationalist leanings, who was once a member of the EU parliament and the head of Turkey-EU relations groups discussed what journalists should do if they learned that terrorists planted a bomb somewhere. He said that in such circumstances journalists should go to security services before releasing the news story. He added that journalists should have the full freedom of investigation after the attack but should cooperate with the security organisations before it (interviewee profiles table number 21).

The two government party representative interviewees shared similar views as interviewees with nationalist political backgrounds, and explained that censorship was indispensable when national interests were on the agenda (interviewee profiles table numbers 2 and 19). The vice-president of the government party defended the necessity of censorship when national security was at stake, citing as an example the behaviour of the USA after the 9/11 events. He explained that both journalists and the army are from the same country and therefore if journalists reveal something that runs opposite to what the army has declared that meant two entities from the same side were contradicting each other which would make it easier for the nation's enemies to humiliate them. He added (interviewee profiles table number 19):

For example in America when twin towers were attacked, did we see any news about the ruptured body pieces? No. Terrorism uses propaganda. Through the media, terrorism sometimes gains propaganda. Secondly, they terrorise people's minds: people become scared and panicked in the presence of terrorism. In Turkey when the media represents terrorist acts in an exaggerated manner, it promotes the PKK. [...] Therefore, in order for national security and anti-terror police to protect innocent people, I do not believe in limitless freedom of expression of the media.

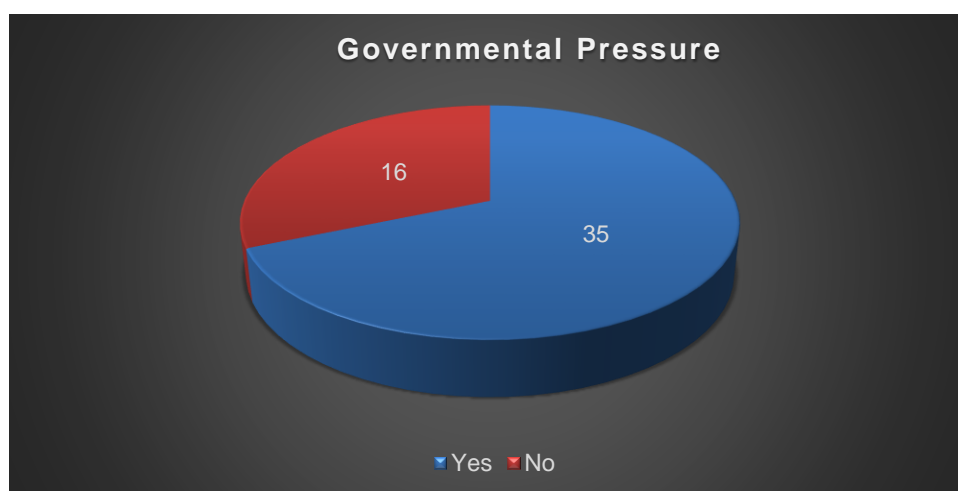
On the other hand, both of the Kurdish MPs from the Kurdish party (interviewee profiles table numbers 5 and 23) harshly criticised the censorship resulting from national security concerns.

One of them (interviewee profiles table number 5) said that a journalist should not have concerns about national security but they should write what they see, what they hear and what they conclude. He also added that the only thing a journalist should consider were the ethical values of journalists on which all the world has reached an agreement, such as publishing images of a decomposed body. The other MP from the Kurdish party accordingly said people will somehow access the information even if the state prevents it (interviewee profiles table numbers 23).

5.2.3 Governmental Pressures

One of the harsh criticisms directed at the current AKP (Justice and Development Party) Turkish government is that it has created a media that will support their policies and marginalised dissenting media groups (Haynes, 2009: p. 108). After AKP came to power, it has been claimed that following the severe fight between the government and the old media moguls such as Dogan (still effective in the media sector) and Bilgin (who sold media channels to Calik media group who is claimed to be a 'man of the government'), the media lost the battle and the government now controls the flow of information (Ozkanca, 2012: p. 183; Haynes, 2009: p. 107). Just after they took office, it is claimed that some rich conservatives entered the media sector to increase the power of the government and to persuade other media group ownerships to change hands. Some others claimed that the AKP were actually the real owner but the businessmen were pretending to be the owners (Saka, 2008: p. 199). In an interview, one of the media owners in Turkey clearly indicated that they bought the daily newspaper from the rival of the AKP government to support the government (Sancak, 2013: p. 1). These kinds of explanations and changing media relations also raised the claims that the AKP government is enhancing the pressure on the media and curtailing press freedoms. Therefore I asked the interviewees what they made of these allegations:

Figure 5.1: Is there governmental pressure on the media in Turkey?
(Whole Sample)



As seen in figure 5.1, almost 35 (70%) of the participants believe that the government exerts pressures on the media while 16 of all (30%) do not believe so.

Table 5.9: Is there a governmental pressure on the media in Turkey?
(Ethnic Difference/News Sources/News Producers)

Is there a governmental pressure on the media in Turkey? (ethnic difference/news sources/news producers)								
Answers	Ethnic Background				News Sources		News Producers	
	Kurdish		Turkish		N	%	N	%
	N	%	N	%				
Yes	13	76	21	65	16	69.56	19	67.9
No	4	24	11	35	7	30.4	9	32.1
Total	17	100	32	100	23	100	28	100

Differences between news producers and news sources are minimal (19 or 68% of the former and 16 or 70 percent of the latter believe that government pressure exists), while differences between interviewees of different ethnic group, while existing, are not as marked as with respect to questions examined earlier (13/76% of interviewees of Kurdish background and 21/65% of interviewees of Turkish background agreed with the statement). In contrast, differences between interviewees with different political orientations are rather visible, with the majority (7 out of 9, or 77%) of those who are close to the conservative government rejecting the pressure claims, and the majority of those from leftist, nationalist and liberal political backgrounds accepting the same claims:

Table 5.10: Is there a governmental pressure on the media in Turkey?
(Political Orientation)

Is there a governmental pressure on the media in Turkey? (political orientation)												
Answers	Political Orientation											
	Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Conservative		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	8	73	7	100	7	87	2	23	9	72	2	50
No	3	27	-	-	1	13	7	77	3	28	2	50
Total	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

A couple of illustrative quotes from interviews should help demonstrate these differences. An MP from the AKP government, for instance, denied government exerts pressure on the media, and wanted me to compare them with the previous governments on their dealings with the media. He also added that those who claimed that there was pressure on the media were not journalists and

that they said so because they cannot any longer write/declare their separatist and terrorist approaches in newspapers or on TV (interviewee profiles table number 19). Another government MP added that the media lost their previous powers and therefore produced these kinds of 'totalitarian' allegations (interviewee profiles table number 2).

A negative answer was given also by the head of one of the public broadcasting channels, who indicated that he had been there for the last three years and never faced any kind of pressure. Moreover, he said if they had such pressure put on them they would oppose it and he believed that the government would understand (interviewee profiles table number 24). This can be interpreted as an expected answer since the government controls the public broadcasting channel, suggesting political parallelism between political hierarchies and media hierarchies of the kind typically found in media systems classed by Hallin and Mancini (2004) in the 'polarised pluralist' or 'Mediterranean' model. Another interviewee, who is the executive editor of a news media group, which is allegedly close to the government, said that the media was getting more autonomous every passing day and this was enabling the media to deliver more unbiased news. Thereafter, I asked him about the rumours that the TV channel and the newspaper he was heading were acting like an advocate of the government. He said that such claims were propagated by people who did not like the Turkish government's ideology and that they would of course support the government as they were taking big steps in making Turkey a more democratic country (interviewee profiles table number 32).

In contrast, the head of a news channel, that is owned by one of the richest media owners (Dogan) and known to be position itself as to be secular-centrist (indicated by the interviewee), stated that the Turkish media are entirely subservient to the government and consider how the government will react before covering a story. These circumstances cause media professionals to develop a 'self-censorship attitude' to defend themselves (interviewee profiles table number 24). A similar argument was offered by an academic interviewee known for his liberal political orientations (interviewee profiles table number 25):

The AKP government is consolidating its power over media through 'disciplining' them and defines the limits within which they can express themselves. Even the PM takes up a fight against a columnist in a fierce attack. Remember the 28th February military coup attempt process in 1997, when the generals 'accredited' the journalists and accepted only those journalists to their news conferences. The same applies in the case of the AKP government. Recently, the PM invited selected newspapers for a private meeting in which they were told how to cover the Kurdish Issue, and in doing so certain newspapers were excluded.

Having discussed different opinions about the existence of government pressures it is now appropriate to turn to the issue of censorship. As part of the interview, all the interviewees who are journalists were asked about their own experiences of censorship. It is important to note that during the interviews, most of the reporters did not disclose they were censored, but did so only after I stopped the recorder; the table below takes this information into consideration. On the whole, the majority of news producers have experienced censorship in their news stories. The percentage is higher among Kurdish media professionals, which yet again highlights the markedly different experiences with the media-democracy relationship between Kurdish and Turkish interviewees:

Table 5.11: Have you ever experienced censorship for any news you covered?
(News producers only, divided by ethnicity)

Have you ever experienced censorship for any news you covered? (news producers and their ethnic differences)						
Answers	News Producers					
	All		Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	17	60.7	10	85	6	40
No	11	39.3	2	15	9	60
Total	28	100	12	100	15	100

It is also important to note that not all the journalists linked censorship to government pressures, nor claimed that censorship was always clearly external. As one media academic suggested, censorship does not always come from external sources; instead, news producers may censor themselves due to previous pressures, national traditions or economic challenges they may face. Over time, self-censorship may turn into a habit that is difficult to eradicate (interviewee profiles table number 17). One of the interviewees said that journalists in Turkey often face trials and waste time in the court corridors as the laws that regulate the freedom of expression and the media are not clear and could be interpreted by the prosecutor in different ways. Furthermore, he adds that the anti-terror law is very limiting for journalists (interviewee profiles table number 24):

When we report the Kurdish conflict we are forced to choose: you will either be on the side of the state or the PKK. This causes us not to cover the news objectively. The journalists were misused to clean up the mistakes of the army; they are forced to ignore the mistakes made by the officials of the state. The state officials usually say the same thing: "You are not a UN observer". What does this statement mean? It means that we cannot behave impartially.

Despite such concerns about censorship and governmental pressures it is worth pointing out that some media professionals thought it necessary to emphasise that the situation with press freedom in Turkey was definitely improving and that it would be inappropriate to equate contemporary Turkish media with their counterparts during the military coup

5.2.4 Public Broadcasting and the State

One sector of Turkish media that is particularly often discussed in relation to government pressures is Turkish public broadcasting. The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) has been one of Turkey’s most important state organisations since 1964. In parallel with the recent democratic changes the TRT also underwent several changes. Law number 2954, first enforced in 1983, which controls policies, procedures and aims of the TRT, was altered in 2008. The most important change involved allowing the state-broadcasting channel to broadcast in local and international languages (such as the Kurdish and Arabic languages) as a sign of acknowledging minority and human rights (Elmas and Kurban, 2012, p. 217; Genckaya, 2008: p. 73). Furthermore, various other legal mechanisms were introduced – including the Article 133 of the Turkish Constitution, EU regulations and the institution of the Ombudsman, introduced in 2012 - that are meant to guarantee TRT’s independence from judicial and political power structures (Adakli, 2009: p. 302).

Despite these changes, the question of TRT’s political autonomy remains a major point of debate in Turkey. As evident from the following table, the vast majority of interviewees does not believe that TRT is independent from the government, and instead believe either that it is ‘dependent’ on the state or describe it as a ‘state broadcaster’. Differences between opinions of news sources and news producers are small; however, the latter were somewhat more likely to claim that the TRT is independent from the state (only 1 or 4.3% of the news sources as opposed to 5 or 17.9% of news producers):

Table 5.12: To what extent do you believe the public broadcasting has been independent from the government in Turkey? (Whole Sample/News Sources/News Producers)

To what extent do you believe the public broadcasting has been independent from the government in Turkey? (whole sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dependent	26	51	12	52.2	14	50
Independent	6	11.8	1	4.3	5	17.9
State Broadcasting	19	37.2	10	43.5	9	32.1
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

Regardless of the legal reforms affecting public broadcasting, most interviewees, but especially so the older ones, talked about the 'BBC years of TRT' as a golden era of the institution, and described the recent period as a period of decline. One interviewee argued that recent changes actually drew the TRT away from the BBC model and made it more 'local', which at the same time also made the institution less democratic (interviewee profiles table number 24). Likewise, a university professor suggested that today the TRT was in a worse position in terms of governmental control and it was difficult to decide whether it was state or public broadcasting (interviewee profiles table number 17). Another interviewee believed that regulations such as the already mentioned Turkish Constitution Article 133 are ineffective and cannot guarantee and protect the impartiality of TRT. This interviewee pointed out that government ministers responsible for TRT had private offices within the headquarters of TRT and intervened in the broadcasting policies, programme contents and even staff recruitment. As well as government members, other political and military powers have also interfered with TRT's 'public' broadcasting (interviewee profiles table number 17). A similar opinion about the ineffectiveness of regulation is shared by another interviewee, who states that the relationship between the TRT and the government does not comply with EU directives, since the TRT continues to employ those who are close to the government. He linked this dependence on the government to the fact that the TRT budget is determined by the government; an institution whose income is managed by the government might have difficulty reporting on government's activities in an unbiased manner (interviewee profiles table number 37).

Many interviewees critical of the TRT also emphasised the historical continuities in state-TRT relations. One interviewee argued that the TRT has not yet given up the life-long habit of being close to the governments and state ideology (interviewee profiles table number 50), while another pointed to the continuing influence of the nation-state tradition, in accordance with which both the TRT and the *Anatolia News Agency* (AA) were instruments of the state, designed to help in the process of modern nation-state building (interviewee profiles table number 27). In a related manner, some interviewees pointed out that there are no clear differences in popular understanding between the meaning of the word 'public' and the word 'state' (e.g. interviewee profiles table number 4). Because of the absence of such a differentiation between the state and the public, it is difficult to talk of proper public broadcasting, and this is also allegedly one of the reasons for why Turkish broadcasting has not been able to help all ethnic and religious identities to have their voices heard as part of a common public culture (interviewee profiles table number 39).

Those few interviewees who believed the TRT was in fact independent typically referred to the existence of coverage of ethnic minorities and broadcasting in minority languages, and used this

as the basis for arguing that contemporary public broadcasting in Turkey is freer and better than it was in the past. These recent changes, argued one interviewee, show that the TRT is now more public than it used to be (interviewee profiles table number 10). An MP from the government party used a somewhat different argument to defend the relative independence of TRT; although he acknowledged that the TRT seemed to be on the side of the government, he insisted that the TRT also often voiced criticisms of governmental control over TRT, thereby suggesting that the TRT is not as closely controlled by the government as some might suggest (interviewee profiles table number 2).

5.2.5 Cultural Diversity and the Turkish Media

After having examined interviewees' views on media and democracy in Turkey in general I will now turn to their opinions on two further issues of relevance to Turkey's democratisation: media representations of cultural diversity and minority media. As evident from the table below, only a minority (13/25%) of all interviewees believed that the mainstream media covered issues of cultural diversity 'well'. Differences between news sources and news producers were not particularly marked, with 5 (22%) of the former and 8 (28%) of the latter expressing a positive opinion on media and cultural diversity (table 5.13).

Table 5.13: How well do the mainstream media deal with the issues of cultural diversity?
(Whole Sample/News Sources/News Producers)

How well do the mainstream media deal with the issues of cultural diversity? (whole sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Well	13	25.5	5	21.7	8	28.6
Not well	12	23.5	5	21.7	7	25
Nationalist Approach	16	31.4	8	34.8	8	28.6
Ignore	10	19.6	5	21.8	5	17.8
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

Interviewees of Kurdish background were more inclined to judge the media's way of dealing with cultural diversity in a negative manner, with only 2 (12%) believing that the media performed 'well' in this respect and over half (9/52%) stating that the media adopt a 'nationalist approach' with respect to cultural diversity. In contrast, interviewees of Turkish origin were more inclined to adopt a positive attitude, with over a third (11/34%) claiming that the media performed well on this issue, and less than a fifth (6/19%) stating that they adopted a nationalist approach:

Table 5.14: How well do the mainstream media deal with the issues of cultural diversity?
(Ethnic Difference)

How well do the mainstream media deal with issues of cultural diversity? (ethnic differences)				
Answers	Ethnic Background			
	Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%
Well	2	12	11	34
Not well	2	12	9	28
Nationalist Approach	9	52	6	19
Ignore	4	24	6	19
Total	17	100	32	100

Interesting differences appeared also between interviewees of disparate political orientations. Those of conservative and especially those of nationalist orientations were particularly inclined to adopt a positive approach to media's dealings with cultural diversity, while those of leftist and pro-Kurdish orientations were more inclined to argue that the media adopt a nationalist approach:

Table 5.15: How well do the mainstream media deal with the issues of cultural diversity?
(Political Orientation)

How well do the mainstream media deal with issues of cultural diversity? (political orientation)												
Answers	Political Orientation											
	Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Conservative		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Well	2	18	-	-	5	64	4	44	1	8	1	25
Not well	3	28	1	14	1	12	1	12	4	30	2	50
Nationalist Approach	5	45	5	72	1	12	2	22	2	20	1	25
Ignore	1	9	1	14	1	12	2	22	5	42	-	-
Total	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

A good example of a positive attitude to Turkish media's dealings with cultural diversity could be found in the interviewee with a university professor who stated that the Turkish media's situation with regard to multiculturalism was appropriate and entirely in line with universal standards. He added that there was no censorship, restriction, or obstacle to reporting about different cultures

and different ethnic identities and that there were no racist or hate-filled publications in this aspect (interviewee profile table number 33). Another example of a positive statement on this issue came from one of the media professionals, who said that Turkey became more democratic and therefore the media were under pressure to represent cultural diversity in the country (interviewee profiles table number 40).

A common approach among many interviewees (e.g. interviewee profiles table numbers 4, 10, 11, 14, 15, 42 and others) was to emphasise recent changes and improvements with regard to media coverage of cultural diversity. In this regard the head of one of the important NGOs in Turkey said that Turkish society and the media have recently started acknowledging the existence of other cultures and ethnic backgrounds they had previously ignored and thus the media were changing positively and started representing the multiculturalism in Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 1). A media professional sought to demonstrate positive change by mentioning the media reaction to and condemnation of the assassination of the Armenian journalist Hrant Dink (interviewee profiles table number 15). In a slightly different manner, another interviewee shared the following interesting experience from the late 1980s to illustrate how things have changed to the better in recent years (interviewee profiles table number 11):

In 1987 when I was an Ankara correspondent I was the first to use the term "Kurdish" in the media with the approval of Hürriyet's former owner Erol Simavi. He did not know if there were Kurds in Turkey until I asked him whether I should mention the word "Kurd" in my column. He said 'if there are Kurds in Turkey write it'. After the news was published I got nearly 150 phone calls by the afternoon and I was constantly told that my career would be terminated.

An interviewee who heads a nationalist newspaper went as far as to suggest that current improvements in Turkish media coverage of diversity were only a 'fashion' and that in fact, everybody in Turkey was equal and united, thereby implying that there was in fact no need for changes in this respect. This interviewee became a little angry and perceived the question about this matter as a provocation. Some other interviewees responded in a similar manner and were suspicious of motivations driving the research project (interviewee profiles table number 30, 46 and 47).

Those interviewees who adopted a critical stance typically challenged arguments that recent changes in the Turkish media system brought significant improvements in the media treatment of cultural diversity. An editor-in-chief objected to the expression 'positive change' and said it was impossible to talk of a 'better coverage' while there was a high circulation daily newspaper whose

motto was 'Turkey belongs to the Turks' (interviewee profiles table number 20). A sociology professor, on the other hand, pointed out that although Kurds are having more media coverage Armenians and Greeks are still simply ignored in the media (interviewee profiles table number 17). He explained that attitudes to ethnic minorities differed depending on their size and perceived threat to national security. If a minority was small and was no longer perceived as part of the 'danger circle' then it was more likely that it would receive coverage in the media, while larger and presumably more dangerous minorities continued to be ignored. According to him, Kurds and Alewites (a religious group) are still a national security problem in Turkey and therefore cannot be tackled under the 'cultural diversity' umbrella. He also argued that even when reporting on minority groups, the media humiliate them by referring to them in a negative manner, using derogatory and sensationalist headlines such as "The mother of Kilicdaroglu (main opposition leader) was an Armenian" and "PKK militants are not Muslims" (Interviewee profiles table number 17).

When seeking an explanation for such behaviour, critical interviewees often pointed to historical continuities and especially the legacies of the nation-state building project. The already mentioned sociology professor, for instance, spoke of the persistence of 'nation-state' ideology (interviewee profiles table number 17):

We believed in the project of the 'nation-state'. Having a nation state required being a Turk regardless of where you came from and whichever ethnic background you had. Therefore, we never considered other ethnic backgrounds. But the world has changed and the 'nation-state' project is not viable anymore. We thought that Kurds, Armenians or other ethnic groups were happy being Turks but we were wrong. Kurds said they were Kurdish and that's it.

A similar explanation was provided by the chair of an NGO who linked the shortcomings in representations of the 'other' in the mainstream media to the lack of philosophical and intellectual background. He said that cultural diversity was always a politically sensitive topic and therefore media professionals still continued to side-step the issues (interviewee profiles table number 36). Another example of such an argument about ideological continuities was put forward by a politician, who argued that mainstream media did not want to cover cultural diversity because they wanted to avoid getting into conflict with the long-established mainstream nationalist socio-political ideology (interviewee profiles table number 2). The chairwoman of an NGO also presented a similar explanation, emphasising the historical continuities and persistence of racism and strong support for cultural assimilation in Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 8):

The Turkish media has always been racist and assimilating. The change in the media is parallel to the change in Turkey. In past, a journalist writing even a sentence against the official sources would be in trouble. But now this has changed. In times of the single-party government, five groups were alienated: non-Muslims, Kurdish people, Alewi people, religious people and villagers. Until 1946, villagers were not permitted to enter Ankara (the capital city). The reason was that the look of villagers was damaging the modern and contemporary image. In 1946 the votes of the villagers became valuable as the multiple-party system was put into action. Therefore the villagers were freed from being the 'other' for pragmatic reasons. But the other four minorities continued to be the 'other'.

5.2.6 Minority Media in Turkey

Most interviewees were also rather critical of the treatment of minority media in Turkey. As the table below suggests, most believed that minority media have been suppressed in Turkey, either 'always' or 'sometimes'. As seen in the table, no major differences between news producers and news sources could be found:

Table 5.16: Have the minority media organisations been suppressed in Turkey?
(Whole Sample/News Sources/News Producers)

Have the minority media organisations been suppressed in Turkey? (whole sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always	27	52.9	12	52.2	15	53.6
No	9	17.7	3	13	6	21.4
Sometimes	12	23.5	6	26.1	6	21.4
No answer	3	5.9	2	8.7	1	3.6
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

As with the question about attitudes to cultural diversity, significant differences appeared between interviewees of different ethnic background and political orientation (table 5.17). Interviewees of Kurdish background were even more critical than those of Turkish background (only 1/5% of Kurdish interviewees believed that minority media were not suppressed, in contrast to 8/25% of Turkish interviewees). With regard to political orientation, interviewees holding conservative and especially those holding nationalist convictions were more likely to argue that minority media were not subject to pressures.

Table 5.17: Have the minority media organisations been suppressed in Turkey?
(Ethnic Difference/Political Orientation)

Have the minority media organisations been suppressed in Turkey? (ethnic difference/political orientation)																
Answers	Ethnic Background				Political Orientation											
	Kurdish		Turkish		Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Cons.		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always	13	77	13	41	8	73	6	85	1	12	1	12	9	75	2	50
No	1	5	8	25	1	9	-	-	5	64	3	33	-	-	-	-
Sometimes	3	18	8	25	2	18	1	15	-	-	4	44	3	25	2	50
No answer	-	-	3	9	-	-	-	-	2	24	1	11	-	-	-	-
Total	17	100	32	100	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

Among those interviewees who thought minority media were not being suppressed, one argued that minority media are not only free of political pressure but on the contrary receive governmental support (interviewee profiles table number 3). A journalist from an opposition newspaper argued that the minority media were not suppressed but rather that they ceased publication due small audiences and resulting economic problems (interviewee profiles table number 50). Another interviewee said that the state actually supports minority media because it thinks their numbers are very low and they cannot present a threat to Turkish politics. If they were more numerous, argued this interviewee, political pressure on them would increase (interviewee profiles table number 17 and 31). The political representative of the nationalist party claimed that the minorities were backed by lobbying powers in Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 42).

Interviewees who agreed that the minority media were suppressed often referred to obstacles created by assimilatory pressures and nation-state policies. One interviewee said that one of the main reasons for the minority media not surviving was the assimilation process in the country. He said that the only minority media which could cope with assimilation were Kurdish media (interviewee profiles table number 4). A columnist mentioned that Turkish minorities gained rights from the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 (detailed in chapter 2) but pointed out that the “nation-state” structure of Turkey only allowed minorities to exist if they stayed behind locked doors in their small and narrow gardens (interviewee profiles table number 4). A journalist who revealed many documents about government pressures on minorities in Turkey said that the subscribers of Agos (the Armenian newspaper in Turkey) were blacklisted by the army (interviewee profiles table number 26).

One of the NGO vice-chairs who conducted studies on minorities gave this meaningful contribution, in which he pointed to a combination of political and economic reasons for the problems experienced by minority media in Turkey, as well as linked those reasons to the nature of their reporting (interviewee profiles table number 8):

The minority media target a very small group of people and therefore they only receive few advertisements. Secondly they are very carefully controlled by the state. They face many prosecutions and it is really difficult to be an editor in a minority medium. Therefore almost every minority newspaper prefers to only cover the news about their community which avoids meddling. Can we blame them because they are doing this? No. Heroic courage is required to cover sensitive issues in Turkey if you are reporting for a minority newspaper as Turkey is a country where violent events took place such as the 6-7 September events (the pillage movement against the minorities which occurred in 1955 in Istanbul, Turkey, author's note) and the assassination of Hrant Dink.

This link between economic and political pressures and the narrow scope of reporting in minority media was mentioned also by the editor in chief of an Armenian minority newspaper. He stated that especially after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 minority media became targets of different kinds of pressures - political, economic and cultural - as a result of nation-state policies. To avoid or at least minimise these pressures, minority media preferred to cover news related solely to members of their group. As an example he mentioned his own preference to use a Turkish name for himself rather than his own original Armenian name (interviewee profiles table number 41).

5.3 The Turkish Media and Civil Society: Academics and NGOs

If the previous sections of this chapter examined interviewee opinions on matters of relevance to the media—democracy relationship in general, the remainder of this chapter will tackle their views on matters of more direct relevance to deliberative democracy – namely, the relationship between the media and civil society. In particular, this chapter will assess interviewees' views on the media treatment of two civil society groups: academics and NGOs. These two groups are among the key actors in a functioning deliberative democracy, and gaining an understanding of elite perceptions of their relationships with the media is therefore of relevance to the objectives of this study.

5.3.1 The Media and Academics

Especially after the launch of private TV in Turkey, the media has increased its influence on Turkish society. Parallel to improved technological opportunities media organisations started to invite experts from different scientific or social fields to comment on current affairs, all with the aim to increase their status vis-à-vis competitors to attract more audiences (Kocer and Erdogmus, 2011). The higher the title of the expert and the faster the media channel was in hosting the academic, the higher its status among competitors. As one of the interviewees explained (interviewee profiles table number 17):

The Turkish Republic used to live under the influence of idiosyncratic taboos until the 1990s but then commercial broadcasting began and so change took place. TV channels soon discovered that debates about taboo issues were attracting great numbers of audiences. Another point that should be mentioned is that the Turkish people showed a desire for all subjects to be discussed and spoken about openly. People had an avid interest in these programs.

The first time when Turkish academics appeared prominently on TV programmes was in 1999 when north-west cities in Turkey were devastated by a major earthquake. In the aftermath of the event many geoscientists started to use the media to tell people what to do (Bektas, 2012). Likewise, following the September 11 events in America war experts, psychologists and sociologists appeared on television commenting on the events as well as published their views in the print media (Sabah Daily, 2009: p. 5).

While this growing prominence of academics in the media may be an indicator of an increasingly deliberative public sphere in Turkey, views expressed by some of the interviewees raise doubts about the actual impact of academics on the quality of public deliberation. Some interviewees argued that the growth in academic voices in Turkish media was ultimately driven by commercial imperatives rather than a genuine desire to represent diverse opinions. For instance, one interviewee argued that scientists appearing in the media after a sudden, dramatic event were often presented in a celebrity format. If an issue was not sensational or not relevant to the daily agenda, it is very difficult for academics to gain media coverage (interviewee profiles table number 11). In a related manner, another interviewee argued that the media mostly prefer academics that are widely known by society and who have a charismatic presentation. In contrast, other academics who may have also contributed to science but who do not have the same public profile and the same links with hierarchies of power cannot find opportunities to get their voices heard in the media (interviewee

profiles table number 21). The same interviewee also claimed that the media tend to give voice to academics who will offer views that will ultimately benefit the media owner and will avoid raising controversial topics or questioning the status quo. Academics aligned with oppositional views can therefore gain access only to marginal journals and talk at international conferences (interviewee profiles table number 21).

Another interviewee concurred with these views, arguing that academics cannot influence the media agenda, and that instead, the media actually use academics to pursue their own agendas. After explaining why a big media group (DOGAN Media) did not invite him to express his views through their media channels, one interviewee insisted that the media see what they want to see and they shape the ideologies through having opinions from academics that fit their agendas (interviewee profiles table, number 31). Similar views were put forward by another interviewee (interviewee profiles table, number 25):

In contextualising in the case of Turkey, academics writing columns in newspapers do not make much difference, as most of those academics writing in the media repeat the official view most of the time, as otherwise the consequences can be heavy. Therefore, having academics writing in newspapers and magazines does not create any difference. It is also important to remember that intellectual life in Turkey is based on parallel streams that do not intersect. Therefore, even if you have certain academics trying to make a difference this will remain within that stream.

