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Turkey: The Kurdish Question and the Coercive State

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In 1999, T urkey's long-lasting Kurdish conflict [1] took on a new turn
after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers'
Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan—PKK[2]), and the acceptance of Turkey's
candidacy for membership in the European Union. The negative peace that
began with the capture of Öcalan and the PKK's decision of ceasefire in 1999
saw an increase in the number of civil society organizations (CSOs) concerned
with and working in areas related to the Kurdish conflict. However, since mid-
2004, sporadic violence in conflict-affected areas, as well as the spread of vi-
olence in western Turkish cities, have hampered attempts to bring about peace
and affected the functioning of CSOs. In this chapter, I analyze peacebuilding
issues and the degree to which CSOs fulfill peacebuilding functions within the
framework of the Kurdish conflict. The data derive largely from fieldwork
conducted in the cities of eastern and southeastern Anatolia, where there are
high concentrations of Kurds, as well as cities where most CSOs working on
the issue are located, such as Istanbul and Ankara.

Context

It can be argued that the roots of the so-called Kurdish question date to the Ot-
toman Empire and national uprisings at the end of the nineteenth century. In
the early years of the Turkish Republic (1924–1938), there were eighteen Kur-
dish rebellions. However, the conflict became distinctly "Kurdish" after 1984
with the emergence of the PKK as a separatist group within Turkey, when it
first attacked Turkey's state apparatus. Ever since, the conflict has unfolded
with several stages. In 1987, the government declared emergency rule in thir-
teen Kurdish-populated provinces.[3] The conflict peaked from 1991 to 1999,
when the highest number of deaths and human rights violations occurred. This

period was followed by a negative peace period, which ended with the reescalation of conflict in mid-2004. The conflict became internationalized yet again[4] in late 2007 with the Turkish Army's bombings of PKK camps within the territory of northern Iraq. Between 30,000 and 40,000 people are estimated to have died during the conflict.

The Kurdish Question in a Broader Context

Kurds have never existed as an independent political community[5] and thus have been under the rule of others throughout history—the Sassanian, Safavid, and Ottoman Empires in addition to the Turkish Republic, to name but a few. There are no official statistics identifying the number of Kurds in Turkey. However, studies estimate that Kurds constitute 15–20 percent of the total population in Turkey (Andrews 1992; McDowall 1997; Gunter 1997). In the absence of verifiable statistics, some scholars claim that Kurds are the largest "stateless" group of people in the world (McKeirnan 1999; Council of Europe 2006). Such studies argue there are 20–30 million Kurds living in the region where the borders of Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Iraq meet. There are, in addition, some 1 million Kurds living in Western Europe (Council of Europe 2006), most of whom migrated there after the 1970s.

It is important to note that Kurds do not make up a homogenous group in terms of religious affiliation. Although most Kurds (70 percent) adhere to the Sunni sect of Islam, there are considerable Alevis[6] and a few Yezidis (together, 30 percent; Barkey and Fuller 1998, 67; Andrews 1992). This heterogeneity in demographic characteristics is also represented in the Kurds' political and social organizations. For example, Kurdish votes in eastern and southeastern Anatolia are usually divided among the government's Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi—AKP), the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi—DTP), and lesser center-right parties.

Also, there exists no specific region in Turkey where the population is exclusively made up of Kurds; in most parts of eastern and southeastern Anatolia, however, they constitute the majority. Kurdish populations in the western cities started to increase with economic migration beginning in the 1950s, intensifying especially after the forced displacement of many Kurds in the 1990s.[7] Today Kurds live throughout every region of Turkey, with Istanbul, Ankara, Mersin, and Izmir having the largest populations of displaced Kurds.

Conflict Parties

The primary parties to the conflict are the organs of the Turkish state and society, the PKK, the pro-Kurdish DTP,[8] and, more generally, the Turkish and Kurdish citizens of Turkey. Within those categories, the most important actors are: the ruling AKP government, under Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; and the state security forces, including the military, police, Village Guards,[9]

and Gendarmerie.[10] Important secondary actors are the European Union and the United States.

Kurdistan Workers' Party. Even though the conflict is rooted in an earlier period of imperial rule, the Kurdish question crystallized after the emergence of the PKK as an armed group within the Republic of Turkey. The Kurdistan Workers' Party was founded in 1978 by Abdullah Öcalan to "set up a democratic and united Kurdistan in southeastern Turkey to be governed along Marxist-Leninist lines" and sought to "monopolize the Kurdish nationalist struggle" (Çağaptay 2007, 2). The Turkish state declared the PKK to be an illegal organization whose cadres are fed by indigenous and expatriate Kurds. Due to the lack of scholarly works and reliable sources on the structure and functioning of the PKK, except for its political cadres, we know little about the PKK's membership profile. According to Orhan Doğan, a Kurdish former member of parliament who was released in June 2004 after thirteen years in prison,[1] there are 3,000 PKK combatants in Turkey (*Radikal* 2005a).[1] In addition, several PKK subgroups perform nonviolent political, social, and community functions. As in other cases where illegal groups fight against the state, some countries support the PKK as a "stick" in their negotiations with Turkey. Syria long gave refuge to Öcalan because it gave the Syrians a bargaining chip in the negotiations for water from the Tigris-Euphrates river basins. Iran, in opposition to Turkey's secular system, "long saw the PKK as a useful tool to use against Turkey. Tehran allowed the PKK to maintain about 1,200 of its members, which later formed the basis for the PJAK [Partîya Jîyane Azadîya Kurdistan—Kurdistan Free Life Party], in around fifty locations in Iran" (Çağaptay 2007, 3).[1] The PKK is allegedly financed through criminal rings (mostly drug traffickers), propaganda, and fund-raising auxiliaries in Europe. It also sponsors TV stations (e.g., Roj TV) that actively promote PKK ideology and mobilize supporters (Çağaptay 2007, 3–4).