Apart from highlighting the detrimental impact of commercial imperatives, political agendas and media owners' interests, some interviewees also thought the quality of academic contributions themselves is not always beneficial for public deliberation. According to one interviewee, some academics use too much jargon and cannot present their views in a manner that is understandable by the audience. Furthermore, poor performance of academics in the media may prompt negative views about academia in general, and give rise to tensions between the society and universities (interviewee profiles table number 39).

In sum, interviewee opinions about media representations of academics in Turkey suggest that the mere appearance of academic voices is not enough to secure a truly deliberative public sphere. If these academic voices merely mirror and reinforce the existing political and economic interests, then they are unlikely to add to the broadening of views and opinions that characterises a deliberative public sphere. We shall return to these dilemmas again in the content analysis chapter,

where we should be able to establish whether and to what extent the media have given voice to academics, and if so, whether these academic voices are really limited solely to reinforcing existing views.

5.3.2 The Media and NGOs

As the Table 5.18 below suggests, 35 (69%) of all interviewees believe that NGOs are not sufficiently represented in the mainstream Turkish media. Differences between news sources and news producers are small; 15 (65%) of the former and 20 (71%) of the latter argue that NGOs are not sufficiently represented.

Table 5.18: What is the representation level of the NGOs in the Turkish media?
(Whole Sample/News Sources/News Producers)

What is the representation level of the NGOs in the Turkish media? (whole sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Enough	9	17.6	2	8.7	7	25
Depends	7	13.7	6	26.1	1	3.6
Not Enough	35	68.7	15	65.2	20	71.4
Ignored	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

The interviewees painted a rather bleak picture of the media treatment NGOs. In the words of a media professional, Turkish media insist on representing the NGOs as those who are ‘always protesting and contradicting state policies’ or engaging in ‘unpermitted demonstration’. This, he argued, results in likening NGOs to terrorists and ultimately to alienating the public from the NGOs (interviewee profiles table, number 51). Another interviewee concurred, arguing that the media present the otherwise entirely legal activities of the NGOs in a negative manner, thereby creating the impression that they are better avoided altogether (interviewee profiles table, number 37). Even the word ‘organisation’, argued one interviewee, conjures up negative images (interviewee profiles table, number 46):

The word “organisation” in Turkey is a little risky and dangerous one. When people hear the word “organisation” for any issue, they get scared, as they think that they will be punished and have many problems. The thought of setting up an NGO or supporting it is frightening and there are not sufficient attempts to change this perception. The tradition to establish an NGO has not yet been formed because of the political pressures Turkish society has faced.

The interviewees offered different interpretations for this bleak state of affairs. An NGO member, for instance, links it to the efforts of the media to act as advocates of traditional state interests. This results in the media and suppressing any protest activity, or at least covering it in a negative manner (interviewee profiles table number 8). Another interviewee – a news producer – argued that the root cause of negative coverage of NGOs lies in Turkish news culture and its inclination to focus on elite views only (interviewee profiles table number 20):

The NGOs are not well represented in the Turkish media since the journalists do not do good journalism. If you take a quick look at the mainstream newspapers, you will see no news about the lower classes or the workers. This is an elitist approach. They ignore or humiliate the news about the ordinary people.

Another explanation linked the poor coverage of NGOs to the political economy of the media in Turkey, and, in particular, to their commercial interests. According to one interviewee, this applies especially to mainstream Turkish media which, due to ratings wars, are using tabloid discourse, which results in sensationalist media coverage that leaves little room for issues put forward by the NGOs (interviewee profiles table number 10). In contrast, other interviewees blamed the political elites and power structures. An NGO chair said that decisions over what should be covered (or not) are ultimately taken by authorities above and outside the media themselves (interviewee profiles table number 38), while a chair of a different NGO argued that the lack of coverage of NGO activity is due to political pressures over Turkish media (interviewee profiles table, number 45).

Another line of argument involved pointing to weaknesses within the NGO sector itself. According to some interviewees, NGOs set their agendas in line with certain political and ideological views, and this prevents them from being purely civil society organisations (interviewee profiles table, numbers 15, 41, 47 and 50). One interviewee also argued that NGOs lack in creativity, and should themselves invest more effort into becoming visible in the first instance (interviewee profiles table, number 48):

If they want to be heard as much as they want to be, they need to take action and be creative. They cannot even as publish reports, magazines etc. well enough. They should not expect media organs to work for them, it is never going to happen, nor is it happening anywhere else in the world.

With regard to the last claim – namely that the NGOs themselves are responsible for the lack of media coverage of their activities – it is worth looking at how the interviewees from the NGO sector themselves responded to such criticisms. To this end, I asked the NGO members how they organize their press relations and if they think they are successful in accessing the media. All six civil society organisations representatives (interviewee profiles table, numbers 1, 8, 29, 36, 38, 45) described the similar methods of accessing the media, which suggest that they do invest efforts strategically and systematically to reach the media:

- Publishing press bulletins in which they talk about their present and future projects and plans;
- Sending these announcements to media organisations via electronic and traditional ways;
- Arranging press meetings and inviting media professionals;
- Writing directly to the columnists or the media professionals who they thought might be interested in their activities.

At the same time, three of the six NGO representatives interviewed also said that they did not have sufficiently professional media relations strategies and that this is possibly a reason for the lack of coverage (interviewee profiles table numbers 8, 38, 29). However, one of the interviewees said that they have professional PR staff yet they still cannot overcome the obstacles posed by nationalist ideologies and therefore they never received coverage in nationalist media (interviewee profiles table number 8). Similar obstacles, unrelated to the lack of professional PR support, were mentioned also by a member of a left-wing NGO and a member of a pro-nationalist one, who claimed that although they tried hard to access the mainstream media, they faced discrimination because of their ideological background, which led them to turn to local media instead (interviewee profiles table, numbers 38 and 45).

One of the interviewees, who acts as the head of the democratisation department in an influential NGO, pointed to possible mutual links between all these factors. He argued that due to the political distance between ideologies civil society organisations are losing the motivation to work with the media and simply work on the assumption that the media will not consider their activities, which

then leads to a further decline in coverage. Furthermore, he suggested that the weak media coverage of NGOs may also be simply a result of the more general unwillingness of the media to cover social or human rights issues, rather than of their negative attitudes to NGOs as such (interviewee profiles table numbers 8).

The comparison between views of NGOs representatives and media professionals also showed that the two sides tend to first blame each other rather than accept own mistakes. It could be argued that this mutual hostility results in part from insufficient communication between the media professionals and the NGOs, which is also related to the more general weakness of the political and democratic culture of the country. On the other hand, it is probably true that the Turkish NGOs often lack the capacity, economic resources and management organs to fully invest in nurturing their relationships with the media. On the other hand, as has been suggested also by an interviewee, the media, in order to increase social responsibility and to inform people about human rights violations, should also invest more in communicating with NGOs that play crucial roles in these issues, regardless of their ideological stance (interviewee profiles table, number 8). The results of the content analysis, presented in Chapter 7, should help us ascertain the extent to which the criticisms put forward by different interviewees are grounded in empirical evidence in the form of actual media coverage.

5.4 Conclusions

The first notable result arising from the analysis of interview materials is that there are evident differences between the views of the interviewees depending on their professional position, ethnicity and political orientation. The prominence of these differences varies depending on the subject discussed. With regard to general perceptions of democratisation in the country, interviewees who are politically closer to the government expressed more positive views, highlighted the democratic development in the country and emphasised evidence of positive change. Although they expressed several criticisms, e.g. with regard to legal frameworks and press freedoms, they mostly linked this to the legacies of the older political culture of Turkey.

In contrast, those who describe themselves as being nationalists expressed positive opinions about the state of affairs with regard to cultural diversity and the Kurdish Issue, and in fact questioned the need to discuss these issues as a potential problem. However, when it came to the other questions regarding media freedoms and the media-democracy relation they were more critical and emphasised the lack of governmental ability to create a democratic ambiance and blamed the government for current media pressures in the country.

Interviewees' opinions also differed notably depending on their professional background. For instance, the interviewees who expressed positive views of the role of the media in democratisation were mostly media professionals. As suggested earlier, this could be because they hold particular ideologically inflected assumptions about what makes their job legitimate and what constitutes a professional approach to journalistic work. For instance, one of the main reasons provided by several media professionals to defend their decisions to avoid reporting sensitive issues and so not allow them to be deliberated in the public sphere was their concern about national security. The problems related to lack of representation or mis-representation of cultural diversity were particularly often mentioned in the context of these national security concerns. In fact, journalists could even provide legal grounds for their avoidance of covering issues of cultural diversity, in as long as they could present them as issues that are potentially damaging the territorial and national unity of Turkey. As states in 3984/4: "Broadcasts shall not violate the existence and independence of the Turkish Republic, the territorial and national integrity of the State, the reforms and principles of Ataturk" (Kurban and Elmas, 2012: p. 220). Similar arguments were also often used to explain or justify any problems experienced by minority media.

When looking at the approaches of the interviewees based on their ethnic backgrounds, we see that Kurds especially are more critical of media freedoms and democratisation in the country which could be linked to their past memories and own experiences. However, while the Kurdish interviewees who allegedly have close relations with the governmental party (e.g. interviewee profiles table number 2 and 15) expressed more positive views; those who do not have such links, presented negative opinions and claimed that the democratic steps taken by the government did not have any constitutional basis and the pressure on the media organisations continued.

The question of course remains which of the different perspectives offered by the interviewees – if any – provides the most accurate description of the state of media and democracy relationship in Turkey. This question will be tackled after we present the results of the content analysis (chapter 7), which will allow to establish whether and to what extent the trends in media reporting confirm the assessments and opinions offered by interviewees.

CHAPTER VI

ELITE VIEWS on the MEDIATION of the KURDISH ISSUE

6.1 Introduction

After having examined interviewee's opinions on democratisation and the media in Turkey in general, this chapter turns to the analysis of interviewees' views on the Kurdish Issue. As argued earlier, the Kurdish Issue constitutes one of the central aspects of the process of democratisation in Turkey, and as such, offers an opposite case study for examining this process. Recent political shifts brought changes to the media sector as well as to the media treatment of cultural diversity and, specifically, the coverage of the Kurdish Issue. However, the depth and extent of these changes, as well as their stability and permanence, is still unclear. This chapter starts by examining interviewee's opinions about the Kurdish Issue in general, seeking to ascertain whether the interviewees actually believe in the existence of the 'Kurdish Issue' and the existence of Kurds in Turkey. This is followed by sections examining opinions about the media coverage of the Kurdish Issue in the mainstream media and about changes in this coverage in recent years. The chapter then tackles the experiences of media professionals themselves, asking whether they ever covered Kurdish Issues and if so, whether they experienced censorship. The final section looks at interviewee opinions about the establishment of the first Kurdish TV channel TRT 6 (Turkish Radio Television Cooperation). As in the previous chapter, the analysis focuses on detailing the key themes and interpretations offered by the interviewees, as well as points to significant differences between interviewees depending on their professional position, ethnic background and political orientation.

6.2 Does the Kurdish Issue Exist?

The naming of the Kurdish Issue as a 'problem' is in itself a contentious matter in Turkey, and even the existence of Kurds themselves as a separate ethnic group is occasionally brought into question. Due to this, I started by asking the interviewees whether they actually accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey. As table 6.1 shows, 46 (90 %) of all interviewees agreed with the statement, and differences between news sources and media professionals are negligible:

Table 6.1: Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey?
(Whole Sample / Sources and Producers)

Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey? (whole sample/ sources and producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	46	90.2	20	87	26	92.9
No	5	9.8	3	13	2	7.1
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

As one would expect, all of the Kurdish participants believe that the Kurdish Issue is a problem in Turkey which means that those who disagree are all of Turkish origin.

Table 6.2: Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey?
(Ethnic Difference)

Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey? (ethnic difference)				
Answers	Ethnic Background			
	Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	17	100	27	88
No	-	-	5	12
Total	17	100	32	100

In terms of political orientation, the only participants disagreeing with the existence of the Kurdish Issue were found among those of nationalist political orientation (5/63%).

Table 6.3: Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey?
(Political Orientation)

Do you accept that there is a Kurdish Issue in Turkey? (political orientation)												
Answers	Political Orientation											
	Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Conservative		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	11	100	7	100	3	37	9	100	12	100	4	100
No	-	-	-	-	5	63	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

Interestingly, the few interviewees who objected to the existence of the Kurdish Issue objected to the phrasing of the question, presumably because they felt that the manner in which the question was posed implied that the existence of the Kurdish Issue is at least possible and debatable. One interviewee, the political representative of a nationalist party, went as far as avoiding using the word “Kurd” and “Kurdish” throughout the 90-minute interview, and preferred using terms such as “these people”, “that problem”, “mentioned ethnicity”, “the ones you mentioned” (interviewee profiles table number 42).

When I asked these interviewees to explain the reason of the conflict that had caused thousands of people to be killed and prompted mass migration of people from the eastern cities to the west, they argued that these processes were a result of the underdevelopment and economic problems in the eastern cities (interviewee profiles table numbers 30, 42, 45, 46). As one of these nationalist-oriented interviewees explained, what was referred to as the Kurdish Issue simply had no real sociological existence, and was purely a product of nationalist propaganda that misleadingly interpreted economic disparities and differences in levels of development in ethnic terms (interviewee profiles table number 49):

It is not the Kurdish Issue but the issue of Kurdishism. For it to be the Kurdish Issue there must be an ethnic problem in Turkey in sociological terms; they must have been prevented from having a job, having education just because of their ethnic culture. Therefore, in Turkey the problem is between the PKK and the government. People did not hate each other. However, PKK created damning propaganda and the idea that this was all happening to them because they were Kurdish. This victimisation created the excuse to act in a violent way. Today, Turks also feel victimized by Kurdish people.

Apart from nationalist propaganda and socio-economic differences, another explanation provided by these interviewees was the meddling of international powers, whose interest presumably was to foster secession and divide Turkey into different countries. In line with this reasoning, these interviewees were also suspicious of my own agenda as a UK student and stated that they could not understand why a student coming from the UK might be interested in conducting a study of a sensitive issue in Turkey. For instance, a conservative religious media professional related the Kurdish Issue to the ‘desire of the deep powers to control Turkey’ who wanted to halt the economic and cultural development of Turkey. These ‘invisible’ powers abuse the Kurdish people and provoke Turkish society through terrorist attacks (interviewee profiles table number 28). A journalist working for a pro-nationalist daily linked the socio-economic explanation with the argument about an

international conspiracy, arguing that the Kurdish Issue was an economic problem, which was misused by international powers such as the USA and EU countries (interviewee profiles table number 50).

According to another media professional, the key culprit was in fact the Turkish state, which always wanted to keep the 'separation fear' alive through spreading fake propaganda about international powers having separation plans for Turkey, since this helped it maintain its domination over the people (interviewee profiles table number 24):

This country has pressured others with the fear of separation. We came from the Ottoman Empire, which had lost most of its lands when the Turkish Republic was established. Therefore, the Turkish State always tried to pressure the minorities for fear of separation and loss of its lands again. They launched Turkicization politics and tried to wipe out others. They shelled Dersim (a Kurdish city in the east of Turkey); they even split children from their families. They did the same to the Armenians.

In contrast, those interviewees who accepted the existence of the Kurdish Issue mostly discussed the issue within the democratic rights context, and explained it as a result of undemocratic state policies, forced assimilation etc. For instance, the representative of an important NGO told me that it was impossible to deny the Kurdish Issue in Turkey as the Kurds in Turkey have been ignored and assimilated since the establishment of Turkey. This interviewee also said that the Turkish state did not only ignore the Kurds but also pressured and tortured those who voiced the rights of the Kurds (interviewee profiles table number 38). Likewise, a sociology professor who conducted several significant studies on the Kurdish Issue and who was allegedly discriminated against because of his work pointed to forced language assimilation and political centralisation as triggers for the Kurdish Issue (interviewee profiles table number 31):

The Kurdish Issue is standing against the culture and religion politics of the Turkish Republic and a powerful rejection to these policies. The Republican politics simply says that Turkish is going to be everyone's language in Turkey and all governing is going to be from Ankara (the capital city of Turkey). Kurds today do not accept these two issues. They reject the centralization and assimilation of the Kurdish language. They want Kurdish to be an official language and a language of education for Kurds.

Interestingly, however, some of the interpretations offered by interviewees who accepted the existence of the Kurdish Issue overlapped with some of those used by those participants who objected the existence of the Kurdish Issue – namely, they believed that the Kurdish Issue was a tool used by those in power to maintain their position, or argued that the Kurdish Issue is, at its root, not an ethnic issue (or at least not solely). For instance, one participant suggested that the Kurdish Issue was a tool used by the army to maintain its hegemony in politics and society (interviewee profiles table number 12). Another believed that the controversies surrounding the Kurdish Issue have always been one of the main ways the political parties have used to maintain their existence, increase their votes, and allow the high-ranking armed forces officials in the conflict areas to retain their high-paid posts (interviewee profiles table number 8). Another interviewee pointed out that it would be wrong to link the existence of the Kurdish Issue only to ethnic reasons. He argued that not only Kurds but many other groups in Turkey suffered from anti-democratic state policies aimed at homogenisation and assimilation, for instance those who were hanged because they refused to wear hats, and those who were imprisoned due to teaching or reading the Koran (interviewee profiles table number 36). Finally, like some of the interviewees who denied the existence of the Kurdish Issue, some of those who acknowledged it were also rather concerned about the language used when talking about Kurds. One of the academics thus challenged the use of the word ‘problem’. He said that the ‘state ideology’ wanted the Kurds and the Kurdish rights to be seen as ‘problem’ and therefore the media insists to use it in this way (interviewee profiles table number 25).

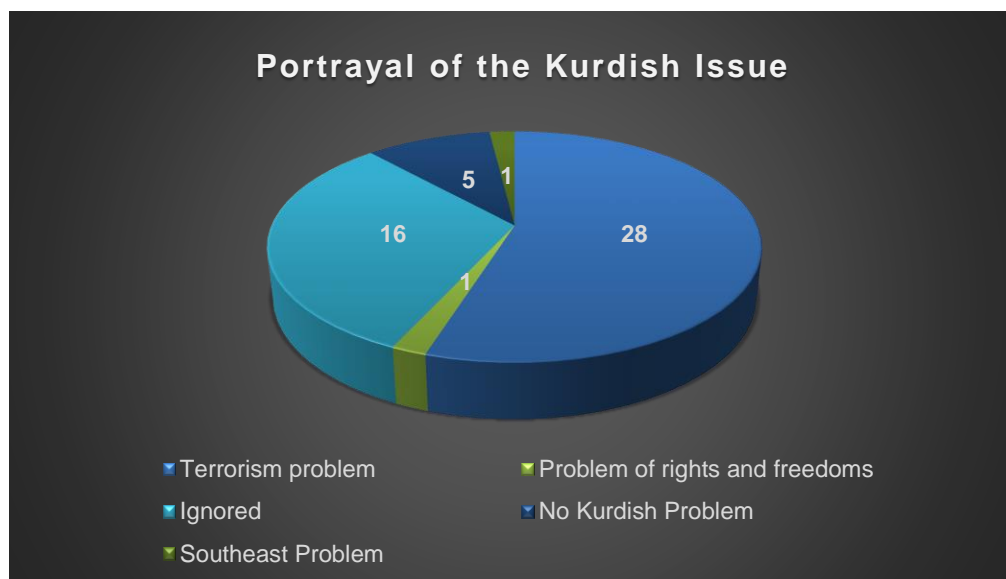
The interviewees also varied in their proposals for solutions to the Kurdish Issue. One media professional who left Turkey due to alleged pressures said that the solution was easy and the only thing needed was the recognition of Kurds and their language by the Constitution (interviewee profiles table number 6). In contrast, an influential editor-in-chief argued that a simple legal change would not suffice, as existing generations would also demand compensation for the relatives lost and for the consequences of assimilation and pressures (interviewee profiles table number 14). The psychological aspects of the problem would also need to be addressed, suggested another interviewee, who mentioned the historical ‘separation-phobia’ as a key obstacle to the solution of the Kurdish Issue (interviewee profiles table number 24). Finally, official Turkish history would also need to be revised; according to a famous journalist who specialises in the Kurdish Issue the long history of suppression has so far remained neglected (interviewee profiles table number 34):

Kurds in Turkey have always faced human rights violations. They have not been able to use their language, develop their culture, form their life style, always been subjected to murder, been humiliated and not been able to get state services properly. There have been tens of insurgences such as Koçgiri Rebellion (1921), Sheikh Said (1925), Ararat (1926) and Dersim rebellions (1937) and these uprisings were quelled with the killing of the rebels. However, the official history in Turkey does not tell about these rebellions in terms of human rights violations but only tells how they were terrorist groups, traitors. Nevertheless, because today's people have looked for the reality and the independent historians told the truth, people have been aware of what was done to Kurds in Turkey. I, just last year, learned what the chief of police forces during the Dersim revolt (1937), Ihsan Caglayangil, said: "We filled the caves with people and killed them with gas."

6.3 The Kurdish Issue in the Turkish Media: Framing and Changes over Time

With the exception of the handful of interviewees of nationalist political convictions who did not believe in the existence of the Kurdish Issue most interviewees were critical of mainstream media representations of Kurdish matters. As evident from *figure 6.1*, over half (28) of the interviewees thought the Kurdish Issue was mostly represented as a terrorism issue which requires security measurements. Another 16 (31.4%) believed that the issue was simply ignored, 1 (2%) thought that it was represented as a problem of Turkey's southeast, and only 1 (2%) that it was presented from the perspective of freedoms and rights. The remaining 5 (9.7%) were those who thought the Kurdish Issue did not exist.

Figure 6.1: In your opinion, how has the Kurdish Issue has been portrayed within the mainstream Turkish Media? (Whole Sample)



As with the question about the existence of the Kurdish Issue, marked differences appeared between participants of different ethnic background and political conviction. Turkish interviewees and interviewees of nationalist political orientations were less likely to state that the Kurdish Issue was represented as a terrorist issue:

Table 6.4: In your opinion, how has the Kurdish Issue been portrayed within the mainstream Turkish Media? (Ethnic Difference and Political Orientation)

How do you think the Kurdish Issue has been portrayed within the mainstream Turkish Media? (ethnic difference and political orientation)																
Answers	Ethnic Background				Political Orientation											
	Kurdish		Turkish		Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist		Conservatives		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Terrorism problem	11	65	16	50	7	64	4	56	1	12.5	4	45	9	75	3	75
Problem of rights and freedoms	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ignored	6	35	10	32	4	36	3	44	-	-	5	55	3	25	1	25
No Kurdish Problem	-	-	4	12	-	-	-	-	5	62.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southeast Problem	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	17	100	32	100	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

Some of the interviewees who argued that the media presented Kurdish Issues from the perspective of terrorism also commented on the detrimental consequences of such framing for public understanding. According to a NGO representative from Diyarbakir, a Kurdish city in southeast Turkey, the emphasis on terrorism leads to a lack of understanding of what is happening in eastern Turkey. Instead of reporting on the plight of Kurdish victims who were forced to leave their villages due to pressures or because of their relatives or friends have been killed, the media keep describing these events as a ‘struggle against terrorism’, ignoring the human rights violations (interviewee profiles table number 29):

Interestingly both the media and people living in western cities of Turkey do not understand why people here worry when they receive the dead bodies of the terrorists or guerrillas from the mountains. Does this not look very disappointing? People here worry because the dead bodies are their sons, their siblings; why do they not understand this? This demonstrates that many things in western cities of Turkey are misunderstood and going on wrongly.

Some interviewees pointed to the link between the terrorist frame and the choice of news sources. Rather than interviewing Kurdish victims of the conflict in Kurdish cities, argued one participant, the media preferred to report the statements of armed forces officials as they thought the army was the most accurate and trustworthy news source in this conflict (interviewee profiles table number 29). Likewise, one of the journalists said that the media covered the Kurdish Issue through fabricated news which was prepared by the army and they were content with what they had (interviewee profiles table number 26). A similar point was raised by another interviewee, who argued that the media usually handed the microphone to the army members or armed staff, preferring the views of official representatives and institutions rather than speaking to the victims of the conflict between the Kurdish rebels and the Turkish army (interviewee profiles table number 12).

Some of the interviewees also thought to explain why such a framing of Kurdish Issues persisted. According to one participant, media professionals actually wanted to cover Kurdish Issues as simply Kurdish Issues rather than reporting 'military news' but they could not do this because the anti-terror law or the penal code in the constitution did not allow this. If these professionals refused the military perspective, they would therefore risk being imprisoned the next day (interviewee profiles table number 16). Accordingly, threats to media professionals were mentioned as a deterrent by another interviewee, who argued that the buildings of the media daring to report on Kurdish matters outside of the terrorist frame were targets of bomb attacks, while journalists rejecting the terrorist frame risked being killed. To support his point, he mentioned that most of the unidentified murders we know today are of Kurdish journalists (interviewee profiles table number 12). Due to such legal restrictions and threats, argued another participant, media professionals had to accept the cliché: "no Kurd, no Kurdish Issue" (interviewee profiles table number 18). On the other hand, some of the interviewees also emphasised that the media themselves were at least in part to blame for the situation. According to one participant, Turkish racism was very effective within the media and media professionals actually liked the authorities and the military tutelage (interviewee profiles table number 51).

The different arguments about the mainstream media reporting of the Kurdish Issue are perhaps best summed up in the following excerpt from the interview with the head of one of the minority media groups in Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 41):

The mainstream Turkish media covered the Kurdish Issue from the perspective of state ideology, which was nationalistic, non-pluralistic and anti-democratic. They preferred to ignore the problem or to see it as a terrorism issue or an underdevelopment problem. They used to say that if employment increased there in Kurdish cities there would be no Kurdish Issue. They have paid no attention to their identity and cultural rights.

After discussing how the Kurdish Issue and the Kurds have been covered in the mainstream media, interviewees were asked whether they felt that this representation changed in recent years or not. As evident from *table 6.5*, most (37/72.5%) of the interviewees agreed that media representations have changed for the better. The proportion of those agreeing with positive change was virtually the same for both ethnicities: 70% (12) among Kurdish interviewees and 72% (23) among Turkish interviewees. The percentage of those believing there was no change was higher among Kurdish (5) as opposed to Turkish (3) participants:

Table 6.5: Do you think there has been any change over recent years?
(Whole Sample and Ethnic Difference)

Do you think there has been any change over recent years? (whole sample/ethnic difference)						
Answers	Whole Sample		Ethnic Background			
	N	%	Kurdish		Turkish	
			N	%	N	%
Yes, positively	37	72.5	12	70	23	72
Yes, negatively	-	-	-	-	-	-
No, the same	8	15.7	5	30	3	9
No Kurdish Issue	5	9.8	-	-	5	16
No answer	1	2	-	-	1	3
Total	51	100	17	100	32	100

Interesting differences appeared also between news sources and news producers, with the former being more inclined to state that there has been no change in recent years. While 15 (65%) of news sources (academics, NGO representatives and politicians) believe the media coverage of the Kurdish Issue improved; the news producers have a more positive approach, with 22 (78%) agreeing that the coverage has improved.

Table 6.6: Do you think there has been any change over recent years? (Sources and Producers)

Do you think there has been any change over recent years? (news sources/news producers)				
Answers	News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%
Yes, positively	15	65.2	22	78.6
Yes, negatively	-	-	-	-
No, the same	5	21.7	3	10.7
No Kurdish Problem	2	8.7	3	10.7
No answer	1	4.4	-	-
Total	23	100	28	100

To illustrate the changes that have taken place, some participants pointed to the improved position of journalists reporting on Kurdish matters. As one of the interviewees stated, there were journalists who used to cover the Kurdish Issue in the past but they used to be marginalized and alienated. These journalists were being censored due to the state ideology and some of them lost their jobs only because they handled the problem (interviewee profiles table number 51). The editor-in-chief of an effective media group in Turkey recounted his experience in 1994 when he tried to cover the Kurdish Issue (interviewee profiles table number 14):

In 1994 there was a food embargo in Tunceli, a Kurdish city in the east of Turkey, as they were accused of aiding and abetting PKK. Entry to this city was prohibited and the food sales were under official control. However, the Turkish media did not even talk about this food embargo. When I heard this, I wrote in my column but the state denied this embargo. On the other hand, the journalists who wanted to go and investigate the embargo were not being allowed to do so. However, I managed to get to this city despite great obstructions, bans and threats. When I got there, I saw the human tragedy there. An area in the city was destroyed by security forces as the residents there were blamed with supporting PKK members. I wrote about all this in the newspaper, Hurriyet Daily. I faced no censorship as I was a famous journalist but an ordinary reporter would somehow be prevented from entering there. As soon as the media started to handle this unfair embargo, the bans on the city were lifted. Nevertheless, the 1-year-old child of the woman whose house was demolished by security forces at this time will never forget this sorrow. Every step taken in violence will delay the solution for decades.

Most of the interviewees linked the positive changes in media representation to the democratic reforms in Turkey linked to the EU accession negotiations. After the army tutelage was broken, both the media professionals and academics felt freer to cover sensitive issues. Of course, the decreasing monopoly of the media groups and the increasing media plurality provided an atmosphere in which media professionals could write more freely and the audience could read about diverse opinions.

However, some participants were sceptical about the extent of the changes that have taken place. One interviewee wondered whether the fact that the change came from the state rather than the media was really a good thing for democracy. He said that the leading role of the state in these matters actually indicated that the stance of the media is still very much determined by the government's position; if they open up, the media follows suit; if the government follows security lines in dealing with the Kurdish Issue then the media withdraws as well (interviewee profiles table number 25). A Kurdish journalist shared this scepticism, stating that the changes were induced by the government and wondering whether the media will be able to maintain its current position if the government changes its stance on the Kurdish Issue (interviewee profiles table number 22).

A Kurdish politician pointed to a different problem with the current coverage. He wanted me to question the representation of the Kurdish Issue in the 'Kurdish media' rather than only in mainstream media, and argued that both Turkish and Kurdish media cover the conflict in an exaggerated manner. While they overstate the fight between the two factions they miss the real story and forget about what the people, the real victims of this clash, have faced (interviewee profiles table number 23). A NGO member presented a similar argument, arguing that the Kurdish media suffer from similar shortcomings as Turkish media (interviewee profiles table number 29):

The Kurdish media have developed an attitude against the Turkish media. [...] The Kurdish media also now consider their ideology more than anything else, like the Turkish media do. The Kurdish media also do not criticise their structure. The Kurdish media also support the Kurdish political movement without any questions. The main reason for the Kurdish media not to be universal is their engagement with Kurdish politics. However not only the Kurdish media but also the NGOs in Diyarbakir are supposed to be on the side of PKK. Therefore, whatever the Kurdish people do they will be blamed as being supporters of terrorist organisations. First, we should change this perception. Every step Kurdish people take is being assessed as violent behaviour, as a demand of PKK. Western Turkish cities still do not accept the universal human rights for the Kurdish people. At this point, the only thing that

can be done is to establish a new media organisation managed by both Kurds and Turks who can harshly criticise both parties.

6.4 Reporting the Kurdish Issue and Censorship

As existing sources suggest, journalists seeking to report on Kurdish matters have faced a number of obstacles over the years. Because reporting the Kurdish Issue has usually been related to national security issues, it has not been easy for the correspondents to cover Kurdish matters in depth (Jongerdan, 2007: p. 30). At the very beginning of the ‘peace talks’ with the Kurdish rebels the Turkish government held meetings with the media owners and wanted them to do ‘responsible journalism’, and according to some commentators, these initial meetings eventually amounted to ‘censorship attempts’ because some media professionals were forced to leave their jobs after these meetings (Alici, 2013: p. 8). Moreover, not all journalists were able to go to the ‘conflict area’ in Eastern Turkey as the Turkish army controlled access and allowed media professionals to go with them on the condition that they would only cover what they allowed in the news story (Altan, 2012b: p. 12). This specific relationship between journalists and the army is known from several other recent military conflicts, and has been referred to in literature as ‘embedded journalism’ (Tumber, 2005: p. 373). As a result, Turkish correspondents from the conflict areas were reporting the news from the official, army- and state-sanctioned perspective, even though some exceptions incorporating views from both sides could be found as well (Balikci and Durukan, 2009: p. 117).

To explore these issues further I asked interviewees whether they were ever involved in reporting or commenting on the Kurdish Issue. As shown in *table 6.7*, the vast majority (46) of all interviewees had this experience, while differences between news sources and producers were negligible:

Table 6.7: Have you ever covered the Kurdish Issue? (Whole Sample/Sources and Producers)

Have you ever covered the Kurdish Issue? (who sample/news sources/news producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	46	90.2	21	91.3	25	89.3
No Kurdish Issue	5	9.8	2	8.7	3	10.7
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

I have also asked the interviewees if they ever experienced censorship whilst reporting the issue. As table 6.8 shows, 20 (39%) answered yes, and the proportion was higher among news producers than among news sources (46% as opposed to 30%).

Table 6.8: Have you ever experienced censorship while covering the Kurdish Issue? (Whole Sample/ Sources and Producers)

Have you ever experienced censorship while covering the Kurdish Issue? (whole sample/ sources and producers)						
Answers	Whole Sample		News Sources		News Producers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	20	39.2	7	30	13	46
No	26	51	14	61	12	43
No Kurdish Problem	5	9.8	2	9	3	11
Total	51	100	23	100	28	100

As revealed by the comparison between Kurdish and Turkish news producers and sources (see table 6.9), experiences of censorship were significantly more common among Kurdish interviewees.

Table 6.9: Have you ever experienced censorship while covering the Kurdish Issue? (Producers' and Sources Ethnic Differences)

Have you ever experienced censorship while covering the Kurdish Issue? (producers' and sources' ethnic differences)								
Answers	News Producers				News Sources			
	Kurdish		Turkish		Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	9	71.4	4	27	5	100	7	41
No	3	28.6	8	53	-	0	8	47
No Kurdish Problem	-	-	3	20	-	-	2	12
Total	12	100	15	100	5	100	17	100

It is important to note that many of those who initially said “no” to the question, later, as soon as I stopped the recording, indicated that they had been censored many times. This could be explained because of both the difficulty of admitting censorship and the ‘distrust’ in the interviewer at the beginning of the meeting. Another point to note is that in some cases, interviewees denied having the experience of censorship, yet later described practices that amounted to a form of

editorial censorship. For instance, one media professional who avoided describing his experience as 'editorial censorship' said that he was carefully choosing his words in the news about the Kurdish Issue as to avoid being prosecuted for praising the terrorist organisation (interviewee profiles table number 9).

In the cities in which the Kurdish conflict peaked such as Sirnak, Diyarbakir, Batman and Siirt, journalists have been unable to engage in impartial journalism as they have been facing many other problems such as threats, nationalist reaction and pressures by the armed forces as well as the difficulty of looking for news under the crossfire between the army and the PKK guerrillas (interviewee profiles table numbers 13).

Not all of the media professionals who experienced censorship objected to it. Some of the journalists said that they actually did not mind if their news reports were edited by their employees because any news could be censored for different reasons, including editorial ones. Therefore, although they had been censored many times before, they regarded it just as a normal procedure and did not oppose it. These journalists also mentioned the changing circumstances and political taboos and thus they said the situation for journalists today was better than in the past in terms of covering the sensitive issues although many problems still existed (interviewee profiles table numbers 15 and 34). This result indicates that censorship is a practice sustained to some extent by journalists themselves who do not find it objectionable.

Interviewees mentioned several different forms of censorship and related factors obstructing the reporting of the Kurdish Issue, either experienced by themselves or by others they knew. One editor-in-chief known for his journalistic activities for decades argued that it was not only the risks which prevented reporters from covering the Kurdish Issue - they were also not keen to investigate the truth about a news story. They did not go to evacuated villages, did not witness the prison uprisings in the 1980s and did not talk to influential people. He also added that politicians did not want mainstream society to know what was happening in the region and therefore obstructed reporters from covering Kurdish stories (interviewee profiles table number 14). The executive editor of a Kurdish daily said that the reason for censorship was the threat of being labelled as PKK or terrorist supporters (interviewee profiles table number 9). A journalist who works for the public TV channel (TRT) said that when they were reporting about the Kurdish Issue they had to remain within pre-drawn lines. He said that they had received news of several unidentified and unsolved murders from the Kurdish regions of Turkey every day during the 1990s, but were not able to give the full details and instead only said "in this city two people have been murdered by unidentified murderers today" (interviewee profiles table number 15). All journalists who interviewed PKK leaders or members said that their interviews were censored or were not published at all. They also said that

they received many threats from armed forces staff and warnings from their owner not to cover the news related to the Kurdish Issue. The media owners were being told by the army or political organisations that their staff were advertising the 'terrorists' and they were warning the journalists in order to be able to keep working in that media group. I asked these journalists how they were coping with these pressures and if they were insisting on publishing the news. They said that they were doing nothing, as they would be fired if they did (interviewee profiles table numbers 7, 18, 24 and 51).

However, not all reporters were afraid of being prosecuted. The older, more experienced journalists (interviewee profiles table numbers 7, 18 and 24) said that the Turkish judiciary were not sentencing them due to their experience and fame in society. However, if the young journalists covered the same issue from the same angle they would face prison sentences or would face a long prosecution process. In this regard, a few journalists explained that they were imprisoned and prosecuted because they interviewed PKK members or covered the Kurdish Issue without considering the 'national-security' limits (interviewee profiles table numbers 4, 20, 34, 39 and 51). One of these experienced journalists said that when the army wanted to create pressure on a reporter, along with calling the media owner or directly threatening him, they produced 'fake news' about that journalist and thus would portray him or her as a 'terrorist and violence-lover' and try to defame him/her. He referred to this as a 'psychological war strategy' and added that those who wanted to discredit the journalists in the public mind could misuse other journalists or media to support the official organisations. He then recounted his own experience of being subjected to such a 'psychological war' and was faced with a military memorandum (interviewee profiles table numbers 7):

This memorandum was a part of a psychological war waged by the General Staff and it included other journalists besides me. It claimed that we were supporting and being supported by a terrorist organisation, the PKK. The more interesting point here was that they did this using the media. A very famous TV newscaster read this declaration on behalf of the army. The next day some newspapers, including the one I was working for, announced it in their headlines. Media organisations could not resist the pressure as they had been threatened. I was working for the daily Sabah at that time. When I learnt about this memorandum (this was a military speculation prepared by the Army) I wrote in my column that I would bring a case against the Army members involved in this ugly defamation. However, my column was censored and the next day I was expelled from the newspaper again due to the pressure from the Army. The General Staff in recent years have come to accept that the memorandum was prepared by some Army members to slander the journalists who did not think as they did.

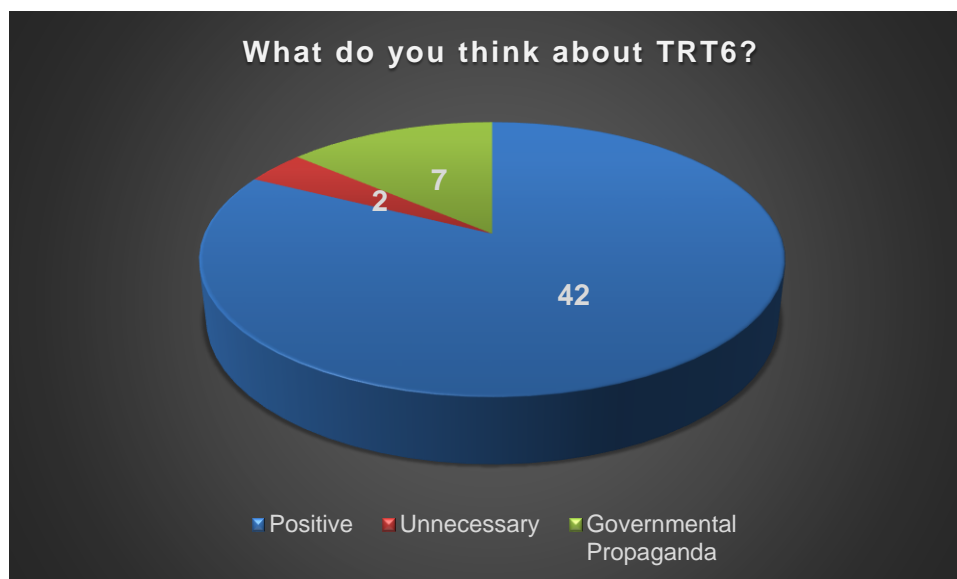
All censorship stories mentioned so far were recounted by Turkish journalists. The experiences of Kurdish journalists who work for Kurdish newspapers were somewhat different, in the sense that they did not experience pressures from the editorial board or the newspaper owners (who were also Kurds). However, they heard of direct threats from individuals or the Army staff and they said many of their journalists' friends were sent to prison or murdered and their newspaper building was bombed (interviewee profiles table numbers 9 and 22).

6.5 TRT 6: Public Broadcasting in Non-native Languages

As explained in Chapter 3, the launch of TRT6 – the first television channel to broadcast fully in Kurdish – in 2009 was a key milestone in the gradual, decade-long recognition process that started reversing the long-standing processes of assimilation and exclusion of Kurds in Turkey. However, the establishment of the TRT6 also prompted questions and harsh nationalist objections as well as criticisms of the channel being simply a usual 'state propaganda tool' and was not grounded in any constitutional guarantees for Turkish Kurds (Olson, 2009: p. 148; Genc, 2010: p. 138). The day after TRT 6 opened, for instance, the nationalist newspaper, *Ortodogu Daily*, (whose content is analysed for this study- see chapter 7) carried a headline saying the PM was committing crimes against the Turkish constitution which clearly stated that the language of the Republic of Turkey is Turkish. (Ortodogu, 2009: p. 1).

During my fieldwork in Turkey, these and other kinds of questions were also raised by the interviewees. In this context I asked the interviewees what they thought of TRT6:

Figure 6.2: What do you think about TRT6?
(Whole Sample)



As the figure above shows, the vast majority (42/82.4%) described the TRT6 in positive terms. Of the remaining participants, 7 (13.7%) interviewees stated that the channel was governmental propaganda, and 2 (3.9%) described it simply as unnecessary. As shown in *table 6.10*, interesting differences appeared between participants of Kurdish and Turkish origin. While the percentage of those who were positive about TRT6 was equal, the proportion of those believing that TRT6 was governmental propaganda was higher among Kurdish interviewees, and interviewees who thought TRT6 was unnecessary were all Turkish.

Table 6.10: What do you think about TRT6? (Ethnic Difference)

What do you think about TRT 6? (ethnic difference)				
Answers	Ethnic Background			
	Kurdish		Turkish	
	N	%	N	%
Positive	14	82	26	82
Unnecessary	-	-	2	6
Governmental Propaganda	3	18	4	12
Total	17	100	32	100

These differences apparent, Turkish and Kurdish interviewees had much in common in their views on TRT6. Most of them believed that TRT6's opening constitutes a positive democratic step, and described the channel as the official acknowledgment of Kurds by the Turkish state. At the same time, they also expressed certain misgivings about the channel. First, they shared a concern about the channel having no constitutional guarantee. Second, they were both critical of the quality of the content, believed it was not very professional but instead aimed primarily at attracting Kurdish viewers. Some of the interviewees who applauded government's actions also expressed a wish that the channel had been opened earlier (interviewee profiles table number 17, 25, 31, 33, 37). The representative of the main opposition party explained the reasons for this mixture of enthusiasm and suspicion regarding TRT6 in the following way (interviewee profiles table number 44):

Although TRT6 has been approached with suspicion because of the decades-long pressures on the Kurds, I think the opening of TRT6 is a politically, culturally and socially important step. On the other hand, we should also remember and remind ourselves that the launch of TRT6 does not mean that all the bans and pressures on the Kurdish language and the Kurds have been lifted. For instance, Kurdish

people still cannot name their children in their language as the Kurdish alphabet is different than the Turkish one. The letters “Q, W” and “X” are officially prohibited in the ID cards.² How can they give their children names that include these letters?

An academic journalist who is known for his opposition to government policies likewise stated that whatever the critiques of TRT6 were, the people in Turkey should first appreciate the existence of the channel as such. According to him, the opening of TRT6 represents an important positive step especially in terms of multiculturalism, given that 20 million Kurds live in Turkey and there was a grave need for a Kurdish language channel (interviewee profiles table number 39). A similar mixture of positive and negative comments was offered by the vice-chair of an NGO (interviewee profiles table number 8):

On the one hand TRT6 is not that important given that satellite TVs and internet are widespread and commonly used and people already watch ROJ TV in Kurdish cities. On the other hand TRT6, which has opened with the greetings of the PM in Kurdish and is publicly funded, is a very positive step as the state has been not only ignoring but also denying the existence of the Kurds since the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Despite the problems regarding its contents and the programmes I think this is an obvious improvement achieved by the AKP government.

Some of the interviewees also had concerns about the ability of TRT6 to lure Turkish audiences away from satellite TV channels broadcasting in Kurdish, allegedly controlled by the PKK. One of the media professionals argued that TRT6 still had a long way in luring audiences away from PKK-dominated channels (interviewee profiles table number 14). The head of the Kurdish satellite channel ROJ TV, which has been accused of being a PKK’s propaganda channel by Turkish authorities, said that the TRT6 will not be watched by Kurdish people as they are already able to watch other Kurdish TV channels such as ROJ TV, broadcasting from Europe (interviewee profiles table number 14). In this context, some of the Turkish interviewees stated that Kurds were subject to intensive propaganda from Kurdish rebels using this satellite channel and it is difficult to make them change their minds and watch a TV channel set up by the Turkish state that had ignored and tortured Kurds for years (interviewee profiles table numbers 3, 11, 15, 42, 49).

Apart from ethnic background one of the factors that seemed to influence the interviewee’s responses to TRT6 was their political positioning. As evident from the following table, Turkish

² In September 2013 the Turkish government announced a democratisation package through which this ban has been lifted (Gurcanli and Alp, 2013).

nationalists and pro-Kurdish interviewees were considerably more negative about TRT6 than participants of other political orientations.

Table 6.11: What do you think about TRT6? (Political Orientation)

What do you think about TRT 6? (political orientation)												
Answers	Political Orientation											
	Leftist		Pro-Kurdish		Nationalist.		Conservative		Liberal		Centre	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Positive	10	90	4	56	3	38	9	100	12	100	4	100
Unnecessary	-	-	-	-	2	24	-	-	-	-	-	-
Governmental Propaganda	1	10	3	44	3	38	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	11	100	7	100	8	100	9	100	12	100	4	100

The harshest critiques of TRT6 came from Turkish nationalists, but pro-Kurdish interviewees were also rather negative about the channel, due to concerns about its future. Interestingly, the arguments of both groups resemble each other. While Turkish nationalists claimed that the state cannot support any minority language, pro-Kurdish participants maintained that the state's assimilation pressure on Kurdish people continued unabated regardless of TRT6.

For example, one of the Turkish nationalist lecturers simply said the establishment of the TRT6 was completely mistaken (interviewee profiles table number 49), while the Editor-in-chief of a nationalist newspaper said that the government has launched this TV channel because it was forced by the EU Commission (interviewee profiles table number 46). A representative of the nationalist party indicated that the state should maintain equality amongst all the languages and added the following (interviewee profiles table number 42):

A TV channel like TRT6 should not have been opened by the state but by the private sector. The state should give the permission and the private sector should have opened it. The state is an official institution in Turkey and the official language is Turkish. Therefore you cannot open a TV station broadcasting in a foreign language by the hands of the state as the state can just make legal arrangements and allow these kinds of TV channels to be opened by the private sector. We politically disagree with this attempt as we are the heritage of the Ottoman Empire and many other languages or dialects have been spoken in this land and can still

be spoken in homes. However, the state should not privilege a specific language, as the official language is Turkish.

On the other hand, one of the pro-Kurdish journalists explained his opposition to the channel in the following way (interviewee profiles table number 22):

We do not think that TRT6 is different from other channels. Other TV channels promote the “state ideology” in Turkish, while TRT6 does it in Kurdish. The pressure, ignorance and extermination politics against Kurdish people are the same but the language is different. The denial of Kurdish people could be expressed in English as well. They are trying to say that “they have lifted all the bans in front of the Kurdish language and the people; the Kurdish Issue in Turkey has been solved, see, we opened a Kurdish TV”.

A pro-Kurdish media lecturer offered a similar perspective, arguing that the channel was under great pressure from the government and that state discourse against minorities and Kurds is being produced there again and again (interviewee profiles table number 12). Another lecturer, after welcoming the opening of the channel, stated that the TRT6 can also be regarded as an attempt to create a distinction between “the good and the bad Kurds” - those who were watching it would be ‘good’ and the others who keep watching other international Kurdish channels would be ‘bad’ ones. He summarised the critiques of TRT6 in the following manner (interviewee profiles table number 25):

However, this will again take me to the whole issue of ‘form’ vs ‘substance’. In terms of form, yes, the state managed to get and run a Kurdish language Turkish Republic channel; but what about the substance? The substance is very much related to entertainment; aiming to create a fiesta culture. TRT6 is to limit the Kurdish language within a defined area; and therefore when the Kurdish language is spoken beyond the defined area in an official manner it is not acceptable by the establishment. Thus, the ‘good Kurds’ have to know their limits. The same applies to other groups initiating Kurdish language TV channels; such as the religious Gulen group’s new TV station in Kurdish language. Since Kurdish sensitivities in religious issues are known, they are using Islam to contain Kurdish movements and activities again in intending to ‘create good Kurds’. Hence, in opening a TV channel again the aim has intersected; and the Kurdish population has to be manipulated through religion so that the strength of Kurdish activism is undermined. These are all parts of the plan. The same position on religion has been taken by the PM as well; repeatedly referring to the Kurdish political movement as the followers of

Zoroastrians, the religious legitimacy of Kurdish activism brought into question, as PM himself claims the central position in religion.

One of the interviewees whom I interviewed at his office in the Turkish capital Ankara was the head of TRT6. It is interesting to note that the Kurdish channel ROJ TV - a channel he believed was a propaganda outlet of the PKK terror organisation - was turned on at his office at the headquarters of the Turkish Radio and Television Cooperation (TRT). He acknowledged that the TRT6 was a target of harsh criticisms, most of which were in his opinion not well intended, from both Kurdish and Turkish people. He also added that although they invited the Kurdish MPs from the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) to answer the questions they rejected the invitation but kept criticizing the channel. Additionally he said that it was normal for a new channel to have some problems and pointed to the difficulties of producing a programme in a language that has been suppressed for years, thereby indirectly addressing the criticisms voiced by other interviewees and outlined earlier (interviewee profiles table number 15):

TRT6 was a sign and beginning of a democratic solution for the problem and through TRT6, the aim was to inform the Kurdish people from an "accurate" channel "accurately". Before TRT6, citizens were being informed only from one source, which was usually from the PKK background, such as ROJ and MED TV, who were broadcasting PKK propaganda. First of all, Turkey was not completely ready for TRT6. There were many questions in people's mind. What happens if TRT6 opens? On the other hand, TRT6 had broadcasting problems as it would broadcast in Kurdish. Kurdish language has never been a language of education, culture or art in Turkey. Also it is sometimes difficult to find guests for the programmes we make. We broadcast not only in mainstream Kurdish, but also in other Kurdish dialects, such as the Zaza language. However, it is very difficult to find people to employ, as there is only a small number of people who speak this dialect; and there is a lack of educated people among people who speak this dialect. We even do not have a dictionary in Zaza language. On the other hand, we are watched and follow the ratings very carefully. We are 12th in south-eastern cities and 14th in the country among national channels. In the eastern and south-eastern cities people in hospitals want to watch TRT6 while getting treatment. We are getting better every passing day and are surmounting the problems we have now.

6.6 Conclusions

As in the case of views on media and democracy discussed in the previous chapter, the interviewees' views on the Kurdish Issue often differed depending on their professional position, ethnicity and political orientation. However, these differences in approaches were not as marked as in the case of views regarding media and democracy. Although we have to be mindful of the fact that we are dealing with a small sample, these results do suggest that there may be greater elite consensus on the Kurdish Issue than on issues of media and democracy in Turkey in general. Obviously, a larger, representative sample would be needed to confirm whether this finding is generalizable.

As seen in the thematic analysis above, most of the interviewees acknowledge the existence of the Kurdish Issue (see table 6.1), and the few who deny it are all of Turkish origin and have a nationalist political orientation (Tables 6.2. and 6.3). Likewise, the majority of interviewees believes that the media predominantly adopt a terrorist frame when reporting the Kurdish Issue (Figure 6.1), but Turkish interviewees and interviewees of nationalist political orientations were less likely to offer the same answer (Table 6.4). Some slight differences along ethnic lines also appeared in perceptions of change in the media reporting of Kurdish Issues over time (Table 6.5), although differences between news producers and news sources were more pronounced in this respect, with news producers being more likely to adopt a positive stance on recent changes (Table 6.6.). Differences along ethnic lines and professional position appeared also with regard to reported experiences with censorship (Tables 6.8 and 6.9), while opinions on the TRT – while overwhelmingly positive across most of the sample (Figure 6.2) – differed depending on political orientation; interviewees of nationalist and pro-Kurdish orientations were interestingly both more likely to be negative about the TRT (Table 6.11).

As with the results of interviewee analysis presented in the previous chapter, the question of course remains which of the different perspectives offered by interviewees provides the most accurate description of representation of the Kurdish Issue in the mainstream Turkish media, and whether, ultimately, the coverage of the Kurdish Issue contributes to deliberation in the public sphere or not. This question will be tackled in the following chapter and the concluding discussion.

CHAPTER VII

ANALYSING MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS of the KURDISH ISSUE

7.1 Introduction

Journalists, while covering the news stories are expected to ask questions from different viewpoints, not rely on one-sided news and examine all parts of the news story to ascertain the reality about recently occurring events (Strömbäck, 2012: p. 12). However, can members of the media do this when they cover a sensitive topic? For instance can the media really question where they stand while covering democratic problems regarding ethnic minorities and thus can they lead these issues to be properly deliberated in the public/political sphere? These questions are particularly pertinent in politically polarised nations like Turkey, where principles of free speech and other democratic rights have such a nascent and uncertain foundation.

From this perspective the Turkish media have an important role both in maintaining the Kurdish Issue as well as in its resolution, along with other social and political solution methods (Erdem, 2013: p. 48). Therefore it is very important to examine how the Turkish media have tackled the issue. In this regard, this chapter, to be able to answer research questions regarding the role of the Turkish media in creating a deliberative democracy, and so locating them within competing media models (detailed in chapter 1), aims to look at representation of the Kurdish Issue within five mainstream newspapers based on one month coverage of two important events: the launch of TRT6 in 2009 and the Uludere Airstrike in late December 2011 (detailed in chapters 3, 4 and 6) and news items regarding the Kurdish Issue. As explained in chapter 4, the sampling period for this analysis constitutes two months of coverage. The first commencing after the TRT6 launch, the second, after the news broke about the airstrike on Kurdish citizens.

Through this analysis I seek to assess the extent to which the Kurdish Issue was fully and fairly reported which in turn will allow me to make an empirically informed judgement about the wider democratic performance of mainstream Turkish journalism. Although the answers to questions such as does the coverage develop a deliberative/pluralistic public sphere or do we see the dominance of certain issues, certain voices, certain topics are covered in the body of the chapter; a quick summary of the main differences are mostly debated in the last section of the chapter: Discussing the Results.

7.2 Content Analysis Sample

For researching the representation of the Kurdish Issue, I have conducted quantitative content analysis of 711 news items (including columns and op-eds) in five different mainstream newspapers all of which represent different political ideologies: (1) *Cumhuriyet Daily* represents a leftist-secular ideology, (2) *Hurriyet Daily* which is called the flagship of Turkish newspapers is known for its centre-right stance, (3) *Ortadogu Daily* describes itself as a 'nationalist' paper, (4) *Taraf Daily* is a liberal young (2007) newspaper known for its assertive coverage regarding the Kurdish Issue and (5) *Zaman Daily*, having the highest circulation in Turkey, is mostly mentioned within a religious context (see chapter 4). As has been detailed in the methodology chapter the selection of these newspapers is based on their circulations (see table 4.2), capability of structuring the daily agenda, political tendencies and the media groups they are linked to.

The reason for selecting (1) TRT6 opening and (2) Uludere Airstrike coverage for the content analysis is their specific significance in debates about the Kurdish Issue. While TRT6 points a cultural angle of the Kurdish Issue, the Uludere Airstrike refers to a conflict both in military and socio-political terms (as the airstrike was directed at Kurdish villagers). Thus through this selection it will be possible to see (a) the change/similarity in themes of the news over time, (b) the relative extent of news access granted to different political or civil actors in different contexts, (c) the increase or decrease on media reporting of the Kurdish Issue and (d) if this direction points to an increasingly negative or positive approach by the media.

To be able to demonstrate the change and differences in nature of the coverage, even though the sampled events are all related to the Kurdish Issue, I have differently categorised the news items: i.e. while the launch of TRT6 (2009) and Uludere Airstrike (2012) are the main events, I have also analysed any other news items related to the Kurdish Issue at the time of these two events,

In this regard, table 7.1 shows the number of news items given to various issues related to the Kurdish Community during the two sample months. The first three data columns relate to the first month of sampling and the launch of TRT6. The last three columns relate to the second month of sampling which covered the Uludere airstrike. For both months, I have differentiated between news items that (a) solely focused on the selected topics (i.e. TRT6/Uludere), (b) mentioned the selected topics and related them to other issues concerning the Kurdish community, and (c) all other items that addressed Kurdish Issues but made no reference to the two issues selected - naming the ones in 2009 as *Kurdish Issue 1* and the latter in 2012 as *Kurdish Issue 2*. As will be seen in forthcoming

analysis, some newspapers avoided linking the Uludere Airstrike to the Kurdish Issue, while others directly framed it as a continuation of the violence of the Turkish state against her Kurdish citizens.

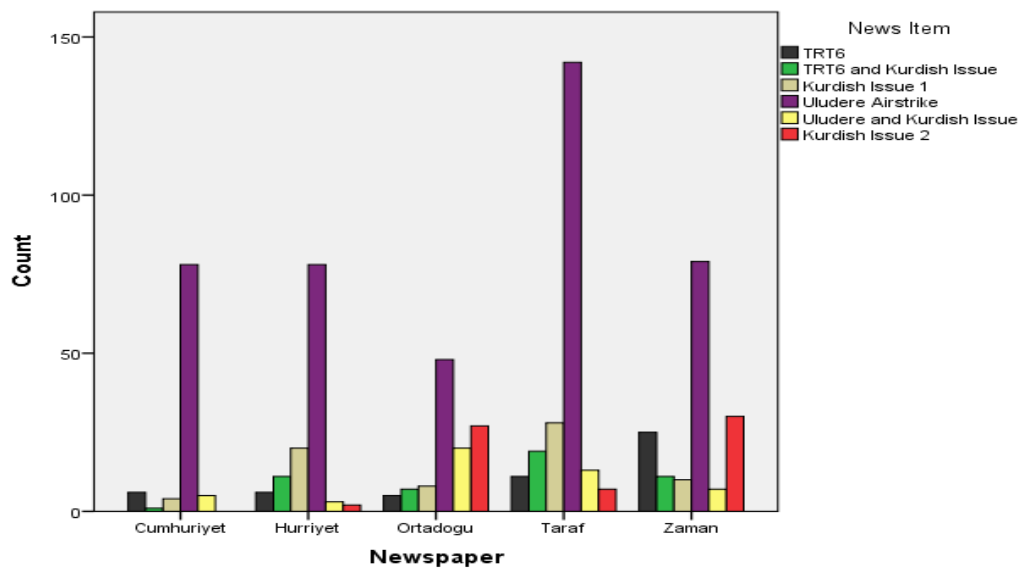
Table 7.1: Amount of the news items in the sampled papers

News Item and Newspaper												
News Item	Newspaper										Total	
	Cumhuriyet		Hurriyet		Ortadogu		Taraf		Zaman			
	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%
TRT6	6	6%	6	5%	5	4%	11	5%	25	15%	53	7%
TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	1	1%	11	9%	7	6%	19	9%	11	7%	49	7%
Kurdish Issue 1	4	4%	20	17%	8	7%	28	13%	10	6%	70	10%
Uludere Airstrike	78	83%	78	65%	48	42%	142	65%	79	49%	425	60%
Uludere and Kurdish Issue	5	5%	3	3%	20	17%	13	6%	7	4%	48	7%
Kurdish Issue 2	0	0%	2	2%	27	23%	7	3%	30	19%	66	9%
Total	94	100%	120	100%	115	100%	220	100%	162	100%	711	100%

(Fre. = Frequency)

The total number of the news items analysed for this study in two one-month periods (January 2009 and January 2012) is 711 as the table above demonstrates. While secular-leftist daily *Cumhuriyet* has the least coverage by 13% (94 items), the nationalist newspaper *Ortadogu* followed it by 16% (115 items). The daily *Hurriyet*, described as having an elitist-secular view by the editor-in-chief (interviewee profiles table number 11), had 17% (120 items) of analysed items; the religious daily *Zaman* which has the highest rate of circulation in Turkey had 23% (162 items) of the news and *Taraf* daily had the most of the news by 31% (220 items). The difference of this coverage can more easily be seen in the figure below:

Figure 7.1: Newspaper and News Items



Looking at how extensively the newspapers covered these various issues and events, table 7.1 shows all five newspapers covered the airstrike (66%) more than the launch of TRT6 (14%)³. While *Cumhuriyet Daily* reported the opening of TRT6 in only one news item in relation with the Kurdish Issue; the nationalist *Ortadogu* (whose stance will be discussed in the following tables) covered seven items of the TRT6 opening relating it with the Kurdish Issue.

The most notable point here is that religious paper *Zaman* gave far greater prominence to the launch of TRT6 than the others did. Nearly half of the reports on TRT6 alone were reported in *Zaman* and this was the only paper who had more items solely focused on the creation of TRT6 (all the others that did report the creation of the station tended to combine it with the discussion of other Kurdish Issues). The implications of these differences are considered in the discussion section).

With regard to *Uludere*, all the papers have most of their items solely focused on the airstrike. It is evidently sufficiently newsworthy in its own right, it doesn't need to be linked to other Kurdish Issues to gain news comment, and when it occurred it evidently crowded out the coverage of Kurdish Issues that were not at all related to the military event. Some papers justified the government's position and blamed the PKK, but others took a different angle and were less dependent on government sources and explanations. For example, the religious daily *Zaman*, seems to have tried to create a perception for legitimizing the airstrike by representing the villagers as 'possible terrorist groups' without questioning why and the way they killed even if they were

³ The total numbers obtained considering the news items of the main two events covered with the Kurdish Issue i.e. sum of *Uludere Airstrike* news and *Uludere and Kurdish Issue* equals 66%.

terrorists. In addition the reports said Uludere airstrike was used a way of propaganda by PKK and the Kurdish Party by calling on the people to the streets to increase the conflict. Thus the massacre was portrayed as an accident resulting from legitimate military defensive actions against the PKK (which is known to be as violent terrorist organisation) and the Kurdish Party. There is also a strong insinuation that the PKK may have some responsibility for the misidentification of the Kurdish civilians.

Image 7.1: Front page of Zaman for Uludere airstrike



(Headline: The fatal enquiry)

At the bottom left of the article, without giving any proof for the claim, the reporter asks if the PKK misused the villagers as the PKK were used to attacking military bases under the camouflage of being smugglers. The next day, the newspaper showing photos of dead bodies, said that the government were ignoring the smugglers and allowing them to smuggle from the border countries

which can be read as the effort of the newspaper to support government against criticism. On the fourth day the paper stated that those who were provoked by PKK and BDP started violent protest destroying their surroundings. Here another point is that the paper across all items preferred mentioning the Turkish name of the village - *Ortasu* rather than using the Kurdish name *Roboski*.

Image 7.2: Front page of Hurriyet for Uludere airstrike



(Headline: Does the state bomb its own people?)

If we we give a short look at secular-centrist Hurriyet whose motto is "Turkey belongs to Turks" we again see some insights about the direction of the coverage. Hurriyet quoting and picturing the PM Erdogan had the headline: "Does state bomb its people?" With this statement Erdogan tried to gain trust through the secularist daily's header by indicating that during his time in office the state has never harmed its people (see image above).

Image 7.3: Front page of Cumhuriyet for Uludere airstrike

AY NEGATİ CUMALİ BÜYÜKLEN BÜYÜYAMAM Cumhuriyet Gazetesi

Cumhuriyet

77. YIL SAYI: 31495 / 1 TL (KDV İçinde) (KTC'de: 1,5 TL) KURUCUSU: YUNUS NADI (1924-1945) BAŞYAZARLARI: NADİR NADI (1945-1991) İLHAN SELÇUK (1992-2010) 490 262 751 24 91 www.cumhuriyet.com.tr 30 ARALIK 2011 CUMA

Irak sınırında 'teröristlerin geçiş güzergâhından' kaçak mazot getiren köylüler hedef alındı: 35 ölü

Jetler sivilleri vurdu

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi

CHP OLAYIN PEŞİNDE

'Sorumlusu hükümet'

CHP, köylülerin operasyon sonucu öldürülmesini "herkesi terörist gören anlayışın sonucu" olarak değerlendirdi. Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Tanrısal, olaydan hükümeti sorumlu tutarken Grup Başkanvekili Tarhan, "Sivillerin zarar görmesi son derece rahatsız edici" dedi. CHP'li Aygün ve Furat da Genelkurmay'ın açıklaması ile istihbaratın objektif değerlendirilmesini istedi. ■ 8. Sayfa

BDP YAS İLAN ETTİ

'Bu olay katliamdır'

35 kişinin ölmesi üzerine Diyarbakır ve Hakkâri'de olaylar çıkarken BDP Eşbaşkanı Demirtaş, "Bu katliamın sorumlusu 'gece gündüz operasyon süreci' diyenlerdir" diye konuştu. Demirtaş, "50 kişilik grup köylülerine ulaşmak üzereyken karakol görevlileriyle karşılaşmış. Görevlilerin 'buradan geçmeyin' diyerek görevleri yolda saldırıya uğramışlar" dedi. ■ 8. Sayfa



Kaçakçılığa mecbur bırakılan köylülerin cesetleri traktörler ve katırlarla Ortasu köyüne getirildi. Köyden yükselen ağıtlar ise yürekleri dağıttı. (Fotoğraf: AFP)

ÇOCUNLUĞU GENÇ Şırnak'ın Uludere ilçesinin Irak sınırında önceki gece insansız hava uçaklarının görüntü alması üzerine başlatılan hava operasyonunda Ortasu ve Gülyazı köylerine kaçak mazot ve sigara getiren köylüler, F-16'lar tarafından vuruldu. Çoğu genç 35 kişi öldü, 1 kişi yaralandı. Katırlardaki yakıt bidonlarının da alev alması sonucu bazı cesetler yandı. MAHİMUT ÖZAL'ın haberi ■ 8. Sayfa

İNCELEME BAŞLADI Olayla ilgili idari ve adli işlemlerin devam ettiğini açıklayan Genelkurmay, terör örgütünün bölgede eylem yapacağına ilişkin istihbaratın artması üzerine keşif ve gözetleme faaliyetleri yapıldığını kaydetti. Açıklamada "Şırnak doğru hareketin tespit edilmesi üzerine Irak'ın kuzeyindeki Sinat-Hafanin'de sivil yerleşim bulunmayan bölgenin vurulduğu" belirtildi. ■ 8. Sayfa

SADECE PREDATOR GÖRÜNTÜSÜ YETER Mİ? UTKU ÇAKIROZER'in yazısı ■ 14. Sayfa HÜKÜMET: OPERASYON KAZISI ■ 6. Sayfa

(Headline: Jet aircrafts shot the civilians)

Unlike other sampled dailies secular leftist Cumhuriyet and liberal Taraf seem to cover the news from diverse sources. However, although Cumhuriyet, which gave the news saying "jets shot the civilians", mentioned and quoted BDP (the Kurdish party) and opposition party leaders they did not quote the villagers (see image above). On the other hand while Taraf reported the news quoting the villagers rather than the politicians or governmental actors they preferred to ignore the brutal reaction of the Kurdish party members. Along with the photo of donkeys carrying dead bodies the header said: "State bombed its own people - 35 died". In the article, the reporters questioned the reasons why the villagers were killed, saying that those who were killed were mostly children (see image below).

Image 7.4: Coverage of Taraf Daily on the third day of Uludere Airstrike

Taraf

KUM SLATI
AHMET ALTAN
Niye öldürüldü bu çocuklar

K Dergisi bugün ve yarın Taraf'ta birlikte ücretsiz

DEVLET HALKINI BOMBALADI [35 ÖLÜ]

Hava Kuvvetleri, katırlara yükledikleri kaçak sigaralarla Türkiye'ye giriş yapmakta olan köylü grubu bombaladı. 35 kişi öldü, üç kişi de yaralandı

JETLER BOMBA YAĞDIRDI ÇOĞUNLUĞU ÇOCUKTU

İstihbarat MİT ajanından geldi

Asla örtbas edilmeyecek

Askerleri göğürsen korkma...

(Headline: State bombed its own people - 35 died)

This qualitative example is at least suggestive that, although all titles deemed the airstrike as a major news event in its own right, there were differences in the ways in which this tragedy was framed and sourced. For instance, Taraf and Cumhuriyet do not seem to defer to the government line as completely as Huriyet and Zaman. In the coverage of Taraf and Cumhuriyet, different sources are used and they are more victim focused. To determine whether this specific case is exceptional or more widely indicative, it requires further statistical and qualitative analysis of the sampled content.

7.3 Locating the News

The location of news items is also an important indicator of the value attributed to particular issues and events. When we look at where the news items regarding the Kurdish Issue have been usually located in the newspapers, as table 7.2 below suggests, most of the Kurdish Issue news

items have been covered in what I have coded as ‘other general news section’, excluding front or second pages. While 77% of news items are on ‘other’ pages; 6% have been on the second pages, and the Kurdish Issue has been covered on the designated pages by 4%. Adding all the news items seen on the front pages (news, editorial, lead and non-lead) we see that 13% of the news about the Kurds has been reported on the first page of the paper, while 87% of news items are, on ‘other’ pages (including the second and the designated page). Accordingly, the front page editorial news items where the reporter’s identity is not shown (lead and non-lead) are more (8%) than front-page news items where the reporter’s identity has been disclosed (5%).

Table 7.2: Locations of the news items across the newspapers

Newspaper-News item-Item Location									
Newspaper	News Item	Item Location							Total
		Designated page	Front page lead editorial	Front page lead news	Front page non-lead editorial	Front page non-lead news	Other general news section	Second general news section page	
Cumhuriyet	TRT6	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	6
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Kurdish Issue1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	Uludere Airstrike	2	2	4	7	6	56	1	78
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	5
	Kurdish Issue2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		3	2	4	7	6	70	2	94
Hurriyet	TRT6	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	6
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	11
	Kurdish Issue1	3	0	1	0	1	9	6	20
	Uludere Airstrike	0	3	0	5	1	69	0	78
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
	Kurdish Issue2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total		4	3	1	5	3	97	7	120
Ortadogu	TRT6	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	5
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	1	1	0	0	1	4	0	7
	Kurdish Issue1	0	0	0	2	0	2	4	8
	Uludere Airstrike	0	2	0	8	2	36	0	48
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	1	2	0	0	0	17	0	20
	Kurdish Issue2	0	1	0	2	0	24	0	27
Total		2	7	0	12	4	85	5	115
Taraf	TRT6	0	0	0	1	1	9	0	11
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	0	1	0	0	0	17	1	19
	Kurdish Issue1	3	0	4	2	0	2	17	28
	Uludere Airstrike	9	4	2	10	2	115	0	142
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	13
	Kurdish Issue2	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7
Total		12	5	6	13	3	163	18	220
Zaman	TRT6	0	1	2	1	0	19	2	25
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	0	0	0	0	1	9	1	11
	Kurdish Issue1	2	0	0	0	0	3	5	10
	Uludere Airstrike	5	1	1	0	0	72	0	79
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	2	0	0	0	1	4	0	7
	Kurdish Issue2	0	0	1	0	0	29	0	30
Total		9	2	4	1	2	136	8	162
Total	TRT6	0	2	2	2	3	39	5	53
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	1	2	0	0	2	42	2	49
	Kurdish Issue1	8	0	5	4	1	20	32	70
	Uludere Airstrike	16	12	7	30	11	348	1	425
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	5	2	0	0	1	40	0	48
	Kurdish Issue2	0	1	1	2	0	62	0	66
Total		30	19	15	38	18	551	40	711

The other notable point is that all five newspapers have not seemed keen to cover the news regarding TRT6 and Kurdish Issue (in both periods January 2009 and 2012) on their front pages. While secularist Cumhuriyet and Hurriyet have not reported the news regarding the launch of TRT6, the nationalist Ortadogu only reported it twice on its front page. Although TRT6 is seen only twice, Taraf daily gave nine news items in 2009 regarding the Kurdish Issue on its front page whereas they did not cover any news on their front page in 2012. Limited news coverage regarding TRT6 and the Kurdish Issue also are conspicuous in religious Zaman daily where TRT6 news is covered only 4 times, Kurdish Issue news twice in 2009 and only once in the one-month period in 2012.

The same pattern of coverage was also evident for the Uludere Airstrike and the news which tackles the airstrike in relation with the Kurdish Issue in the country. Although the newspapers tended to ignore the breaking news on the next day of the event, Uludere Airstrike has been on the media agenda since the very first days of 2012 and the evidence suggests it dominated the front pages for the sample period, at least with some papers. According to table (7.2) above, secularist Cumhuriyet ran 19 items on its front pages during this period; liberal Taraf, 18; nationalist Ortadogu, 14; centrist Hurriyet, 9 and religious Zaman only 2. When we come to Taraf and Zaman dailies we see noteworthy increases of designated pages; Taraf by nine and Zaman by seven. These results further corroborate my initial findings that suggest the airstrike was deemed more intrinsically newsworthy than the creation of TRT6. There were only 9 front page items that solely focused on the creation of the channel whereas there were 60 lead items on the airstrike.

Looking at the item type, the table below (7.3) shows that of the item types regarding the Kurdish Issue (all of the issues combined), 28% were columns, 38% were editorials, 30% were news items and 2% were interviews. As some of the interviewees also pointed out, because the news editors abstain to cover the 'controversial' issues directly in their newspapers due to economic or political pressure, they prefer to let the columnist write about sensitive issues as it is generally accepted that newspaper columnists are mostly responsible for their writings. The second way to avoid legal or political pressure is to cover the sensitive news as an editorial because these news items are being presented by the name of the newspaper itself rather than the reporter's name (interviewee profiles table number 3, 4, 9, 10, 12). That's why I think the rate of columns and editorials are higher than the news items or the interviews regarding the sampled events.

Table 7.3: Types of news items across the papers

Newspaper-News item-Item type								
Newspaper	News Item	Item type						Total
		Column	Editorial	Feature item	Interview	News item	Op-ed	
Cumhuriyet	TRT6	1	4	0	0	1	0	6
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Kurdish Issue1	1	2	0	0	1	0	4
	Uludere Airstrike	9	42	0	1	26	0	78
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	3	1	0	1	0	0	5
	Kurdish Issue2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		14	50	0	2	28	0	94
Hurriyet	TRT6	1	3	0	0	2	0	6
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	2	2	0	0	7	0	11
	Kurdish Issue1	3	5	2	0	10	0	20
	Uludere Airstrike	18	33	0	0	27	0	78
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
	Kurdish Issue2	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Total		27	43	2	0	48	0	120
Ortadogu	TRT6	2	3	0	0	0	0	5
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	4	3	0	0	0	0	7
	Kurdish Issue1	0	8	0	0	0	0	8
	Uludere Airstrike	9	38	0	0	0	0	48
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	14	6	0	0	0	0	20
	Kurdish Issue2	13	14	0	0	0	0	27
Total		42	72	0	0	0	0	115
Taraf	TRT6	3	4	0	0	4	0	11
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	9	3	0	2	4	1	19
	Kurdish Issue1	2	13	0	6	7	0	28
	Uludere Airstrike	56	44	0	1	41	0	142
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	12	0	0	0	1	0	13
	Kurdish Issue2	3	3	0	0	1	0	7
Total		85	67	0	9	58	1	220
Zaman	TRT6	3	12	1	2	5	2	25
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	4	3	0	0	3	1	11
	Kurdish Issue1	4	2	0	0	2	2	10
	Uludere Airstrike	16	20	0	0	43	0	79
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	4	0	0	0	1	2	7
	Kurdish Issue2	3	4	0	0	23	0	30
Total		34	41	1	2	77	7	162
Total	TRT6	10	26	1	2	39	2	53
	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	19	12	0	2	14	2	49
	Kurdish Issue1	10	30	2	6	20	2	70
	Uludere Airstrike	108	177	0	2	138	0	425
	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	35	7	0	1	3	2	48
	Kurdish Issue2	20	21	0	0	25	0	66
Total		202	273	3	13	212	8	711

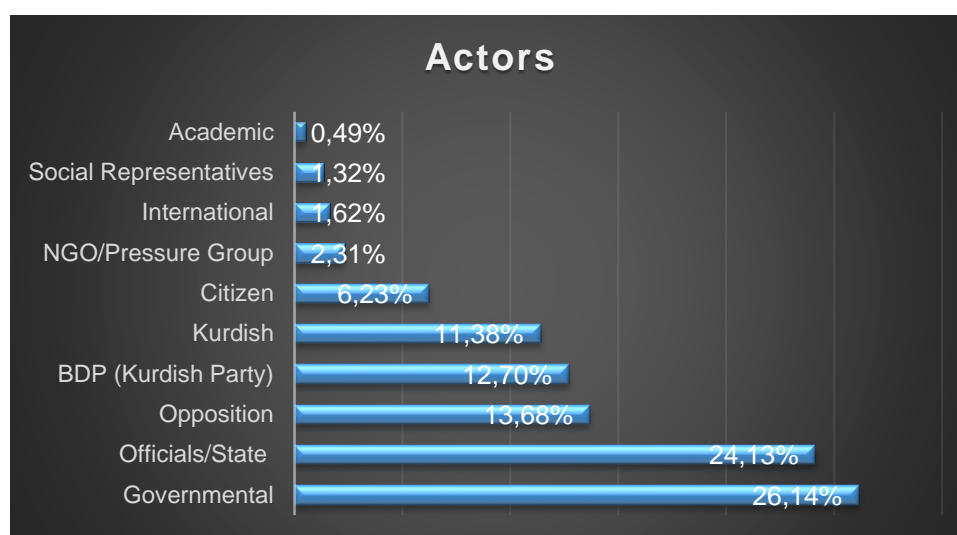
However, there is an interesting distinction here. The types of coverage of Taraf and Cumhuriyet dailies correspond to the previous qualitative analysis above which are more closely examined in the forthcoming tables. While these two newspapers mostly covered the airstrike on their front pages and gave the most coverage overall of the airstrikes they sourced the airstrike story in a different way to other papers - more victim-focused, voicing diverse parts adopting a different frame and giving greater editorial prominence to the story.

7.4 Actors: Stopwatch Balance

One of the main features of news media, which has long been the central point of news production discussions, is about their impartiality (Harrison, 2005: P. 97). This approach has been described as the idea of balanced public forum which “reflect all perspectives and points of views in any major controversy, as well as include the voices of a diverse range of actors, groups and interests” (Dragomir, 2010: p. 259). While the idea of *balanced public forum* also refers to the ability of the media in creating a deliberative public sphere; the *stop-watch balance* in this context points to the equity of coverage given to different types of political actors (group, representatives, spokespersons) and whether they are more favourably treated in some papers than others (Semetko et al, 2012).

Looking at the sampled dates and items regarding the Kurdish Issue, figure 7.2 shows which individuals, groups, organisations and institutions featured most prominently in coverage.

Figure 7.2: Total distribution of the actors in categories across the newspapers



It is evident that, in aggregate terms, state/ governmental sources were most prominent. Here while the governmental actors accounted for 26% of appearances and state officials⁴ gained visibility by 24%, the remaining 50% is divided among the other 8 categories. Although the political opposition members have seen by 13.70%, the Kurdish Political Party (BDP) members came after them at 12.70% followed by other Kurdish actors at 11%.

The dominance of governmental and state sources in this coverage is not entirely unique to Turkish news media (see Schlesinger, 1990 and Seymour-Ure, 1987 for discussions about the tendency of these ‘leadership arenas’ to dominate in UK political reporting). But it is striking how

⁴ *Governmental Actors* refers member of the government party and *state officials* refer to the state authorities such as head of intelligence service, mayors, police and army.

marginal other civil society actors were in this coverage. In this regard, the first signs regarding the possibility of the Turkish media to create a pluralistic/deliberative public sphere might be discussed through this figure. While all five newspapers seem to prefer to access politician news sources as the first sources (including the Kurdish ones) at 80%, non-political pressure groups, university members and citizens achieve a marginal collective presence of 10%. Academics represent only 0.49%, group representatives 1%, NGO members 2% and ordinary citizens from society 6%.

The imbalance of actors included in the news stories can also be seen in totals of their length of quotations. As table 7.4 below suggests when we look at the distribution of the quotation lengths across the newspapers there are three main points for consideration: (1) the liberal Taraf is the newspapers having the highest total of quotations while religious-conservative Zaman has the lowest by 16.09%. Besides, governmental actors seem to have the highest quotations in both these dailies and centrist Hurriyet which is also claimed to be nationalist: Taraf, 31%, Hurriyet 45% and Zaman 45.50%. (2) We again see the numerical dominance of the governmental actors because they were quoted by 32.17% as the highest category followed by the opposition members by 20.37%. (3) The lowest rate again goes for the actors who would more closely point the possibility of Turkish journalism to contribute a deliberative democracy: NGOs by 4% (1318), citizens 4% (1217), social representatives by 2% (639) and academics by 1% (380). NGOs seem to be least prominent in Taraf and most prominent in Ortadogu and Cumhuriyet. Here, although the total of quotations is so short given to the academics in all five newspapers, we see that the secularist Cumhuriyet and nationalist Ortadogu dailies quoted no word from them while liberal Taraf quoted 190 words as the highest among all others.

Table 7.4: Total distribution of the actors' quotations length in categories across the newspapers

Actors in Category	Newspapers											
	Cumhuriyet		Hürriyet		Ortadoğu		Taraf		Zaman		Total	
	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%
Academics	0	0	103	1.59	0	0	190	2.49	87	1.71	380	1.20%
NGOs/Pressure Group	390	7	250	3.86	640	9.21	20	0.26	18	0.35	1318	4.16%
Ordinary People/Citizens	3	0.1	300	4.63	0	0	811	10.6	103	2.02	1217	3.84%
Kurdish Actors	1102	20	135	2.08	94	1.35	71	0.93	122	2.39	1524	4.81%
Social Representatives	0	0	0	0	0	0	369	4.84	270	5.3	639	2.02%
Officials	518	9.4	1208	18.6	1654	23.8	1022	13.4	1138	22.3	5540	17.48%
Government	709	13	2934	45.3	1834	26.4	2396	31.5	2320	45.5	10193	32.17%
International	327	5.9	123	1.9	65	0.9	320	4.2	0	0	835	2.64%
Opposition	1305	24	734	11.3	2555	36.7	1061	13.9	800	15.7	6455	20.37%
BDP (Kurdish Party)	1186	21	695	10.7	105	1.51	1357	17.8	241	4.73	3584	11.31%
Total	5540	100	6482	100	6947	100	7617	100	5099	100	31685	100.00%

('Wc.' columns = Word count)

Although different rates of quotations may suggest that, some papers are more expansive in their accessed opinion than others; the opposition and NGO members quoted in these newspapers (Cumhuriyet and Ortadoğu) are allegedly close to the political ideologies of the newspapers. While Cumhuriyet mostly quoted from CHP and their leader (Republican People's Party) Ortadoğu mostly quoted from MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) and the leader of the party (see table 7.5 below). The same goes for the NGOs; Cumhuriyet and Ortadoğu quoted from which have been coded as "other NGOs" in the coding schedule: CYD (Association for Supporting Contemporary Life) quoted in secularist Cumhuriyet and Ulku Ocaklari (Association of Turkish Nationalists) quoted in Ortadoğu.

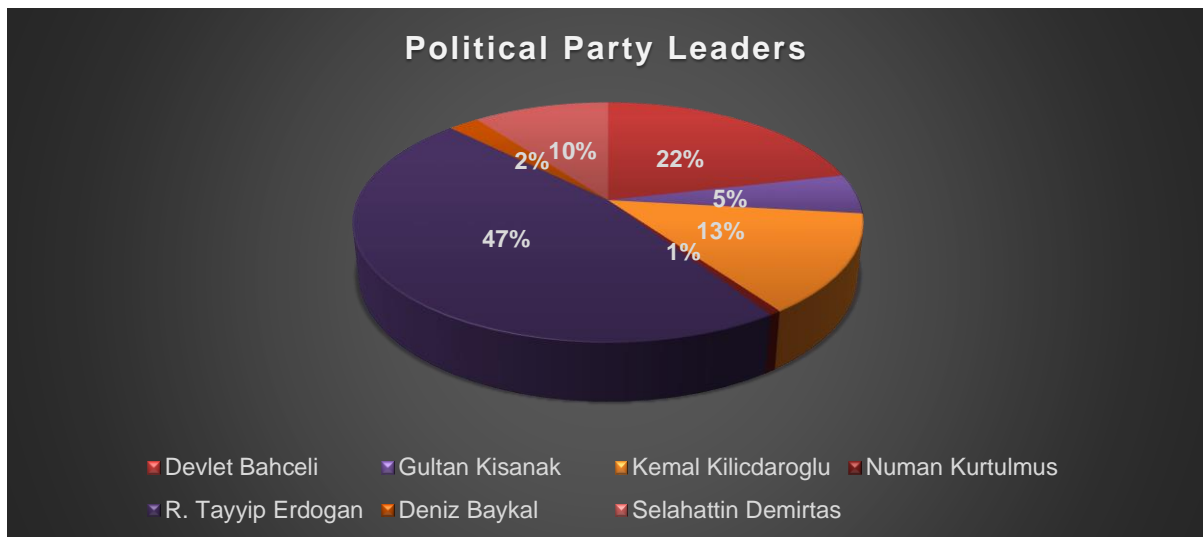
When assessing how the Kurdish politicians and other Kurds have been quoted across the newspapers, table 7.4 suggests that while the Kurdish Party (BDP) actors achieve 11% of the total quotes, other Kurdish actors achieved only 4.81%. These rates vary in other newspapers: the secularist Cumhuriyet has the highest rate of 21% for the Kurdish politicians and 20% for other Kurds which is higher than the liberal Taraf daily which quoted Kurdish non-political figures less than 1% and the politicians nearly 18% of the time. The lowest rate in lengths of Kurdish quotations as expected are in Ortadoğu daily which finds less than 3% in total of BDP and other Kurdish actors. This rate increases to nearly 13% in centrist-secular Hurriyet daily. Although Zaman daily in general seems to

have a more positive stance on the Kurdish Issue, when it comes to rates of Kurdish media access they lag behind Ortadogu daily at just over 7% in quoting from the BDP and other Kurdish actors.

After giving the actors' lengths of quotations rates, looking at how the sampled newspapers gave voice to the different actors from different political/ideological backgrounds would also give us insights into why for instance some newspapers seem to have a higher quotation length for opposition members (see table 7.4 and figure 7.9).

As can be seen from figure 7.9 and table 7.5 below when looking at how the political party leaders in Turkey have been quoted across these five newspapers we again see that AKP leader R. Tayyip Erdogan leads with 47%. Devlet Bahceli, leader of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) comes next with 21% followed by the leader of the secularist main opposition party leader CHP (Republican People's Party) Kemal Kilicdaroglu with 13%. Here the Kurdish party leaders (BDP - Peace and Democracy Party) are again among the least quoted leaders; while the female co-president is quoted 5% of the time the male co-head is quoted at 10%. Lastly, the leader of religious party (Voice of People Party - HSP) leader Numan Kurtulmus is quoted only 1% of the time and former leader (Deniz Baykal) of secularist main opposition party (CHP) is quoted at 2%.

Figure 7.3: Total distribution of the political party leaders' quotations length across newspapers



When we scrutinise how the papers quoted from the leaders, at the table 7.5, we see the dominance of the PM at all five newspapers (with the highest rate in religious Zaman daily); thereafter each paper quotes from the leader they are allegedly close to. For instance while the nationalist Ortadogu quoted the Nationalist Movement Party leader 37% of the time they did not quote either of the Kurdish leaders at all. On the other hand the centre-secularist daily Hurriyet also quoted the

nationalist leader more than others (excluding the PM) at 23% while they quoted nothing from the female co-head of the Kurdish party and only 2% (214) from the male leader. The main opposition party leader was quoted 20% of the time in Cumhuriyet, interestingly his rate increases to 22% in the nationalist Ortadoğu. Accordingly we see the main opposition leader quoted only at 7% in liberal Taraf and at 10% in religious Zaman.

Table 7.5: Total distribution of the Political Party Leaders' quotations length across newspapers

Political Party Leaders	Newspapers										Total	
	Cumhuriyet		Hürriyet		Ortadoğu		Taraf		Zaman			
	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%	Wc.	%
Devlet Bahçeli	438	20.64%	527	22.89%	852	36.58%	71	4.26%	297	16.69%	2185	21.42%
Gultan Kisanak	301	14.18%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	218	13.07%	28	1.57%	547	5.36%
Kemal Kilicdaroglu	427	20.12%	124	5.39%	519	22.28%	109	6.53%	182	10.23%	1361	13.34%
Numan Kurtulmus	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	66	3.71%	66	0.65%
R. Tayyip Erdogan	591	27.85%	1437	62.42%	958	41.13%	744	44.60%	1030	57.90%	4760	46.67%
Selahattin Demirtas	365	2.00%	214	2.00%	0	2.00%	342	2.00%	125	2.00%	1046	2.00%
Deniz Baykal	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	184	11.03%	51	2.87%	235	2.30%
Total	2122	100%	2302	100%	2329	100%	1668	100%	1779	100%	10200	100%

If we focus on how the Kurdish political leaders are quoted in these five newspapers we realize that Cumhuriyet daily is the paper which quoted in the highest rate of 16% (666 in sum of both Kurdish leaders). Here liberal Taraf, which reported more news items (31%) related to the Kurdish Issue (see table 7.1), is expected to have a higher quotation but the total quotation is 560 words (15%). Following this although Zaman daily covered the second highest news items after Taraf, they only quoted 153 (4%) words from Kurdish party leaders - less than secular-centrist Hurriyet daily that quoted 214 words (2%) from one of the Kurdish co-heads. As daily Zaman were claimed to be on the government side at the launch of TRT6 and at the happening of the Uludere Airstrike they seem to keep the balance of governmental pressure by not quoting much from the Kurdish leaders but instead quoted from the government members and official actors as seen table 7.5.

7.4.1 What Appearances Tell Us?

After examining the quotation length of the actors in the papers, the image of the actors in the newspapers could also give us insights regarding the representation of the Kurdish Issue in the mainstream media as the table below suggests, while covering the Kurdish Issue news items all five newspapers seem to mention the actors (49%) and they directly quoted and pictured the actors (18%) regardless of their poli-ethnic background, if we give a whole look at the appearance of the actors across sampled news within the five newspapers. Although newspapers are limited for space,

journalists' preferences for not picturing and quoting the actors but rather be contented with mentioning, may tell us something about the politics of media access and the power relationship and the factors influencing the construction of the news debated in chapter one.

Table 7.6: Appearance of the actors across the newspapers

Newspaper and Appearance						
Newspaper	Appearance					Total
	Mentioned only	Pictured only	Directly quoted not pictured	Directly quoted and pictured	Mentioned and pictured not quoted	
Cumhuriyet	47.11%	0.58%	32.08%	17.34%	2.89%	100.00%
Hurriyet	45.59%	0.25%	28.46%	18.14%	7.56%	100.00%
Ortadogu	59.72%	0.00%	20.56%	15.56%	4.17%	100.00%
Taraf	48.09%	0.00%	28.09%	17.30%	6.52%	100.00%
Zaman	45.85%	0.00%	25.98%	21.62%	6.55%	100.00%
Total of All	49.00%	0.15%	27.02%	18.15%	5.68%	100.00%

As stated in the table above the actors across the sample in five newspapers were mostly mentioned only. When we specifically look at how the governmental actors appeared across the papers we see the same trend in government members' appearances. While they were mentioned at almost 48% (254 times) they were quoted but not pictured at 30% and both quoted and pictured at 18% (out of 533). The nationalist Ortadogu mostly mentioned the government members and conservative Zaman had the highest rate for quoting and picturing the governmental actors at 30%.

Table 7.7: Governmental actors and their appearances across the newspapers

Governmental Actors- Appearance												
Newspaper	Appearance										Total	
	Mentioned only		Pictured only		Directly quoted not pictured		Directly quoted and pictured		Mentioned and Pictured not quoted			
	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%
Cumhuriyet	55	22%	0	0.00%	27	17%	11	11%	3	14%	96	18.01%
Hurriyet	52	20%	0	0.00%	35	22%	17	17%	6	29%	110	20.64%
Ortadogu	65	26%	0	0.00%	26	16%	17	17%	0	0%	108	20.26%
Taraf	49	19%	0	0.00%	46	29%	24	24%	5	24%	124	23.26%
Zaman	33	13%	0	0.00%	26	16%	29	30%	7	33%	95	17.82%
Total	254	100%	0	0%	160	100%	98	100%	21	100%	533	100%

The rate in only mentioning the official actors increases to 52% (out of 492) as the table below suggests; but their rate to be directly quoted and pictured are close to the government members: 18%. On the other hand Taraf daily seem to have the highest rate (23.26%) in covering both government members (see table above) and official actors at 29%.

Table 7.8: Official actors and their appearances across the newspapers

Official Actors- Appearance													
Newspaper	Appearance										Total		
	Mentioned only		Pictured only		Directly quoted not pictured		Directly quoted and pictured		Mentioned and pictured not quoted				
	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	
Cumhuriyet	42	16%	1	100%	20	19%	18	20%	4	10%	85	17%	
Hurriyet	46	18%	0	0%	28	27%	21	24%	11	26%	106	22%	
Ortadogu	30	12%	0	0%	8	8%	12	14%	7	17%	57	12%	
Taraf	87	34%	0	0%	28	27%	18	20%	11	26%	144	29%	
Zaman	52	20%	0	0%	20	19%	19	22%	9	21%	100	20%	
Total	257	100%	1	100%	104	100%	88	100%	42	100%	492	100%	

However, the table below which looks at how the opposition actors appeared proposes that the opposition members were directly quoted but not pictured (38%) and directly quoted and pictured (22%) more than the governmental and official actors (out of 279). While secularist Cumhuriyet seem to mostly quote the opposition actors without picturing them (28%) the nationalist Ortadogu had the highest rate in quoting and picturing the opposition members (31%). Of course as shown in table 7.4 and having the highest rate in being quoted does not refer to the length of their quotation since the quotation table (7.4) suggests that opposition members at 20% trail the governmental members at 32%.

Table 7.9: Opposition actors and their appearances across the newspapers

Opposition Actors- Appearance												
Newspaper	Appearance										Total	
	Mentioned only		Pictured only		Directly quoted not pictured		Directly quoted and pictured		Mentioned and pictured not quoted			
	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%
Cumhuriyet	24	22%	0	0%	30	28%	14	23%	0	0%	68	24%
Hurriyet	25	23%	0	0%	18	17%	12	20%	0	0%	55	20%
Ortadogu	31	28%	0	0%	16	15%	19	31%	1	100%	67	24%
Taraf	13	12%	0	0%	20	19%	3	5%	0	0%	36	13%
Zaman	18	16%	0	0%	22	21%	13	21%	0	0%	53	19%
Total	111	100%	0	0%	106	100%	61	100%	1	100%	279	100%

Although the newspapers seem to have preferred mostly mentioning the actors (governmental, opposition etc.) when we look at the appearance of the BDP (the Kurdish Party) actors) we again see that all newspapers, while covering the Kurdish Party members, mentioned them at a rate of 48% but directly quoted and pictured them at only 18% (out of 259). If we look at how each paper covered them we see that although the BDP actors mostly appeared in religious Zaman (24%) they pictured and quoted them by 21% but mostly mentioned them at 25%. As the table suggest, BDP actors are seen in the nationalist Ortadogu daily as well at 21% but they were only pictured quoted by 10% while mentioned only at 27%. Here another interesting point is that although Taraf Daily is the paper which mostly covered the Kurdish Issue news at 30% (see table 7.1), the appearance of the Kurdish politicians is the least at 15% although they are also mostly the ones who directly quoted and pictured them 27%.

Table 7.10: Appearance of BDP actors across the newspapers

BDP Actors- Appearance												
Newspaper	Appearance										Total	
	Mentioned only		Pictured only		Directly quoted not pictured		Directly quoted and pictured		Mentioned and pictured not quoted			
	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.
Cumhuriyet	27	22%	0	0%	16	22%	10	21%	2	17%	55	21%
Hurriyet	21	17%	0	0%	13	18%	10	21%	4	33%	48	19%
Ortadogu	34	27%	0	0%	11	15%	5	10%	4	33%	54	21%
Taraf	12	10%	0	0%	14	19%	13	27%	1	8%	40	15%
Zaman	31	25%	0	0%	20	27%	10	21%	1	8%	62	24%
Total	125	100%	0	0%	74	100%	48	100%	12	100%	259	100%

When we particularly look at how the PKK members (included as ‘Kurdish Actors’ in this study) we see that the rate for ‘mentioned only’ increases to 73% while they are directly quoted and mentioned at 8% (out of 209 appearance). As the table below suggests, the appearance of the PKK members across the newspapers varies. While all papers mostly tend to only mention them without picturing or quoting, this rate is the highest in religious Zaman. As the table below suggest interestingly nationalist Ortadogu quote them more than other papers do. Of course this appearance does not point to a positive approach on its own as for instance PKK members achieve ‘mentioned only’ (86%) while the paper did not directly quoted and pictured them (0%).

Table 7.11: PKK members and their appearance across the newspapers⁵

Newspaper-PKK members-Appearance																	
Newspaper	Actor	Cumhuriyet			Hurriyet			Ortadogu			Taraf			Zaman			Total of Dispositions
		Abdullah Ocalan	Abdullah Ocalan	Other PKK Members	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	Other PKK Members	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	Other PKK Members	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	Other PKK Members	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	Other PKK Members	
Appearance	Mentioned only	100%	16.7%	80.0%	62.5%	50.0%	86%	60.0%	50.0%	86%	75.0%	66.7%	71.7%	73.40%			
	Pictured only	0%	0%	5.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.48%			
	Directly quoted not pictured	0%	16.7%	10.0%	20.8%	50.0%	14.0%	20.0%	0%	14.0%	16.7%	0%	11.7%	13.00%			
	Directly quoted and pictured	0%	16.7%	5.0%	8.3%	0%	0%	20.0%	50.0%	0%	8.3%	33.3%	11.7%	8.12%			
	Mentioned and pictured not quoted	0%	50.0%	0%	8.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5.0%	5.00%			
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			

⁵ The totals of the appearances are based on the total actual numbers (frequencies) of the appearances.

Here daily Taraf which is known to be the most assertive newspaper in covering the Kurdish Issue also seems to favour mentioning the PKK members (72%) rather than picturing and quoting them. However, compared with other four newspapers Taraf daily is the newspaper that mostly pictures and quotes the PKK members (14%) which decreases to 12% in religious Zaman. Hurriyet daily on the other hand seems to 'mentioned and pictured but not quoted' at 50%.

7.4.2 Positioning the Actors

Without doubt, as can be seen in analyses of how the actors appeared across the newspapers and how they are quoted, covering news items related to an issue does not say much on its own regarding the approach of a newspaper. To be able to understand the stance of a media organisation for the covered topics, it is necessary to analyse how they presented different actors contextually. As can be seen in the table below the five newspapers have differently approached the previously categorised subjects related to the Kurdish Issue. Actually these approaches are also able to tell us about the ideological background of sampled newspapers: Cumhuriyet - secular leftist; Hurriyet, secular - centrist; Ortadogu - nationalist; Taraf - liberal and Zaman- religious.

While coding the dispositions I have tried to demonstrate how each sampled newspaper presented actors from diverse backgrounds (e.g. international actors, politicians, PKK members, NGOs, academics), in particular whether they were presented as attacking, defending or in a non-evaluative position for the main subjects of the content analysis (i.e. Kurdish Issue, TRT6 and Uludere Airstrike - see table 7.1). Analysing dispositions of the actors (see table 7.12 below for the dispositions) in this way give us some insights into the evaluative treatment of news sources (i.e. are some mostly presented in a defensive stance? Are others presented on the front foot, attacking others? Does this vary across titles?) and into the stance of the newspaper for the actors and the issues analysed.

The main remarkable point in all five newspapers (as shown above in figure 7.2) is the visibility of the governmental and official actors despite variations within the sample. Secondly, the highest rate observable in all five newspapers was "no evaluation position evident" for the actors' dispositions. Although some disposition codes were merged or ignored due to their very close indications (merged) or insignificance (ignored) while producing the table, it was mostly difficult to see significant differences appearing among the remaining dispositions.

As seen in the table below, linking the earlier observations about the apparently more critical stance of this paper towards the government, the secular-leftist daily Cumhuriyet seems to have actors' dispositions mostly as 'attacking governmental policies' (e.g. 43% for oppositions, 30%

for NGOs). While they covered the actors who defend the Uludere airstrike at 5%, the rate of those who were attacking the action was 14%. On the other hand the actors seen in Cumhuriyet attacking the PKK (Kurdish) policies at 8% having no actors to defend the PKK.

Table 7.12: Actors' Dispositions in Cumhuriyet

Dispositions of Actors in Cumhuriyet										
Disposition	Academic	BDP	Citizen	Government	Kurdish	NGO	Official	Opposition	Social Representatives	Total of Dispositons
Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	5.9%	0.0%	1.7%
Mainly attacking government policies	0.0%	20.0%	24.0%	10.4%	25.0%	30.0%	8.2%	42.6%	0.0%	19.5%
Mainly attacking PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.4%	0.0%	10.0%	11.8%	7.4%	0.0%	7.6%
Mainly attacking Turkish policies	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	10.4%	0.0%	10.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%
Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	27.3%	40.0%	7.3%	25.0%	30.0%	4.7%	11.8%	0.0%	14.0%
Mainly defending government policies	0.0%	3.6%	4.0%	19.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	4.4%	0.0%	9.9%
Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Mainly defending launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%
Mainly defending PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	2.9%	0.0%	3.8%
Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	4.4%	0.0%	4.9%
No evaluative position evident	100%	29.1%	28.0%	23.0%	50.0%	20.0%	36.5%	20.6%	0.0%	27.6%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.0%

The secular-centrist Hurriyet daily, compared with Cumhuriyet had a lower rate for “attacking government policies” actors at 5%. While they also had no disposition defending PKK policies, they had 4% attacking PKK policies. In this newspaper the Uludere event was also attacked (15%) more than defended (6%). The other observable point is that they tend to cover the pro-Kurdish party (BDP) members as ‘defending governmental policies’ at 19% while other opposition members defend the government (11%). The NGOs they covered seem to mostly defend Turkish policies (20%) while they were not disposed towards defending Kurdish or PKK policies.

Table 7.13: Actors' Disposition in Hurriyet

Dispositions of Actors in Hurriyet										
Disposition	Academic	BDP	Citizen	Government	Kurdish	NGO	Official	Opposition	Social Representatives	Total of Dispositions
Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	6.3%	24.1%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.4%	0.0%	33.3%	5.8%
Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	2.8%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
Mainly attacking government policies	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%	2.7%	5.6%	20.0%	1.9%	12.7%	0.0%	4.8%
Mainly attacking PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.6%	3.6%	0.0%	4.0%
Mainly attacking Turkish policies	0.0%	12.5%	10.3%	13.6%	8.3%	0.0%	4.7%	5.5%	33.3%	9.1%
Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	25.0%	27.6%	6.4%	19.4%	20.0%	7.5%	27.3%	0.0%	14.9%
Mainly defending government policies	0.0%	18.8%	3.4%	20.9%	8.3%	0.0%	12.3%	10.9%	0.0%	13.9%
Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Mainly defending launching of TRT6	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%
Mainly defending PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.0%	2.1%	3.4%	5.5%	0.0%	20.0%	11.3%	0.0%	33.3%	5.8%
Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	2.1%	3.4%	2.7%	2.8%	0.0%	1.9%	3.6%	0.0%	2.5%
No evaluative position evident	0.0%	22.9%	27.6%	37.3%	47.2%	30.0%	37.7%	34.5%	0.0%	35.0%
Total	0.0%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.0%

Ortadogu Daily (said to be a nationalist newspaper and close to the Nationalist Movement Party – MHP - in Turkey by its editor-in-chief interviewed for this study) attacked both governmental policies (15%) and Turkish policies (10%). Kurdish actors and NGOs here mostly attacked governmental policies as well, 21% for the former and 63% for the latter, which can also be linked to the qualitative analysis at the start of this chapter. *Ortadogu* did cover the NGOs but along with attacking governmental policies, they seem to mainly attack Kurdish policies (12.5%) and the launch of TRT6 (12.5%).

Table 7.14: Actors' Disposition in Ortadogu

Dispositions of Actors in Ortadogu										
Disposition	Academic	BDP	Citizen	Government	Kurdish	NGO	Official	Opposition	Social Representatives	Total of Dispositions
Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	12.5%	14.0%	10.4%	0.0%	6.1%
Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	12.5%	5.3%	7.5%	0.0%	5.0%
Mainly attacking government policies	0.0%	9.3%	0.0%	8.3%	20.6%	62.5%	7.0%	26.9%	0.0%	15.0%
Mainly attacking PKK policies	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	11.9%	0.0%	4.7%
Mainly attacking Turkish policies	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	13.9%	19.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	10.3%
Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	1.8%	1.5%	0.0%	2.8%
Mainly defending government policies	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	4.6%	6.3%	0.0%	3.5%	4.5%	0.0%	4.7%
Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	8.3%	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	6.2%
Mainly defending launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Mainly defending PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	3.2%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	7.5%	0.0%	4.4%
No evaluative position evident	0.0%	44.4%	100.0%	40.7%	15.9%	12.5%	43.9%	26.9%	0.0%	34.4%
Total	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.0%

Accordingly because the launch of TRT6 has been described as a *manifestation of Kurdish acknowledgement* by many interviewees (e.g. interviewee profiles table number 1, 2, 4, 5 and 13); Ortadogu seems to have only government members (7%) and officials (2%) as defending the opening of the TV channel. These low percentages of actors defending the creation of TRT6 might be a product of the limited amount of coverage given to the issue, yet, when we look at the secularist newspapers Cumhuriyet and Hurriyet (see tables above), we see the similar approach with Ortadogu Daily in terms of TRT6. While both newspapers show government and officials as being in support of the launch of TRT6 the rate of Kurdish actors attacking the launch of TRT6 increases to 8% in Hurriyet. As table 7.2 (above) suggests, their preferences not to cover the opening of the channel on the front page on the second day of its launch but reporting it on 'other pages' seem to confirm this conclusion. However, the nationalist Ortadogu goes further and the front page (as shown below) stated that the start of the Kurdish channel is a betrayal of the country by the government.

Image 7.5: Front page coverage of Ortadoğu Daily on launch of TRT6⁶



(Headline: Betrayal with the hands of the government)

Again in connection with their nationalist stance the news items they covered related to the Uludere Airstrike seem to be defending the airstrike at 7%. Although this rate seems to be low, it should be noted that they have structured their approach through criticizing the government and blamed them for not doing enough in countering terrorism. In this context, as stated on the front page of the newspaper on the third day of the airstrike (see below), the nationalists in the country described the Kurdish villagers as being smugglers who could easily mingle with PKK 'terrorists' and so they were needed to be killed for security reasons.

⁶ Ortadoğu Daily covers the launch of TRT6 with the header quoting the nationalist party leader: "Betrayal with the hands of the government" claiming it is a threat to the unity of the Turkish state.

Image 7.6: Front page of Ortadoğu Daily covering Uludere Airstrike⁷

FIKİRDE LİDER GAZETE

ORTADOĞU

1 OCAK
2012 PAZAR
50 KURUS

NE MUTLU TÜRK'ÜM DİYENE

YENİ
YILINIZ
KUTLU
OLSUN

BAHÇELİ'DEN UYARI

MHP Lideri Devlet Bahçeli, Şırnak Uludere'de meydana gelen olayla ilgili yaptığı açıklamada " Talihsiz ve üzücü olayı istismar ederek kan tacirliğine soyunan bedbahtlar, ağzlarından çıkanların nerelere varacağını biraz insaf ve vicdanları varsa hesap etmelidirler" dedi



Uludere Kaymakamı linçten kurtuldu

Herkes silahlı gelmeyin

HDP Şırnak Milletvekili ve Grup Başkanvekili Hatip Kaplan, 35 kişinin öldüğü Irak sınıma tazeyeye göreceği olan İçişleri Bakanı Başar İnce'ye mesaj gönderdi. Kaplan, "Buğün gelmeyin" dedi. ■ 8'de

ŞIRNAK'ın Uludere ilçesindeki olayda hayatını kaybeden 35 kişi için taziyeye ziyaretinde bulunmak üzere Cülyazın köyüne giden Uludere Kaymakamı Naif Yavuz ziyaret sırasında bir grubun taşı ve yumruklarıyla saldırısına uğradı. Kaymakam Yavuz'un atılan taşlar sebebiyle hafif yaralandığı belirtildi. ■ 9'da

"HER şeyden önce Türk devleti terörle mücadelede vatandaşın aydınlanmasını yapacak basiret, bilgi, deneyim ve endişeyle hareket etmelidir" diyen Bahçeli, " Siyasetteki bölücü mihraçlar ve bu son olaydan nemalanma arayışında olan pervasızlar, nedense PKK'nın, arine karındaki masum yavrularla birlikte küçük çocuklara hayasızca kayması, gencecik kızları puslu kurarak katletmesine, sıvı ve masum insanlarımızın hançara yok etmesine buğün kadar sessiz kalmışlardır" açıklaması yaptı.

BAHÇELİ, " münimdir ki, komunun kazanarak kadimle işklistendirilmesi, yas çığrıları, halkına kurşun sıkan ve bomba atan devlet ahlakları büyük bir sorumsuzluk, ahlakçılık ve kömü niyetlilik olarak hatırlanacaktır. Güvenlik kuvvetlerimiz yeni bir cendereye alınarak, terörle mücadelede çok ihtiyaç duyduğumuz moral ve motivasyonlarını toplumun eylemiyle karşılamak için propagandanın mesafe almaması için sorumluluk mevkiinde bulunanlar son derece uyanık olmalıdır" dedi. ■ 9'da



Cevap bekleyen sorular

■ BU için içinde peşmergenin veya PKK terör örgütüyle birlikte uzantılarının da parmağının olup olmadığı mutlaka izah edilmelidir.

■ ÖLENLERİN çoğunlukla aynı ad-eve mensup 29 kişinin bulunduğu dışındığında, PKK'nın yeni militan kadro devirmek ve genç yavaşlarken kullanmak için büyük bir organizasyon içinde olup olmadığı şüphesine de netlik kazandırılmaktadır.

(Headline: Warning from Bahçeli)

When we come to Taraf and Zaman dailies we see a slight difference in news supporting the launch of TRT6. However, this support is mostly seen as defending governmental policies regarding the launch of TRT6 and other improvements regarding the Kurdish Issue. Rather than clearly defending the launch of TRT6, unlike the nationalist daily Ortadoğu, each newspaper seems to cover the news which support the government.

⁷ The front page of the newspaper, quoting from the leader of the Nationalist Movement Party, states that the Turkish State has enough experience in counter terrorism and therefore the separatist claims which indicate the civilians have been killed are incorrect.

Table 7.15: Actors' Disposition in Taraf

Dispositions of Actors in Taraf										
Disposition	Academic	BDP	Citizen	Government	Kurdish	NGO	Official	Opposition	Social Representatives	Total of Dispositions
Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	7.5%	2.5%	0.8%	2.0%	0.0%	6.9%	5.6%	0.0%	4.0%
Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	16.0%	0.0%	2.1%	5.6%	0.0%	3.8%
Mainly attacking government policies	0.0%	10.0%	5.0%	1.6%	12.0%	33.3%	1.4%	16.7%	0.0%	5.2%
Mainly attacking PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	4.0%	0.0%	6.3%	2.8%	25.0%	4.5%
Mainly attacking Turkish policies	0.0%	15.0%	2.5%	4.8%	8.0%	0.0%	2.8%	8.3%	25.0%	5.6%
Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	27.5%	52.5%	1.6%	12.0%	0.0%	6.9%	11.1%	0.0%	12.1%
Mainly defending government policies	25.0%	2.5%	0.0%	21.8%	4.0%	0.0%	7.6%	8.3%	25.0%	10.3%
Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	1.6%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	1.8%
Mainly defending launching of TRT6	25.0%	10.0%	15.0%	8.9%	0.0%	33.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%
Mainly defending PKK policies	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	2.0%	0.0%	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%
Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	2.0%	0.0%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%
No evaluative position evident	50.0%	15.0%	17.5%	41.1%	34.0%	33.3%	34.0%	33.3%	25.0%	32.8%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.0%

However, the actors who supported the launch of TRT6 is highest (8%) in Taraf among other papers. The Kurdish actors' attack of the launch of TRT6 is 16% while they were not disposed to defending the channel. But academics and NGOs seem to defend the opening of the channel, 25% for the former and 33% for the latter.

Table 7.16: Actors' Disposition in Zaman

Dispositions of Actors in Zaman										
Disposition	Academic	BDP	Citizen	Government	Kurdish	NGO	Official	Opposition	Social Representatives	Total of Dispositions
Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	8.1%	12.9%	0.0%	1.3%	21.4%	12.0%	5.7%	0.0%	6.1%
Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	20.0%	1.6%	9.7%	0.0%	7.6%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%
Mainly attacking government policies	0.0%	9.7%	9.7%	3.2%	15.2%	0.0%	1.0%	11.3%	0.0%	6.8%
Mainly attacking PKK policies	20.0%	0.0%	3.2%	11.6%	2.5%	7.1%	6.0%	0.0%	26.3%	5.9%
Mainly attacking Turkish policies	20.0%	4.8%	3.2%	3.2%	16.5%	14.3%	2.0%	1.9%	5.3%	5.9%
Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	0.00%	24.2%	9.7%	3.2%	8.9%	21.4%	3.0%	17.0%	0.0%	9.4%
Mainly defending government policies	20.0%	6.5%	6.5%	26.3%	6.3%	7.1%	6.0%	7.5%	31.6%	11.8%
Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.00%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	1.7%
Mainly defending launching of TRT6	0.00%	0.0%	9.7%	1.1%	1.3%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%
Mainly defending PKK policies	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%	5.7%	0.0%	3.7%
No evaluative position evident	20.0%	41.9%	35.5%	48.4%	31.6%	28.6%	46.0%	49.1%	36.8%	41.9%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

The point which might be taken as confirming this approach is the newspaper's coverage of the launch. As can be seen in the image below the liberal daily Taraf covers the opening of TRT6 on the next day as a 'front-page lead news item' with the heading "The state is astonished", referring to the old, traditional nationalist state and in the sub-heading criticized the ban on making propaganda in Kurdish.

Image 7.7: Taraf Daily's front page coverage of TRT6 launch



(Headline: The state is astonished)

Actually giving the dispositions of PKK actors more clearly seem to give insights regarding the ideological approaches of the newspapers. When we focus on the disposition of the specific Kurdish actors across the newspapers (see table below) we see that they mostly tended to attack the governmental policies or TRT6. The tendency of the newspapers to attack the opening of TRT6 could be read as their portrayal of the Kurdish or PKK actors in a negative way, because this attack on opening of TRT6 or giving no support to its launch (none of actors seem to defend launch of TRT6) was accompanied with attacking governmental or Turkish policies.

Table 7.17: Disposition of the PKK actors across the newspapers⁸

Dispositions of Kurdish Actors Across the Papers														
Newspaper		Cumhuriyet	Hurriyet			Ortadogu			Taraf			Zaman		
Actors		Abdullah Ocalan	Abdullah Ocalan	Other PKK Members	PKK	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	PKK	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	PKK	Abdullah Ocalan	Murat Karayilan	PKK
Disposition	Mainly attacking Kurdish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%
	Mainly attacking launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	16.7%	0.0%	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%
	Mainly attacking government policies	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	20.8%	0.0%	19.4%	0.0%	0.0%	15.2%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%
	Mainly attacking PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	8.3%	33.3%	0.0%
	Mainly attacking Turkish policies	0.0%	16.7%	14.3%	7.7%	16.7%	0.0%	22.2%	20.0%	0.0%	9.1%	8.3%	0.0%	20.0%
	Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike	50.0%	0.0%	14.3%	15.4%	8.3%	0.0%	13.9%	0.0%	50.0%	15.2%	0.0%	0.0%	11.7%
	Mainly defending government policies	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
	Mainly defending Kurdish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%
	Mainly defending launching of TRT6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mainly defending PKK policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	2.8%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
	Mainly defending Turkish policies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	No evaluative position evident	0.0%	83.3%	57.1%	38.5%	16.7%	50.0%	13.9%	60.0%	50.0%	33.3%	66.7%	66.7%	23.3%
	Total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

As can be seen in the table above, there are no Kurdish actors supporting the launch of TRT6 in any of the newspapers. PKK, as an organisation, is portrayed as attacking the launch of TRT6 - 23% in Hurriyet, 18% in liberal Taraf, 14% in Ortadogu and 10% in Zaman. On the other hand, the attack on governmental policies increases to 19% in nationalist Ortadogu and on Turkish policies again to 22%. Furthermore it is possible to add that all five newspapers depicted the Kurdish actors as attacking Turkish and governmental policies which may point to their conflictive way of reporting.

7.5 Themes: Agenda Balance

While evaluating the representation of the Kurdish Issue within the five mainstream newspapers, the first points were the imbalance in media access of Kurdish actors, their appearances and quotation lengths (stop-watch balance). From this perspective it is possible to say that the representation of the Kurdish Issue within the sampled papers and period is shaped by powerful news sources or in an order descending from the most powerful actors (governmental-official) to the least

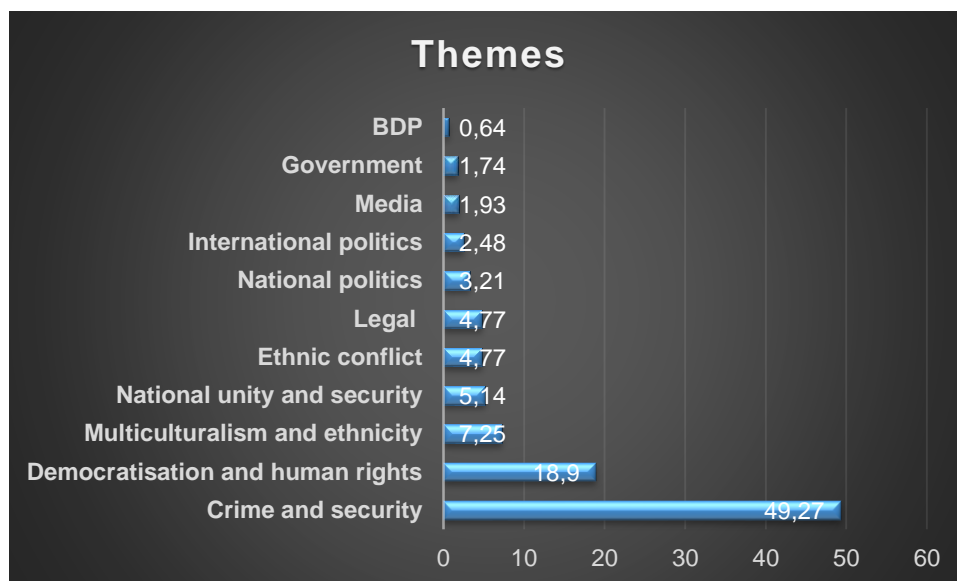
⁸ This table shows dispositions of specific Kurdish (PKK) Actors across all five newspapers; e.g. Abdullah Ocalan (leader of PKK) is seen in Cumhuriyet twice in total (2). He is seen as attacking the government policies in one (50%) and attacking Uludere airstrike in other (50%). As there are no other actors in this newspaper the total of the other dispositions is 0%. The percentages are based on numbers of the times the actors are seen.

powerful (academics-NGOs) or from the politicians towards non-politician actors (see tables 7.4 and figures 7.2 and 7.3). Moreover, despite the appearance of the Kurdish actors (political and civil ones) the low rates in their quotations and appearance type (mostly mentioned only but not pictured or quoted) make us think about the newspapers' marginalisation (directional imbalance) of the Kurdish actors (Norris et al, 1999).

However, to be able to have a comprehensive examination on the representation of the Kurdish Issue and a more coherent point of view regarding the possibility of the Turkish media contributing to a deliberative public-sphere, it is also necessary to look at the *agenda balance* which will give us insights about which themes were prioritized over others within the Kurdish Issue news across the sampled papers.

In this regard figure 7.10 below suggests the imbalance in visibility of different groups of actors is also observable in the themes as well. Although democratisation and human rights or multiculturalism issues were covered, the table shows that the Kurdish Issue was still principally related to the crime and security context at almost 50%. This suggests there is a wider tendency is to cover the Kurdish Issue within this frame of reference, thereby marginalising more 'democratic' debates such as human rights, cultural diversity and ethnic representation. Nonetheless while stating this possibility, it is important to recognise that this is to some extent to be expected, given the sampling criteria.

Figure 7.4: Total distribution of the themes in categories across to the papers



Although there is a huge difference between the proportion of crime and security themes and all other categories (11 theme categories in total), we see the news on the Kurdish Issue is also related to democratisation and human rights at 18% being the second highest rate among the themes after crime and security. Multiculturalism and ethnicity issues follow human rights at 7.25% which actually points to a changing trend if we compare with the appearing actors. Although the actors which appeared (as seen in figure 7.2) are overwhelmingly the politicians and the other political members here the democratic themes come in as second and third while the issues regarding the government come at the end just before the themes regarding the Kurdish Party (BDP).

Being very close to each other, all other theme categories are between 1 and 5 percentile. One of the main issues mostly appears in texts assessing Turkish democracy; 'national unity and security' issues were also highlighted in the newspapers at 5.14% despite the claims of improving democratic views (Bacik and Balamir, 2013). The interesting result here is that although governmental actors mostly appeared as stated above, the newspapers only covered the Kurdish Issue news in relation to governmental themes at only 2%. However, despite it is difficult to report the Kurdish Issue without mentioning or quoting the the Kurdish Political Party members or approaches, themes related to BDP (Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party) are only included at 0.64%.

Although most of the themes have been related to crime and security issues which could also be counted within national security and unity debates when we carefully look at which item was related to crime and security (as has been shown in the table below) we see that Uludere Airstrike was mostly covered within context of crime and security. If we look at the rates of the news items focusing on the airstrike and the news which related it to the Kurdish Issue, we see that 68% of the first and 48% of the latter were reported under the theme of crime and security. Despite the debates at the time of the airstrike, which approached it as a *state crime* and therefore to be prosecuted, as mentioned in qualitative discussion above Ortadogu, Zaman and Hurriyet refrained to highlight the human tragedy or violated rights behind the airstrike.

Table 7.18: Total distribution of the themes in categories across the news items

Theme Category	News Item					
	TRT6	TRT6 and Kurdish Issue	Kurdish Issue 1	Uludere Airstrike	Uludere and Kurdish Issue	Kurdish Issue 2
International politics	2.9%	0.0%	13.5%	1.5%	0.0%	1.8%
National politics	4.4%	5.6%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	3.6%
Government	4.4%	1.1%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.8%
BDP	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.9%
Democratisation and human rights	51.5%	67.4%	20.2%	9.8%	14.6%	13.5%
Multiculturalism and ethnicity	16.2%	14.6%	28.8%	0.7%	6.8%	12.6%
Ethnic conflict	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%	13.5%
National unity and security	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	28.2%	12.6%
Crime and security	1.5%	1.1%	27.9%	68.1%	47.6%	33.3%
Legal	1.5%	2.2%	3.8%	6.3%	0.0%	5.4%
Media	16.2%	7.9%	1.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In addition, *national unity* themes are mostly related to the Uludere news (30%). Again in this context (as shown in the table 7.18) although TRT6 news was not related to *crime issues* and news items which only tackle the Kurdish Issue within TRT6 period covered the security themes at 1%, this rate increases to 68% in 2012 in Uludere airstrike period which points to an increase in crime and security context rather than cultural dimension of the Kurdish Issue, unlike what the interviewees indicated.

Although the *airstrike news* also were related to the democratisation and human rights only at 10%, most of the democratisation and human rights themes were related to TRT6 news at 51% as the launch of the Kurdish channel is seen as a cultural step towards recognising Kurdish rights. However, only 16% of multiculturalism and ethnic issues seem to be related to the TRT6 opening. But news items regarding merely the Kurdish Issue during the TRT6 period is covered within the context of multiculturalism and ethnic issues at 29%. However, this rate goes down to 1% in Uludere news and 13% in Kurdish Issue news in period of the airstrike which demonstrates the influence of the airstrike on the directions of the news coverage.

When looking for which themes were seen in each newspaper, as table 7.19 below shows, crime and security themes are mostly covered in nationalist Ortadoğu and religious zaman at 52% which corresponds to the qualitative analyse above. Although Taraf daily has been the most assertive daily to cover the sensitive debates related to the Kurdish Issue, they also seem to report the news in

a crime and security context at 47%. Besides, we see that the high rates of crime and security also disseminate evenly across the other newspapers.

Table 7.19: Total distribution of the themes in categories in each newspaper

Theme Category	Newspaper				
	Cumhuriyet	Hurriyet	Ortadogu	Taraf	Zaman
BDP	0.60%	0.53%	0.63%	0.59%	0.85%
Crime and security	45.51%	51.06%	51.57%	47.21%	51.69%
Democratisation and human rights	15.57%	12.77%	6.92%	29.03%	19.49%
Ethnic conflict	5.39%	4.26%	6.92%	4.11%	4.24%
Government	2.40%	3.19%	0.63%	0.88%	2.12%
International politics	3.59%	2.66%	2.52%	1.76%	2.54%
Legal	7.19%	3.72%	5.66%	3.23%	5.51%
Media	1.80%	2.13%	4.40%	0.01%	1.27%
Multiculturalism and ethnicity	7.78%	9.57%	5.03%	0.08%	5.08%
National politics	4.79%	4.79%	4.40%	0.01%	2.97%
National unity and security	5.39%	5.32%	11.32%	0.03%	4.24%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Although Taraf daily includes crime and security themes at a high rate, the democratisation and human rights issues also have mostly been covered in Taraf at 29% among all other newspapers. Zaman daily covers democratisation themes at 19% while nationalist Ortadogu relates the Kurdish Issue to human rights only at 7%, the lowest rate. The order for multiculturalism themes stays at the lowest rate in Taraf at 0.08% while it is 9.57% in Hurriyet, 8% in Cumhuriyet and 5% in nationalist Oratodogu and religious Zaman.

7.6 Conclusions

Before going to discuss my results of content analysis I want to present some claims that are made by authors about tendencies in Turkish media while representing the Kurdish Issue which want to compare against my own findings. Bilgic, in this context states that Since the Kurdish conflict gained visibility in the 1980s, it is said that the mainstream Turkish media created important perceptions about the Kurdish conflict, the Kurds, political life of Kurdish people and their representation in the Turkish Parliament (Bilgic, 2008: p. 57). The Turkish media were claimed to have avoided describing the Kurdish Issue as the “struggle for rights” but rather as an “economic and tribal problem” (Yayman, 2011: p. 25). These perceptions did not help to end the conflict but served to prolong it as the media usually related the Kurdish Issue with terrorism and violence; structured the conflict around terror, separatism and backwardness and fed nationalism with the hegemonic state discourses which pushed

the Kurds out of the public sphere (Bulut, 2005: p. 27), as has been mentioned in news construction and power relations in chapter 1.

Erdem, goes further and indicates that, even after the democratic expansion policies the media continued airing videos or covering news which emphasized the economic backwardness of the Kurdish population in Turkey (Erdem, 2013: p. 57). While doing that, the media usually quoted from security members, police or soldiers, rather than sociologists, academicians or the regional people. In this regard, despite a recent alteration towards a more tolerant media, it still is possible to say that the Turkish media ignored and rejected the Kurdish Issue (Aras, 2014: p. 162). Therefore, as has been stated by several influential commentators, but which have not been subjected to rigorous empirical scrutiny, the debate about the Kurdish Issue - whether it is an issue of human rights, social and political problem or an issue of security and economic problem - caused Kurdish rights not to be legitimized and created difficulties for Kurdish politicians while trying to get support from mainstream Turkish society (Kadioglu, 2013: p. 155; Bulut, 2005: p. 123).

In this context, it is possible to state that the results of the content analysis I have done corroborates the claims of these authors to some extent. After analysing the five newspapers' one-month coverage of the Kurdish Issue, mainly in connection with the TRT6 opening and Uludere airstrike, I have shown that the mainstream sampled newspapers have covered the Kurdish Issue, but within a somewhat restricted frame of reference: prioritising the conflict, crime and security themes (see tables 7.18 and 7.19); voicing the governmental-official actors rather than Kurds (politics or non-politics) who are directly part of the events (see table 7.4 and figures 7.2 and 7.9); ignoring the civil actors such as NGOs and victims/citizens and not applying the academics/science members (see table 7.4).

All these issues have been raised by the elite interviewees whose contributions have been thematically analysed in chapters 5 and 6. In this regard, one of the first interesting result of the study is that elites' claims regarding partiality of the media and their tendency to the official approach has been confirmed by the results of the content analysis (interviewee profiles table number 6, 9, 18). For instance the first point raised by the interviewees was the increasing coverage of the Kurdish Issue which also been confirmed by the 711 news items analysed for this study. Secondly, as has been stated by the interviewees, it has been witnessed that some media groups avoided talking about the Kurds even while covering the launch of the first Kurdish public service TV station (TRT6) although this event has been described as the breaking of decades-old taboo and material manifestation (interviewee profiles table number 22, 31, 34) of the official acknowledgement of the Kurds (see table 7.1).

Corresponding to the interviewee claims NGOs, academics and social representatives over the news items have appeared less throughout the 711 news items analysed above. Although Kurdish politicians and civil actors had presence they did not have news access as they were not quoted and pictured equally with other actors. Although the news items were mainly about the Kurds e.g. the launch of TRT6, neither Kurdish politicians nor the civilians were allowed to speak as much as official or opposition actors. Therefore across the newspapers while governmental-official actors had high level of access NGOs, academics and Kurds' media access had remained low with academics being the lowest group.

However, it is also possible to state that some newspapers are more expansive in their accessed opinion than others e.g. Ortadogu gave far more prominence to political opponents than Hurriyet. Academics are more quoted in Ortadogu and Cumhuriyet (see table 7.4). Secular-leftist Cumhuriyet, more than liberal Taraf or others, had the highest rates of quotations from the Kurdish actors. These differences may not have been fundamental but they do suggest there is some variation within media frames of different titles in different newspapers. On the other hand the 711 news items seen across the newspapers suggest that the newspapers seem quite interested in the Kurdish debate which also confirms interviewees' contribution: the Turkish media started covering the Kurdish Issue more than they did in the past. As mentioned by some interviewees, being the leading newspaper to question military and sensitive issues of Turkey (interviewee profiles table number 1, 2, 4, 7, 18 and 26) Taraf had the most of the news - 220 items (30.94%). However, the point here is that although Taraf is the newspaper which covered Kurdish Issue news more than others and although in some point they appear more 'human focused' it is difficult to say that there are huge differences in ways of reporting the news between newspapers in terms of media access, thematic approaches etc.

It is also important to recognise that discussion of coverage, democratisation and human rights issues, multiculturalism and ethnic themes are also visible, albeit marginally (see figure 7.10 and table 7.18) which again corroborates with the positive change in covering the Kurdish Issue pointed out by the interviewees (see table 6.6). However, crime and security themes overwhelmingly are emphasised across the sample. These themes are highlighted by particular newspapers almost by 50% which may suggest that Turkish journalism still prefers to cover the Kurdish Issue news within the context of terrorism and national security. The reporters refrain to see the human rights violations or democratic debates behind the events which has also been stated by many interviewees. On the other hand, although democracy and multiculturalism debates were covered the newspapers preferred to examine this through Turkish governmental or official actors rather than the main parts, civil actors or the Kurds.

Although all newspapers covered the launch of TRT6, their coverage was questionable: while the nationalist Ortadogu covered the opening of the channel on the first page in a negative way on the second day (see image 7.5) Zaman did not report the second day on the front page. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet had no news regarding TRT6 on their front pages although it has been described by the interviewees as 'breaking taboo' of 85 years of the Turkish Republic. The reason for the lack of interest of the TRT6 launch of these two dailies (Cumhuriyet and Hurriyet) might be related to historical roots of Turkish secularism/laicism which believes in nation-state traditions of the country that ignored other minorities and saw them as a threat to the existence of the state at the times of Turkish Republic's establishment (see chapter 2 for details). Taraf, however, had been the only newspaper which covered the news of the TRT6 opening on the second day in a positive way with the header of 'The state got astonished' (see image 7.7).

Furthermore as seen in table 7.17, Kurdish actors across the newspapers are mostly depicted as attacking the launch of TRT6 and governmental policies. Although Kurdish scepticism of the launch of TRT6 (echoed by many interviewees) was based on the lack of constitutional guarantee for the channel, the representation of the Kurds as attacking the opening of TRT6 might be read as the tendency of the newspapers to represent the PKK/Kurdish actors 'uncompromising' and 'unsatisfying'.

The same analysis could be applied to the Uludere airstrike coverage. Although four newspapers, excluding the nationalist Ortadogu (see image 7.6), had news mostly attacking the airstrike which caused the death of 34 villagers. None of them, including Ortadogu, covered this news the next day which points that it took some time for the news of the attack to filter down and suggests there may have been some success in limiting the initial discussion of the attack. The news first spread through social media and it was said the newspapers then could not withstand the social pressure to cover the airstrike despite of governmental obstructionism (Axiallis, 2014: p. 210).

As expressed through the foregoing tables and figures, the Uludere airstrike was covered by all five newspapers. The qualitative analysis here suggests that there were subtle but important differences. Although Taraf and Cumhuriyet seem to access different sources and place more emphasis on victims; the event mostly tackled within the context of crime and security themes again in all five newspapers including the liberal Taraf. While the religious Zaman, which allegedly was close to the government, reported the news on the third day of the event with the header "fatal information (olumcul istihbarat)" under which they alleged that the reason that caused the villagers to be killed was the information which said they were leading PKK members/terrorists (see image 7.1). In the following statements it was said that because only the terrorist groups were walking in large

groups, the villagers were assumed to be the terrorists and therefore they were fired at. This could be both explained with their claimed previous nationalist stance or their political closeness to the government as stated by the deputy editor of Zaman interviewed for this study (interviewee profiles table number 28).

Here I recognize that one of the reasons which caused the crime and security themes to have high rates is the sampled event which was a military airstrike. However, other six news items (see table 7.1) were not directly related to the armed conflict and therefore it would not be mistaken to expect that the democratisation and human rights or multiculturalism issues to have higher proportions. Furthermore because the airstrike resulted in civilian casualties, mostly teenagers and children, the themes could point human rights violations, ethnic conflict or democratisations rather than directly relating them to crime and security or national unity which debated in relation to the elites' contributions in the next discussion chapter.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Through the interviews conducted in Turkey and the content analysis of five mainstream newspapers, answers have been sought to two main research questions: (1) whether and to what extent the mainstream Turkish media are contributing to democratic deliberation and (2) where the Turkish media are almost appropriately located within computing models of media and democracy. While the answer to the first question is based on both research exercises (thematic analysis of elite interviews and content analysis) the answer to the second question was mostly based on the thematic elite interview analysis although it was possible to find some clues in content analysis as well.

8.2 Turkish Media and the Deliberative Public Sphere

As shown in interview analysis chapters, interviewee opinions about the relationship between Turkish media and democracy varied considerably, mostly depending on interviewees' political affiliations. On the whole, conservative-leaning and nationalist interviewees tended to offer more positive views than those affiliated to or close to opposition parties and views. Content analysis results provided a useful response to assess the relative merits of these opposing views, and draw conclusions about the extent to which Turkish media are contributing to a deliberative public sphere. Generally speaking, the analysis shows that the more pessimistic assessments of interviewees affiliated with opposition parties are closer to the reality of Turkish media than those of interviewees affiliated with the governing party.

For instance, figure 7.2, which looks at the Turkish media representation of the Kurdish Issue, clearly shows that there is an imbalance in media access of different actors as the official and governmental sources were the most-often quoted voices. Here while the governmental and the state officials share the rate of almost 50% (25% for each) the other 50% is divided among the other eight categories (e.g. Kurds, NGOs, citizens, social representatives, academics). Table 7.5 likewise suggests the highest number of quoted words were from the governmental and state sources while in contrast the very low number of quoted words were from the Kurdish politicians - it is remarkable how much less civil society actors and academics were quoted in this coverage (see table 7.4). In this regard, the pessimistic approach of the interviewees regarding the inability of the Turkish media to create or contribute a deliberative public sphere/democracy can be validated through these findings. While all five newspapers favoured politicians as news sources at 80%, NGOs, academics and citizens

achieve a marginal rate of 10%. This is clear evidence that the Turkish media are rather far from the ideal of a deliberative public sphere (see figure 7.2).

However, it is also important to note that the extent and quality of coverage varied considerably from paper to paper, and the analysis of individual paper coverage showed that some of the most pessimistic assessments offered by interviewees cannot be supported. The first point to be mentioned here is the significant volume of coverage of the Kurdish Issue within the selected months. Although the nationalist interviewees stated that there were no such problems as the “Kurdish Issue” (see table 6.3), the total numbers (711) of the news items analysed across the five mainstream papers (see table 7.1) suggest that the media professionals are aware of the problem and it is being considerably covered although the nationalist newspaper seemed to avoid naming it as the *Kurdish Issue*, as seen in the qualitative analysis of Uludere airstrike in chapter 7. Additionally this high amount of the news items may be seen as a partial confirmation the interviewees’ statements on increasing coverage of the issue (see table 6.6) – although a systematic longitudinal analysis should be conducted to ascertain whether this is indeed the case.

Furthermore, the extremely negative assessments provided by some of the Kurdish interviewees, who argued that the coverage of the Kurdish issue as a whole remains problematic and that Kurds are discussed almost exclusively within a terrorism context, were also not confirmed by content analysis. As can be seen in table 6.4 actually not only the Kurds but also the Turkish contributors pointed to the same *terrorism* framework. However, table 6.5 suggests that 30% of the Kurdish interviewees believe that this framework did not change and the Kurdish Issue is still being represented as a conflict issue. But figure 7.10, where we can see the themes the Kurdish Issue has been related to in the sampled newspapers, suggests that although the Kurdish Issue is still mostly linked to the crime and security themes; democratic, human rights and multiculturalism debates are also clearly visible. Of course, this is in part a result of the particular events chosen for analysis – again, more systematic and wide-ranging analysis is required to confirm whether these are also more general trends.

However, it is possible to state that the mainstream media, while representing the Kurdish Issue, has carefully considered the predefined limits set by the media owners, social pressure or politics (see table 7.4); they tended to represent the problem through the eyes of the Turkish actors, officials and politicians rather than the civil actors or the Kurds. The pro-nationalist and militarist approaches have been supported and tried to be made justifiable via the news themes (see figure 7.10). Knowing the general discourse of the content, it is also possible to state that the mainstream media have failed to provide unbiased news coverage. On the contrary, the denunciatory headlines

(see qualitative analysis in chapter 7) and ignorance towards the Kurdish actors (not quoting or picturing them) seem to obstruct a full deliberation of the Kurdish Issue in the Turkish and the Kurdish public sphere (see images 7.1 and 7.5).

Still, what is promising in this respect is the fact that the media professionals interviewed are aware of the stance of the mainstream media with regard to state-political powers. Furthermore not only media professionals but almost all of other interviewees (NGO members, academics and politicians) stated the problems related to media freedoms (political pressure, legal frameworks, media ownership etc.) and news production (cultural/editorial limitations, misrepresentation of cultural diversity, minority media issues etc.) which obstruct media outlets to make an effective contribution to democratic deliberation (see table 5.1 and figure 7.2). However, media professionals themselves also confessed their inability to stand against these powers (see table 6.4) who are mostly represented by the government (see figure 5.1 and table 5.9 for governmental pressure debates) and argued that it was difficult to carry out impartial and investigative journalism in Turkey (interviewee profiles table numbers 11, 14, 15, 28) which may also be confirmed while they report the Kurdish Issue as seen in the content analysis of the five newspapers (see table 7.5 and figure 7.3).

Maybe the most important point, as suggested by the interviewees, is that the mainstream media could only start to produce taboo-breaking coverage regarding the Kurdish Question of Turkey following the political decision to overcome the conflict through a peaceful democratic approach. Thus, the question is: Would the Turkish media be able to sustain such coverage without political support? The mainstream Turkish media have continued covering the news about the Kurds as much as the political powers allowed, a point also mentioned by the interviewees (detailed in chapter 7).

In sum, the results of the analysis suggest that the Turkish media are still far from the deal of a deliberative public sphere, at least as far as debating the Kurdish Issue is concerned. For deliberative democracy to succeed the deliberation process should be comprehensive and the deliberation should influence the decision makers (Bohman, 2006: p. 198). All the evidence presented points to the contrary. As far as we can see elements of deliberation in Turkish media, these seem to be a result of government intervention, and our analysis offers little evidence to suggest that this limited forms of deliberation had the capacity to influence the decision making of Turkish elites. It is true that at least the fight between the army and the PKK guerrillas has ceased. However, although this seems to be a success, this point has not been reached through deliberation but through the enforcement of the AKP government (Candar, 2011: p. 39). The contributions of both parties' supporters and even of the Kurdish politicians have been rejected, and so has the involvement of the civil society more generally, which does not fit the communication norms that deliberative democracy requires. Rather than

functioning as instruments of a deliberative democracy, Turkish media therefore function, at best, as instruments of a representative democracy, facilitating debate among elites but closing doors to wider participation.

8.3 Which Media Model?

In order to ascertain the Turkish media's position among other existing media models this part will examine a selection of existing models described in literature in light of the results of interview and content analysis.

There is a broad range of media models that do not fit the reality of Turkish media as revealed in this dissertation. First, there is little evidence that the Turkish media fulfil the ideals of the *democratic participant media theory* (McQuail, 1987) as they suffer from not being able to disseminate the information they have and lack the freedom of expression. As table 5.6 suggests, where I asked the interviewees if the national security concerns are used to curb press freedoms, many of them agreed. In contrast, according to the democratic participant theory, the media should be under the control of the audiences and provide the possibilities for them to express their views. This theory also opposes the monopoly and commercialisation in private media and the bureaucratic centrism in public broadcasting (McQuail, 1987: p. 95). However, as suggested by the interviewees (see table 5.4) commercialisation and media ownership are rather influential in the Turkish news production process, and the content analysis also demonstrates that the audience is not the focus point of the news coverage because news reporting tends to be centred on the political elites (see figure 7.2).

Second, the Turkish media also seem far from the requirements of the *democratic communication theory* (Raymond Williams, 1989) since they have been under authoritative pressure and cannot properly contribute to public discussion. This theory suggests that people should feel free to express their views and be able to choose whatever they want from the approaches conveyed by the media organisations and it both opposes the authoritative pressures and the financial aims to dominate the media organisations (Fraley and Roushanzamir, 2006). Furthermore this model refers to the necessity of existence of a 'public sphere' in which people should be able to discuss and exchange views regarding political, economic and social issues for democracy to function properly (Rutigliano, 2007: p. 226). Again looking at the interviewee statements which pointed to increasing political pressure (see table 5.9) and the results of content analysis (see table 7.4) the Turkish media seems far from these ideals and reluctant to represent the full diversity of views in Turkish society.

Third, the Turkish media are also rather removed from the standards of the *radical democratic media theory* (Curran, 1991). In this theory media organisations are the channels for alternative views and these views are conveyed to diverse groups and all groups of peoples (ethnic/cultural/religious) have equal rights to access these messages (Curran, 2005: p. 29). However, both the content analysis and interviewee statements indicate that the cultural diversities have not been able to gain visibility in the media and due to mentioned legal, security and economic pressures diverse groups are not well informed (see tables 5.2, 5.4, 5.16 and 7.17).

Likewise, the Turkish media do not conform to the ideals of the *liberal theory* (Siebert et al, 1956) as they have not been able to represent diverse opinions due to dominating state ideologies (see table 5.18 and 5.12). Finally, although some interviewees have talked about the role of the media in democratic development and thus pointed to the *social responsibility media theory* (Siebert et al., 1956) it is difficult to state that this model provides an adequate description of the Turkish media, since in Turkey state intervention is not limited to a *social responsibility approach* (media ownership, legal pressures, national security concerns) and social pluralism is not well represented, as the interviewees and content analysis of the news regarding the Kurdish Issue suggest (see table 5.15 and 7.10). Here it is possible to add that some interviewees pointed to the role of the media in improving the cultural and political aspects of society (interviewee profiles table numbers 3, 15, 19, 28 and 32) which may refer to McQuail's (1987) *development media theory*. However, these interviewees (one of them was a government MP) were of those who allegedly have close relations with the government and they seemed to mention this role of the media to legitimize the claimed political pressure indicated by other interviewees (see table 5.9).

Turning to Hallin and Mancini's (2004) much discussed typology of media systems in Western Europe, the authors indicate that in the *democratic corporatist or North/Central European model*, media organisations are being supported by the state for them to represent cultural diversity (2004: p. 191). While the newspaper circulation is high in this model, autonomy in public broadcasting is substantial. Although there is a strong state intervention the pressure is aimed to protect the press freedoms and freedom of public broadcasting - not for disinformation, censorship or manipulation discussed by some interviewees (interviewee profiles table numbers 8, 10, 12, 17, see table 5.5). Furthermore, in the democratic corporatist model, "the press has developed an instrument of identification and organisation of social groups and of discussion, comparison and conflict among them" (2004: p. 153). In Turkey, the opposite is usually the case, as political or military relations have caused the elites to intervene in the media practices via dictating how they should report specific news and even what words to use or not (detailed in chapter 5, see table 5.5) and, in the words of the

interviewees, politics in Turkey had been regulating laws which limit press freedoms and advertisement incomes.

On the other hand it is possible to find similarities between Hallin and Mancini's *North Atlantic/Liberal Model* and media practices in Turkey. "Strong development of commercial newspapers" (p. 202) is indicated by the interviewees as mentioned above (see table 5.4). However, while Hallin and Mancini state that this commercialisation has weakened the ties between the media and politicians (p. 282), what happened in Turkey seems different: while the relative power of political elites over media has weakened, the relative power of media owners over both increased, as media owners receive high-income businesses from the state institutions (interviewee profiles table numbers 18, 20, 22, 27). Furthermore, as suggested by the interviewees (see tables 5.13, 6.4) -where the representation of the Kurdish Issue was analysed- there is a journalistic tradition of state advocacy in Turkey through which the state organs can intervene in the newsroom (see table 5.5). Also, privately-owned media and public broadcasting in Turkey is politically used by the political actors which ultimately causes limited and slow journalistic autonomy/professionalism development and low internal ethnic pluralism (interviewee profiles table numbers 34, 39, 41, see table 5.12 for the public broadcasting debates in Turkey) which all runs counter to some of the key elements of the liberal *media model*.

The media model that provides the best fit for the Turkish media system is Hallin and Mancini's *polarized pluralist or Mediterranean Media* model, mostly found in Southern Europe and characterized by high levels of political parallelism and low news reporting professionalism (2004: p. 98). Here the clearest evidence for the Turkish media belonging to the *polarised pluralism model* is the clear polarisation seen among the interviewees and the content analysis results which points to a political parallelism of the Turkish media (see table 7.5 and figure 7.2). In Turkey, "as political parties developed, newspapers became aligned with them and often were funded by parties" (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 103) as has been stated by the interviewees especially in the last decade (interviewee profiles table numbers 1, 4, 12 and 17). Namely, as revealed by the analysis, elite interviewees' opinions are polarised along the lines of political affiliations. We can find evidence of such polarisation among both the political elites and other news sources as well as among media professionals themselves.

The similarities between the polarized pluralist model and the Turkish model have been mentioned also by many interviewees who believed that the media organisations have not been able to cut the ties with the political and state powers and so the political/state influence has remained high. While the relation of the private media organisations mostly seem to be in economic terms, as

the authors indicated for the Southern European countries, “public broadcasting systems” in Turkey also “tended to be party-politicized” (government focused in Turkish case) and “the top personnel the public broadcasting company are appointed by the governmental actors and are under tight political control even later” (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 106). This has caused censorship (including self-censorship) and thus hampered the development of investigative journalism, and instead fostered the commentary reporting (interviewee profiles table number 9, 12, 14, 17 and others).

As in the Mediterranean Europe Countries (i.e. Italy, Greece, France) the newspaper circulation rate in Turkey has also been low (EJC, 2014), and the focus point of the media organisations has been television, which was highlighted almost by all interviewees. Also, as shown in the literature, the historical development of the Turkish media also resembles the media development in other Southern European countries examined by Hallin and Mancini. For instance, as has been the case in Spain and Italy, there have been journalists and media owners in the Turkish parliament although not as PM or President (Aksop, 2006: p. 113). One of the journalism professor interviewees in this regard stated that because of the political and military pressure on the press, it is both politics and army relations which have determined media development or professionalism. Being close to the dominant political ideology which discriminated against minority and other human rights, was the general attitude of the press especially during the single-party period (1923-1950) when the press was expected to contribute to the statist/Kemalist ideology, a point also mentioned by many other interviewees (interviewee profiles table number 17).

As Hallin and Mancini mention for the situation in Greece, Italy and Portugal (2004: p. 124), the political powers in Turkey also led their relatives or supporters to set up new media organisations without considering the legal framework. The establishment of the first private Turkish TV and radio channels set a clear example for this similarity as PM Turgut Ozal in 1990 provided the possibilities for his son Ahmet Ozal to set up the first TV channel *Magic Box* through the *Uzan group* who then had many other media outlets (Adakli, 2009: p. 302). Actually today’s media-politics relationship also points to the same results as the businessmen close to the AKP government find it easier to set up TV media organisations (broadcast, print and online) as has been indicated by many of the interviewees (interviewee profiles table number 4, 6, 7, 10, 12 and others). “Probably the most significant form of instrumentalization has been the use of media by commercial owners (sometimes private and sometimes state-linked) to wield influence in the political world” (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 114). This political closeness, however, does not stop once the media organisation is set up but the political powers want them to create sensational or manipulative news coverage as is mostly seen in the

modern-day Turkish media due to their relations with the government which is also mentioned for Greece by Hallin and Mancini (2004: p. 125).

The point which does not fit in Hallin and Mancini's *polarized pluralist model* is a lack of editorial independence and the unions which protect the journalists' rights in Turkey. As stated by the interviewees, media professionals in Turkey cannot join labour unions against media owners and advertisers; there is not an influential internal dynamic which allows media professionals to elect their editorial boards or editor-in-chiefs and the influence of national-security/interests concerns in Turkey (as has been stated in the Kurdish Issue and deliberative democracy relations above) has caused the media professionals to treat news in a biased and unprofessional way. This point again refers to political parallelism, as the agenda of news production in Turkey, in the words of the interviewees, is set up by the political elites and this agenda setting helps politicians to shape public opinion (see table 7.4 as evidence for elite- oriented news reporting). In this regard, along with this national journalism culture, the political economy of media ownership mentioned above, causes media professionals to re-produce hegemonic statist political culture. Accordingly, the negative approach of the interviewees for public broadcasting as governmental propaganda, which is expressed as *strong state intervention* (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 74) in the *Mediterranean model* (see table 5.12) refers to producing hegemonic political culture which Hallin and Mancini mention in relation to Greece and Spain (Harcourt, 2012: p. 140).

The aim here is not to give any final judgement regarding whether Hallin and Mancini's Mediterranean or polarized pluralist model is the only model in which the Turkish media can be best fitted in but to provide a view to better understand the Turkish media. However, the outcomes of the both elite interview and content analysis suggest that the media system in Turkey closely resembles Mediterranean or polarized pluralist system. The nation-state construction caused the media to remain under pressure of the state ideology as the state sees the 'other' as a threat to its existence and as can be seen the cultural diversity and representation of the Kurdish Issue addressed to the interviewees (see table 5.13 and 6.4) this policy has influenced the news reporting of the media professionals which again points to strong political parallelism. Although Turkish democratisation has made progress in recent years, the political pressure to control the media through mentioning national concerns/security seems to be the extension of this nationalist political culture.

This thesis has aimed to provide an empirically grounded assessment of the contemporary democratic performance of the Turkish media. As might be expected, it cannot be claimed that this is the first attempt to explain the relationship between the media and democracy in Turkey (see Aydin, 2008; Bektas, 2000) nor, indeed, is the only study that has examined the representation of the

Kurdish Issue within the mainstream Turkish media (see Durna and Kubilay, 2010; Bulut, 2005; Bilgic, 2008). Having said this, I believe its contribution to knowledge has been manifested in several ways. First, it has sought to show how debates about media performance generally, and specifically with regard to the Kurdish issue, need to be understood within the context of wider debates about deliberative democracy, cultural recognition and the public sphere. Second, the detail of the case study highlights how generic typologies of media systems, such as that offered by theorists like Hallin and Mancini (2004), can have heuristic value but often fail to capture important local details and exceptions. To some extent, the analysis I present suggests that the Turkish media system conforms most closely to what these authors refer to as a 'Polarized pluralist or Mediterranean model', but the fit is not watertight. For example, the development of the Turkish media is not based on capitalist or bourgeois trends as in the Southern European countries. At the same time, the inspiration of Anglo-American "information oriented journalism" (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: p. 99) perspective and "American forms of professionalism" have not been clearly visible in the Turkish news production and reporting traditions (2004: p. 105). On the other hand, unlike Mediterranean countries, "political logic" does not "tend to play role" in only public broadcasting but also in privately owned media output (2004: p. 109).

Third, the study shows that there are problems in talking in totalising ways about the editorial actions and responses of 'the Turkish media'. For instance, my content analysis revealed major differences between news organisations in the ways in which they *evaluated* highly emotive and contentious issues involving the Kurdish community (such as the Uludere air strike). These differences demonstrate how high degrees of political polarity and parallelism affect the Turkish media, and as a consequence show that the Turkish media cannot be seen as a unified and 'closed' message system for ruling elites. Having said this, the study also reveals the limitations to the diversity of media debate. For example, the content analysis showed that all news organisations placed far greater emphasis and attention to the ongoing military conflict concerning the Kurdish issue, and little emphasis on hugely significant cultural innovations, such as the establishment of the TRT6 news channel. It is my contention, that this reveals a widespread *interpretative* closure across mainstream news media in their treatment of the Kurdish issue, i.e. that it is defined principally within a military/conflict frame. This in turn limits and delimits the contribution that these opinion leading organisations make to a fully informed public deliberation of the complexities of the Kurdish issue. Additionally, the evaluative tone of the democratic dialogue that exists in press discourses, and its highly polarised and oppositional nature, may also constitute a further barrier to the realisation of the ideals of deliberative democracy and cultural recognition. Effective multi-cultural deliberation needs to be capable or recognising nuances and multidimensionality. It must also be founded on principles

of recognition and respect. My analysis suggests that, whatever the advances over the recent period, these qualities are conspicuously under-developed in mainstream Turkish press discourses.

8.4 Suggestions and Recommendations for further Study

This study examined and questioned the possibility of the Turkish media to contribute to a deliberative public sphere and tried to locate the Turkish media within the existing media and democracy models through looking at the representation of the Kurdish Issue within the mainstream media and analysing the elite interviewees' contributions from diverse backgrounds. The research mostly concentrated on the current debates and developments, and didn't provide much insight into changes over time.

To be able to look at a longer time period the representation of the Kurdish issue could be analysed from the 1990s which would allow the examination of change or stability in terms of democratisation of the country over time. Along with demonstrating the change in representing the Kurdish Issue over time, such research could illustrate a further policy alteration in democratic terms in the country and might show the agenda-setting influencers (e.g. politicians, military, cultural spectrum, human rights debates etc.) in journalism and news reporting practices.

The events to be examined could be those I have discussed in chapter 3 as milestones of the Kurdish debate in Turkey. Starting from the 1990s and ending with Uludere Airstrike in late 2011, such a longitudinal analysis of the events would help better understand the media's approach to democratic perceptions in Turkey and these events could be construed more broadly as an evolution of discourses about minorities in Turkey over the sample period. Furthermore we would be able to more closely see how the interpretative stance has changed; for example, from a news agenda fixated with military themes to one focused on civil/cultural dimensions.

Apart from analysing the print media as done in this study, to have a broader perspective further studies that would include other types of other media could be helpful. Especially given the low literacy rates mentioned by the interviewees (e.g. interviewee profiles table number 11, 18, 19, 25) TV in particular, seems very important in Turkey as even in the last presidential elections in August 2014 the TV channels were accused of not covering the Kurdish candidate even for only a few minutes (Radikal, 2014). Broadcast news hours and also political debate programs could be analysed in terms of discourse and their content. Different TV news hours or programmes from diverse TV channels would also give us useful feedback regarding the representation of the minorities (not only the Kurds but Armenians, Greeks, Gypsies etc. could be included and compared). Answers for the

questions to what extent is TV content contributing to deliberation of the sensitive issues/how is it covering Kurdish, Armenian or other minority debates could be looked for using such an approach.

Another study could include digital media – forums, websites, and blogs: do they offer a greater range of views? Do they resemble a deliberative public sphere more closely than the print media? Also, research that would include popular culture and entertainment genres could give us meaningful insights into the representation of Kurds and other minorities – e.g. how are Kurds represented in television fiction (if at all); how has this changed over time; what roles did Kurdish actors perform in Turkish films and television fiction? Has the proportion of Kurdish music in Turkish media increased in recent years?

An audience study would obviously be very beneficial as well. Here again different media followers from diverse ethnic, cultural and ideological backgrounds (dividing them into groups on the base of ethnicity, political orientation, territory etc.) could be examined. Through this kind of a study, it might be possible to see the opinion construction developed by the audience as a reaction to the media text or coverage.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1

1.1 Interviews: Easier Said than Done?

Conducting interviews is not all about going to a person and talking with him or her on specific issues. Especially in research interviews it is more crucial to consider the ethical issues (detailed below) and sometimes need more attention not to lose the interviewee. First, it is not effortless to reach and persuade elites to give interviews especially on a very sensitive issue. You must find contact details and start with winning over the secretary or the assistant. It is crucial to persuade the assistant through the academic importance of the study and emphasising how much the interview would play a critical role in the progress of the study. However it is also necessary to try other ways to communicate directly with the interviewee to persuade him/her over the phone. On many occasions, I have started to talk to the elite persons about how, "I have also talked to their assistant and sent her/him all the details of the study via mail" and they have stopped me and admitted that they had not been informed about the request.

Elites may accept to talk to you within the next week but may forget or postpone it even one hour before the exact time. Moreover, you should not assume you are going to do the interview even after you have gained the approval, and arrived at the agreed location and time of the interview. The interviewee may still refuse to answer your questions although s/he had happily accepted to be interviewed by a researcher for an academic study. If you are researching a very controversial issue at a susceptible time, it is better to be ready for any circumstances. You may be questioned very carefully by security personnel, discriminated and humiliated by the interviewee and may even be prevented from entering the building for the interview. The doors will not be opened unless you directly communicate with the interviewee.

The interviewee sometimes stopped talking and asked me questions, forcing me to share my opinion about some sensitive questions. They had great doubts about who I was and my motives, although I had informed them both orally and in writing beforehand. The sensitive subjects involved in the discussions can also cause people to react in unpredictable ways. When it came to signing a consent form, the interviewees sometimes showed an exaggerated response despite being told the details, and reassured that the consent form was for the interviewee and not the researcher. As my subject sensitive both in terms of the Kurdish Issue and the media freedoms, some of the interviewees at first refused to sign the consent form, despite knowing English and being told every small detail. They often challenged me about whom I was and why I was forcing them to sign the 'consent form'. I tried to explain that the consent form was required to be signed for ethical concerns

surrounding the academic study and also to protect the interviewee's rights (and not mine). Furthermore also told that the university's ethical checklist was aimed to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality, to highlight their freewill for contributing the study or to withdraw their involvement when they wish so and I could make all interviewees to sign the form at the end.

On the other hand, evaluating my approach to field work, I have learnt that timing is crucial when selecting elite interviews as a method for research. Although I had arranged appointments with interviewees, some of them could not talk to me despite my arrival at the agreed time and destination. It was general election time in Turkey, and politicians and some of the media professionals could only give the interviews after election time.

As the Kurdish Issue was such a controversial issue, which may cause trouble to my research I sometimes found myself in a dangerous situation either in my city, Istanbul, or while travelling between two cities which are supposed to be the centres of the Kurdish conflict. As mentioned above, I almost interviewed representatives from all media organisations in Turkey, including minority media. I also interviewed the executive editor of *Agos Daily*, the Armenian newspaper whose editor-in-chief Hrant Dink was assassinated by a Turkish Nationalist in 2007 on the days he was being prosecuted for denigrating Turkishness. When I was going to the newspaper headquarter I asked a young guy if he could please direct me to the newspaper. He said he would guide me but started to ask me very interesting questions: Where are you from? Why do you want to go to *Agos*? How much do you know about the murdered journalist Hrant Dink? Are you Kurdish? I answered everything but was afraid of all this questioning. Why should he ask me all these questions? Furthermore, I saw a scary smile on his face when I said that I was Kurdish, that I was studying media and democracy in Turkey, and had come from the UK. Fortunately, we soon came to the door of the newspaper and I thanked him while he was leaving me.

However, although I have also both checked the ethical clearance checklist in regard to risks of the fieldwork to be done abroad and has been advised by my supervisors, one of the most dangerous aspects of my fieldwork occurred when I went to Diyarbakir, which is supposed to be the Kurdish capital and Turkey's most controversial city in terms of the Kurdish issue. I travelled there to interview Kurdish Politicians such as Leyla Zana (see chapter 3), Kurdish media professionals and the NGOs there. The Kurdish politicians did not give me their full addresses but told me to wait in front of particular shops so that they would pick me up. As a consequence, it is impossible to describe the elite interviews as a trouble-free research method. The researchers must carefully analyse every small detail before they commence the interviews and must always keep in mind that there may be further complications, risks awaiting them on the way to finishing their field work.

APPENDIX 2

2.1 Interviewee Profiles Table

The interviewee profiles have been described based on their own explanations and these portrayals given for the reader to have a better and easier understanding of the study						
Number	Job title	Position within the organisation	Political Orientation	Affiliate	Description	Interview Date
1	NGO Activist	Chairman	Religious Conservative	NGO	A former MP from the government party and now is chairing one of the leading NGOs in Turkey, which was supposed to be a religious one, but nowadays dealing with any kind of human rights violations from diverse backgrounds.	21.04.2011
2	Politician	FMP	Religious Conservative	Government Party	A former MP from the government party but was not nominated as an MP in the last parliamentary elections although he is widely known by the people from the city he was MP for.	22.04.2011
3	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Religious Conservative	Daily Newspaper	A journalist and columnist who works for a daily newspaper, which is supposed to be close to an effective religious group.	08.12.2011
4	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist working for the liberal daily which is supposed to be the catalyst of Turkish democracy as the newspaper the first ever time revealed the documents about the army and the human rights violations in Turkey. This journalist is also known as the first person who revealed documents about a military coup attempt in 2007 and thus the one who caused the army members to be prosecuted in the Ergenekon case since 2007.	16.05.2011
5	Politician	MP	Pro- Kurdish Religious	Kurdish Party	An MP from the Kurdish Party in the Turkish Parliament whose father was killed in jail by torture after he was arrested in the 1980 coup because he was accused of being a Kurdish movement supporter.	25.05.2011
6	Broadcaster	Executive Editor	Pro- Kurdish Leftist	Kurdish TV	A broadcaster and head of a Kurdish TV channel living in and broadcasting from a European country which is known for its support for the PKK and which the Turkish authorities tried to stop TV to broadcast.	29.09.2011

7	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and columnist in Turkey who is known for his democratic and liberal views and who once was accused of supporting Kurdish guerrillas (PKK) by the army; it was subsequently proved that the documents stating the claims against him were fake as the Turkish army had made a former PKK guerrilla write these statements under torture.	31.05.2011
8	NGO Activist	Vice Chairwoman	Liberal	NGO	A human rights activist and head coordinator in an effective NGO in Turkey, which is supported by international funds.	31.05.2011
9	Journalist	Executive Editor	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A female lawyer and human rights activist who was subject to two assassination attempts because she stood against human rights violations under the custody and because of her views for the Kurdish language and the Kurds. She is currently chairing a daily newspaper known for its support for the Kurdish people, whose journalists killed by the nationalists and which had been closed down twice.	05.07.2011
10	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Leftist	Daily Newspaper	A freelance journalist who is mostly covering press freedom problems in Turkey and a correspondent for journalists without border organisation.	11.05.2011
11	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Centrist	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and columnist working for a daily newspaper in Turkey. He is accused of making headlines against democracy when he was editor-in-chief of the newspaper and known as the person responsible for the death of a Kurdish singer after he was forced to leave the country because he made a speech supporting Kurdish rights in an award ceremony in 1999.	21.06.2011
12	Academician	Media Lecturer	Leftist	Private University	A journalism lecturer and former journalist working for a private university.	07.06.2011
13	Journalist	Chairman	Centrist	Daily Newspaper	A journalist and chair of a journalists association famous for his news stories about the Kurdish Issue in Turkey and interviews with the Kurdish rebels living in the mountains.	25.05.2011
14	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Centrist	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and columnist who has been editor-in-chief of prominent Turkish dailies.	20.05.2011
15	Broadcaster	Executive Editor	Conservative	State Kurdish TV	A former correspondent working for TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Association).	26.04.2011

16	Journalist	Editor in Chief	Leftist	Daily Newspaper	A journalist and deputy editor working for a daily newspaper known for its secularist and Kemalist approach.	31.05.2011
17	Academician	Media Lecturer	Leftist Secular	Private University	A secular columnist and academic whose columns allegedly ceased to be published because he criticized the government and the PM.	18.05.2011
18	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and columnist in Turkey who is known for his democratic and liberal views and author of many books about the Kurdish Issue and democratisation in Turkey.	21.06.2011
19	Politician	Vice president	Conservative	Government Party	A politician and vice president of the current government party who comes from a religious conservative background.	13.07.2011
20	Journalist	Executive Editor	Leftist	Daily Newspaper	Editor-in-chief of a daily newspaper which is known for its opposition against the government and its support for the workers.	30.04.2011
21	Academician	International and EU Relations Lecturer	Liberal	Private University	An academic in a private university and columnist for a daily newspaper printed in English and Turkish, which is known to be close to a religious group in Turkey. He was a member of the EU parliament and was the chairperson of the Turkey-EU Parliamentarians delegations.	17.05.2011
22	Journalist	Editor in Chief	Leftist-Kurdish	Daily Newspaper	Editor and journalist of a Kurdish Newspaper printed in a predominantly Kurdish city.	25.05.2011
23	Politician	MP	Leftist-Kurdish	Kurdish Party	The first Kurdish female politician entered Turkish Parliament and jailed just after she took her parliamentary oath because she spoke in Kurdish. After the oath and said "I take this oath for the brotherhood between the Turkish people and the Kurdish people". She was imprisoned for ten years and she is now again an independent MP as her politics ban has not yet ended.	25.08.2011
24	Journalist	Executive Editor	Leftist	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and broadcaster in Turkey who is known for his democratic and liberal views and who once was accused by supporting Kurdish guerrillas (PKK) by the army but then it was proved that the documents stating the claims against him were fake and the Turkish army made a former PKK guerrilla write these statements under torture.	12.05.2011

25	Academician	Human Rights and Finance Lecturer	Liberal Conservative	UK University	A Kurdish academic who is currently lecturing in a British university. He decided not to go back to Turkey after his scholarship was stopped because he spoke out against Kurdish human rights violations.	08.01.2012
26	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist working for the liberal daily which is supposed to be the catalyst of Turkish democracy as the newspaper the first ever time revealed the documents about the army and the human rights violations in Turkey. This journalist is also famous for his news stories and documents he revealed against the army.	20.05.2011
27	Politician	Vice president	Religious Conservative	Religious Party	A former MP from a religious party, a professor and a human rights activist known for his harsh critiques against the government. Although he joined another political party but because this party decided to merge with the government party he refused to walk with them and now independently acts as a politician and human rights activist.	11.05.2011
28	Journalist	Deputy executive editor	Religious Conservative	Daily Newspaper	A journalist and columnist working for a daily newspaper which is supposed to be close to an effective religious group.	27.05.2014
29	NGO Activist	Chairman	Liberal- Kurdish	NGO	A chair of an NGO in a predominantly Kurdish city.	25.05.2011
30	Journalist	Deputy Editor	Nationalist	Daily Newspaper	Deputy editor of a Turkish nationalist daily.	16.04.2011
31	Academician	Sociology	Liberal	Private University	A professor of sociology working for a private university who during the interview said that his professorship was postponed for years because of his studies on the Kurdish Issue and that he was not also very welcomed at the university he is currently working for.	11.05.2011
32	Journalist	Executive Editor	Conservative	Daily Newspaper	An experienced religious and conservative journalist and executive editor of a daily newspaper famous for its support for the government.	13.05.2011
33	Academician	Political Science Lecturer	Conservative	Public University	A former Turkish nationalist academic who is working for a public university.	09.05.2011
34	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Pro-Kurdish	Daily Newspaper	A journalist famous for his news stories about the Kurdish Issue in Turkey and interviews with the Kurdish rebels living in the mountains.	22.04.2011
35	Academician	Political Science Lecturer	Leftist	Public University	An academic who is known for her critiques against the government and who is working for a public university and whose columns in a highly circulated newspaper were stopped allegedly because she criticised the PM and the government for their politics against the Kurds.	09.05.2011

36	NGO Activist	Chairman	Nationalist	NGO	Head of an old NGO which known for their nationalist events and publications.	15.07.2011
37	Academician	Criminology Lecturer	Conservative	Public University	A columnist and an academic who was working for a public university.	27.04.2011
38	NGO Activist	Chairman	Leftist	NGO	Chair of an important human rights NGO in Turkey.	21.04.2011
39	Academician	Media Lecturer	Leftist	Private University	A columnist, journalist and an academic who comes from a leftist and liberal background.	27.04.2011
40	Broadcaster	Executive Editor	Conservative	Kurdish TV	An executive editor and chair of a private Kurdish TV channel which is supposed to be close to an effective religious group in Turkey.	21.06.2011
41	Journalist	Executive Editor	Leftist	Daily Newspaper	An executive editor of a minority newspaper in.	06.05.2011
42	Politician	Vice president	Nationalist	Nationalist Party	Vice chairperson of a nationalist party who avoided using the word "Kurd" and "Kurdish Issue" during the interview I conducted for this study.	15.07.2011
43	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A famous journalist and columnist.	10.05.2011
44	Politician	Vice president	Leftist	Opposition Party	A Kurdish politician, lawyer and MP from the main opposition party who is known for his activities against human rights violations in Turkey	15.07.2011
45	NGO Activist	Chairwoman	Nationalist	NGO	A pro-nationalist and Kemalist chairwoman of a pro-nationalist NGO.	13.07.2011
46	Journalist	Executive Editor	Nationalist	Daily Newspaper	Editor-in-chief of a Turkish nationalist daily newspaper.	16.04.2011
47	Broadcaster	Executive Editor	Nationalist	Daily Newspaper	A pro-nationalist executive editor of a pro-nationalist TV channel who during the interview refused to sign the consent form as he said he was already suffering very much from the pressures by the Turkish authorities but at the end convinced to sign.	14.05.2011
48	Broadcaster	Executive Editor	Liberal	State TV	An executive editor of a state television.	20.04.2011
49	Academician	Political Science Lecturer	Nationalist	Public University	A nationalist academic working for a public university who was also an MP candidate from a nationalist party in Turkey.	13.07.2011
50	Journalist	Correspondent and Columnist	Nationalist	Daily Newspaper	A journalist working for a daily newspaper known for its secularist and Kemalist approaches.	15.07.2011
51	Journalist	Media Ombudsman	Liberal	Daily Newspaper	A liberal media ombudsman and columnist who is working for a daily supposed to have close relations with the government.	02.06.2011

APPENDIX 3

3.1 The Interviewee Profiles in their Own Words

These short interviewee profiles are transcribed from the interviews conducted for this project. Therefore, the information about the interviewee is limited to what the interviewees told. I have not written further details in order to respect the ethical rules of interviewing.

3.1.1 A. Faruk Ünsal

I am currently president of MAZLUMDER (The Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People). I was an MP of the current government party between 2002 and 2007. I studied mechanical engineering in Istanbul Technical University but mainly focus on human rights issues.

3.1.2 Abdurrahman Kurt

I am from Diyarbakir and studied civil engineering at Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul then received my MS from Beykent University again in Istanbul. Then I worked for local governments and a few NGOS. I started doing politics in 2004 as provincial chairman of AKP in Diyarbakir and became an MP in 2007. I am Human Rights commission spokesperson, member of World Parliamentarian Association Turkish Group, member of equality of women and men commission and so on.

3.1.3 Adem Yavuz Arslan

I have been in media for 17 years. I began as a journalist in my last year in Faculty of Communications. Since then, I only had a break for military service. I have been working in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara, respectively.

Now I am Ankara representative of Bugun daily and columnist. Besides representing the newspaper officially, managing the office, following up news and writing columns, I am making a television programme, as well.

3.1.4 Alper Görmüş

I started doing journalism in Nokta but I also worked for Aydınlık in 1978. However, I do not know if I should count this within my journalism experience, as Aydinlik Daily was obviously representative of a political group.

I am not doing active journalism nowadays; just writing columns for Taraf and I write fortnightly for Aktuel as well. When I was a journalist, I used to report social issues and sometimes politics and I delivered journalism lectures at Bilgi University, Istanbul.

3.1.5 Altan Tan

I am an MP from BDP and a civil engineer. I have been actively involved in politics for 22 years. I was a member of Refah Party (Welfare Party, 1991-1998; In 1998 the Welfare Party was banned for violating the principle of secularism in the constitution and being suspected of having an Islamist agenda) as I thought the Welfare party was a religious party. However, afterwards I saw that it was a nationalist and statist party. A politico-religious party blended conservatism and nationalism.

When Refah Party made an electoral alliance with Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) I simply left it as I was against nationalism totally. I was against this alliance since the Muslim Kurds were so effective in the region at this time. As a conclusion, secular Kurdish politics has been getting stronger and bigger ever since.

I joined every organisation, which I thought was against the regime and aimed to change it. Joined HADEP in 2000 (People's Democracy Party. A pro-Kurdish political party in Turkey founded in 1994 and was banned by the Turkish Constitutional Court in March 2003 on the grounds that it supported the PKK) and participated in DTK (Democratic Society Congress, an organisation founded by Kurds in Turkey that works as an NGO).

3.1.6 Amed Dicle

I have been doing journalism for 12 years. I am programme director at ROJ TV as well and been Editor-in-chief for the last 5 years. I am not working in Turkey because in Turkey you cannot work free as a journalist.

3.1.7 Cengiz Candar

I have been a journalist for 35 years. I have worked for many newspapers such as Sabah, Cumhuriyet, Vatan and so on. I currently write for Radikal Daily.

I am just a columnist and I do what columnists do. When I was a reporter, I used to cover foreign politics and international relations as well as domestic political issues. Nowadays foreign and domestic politics are telescoped so I now write about both.

3.1.8 Dilek Kurban

I am head of the Democratization Department of TESEV. I studied Political Science and International Relations at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul and received Master's in International Affairs (MIA) in human rights from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, and my Juris Doctor (JD) degree from Columbia Law School.

3.1.9 Eren Keskin

I am a lawyer in real terms and mainly deal with political lawsuits. Besides that I have also worked as a human rights expert and work for IHD (Human Rights Association). I am, as a lawyer, currently serving the women who are raped by official powers.

I started to do this job, being an Editor-in-chief in Ozgur Gundem Daily, 5 months ago. Of course I used to write for newspapers before as well.

3.1.10 Erol Önderoğlu

I have been working as a journalist since 1996, mostly as a freelancer. I have mainly focused on journalists' rights and violations of these rights. Also I am Turkey correspondent of Journalists without Border organisation (RSF).

I am Editor-in-chief of BIANET (Online news portal Independent Communication Network). We are here analysing alternative news sources and publishing them through our news portal and setting an alternative agenda.

3.1.11 Ertuğrul Özkök

I began my journalism career in 1986 in Hurriyet Daily; prior to that I was a university lecturer in Sociology. I worked with B. Ecevit (former PM of Turkey) in journal of Arayis in military coup era. Ecevit could only manage to publish 52 issues. He was the Editor-in-chief but at the sixth issue the military government prohibited him from writing articles anymore. I took over his place and started to write the editorials from the sixth week. I was working with professional journalists such as Haluk Gerger and Ömer Marda.

Afterwards I joined Hurriyet as a counsellor in 1986. Soon I was promoted to Editor-in-chief Position in the same year. Later I voluntarily worked as Ankara and Moscow correspondent for three

and a half years. I was reporting of course political news when I was Ankara correspondent. After that I kept being Editor-in-chief and it lasted for 20 years.

I am now only writing columns for Hürriyet Daily. I am also a member of administrative board of Dogan Holding.

3.1.12 Esra Arsan

I have been teaching media and communications here at Bilgi University, Istanbul for 13 years as a reader. I am here head of Media and Communication Systems Department. I am also studying and delivering political communication and political journalism lectures. Focusing on how journalists have covered political issues, how they position themselves as political actors and how they contribute to the political perception in Turkey. In addition, I am studying censorship and self-censorship of journalists.

I was a journalist before I started lecturing at Bilgi University. I used to work as a reporter, correspondent as not being columnist but being a correspondent is the basic of journalism I have done TV programmes, writing media critiques and writing on various issues related to journalism on print and online media. I am leftist and writing my articles from a Marxist perspective.

3.1.13 Faruk Balıkçı

I commenced working as a journalist just after the 1980 military coup here in Diyarbakir. I was at that time following the news in martial law courts.

I am now the chairperson of South East Journalists' Association of Turkey and keep writing articles for Hurriyet Daily. I am also working as a reporter for Hurriyet Daily.

Diyarbakir or the South East of Turkey is different from other regions. The Kurdish Issue is a live debate around here. Furthermore, the Kurds from North Iraq are our neighbours and Syria is very close. Therefore, I usually do political stories. For instance, I crossed the borders in 1990 at the time of Gulf War; thus mainly did political and war correspondence, which was mostly related to the Kurdish Issue.

3.1.14 Fatih Altaylı

I have been doing journalism for 30 years and I am the chief editor here now in Haberturk Daily. I am not the chief editor of the TV, but I am in the executive board of the TV. The structure of

the group is a little bit different. Turgay Ciner is the chair of the executive board. Then the positions are subdivided into two as print and visual media. In the visual media Kenan Tekdağ is the head, and I am in the print media side. We have so far directed TV and the newspaper together.

After Asil Nadir bought Gelişim Yayınları and some other publishing, which were in English, I transferred to Gunes Newspaper; I worked as editorial coordinator there, board membership, then chairman of the board. After that, in the beginnings of the 1990s when the radios were first established in Turkey, I established the first radio of Turkey; Best FM, I executed Best FM for 3 years. After making the radio number one in Turkey, I left it. I transferred to Hurriyet Newspaper. I worked in Hurriyet as a writer for 13 years. It was the best-selling newspaper of Turkey in that time, it still is. In the same period, In Kanal D and Show TV, this had the record-breaking ratings in Turkey. I did TEKETEK programme, then I became the chief-editor in Kanal D in 2003-2005. I left there then transferred to Sabah Newspaper, which was the second best seller newspaper of Turkey at that time, as the chief-editor. After Sabah Newspaper was dispossessed by the state, I established Habertürk Newspaper.

3.1.15 Fethullah Kırşan

I used to be a correspondent for TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) for about 15 years. In TRT, a correspondent is allowed to report any kind of news. However, I used to report news mostly related to political and economic matters.

I became an editor and then I was transferred here to TRT6 - in October 2009 as the “general coordinator”, probably because my mother tongue was Kurdish. TRT 6 is the first Kurdish TV channel in Turkey that was established and funded by the state. My responsibility is to run this channel and reach the audiences without any problem.

3.1.16 Guray Oz

I have been working as a journalist since 1971. In Cumhuriyet, I guess, I have been working for 13 years. I did mostly report political news when I was a reporter here.

Before I started working for Cumhuriyet I worked for magazines, ISTI news agency, and then I was a press officer at one of the associations at a university abroad. I started to work as a reporter of Cumhuriyet there. We used to publish Cumhuriyet there and then I came to Istanbul and still in Cumhuriyet.

3.1.17 Haluk Şahin

I graduated from the Law School of Istanbul University in 1964. I went to the USA to do a master's degree in journalism on a UNESCO scholarship and later on I did my PhD also in the USA on mass communication in 1974.

I have never worked in a job related to the legal profession. I have always been very interested in journalism and was already working as a journalist in my student days. I have also had a keen interest in Turkish literature and have written poems, stories, and prepared art and literature pages in various newspapers.

When I came back, to Turkey I planned to work as an academic but instead I started working for TRT (Turkish Broadcasting Corporation) as a programme consultant after they invited me to work for them. However, my stint with TRT lasted only for 2 years. Turkey was going through a very turbulent period of internal strife and military coups. Unexpectedly I found myself out of work. It was also difficult to go back to academia, as I had already been found guilty by a court because of working with leftist people in TRT.

I have been teaching media and communication at Bilgi University in Istanbul since 1996 as a professor. Also, I am the coordinator of radio and television news department. Mostly I teach mass communication theories, investigative reporting and media ethics.

Turkey is not a very productive country in terms of media and communication studies, theories and sources. I am one of the rare ones who have written on communication theories since the 1970s and the first one who undertook a PhD on mass communication. Of course I am not telling all these to humiliate those who did studies in media and communication. But the lack of good pieces of works is directly related to the universities and their policies. We keep the young researchers busy with trivial issues and the academic atmosphere is closed to original productive work in Turkey. Therefore, the new research in media and communications field is not that much attractive and successful?

3.1.18 Hasan Cemal

I have been working as a journalist for 32 years. I worked for Cumhuriyet Daily as a representative, intelligence officer and Editor-in-chief for almost 12 years. I also worked for Sabah Daily as a journalist and columnist for 6 years.

I currently have no responsibilities in Milliyet apart from writing my column. I have generally been involved in political news but I sometimes write about football as well.

3.1.19 Hüseyin Çelik

I studied Turkish Literature in Istanbul and received my MA from SOAS, London in politics. After doing my PhD again in Turkish Literature I delivered lectures at Van University, Turkey as a reader.

My political life started when I was 18 and in Adalet party youth branches; in 1978 when I was 20 I became the president of youth branches in Adalet party. Therefore, I have been active in politics for approximately 33 years. In my academic years I was not directly involved in political works but I always took part as a theoretician. So I can say that I opened my eyes in politics.

I am the vice-president of AKP and I am also the president of advertisement and media. I am responsible for all the presentation campaigns, election campaigns, and advertisement of the party and propaganda and in addition to all that I am the spokesperson of the party.

3.1.20 İbrahim Aydın

Before I started to work for Birgün Daily, I was coordinating publishing of some other periodicals. I am now officially head of the board but also working as an Editor-in-chief here. I am arranging the contents and check them if they fit in our journalism policies. However, I should also note that I am not the only one who decides the editorial issues. Yes, I am the Editor-in-chief but in terms of democratic contribution when it comes to determining the news stories to be covered and how to cover it, we make a decision as the board of the editors; we decide all together.

3.1.21 Joost Lagendijk

I am now a senior adviser at the Istanbul Policy Centre (IPC) of Sabanci University where we are right now. I mainly deal with Turkey-EU relations, but also Turkey domestic politics and with Turkish foreign policy. I have been working here since 2009. Before that, for 11 years, I was member of EU parliament for the Dutch Greens. In the EU parliament, I mainly worked on Turkey, Turkey EU accession, and on the Balkans, western Balkans.

I teach once in the second semester on the EU institution and policies at Sabanci University and also I am a columnist for Zaman Daily, and Today's Zaman Daily.

I worked on Turkey a lot in the EU Parliament (EP). When I had decided not to run again for the EP in 2008, I was considering my options and I wanted to keep on working on Turkey, Turkey EU, Turkey domestic politics, but I did not want to do it in the EP anymore because I have been there for 11 years. So, I was thinking quite quickly about a university in Turkey in Istanbul. There would allow me to work all these issues, not in a strictly academic way but policy- oriented way, then IPC quickly turned out to be the best place to do that.

3.1.22 Leyla Ayaz

I was working for a Kurdish Party, DEHAP (Democratic People Party), which subsequently was closed by the Turkish Supreme Court. Then preferred to work in press and been working for Azadiya Welat for 6 years as reporter and editor.

I am currently a board member, Editor-in-chief and responsible for “women and politics” issues. I am mostly reporting news regarding women but also cover politics.

3.1.23 Leyla Zana

My first meeting with politics was in 1976. However, my very first interest in politics was related to the military coup in 1980. My first engagement in politics was through the Turkey Labour Party. However, I was not a member of the party, neither sympathizer; I was just observing the party organisations. I was also following other leftist groups in Turkey.

Yes, my political interest started because of the problems Kurdish identity has faced for decades. It has been a problem regarding millions of people. We went through a process in which they had no right, no statue and their language and existence were denied.

This process enabled me to structure a political sense and maturity and an understanding of a person’s way of struggle for their rights, how they gained their freedoms and how they had their identity acknowledged. Subsequently in 1991 because of social expectation I decided to be active in politics. I was imprisoned because I said “I take this oath for the brotherhood between the Turkish people and the Kurdish people” (Ez vê sondê li ser navê gelê kurd û tirk dixwîm- in Kurdish) in Kurdish just after I took my parliamentary oath in Turkish National Assembly after I was elected as an MP in 1991.

3.1.24 Mehmet Ali Birand

I have been doing journalism since 1964. I used to report political and foreign news. I am now news director in Kanal D TV and head writer in Posta Daily. I started in Milliyet daily, and then transferred to Sabah Daily and now I am in Posta Daily.

3.1.25 Mehmet Asutay

I am a reader and teaching Political economy; developmentalism; Islamic economy and finance here at Durham University. This is my sixth year here in Durham. I am also teacher in Political Economy of Development in the Middle East; Islamic Political Economy; and Middle East in Global Economy.

When I completed my PhD in the UK Turkey was going through a difficult passage in its more recent history; the so-called post-modern coup-d'état was fresh and heavily prevailing in every aspect of life; the 'Turkish problem of Kurds' was heavily around; human rights violations were all around and hence Turkey was not an attractive option at all during the time.

3.1.26 Mehmet Baransu

I started in journalism in 1995 in Aksam Daily; I have lived in Istanbul throughout my career. I have worked for daily Hurriyet (only to write a book with Yalcin Bayer) as well as for Aksiyon Magazine. I did an MA in journalism in the US. I have also worked as a freelancer for many foreign news agencies such as BBC, ABC etc., and for Turkish news agency Cihan.

I commenced working for Taraf since its first day in 2007. I am a reporter and a columnist in Taraf. I mostly cover political issues but as a reporter, I try and report almost about any subject.

3.1.27 Mehmet Bekaroğlu

I studied medicine and am a professor of psychiatry. I have been a politician for 15 years. I was an MP from the now closed Welfare party.

I worked for Refah Partisi (RP-Welfare Party- an Islamist Political Party) just before the post-modern military coup in 1998. Refah Partisi was a religious party and they invited me to the party as a sign of change in their political thought. However, RP was closed by the Constitutional court because of being the focus point of "anti-secularism activities" and violating the principle of secularism in Turkey in 1998.

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) has been founded by those who were once members of RP. They criticised the RP way/manner of politics and decided to create a new political party, as they thought they should come to the power to realize their political strategies. AKP claimed that they were a new party but they had nothing new, except their strategy of being in power.

When AKP was established, I did not leave Saadet Partisi (SP- Felicity Party - the party which was set up after RP closure by the Supreme court of Turkey) because my way of thought was completely different. The intellectual background of our criticism of the Government was much stronger.

When the SP was founded, we at first thought that it would be a different party and that politics would be debated within a wider and freer context within the party. However, as we saw that the party did not change although we tried hard I and some friends decided to leave SP and set up a new party. Currently I am working for HAS Party (Voice of People Party). I am vice- president of the party and am responsible for human rights and legal affairs.

3.1.28 Mehmet Kamis

I have been working in the media sector since April 1987; I mean I have been a journalist since 1987. I have worked in Zaman for most of that time but I also worked for Tercüman newspaper, TRT (Turkish Radio Television) and Aksiyon (News Journal)

I am deputy editor of Zaman daily. The administrative structure in Zaman is that there is a general manager responsible for all the publishing and broadcasting. The newspaper includes a few sub-establishments such as Cihan News Agent, Aksiyon, Turkish Reviews and Today's Zaman. The general manager is responsible for all those establishments but I am responsible for only Zaman Daily. I represent the general manager in his absence. I am also a columnist in the newspaper.

3.1.29 Mehmet Kaya

I studied pharmacy at the university and worked for several NGOs alongside of working as a pharmacist. I am now the president of DITAM and we focus on the problems of our region, Diyarbakir and social issues.

3.1.30 Mehmet Muftuoglu

I am deputy editor of Ortadogu Daily.

3.1.31 Mesut Yeğen

I am a professor of sociology here at Sehir University, Istanbul. I was teaching at OTDU (Middle East Technical University) and just last year started here at the Sehir University. I have been teaching sociology since 1996. Along with sociology, I also deliver lectures on cultural studies, modern Turkey studies and ethnicity in Turkey.

3.1.32 Mümtazer Türköne

I am a professor of Political Sciences and I had been teaching political sciences and public administration for many years at various universities. I have recently stopped teaching lectures and now I am a columnist for Zaman daily.

3.1.33 Mustafa Karaalioğlu

I have been doing journalism since 1987. I started working at Zaman, then Turkiye, Yeni Safak and finally Star. I also worked for Kanal 7, TRT and NTV.

I am the executive editor of Star. I am responsible for everything that is published in the newspaper. I also write articles, columns on politics in Turkey. I have been in this role since 2007.

3.1.34 Namık Durukan

I have been working as a journalist for 25 years. I have always worked for Milliyet but have also done freelance correspondence for BBC, Reuters and some other news agencies in Europe.

I have been closely following the Kurdish Issue since 1984. There is the position of “expert journalist” here in Milliyet. I am in this position and report news about the Kurdish Issue and the Kurds in the Middle East, Northern Iraq, Iran and Syria. I also follow the Kurdish Party, BDP, and its works in the parliament, as a journalist.

3.1.35 Nuray Mert

I am a reader in political science and international relations. I have two undergraduate degrees; first in political science, second in history both from Bogazici University. Additionally, I have a postgraduate Masters degree in History and I did my PhD in Political Science. I worked at many universities without having an exact position; last time I used to work for the Istanbul University as an external lecturer.

I teach sociology of politics to undergraduate students and International Politics. I have also taught some Middle Eastern studies and Turkish Modernization to PhD and Masters Students. Furthermore, I studied conservative parties and their effects on politics. I have been interested in political parties' authority approaches.

3.1.36 Nuri Gürgür

I studied law at Ankara University and I have been in Turk Ocaklari ever since my teenage life. I was a youth representative in 1958. Since 1996 I have been the chair of the Turkish Hearths.

3.1.37 Onder Aytac

I graduated from Izmir Ataturk High School, and then I graduated from Ankara University Faculty of Law. Thus my main expertise area is Law. However, I received a Master's degree in criminology and I received a PhD in sociology.

I wanted to be either a district governor or a judge. The Police Academy was the first to hold an examination and I passed the exam. Then after attending language courses here for some time, I went to England for Master and PhD. I studied on "Jails, Their Problems, and Alternative Punishment Systems" at Loughborough University during [my] Masters [studies] and on the "Interaction of the State and Security Forces on Terrorism" at Hall University at the Department of Political Science.

I am a reader and teaching Police Public Relations, Behavioural Sciences, Creative Drama at the Police Academy, Media-Police Relations at Master's for seven years, and Alternative Media at Gazi University.

3.1.38 Öztürk Türkdoğan

I am President of the Human Rights Association (IHD) of Turkey. I was born in Kars, Turkey in 1970, studied law, and especially focus on human rights.

3.1.39 Ragıp Duran

I studied law because my father and other family members studied law and did jobs related to law. However, I had always wanted to be a journalist and because I studied international law in France the first newspaper I worked for wanted me to report foreign news and I started at Aydinlik Daily in 1978. However, the Aydinlik today and the Aydinlik in 1978 was totally different and I would not work for the current Aydinlik if they called me to do so as their ideology is really knotty.

I studied law in Paris but I have been doing journalism for the BBC, Reuters and national newspapers and news agencies since 1978. I also delivered lectures at Communication Faculties of Galatasaray and Marmara University in Istanbul, Turkey for ten years. I delivered journalism, comparative French and Turkish Journalism, global media, media ethics, and history-geography and the media, and news production lectures.

I am still teaching at Bilkent University, Ankara but I prefer calling myself a journalist rather than an academic. Currently also working as the correspondent of French Liberation Daily and Arabic El-Mustakbel in Lebanon.

3.1.40 Remzi Ketenci

I started working in the media sector when I graduated from the communication faculty. I have been working as a journalist for almost 18 years. I am now working as the general manager of “Dunya TV” and I have been in this position since July 2009.

3.1.41 Rober Koptas

I studied Labour Economics at Marmara University and got an MA and a PhD in History at Bosphorus University in Turkey.

I don't have a long journalism experience. I was an editor and PhD student in History. I have been writing in Agos for the last five years, started six months before Hrant Dink was killed. Etyen Mahcupyan (another Armenian-Turkish journalists) was the Editor-in-chief before me and I became his successor after he left here.

3.1.42 Ruhsar Demirel

I am doctor normally; I studied medicine at Gazi University, Ankara. In Turkey it is not allowed to do politics if you are a civil servant. Therefore, I could not be active in politics before 2007 although I was very much interested in it. However, after 2007 I resigned from public service and became a member of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). Then I became an MP from MHP in 2011 elections.

I am now the vice president of MHP, which is responsible for female and family issues and responsible for subsidiary organs such as some foundations, and organisations who are not members of our party but indirectly work with us. On the other hand there are some other organs who are not linked to us in anyway but we make much of all thoughts no matter whether they are against us or not.

3.1.43 Ruşen Çakır

I have been involved with the media since 1985. Currently I'm doing political programmes for NTV [stopped this just after the interview] and writing columns for Vatan and mainly work as a "political advisor". My job is to compare and contrast different actions of the parties in Turkey.

3.1.44 Sezgin Tanrikulu

I just started to be active in politics 6 months ago. I was elected as an MP from Republican People's Party in 2011 and I am the vice president responsible from human rights issues.

I am a lawyer and actively worked for NGOs for years. The problem there was that the people around you were not changing that much and you had to address only a limited number of people. However, through politics you can have your voice heard by all the country.

3.1.45 Tansel Çölaşan

I studied law at Ankara University and worked as a Head Prosecutor of State council and now I am president of ADD.

3.1.46 Tarık Tavadođlu

I have been doing journalism for almost 40 years. Excluding SABAH, I worked for almost all newspapers in Turkey and I have been Editor-in-chief of Ortadogu Daily for 15 years. Unlike the executive editors in the other newspapers, I can say that I work harder as I have been dealing with all the details of the daily news printed. For us, every event is news. However, every journalist uses their own dose of exaggeration depending on their target audience and we make sure that we attempt to give readers the idea that we need to do it, in accordance with the nature of our own political view. We publish the news by filtering through our political views.

I worked in almost every department from the revision to the executive editor. In fact, before, if you had not worked in the revision department or any other entry-level department, you would not be able to work as a secretary or as an upper level like an executive editor. I do not think this no-written rule still exists. I wish it did.

3.1.47 Turan Ozlu

I have been working in the media for five years and of course, as Ulusal TV is a “news channel” I am also doing journalism. I am Editor-in-chief here.

3.1.48 Ümit Özdağ

I am a Public Administration professor at School of Economics and Administrative Sciences Section of Gazi University; in addition, I am the head of 21st Century Turkish Institute. This organization makes researches on everything about the national security of Turkey. I am delivering National Security and Terror lectures at Gazi University and other universities. I am writing columns for Yenicag daily and also I wrote in Aksam Daily in the past.

3.1.49 Umit Sezgin

I am the founder of TRT Turk, which has been substituted by TRT International. I have been at TRT for 2 years and a few months. I started at Cumhuriyet then moved to Yeni Gundem. I also worked 2 years for Hurriyet, 4 years for Kanal D and 10 years for NTV in the past. I worked mostly as a news editor in the past and I was usually reporting political news.

3.1.50 Veli Toprak

I have been a journalist for 16 years since 1995. I am the reporter responsible for the TBMM (Grand National Assembly of Turkey) of Sözcü Daily. I am the reporter of Parliament, and the reporter of AK Party privately.

3.1.51 Yavuz Baydar

I have been doing journalism for 32 years. When I was a reporter I used to report news from all subjects; I was a general reporter but not on the economy.

I am now a reader/ public editor here in Sabah Daily. We carefully analyse the wishes or complaints coming from the audience about the contents and coverage of the newspaper and talk about them in our columns such as in the Guardian and the Observer.

APPENDIX 4

4.1 Questions for Elite Interviews

4.1.1 Common Questions for all Categories

4.1.1.1 General view on the role of the news media in Turkey

1. What do you think on role of media in creating a deliberative public sphere and so in contributing deliberative democracy and how far the Turkish media could fulfil this in the country?
2. Do you think media independence from government influence in Turkey is increasing, decreasing or staying the same?
3. What would you say about the “civil dictate” claims in this context?
4. What are the reasons for journalists to have self-censorship? What affects the news discourse/ language?
5. Do you think the current legal frameworks mainly protect or restrict journalists in their work?
6. Do you agree that in Turkey national security is used as grounds to curb press freedom? Should a journalist be censored through this reason? How the country can avoid this dilemma?
7. How pluralistic do you think the news media are in Turkey?
8. Do you think that the news coverage style of Turkish newspapers or other media in general has changed over the years? In what way?
9. What are your views on media standards in Turkey? For example, is commercialisation and sensationalism increasing, decreasing or staying the same?
10. To what extent do you believe public broadcasting is really doing “public broadcasting”?

4.1.1.2 Questions about the reporting and mediation of Kurdish Issue in Turkey

1. Generally, how well do the mainstream media deal with issues of cultural diversity?
2. Do you agree that minority media organisations have been suppressed in Turkey?
3. What is your understanding of Kurdish Issue? How would you describe the situation?

4. Overall, how do you think the Kurdish issue is dealt with today in mainstream Turkish Media coverage?
5. Do you think there has been any change over recent years? (If Yes) why?
6. Have you ever reported on this issue? (If yes) Can you give an example and what were your experiences in dealing with this issue?
7. What do you think about TRT 6 and new channels for Kurdish broadcasting? Do you welcome this development?
8. As a conclusion is it really possible say something directly about whether the mass media enhances or diminishes the prospect of democracy in Turkey?

4.1.1.3 Questions about NGOs

1. How authoritative do you see the NGOs? Why?
2. Do you have any contact with them?
3. What is the representation level of NGOs in Turkish media and how do you evaluate this level in terms of democracy?

4.1.2 Specific questions to each group

4.1.2.1 Academics

1. What is your main area of expertise?
2. What lectures do you deliver at the university?
3. How long have you been teaching at University?
4. Have you ever changed your University? Why?
5. You also write as a columnist. What is columnist's role do you think and how they are approached in Turkey?
6. What do you think about "academic freedom" in Turkish Universities? Can academics write on sensitive issues freely?
7. Have you ever personally experienced any ideological pressure/censorship in University? (if yes) Why?
8. What is it attracting academics to write for newspapers or why do the media need them? Do they create any difference?

9. What would you say about the role of universities and academics in democratisation of Turkey?
10. Apart from participating in TV debates how is the representation of academics in Turkish media?

4.1.2.2 Media Professionals

1. How long have you been working in media, been a journalist?
2. What are your current responsibilities, are there any specific subjects that you are supposed to report?
3. How long have you been in this role?
4. How would you describe the news values and editorial policy of your organisation?
5. Have your reporting practices changed over recent years? (if yes) Why have they changed?
6. How much freedom do you have in your daily reporting? What do you see as being the main pressures that affect you when writing/ producing news reports?
7. How much freedom do you have while reporting sensitive issues?
8. At what level is journalists' autonomy in Turkey do you think?
9. What individuals and organisations do you have most routine contact with in your work?
10. Have you ever experienced any self/governmental or company censorship? Why? How have you dealt with it?

4.1.2.3 NGOs

1. Could you please give brief information about your NGO?
2. What has made you work for this NGO?
3. What is your position in this organisation and how long have you been in this role?
4. Did you work for another NGO before? What was it for?
5. How long have you been working actively for NGOs?
6. Why is it necessary to work for an NGO?
7. Have you ever faced any ideological pressure because you are working for this NGO?

8. What do you do in order to accomplish your objectives?
9. How do you organise your press relations? What do you do to access media?
10. How successful do you think you are, in accessing the media? What helps you?
11. Do you have enough coverage in media?
12. Have you ever been rejected by any media organisation? (if yes) Why?
13. Whom are you trying to communicate with?
14. What media, local or mainstream, do you mostly access and why? Is that why you think that they will talk to you or you believe that they already have access to the audiences, which you want to communicate with?
15. To what extent do you agree that NGOs in Turkey have not done all they should have especially in terms of sensitive issues, such as minority and military issues?
16. What is the representation level of NGOs in Turkish media?
17. How does an NGO try to get their news across? How do they organize this? What problems do they face while doing this?
18. Is the existence of NGOs in Turkey at a noticeable level in terms of democracy and how much they are effective?

4.1.2.4 Political Representatives

1. How long have you actively been in politics?
2. Did you work for another party before? (if yes) Why did you leave it?
3. What are your current responsibilities and role in the party?
4. What is your party's main ideology and target?
5. Who's your party's target group?
6. What is distinctive about the political communication strategy of your party and why?
7. How do you organise your press relations?
8. Which media do you have contact with and why? Is that why you think that they will talk to you or you believe that they already have access to the audiences, which you want to communicate with?
9. What is your communication strategy and how effective do you think it is?

10. Why do you think your Press Officer is important and why do you need him/ her?
11. How successful do you think you are in accessing the media? What helps you?

APPENDIX 5

5.1 Coding Schedule

5.1.1 News Items

1. TRT6
2. TRT6-Kurdish Issue
3. Kurdish Issue 1
4. Uludere Airstrike
5. Uludere Airstrike-Kurdish Issue
6. Kurdish Issue 2

5.1.2 Newspapers

7. Cumhuriyet
8. Hurriyet
9. Ortadogu
10. Taraf
11. Zaman

5.1.3 Item Type

12. Column
13. Editorial
14. Feature Item
15. Interview
16. News Item
17. Op-Ed

5.1.4 Location

18. Designated page
19. Front page lead editorial
20. Front page lead news
21. Front page non-lead editorial
22. Front page non-lead news
23. Other general news section page
24. Second general news section page

5.1.5 Themes Codes

5.1.5.1 International Politics

25. Comparisons with other countries
26. Europe Union
27. Foreign Policy
28. International politics
29. Iran
30. Iraq
31. NATO
32. Other Foreign Policy issues
33. Other issues concerning European policy
34. Syria
35. United Nations
36. USA

5.1.5.2 National Politics

37. Autonomy debates
38. Role of quasi government
39. Independence of Turkey
40. Other centralisation of political power
41. Other decentralisation of political power
42. Other education issues
43. Other environmental matters
44. Other Party proposals and policies
45. Protest to support government
46. Environmental impact of conflict
47. Urban Policy
48. Economic development
49. Role of other political parties
50. Role of other politicians

5.1.5.3 Government

51. Governmental Propaganda
52. Role of AKP government

5.1.5.4 BDP (Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party)

- 53. Role of BDP (Kurdish Party)
- 54. Role of other Kurdish MPs

5.1.5.5 Democratisation and Human Rights

- 55. Cultural and Identity rights
- 56. Democratisation
- 57. Education in native language
- 58. Ethnic and Socio-Cultural equality
- 59. Freedom of Information
- 60. Human Rights Issues
- 61. Kurdish Initiative/Democratic Opening
- 62. Other Freedoms
- 63. Protest for Kurdish rights
- 64. Terrorism policy – issues concerning civil rights

5.1.5.6 Multiculturalism and Ethnicity

- 65. Alawe Rights
- 66. Allegations of Racism
- 67. Assimilation Allegations
- 68. Kurdish acknowledgment
- 69. Other issues concerning Minority Ethnic Communities
- 70. Minorities
- 71. Minority Ethnic representation of the media
- 72. Minority Ethnic representation within political parties
- 73. Minority politics
- 74. Multi Culturalism in Turkey – difficulties or problems
- 75. Multiculturalism in Turkey benefits
- 76. Other Ethnic/race rights

5.1.5.7 Ethnic Conflict

- 77. Ethnic Conflict
- 78. Ethnic Massacre
- 79. Other protests
- 80. Protest against Kurds
- 81. Protests in the area of conflict

5.1.5.8 National Unity and Security

82. National Security
83. National Unity
84. National Unity and brotherhood
85. Nationalism
86. Separation/ Independence of Kurds
87. Sovereignty of Kurds
88. Sovereignty of Turkey

5.1.5.9 Crime and Security

89. Armed fight (Turkish Army-PKK)
90. Arrests/imprisonments
91. Crime/policing issue
92. Defence/ Military
93. Fear of crime, politics of fear, etc.
94. ID cards controls
95. Military Interventions out of borders (Iran-Iraq- Syria)
96. Military Interventions within the borders
97. Other violent crime
98. Protest against PKK politics/acts
99. Prisons

5.1.5.10 Legal

100. Constitutional issues
101. Court of Justice
102. EU Constitution
103. European Court of Human Right decision
104. Legal regulations
105. Other constitutional issues
106. Other law reform issues
107. Turkish Court decision
108. Role of judiciary

5.1.5.11 Media

109. Media freedoms
110. Media Ownership

- 111. Other media issues
- 112. TRT
- 113. Foreign Media Coverage

5.1.6 Actors Codes

5.1.6.1 Academics

- 114. Mithat Sancar
- 115. Mumtazer Turkone
- 116. Other Academic

5.1.6.2 NGOs/Pressure Group

- 117. A. Faruk Unsal
- 118. ADD
- 119. DISIAD
- 120. DITAM
- 121. Genc Siviller
- 122. IHD
- 123. IHH
- 124. MAZLUMDER
- 125. MUSIAD
- 126. Other business and corporate organisations
- 127. Other NGO
- 128. Other NGO Member
- 129. Pressure groups
- 130. Ozturk Turkdogan
- 131. TESEV
- 132. TUSIAD
- 133. Other ethnic group representative

5.1.6.3 Ordinary People/Citizens

- 134. Citizen from the region of conflict
- 135. Citizen-non from the region of conflict

5.1.6.4 Kurdish Actors

- 136. Abdullah Ocalan

- 137. Eren Keskin
- 138. Murat Karayilan
- 139. Other PKK Members
- 140. PKK
- 141. Rojin
- 142. Bejan Matur
- 143. Other PKK Members

5.1.6.5 Social Representatives

- 144. Other ethnic group representative
- 145. Person selected because of his/her representative status of a particular section of society
- 146. Person selected because of his/her representative status of Turkish Public Opinion in general

5.1.6.6 Officials/State Actors

- 147. Abdullah Gul (president)
- 148. District Governor (Kaymakam)
- 149. General Staff (Army)
- 150. Governor (Vali)
- 151. Ilker Basbug
- 152. Isik Kosaner
- 153. Mayor (Belediye Baskani)
- 154. Other armed security
- 155. Other Army Member
- 156. Other Official
- 157. Police
- 158. Village Guard
- 159. National Intelligence Service
- 160. TRT
- 161. Hakan Fidan

5.1.6.7 Governmental Actors

- 162. Ahmet Davutoglu
- 163. Besir Atalay
- 164. Huseyin Celik

165. I. Naim Sahin
166. Other AKP/ Government Member
167. Other Minister
168. R. T. Erdogan (PM)
169. Bulent Arinc

5.1.6.8 International Actors

170. Ahmedi Nejat
171. Barack Obama
172. Bashar al-Assad
173. Jalal Talabani
174. José Manuel Barroso
175. Massoud Barzani
176. Other EU political representative
177. Other foreign political representative
178. Other Iranian political representative
179. Other Iraqi political representative
180. Other Syrian political representative
181. Other UN political representative
182. Other US political representative
183. Nouri al-Maliki
184. NATO Member

5.1.6.9 Opposition Memebers

185. Devlet Bahceli
186. Kemal Kilicdaroglu
187. Mehmet Bekaroglu
188. Other CHP Member
189. Other MHP Member
190. Other Political Parties
191. Other Politicians
192. Suleyman Demirel
193. Deniz Baykal
194. Numan Kurtulmus

5.1.6.10 BDP (Kurdish Party) Members

- 195. Ahmet Turk
- 196. Gulden Kisanak
- 197. Leyla Zana
- 198. Other BDP Member
- 199. Selahattin Demirtas
- 200. Sirri Sakik
- 201. Sirri Sureyya Onder
- 202. Osman Baydemir

5.1.7 Appearance of the Actors

- 203. Mentioned only
- 204. Pictured only
- 205. Directly quoted not pictured
- 206. Directly quoted and pictured
- 207. Mentioned and pictured not quoted

5.1.8 Disposition of the Actors

- 208. Mainly attacking Kurdish policies
- 209. Mainly attacking launching of TRT6
- 210. Mainly attacking government policies
- 211. Mainly attacking PKK policies
- 212. Mainly attacking Turkish policies
- 213. Mainly attacking Uludere Airstrike
- 214. Mainly defending government policies
- 215. Mainly defending Kurdish policies
- 216. Mainly defending launching of TRT6
- 217. Mainly defending PKK policies
- 218. Mainly defending Turkish policies
- 219. Mainly defending Uludere Airstrike
- 220. Mainly presenting policies/ arguments
- 221. Mixed disposition – no single one ascendant
- 222. No evaluative position evident