Over the years, the PKK's positions have changed. There is no clear analysis of what the PKK sought in the past and what it seeks today. According to some, the PKK never demanded an independent state (SORAR 2008); others argue such was the case in the 1980s (Kocher 2002; Çağaptay 2007). However, after the capture of Öcalan, the PKK started to emphasize the notion of a "democratic republic,"[1] as argued by its leader (Öcalan 1999). However, this position might be considered the result of his capture rather than an actual position of the organization.

Peacebuilding means different things within the heterogonous Kurdish society, but one can summarize the dominant options for the PKK, DTP, and Kurdish intellectuals. Although the conflict has increased its intensity since late December 2007, an interview conducted with higher-ranking PKK officers shows that the first option is no longer armed conflict, even though it continues.

These officers claim that peace can be achieved only by "freeing" the Kurdish language in public, by making education in Kurdish available in Turkey, and by "securing" the Kurdish identity through constitutional guarantees and democratic autonomy to Kurds, meaning federalism or decentralization (Çongar 2008). A committee of wise men (*akil adamlar*), they believe, can achieve these through mediation.[15] Even though these officers declined to elaborate a specific position, the PKK and its followers also demand the release of Öcalan as a precondition for "peace." DTP,[1] the alleged follower of the PKK[1] (Çağaptay 2007), seems to be in agreement and does not denounce the PKK's use of violence as a means to achieve peacebuilding goals. Finally, the Kurdish intelligentsia's descriptions of peace and peacebuilding include the same cultural and political goals but also include general amnesty. However, Kurdish intellectuals condemn any use of force and violence, emphasizing instead the necessity to recognize the PKK as a social and political phenomenon among Kurds (Radikal 2008). This means public discussion of the underlying reasons for people joining the PKK, as well as exploring ways in which the members of the PKK can return to society.

The Turkish state. When the Kurdish question became prominent in Turkish politics through PKK activities, many state officers perceived the conflict as a "terrorist act" whose aim was to carve out an independent Kurdistan within Turkish territories. The Turkish state refused to consider the PKK as the legitimate "other" in the conflict and treated the Kurdish population as part of the citizen population. That is why the Kurdish question was never pronounced as such, but rather denounced as "terrorism" or, in the best case, as the "southeast underdevelopment problem." In contrast, most Kurds and the international community perceived the issue as an identity conflict and a problem of representation. One of the difficulties is the fact that conflict parties define the nature of conflict differently. Especially given rising violence, the state's emphases have been security and territorial integrity, whereas Kurds chafe at the slow and unwilling moves of the state in the EU integration process to grant more rights to Kurds.

Although there is no clear, stable, and well-constructed government policy, the government perspective on peacebuilding involves the military, given its definition of peace as state security and territorial integrity. Moreover, there are different perceptions of the state as an actor. Over the years, its understanding of peace has changed. As Kemal Kirişçi argues, it is easier to discuss what is not included in the state's understanding of peace and peacebuilding than what it means. Although the state's emphasis on "dialogue and economic interdependence with the Kurdish administration in northern Iraq" can "foresee an important effort to improve governance at the local level and relations between ordinary Kurds and the Turkish state" and allow "education in the Kurdish-language and media broadcasting in Kurdish languages," its understanding of peace does not include any "transformation from unitary state to a federal

one," "territorial autonomy," or acceptance of Kurdish as an official language (Kirişçi 2008, 7).

Since it assumed power in 2002, the AKP has taken several different positions. According to M. Hakan Yavuz and Nihat Ali Özcan (2006), the AKP treats the Kurdish question as part of forced secularism and Turkish nationalism, of the type enforced by Kemalist ideology, and argues that if Turkey stresses common Islamic ties and brotherhood, then the conflict would eventually end.

Another reason for the preeminent role of the military in the conflict is the legacy of the coups d'état and quasi–coups d'état that have occurred in Turkey once every decade since 1960. These events not only hampered democratic governance; they also solidified the strong role that the military still plays in Turkish politics. The legacies of coups and state coercion on certain civil rights diminish Turkey's democracy score despite a vigorous multiparty system. The European Union, in its progress reports, criticizes the military's intervention in democratic governance from time to time, arguing it is a threat to democratization. During the period of negative peace (1999–2004), the military's public visibility decreased. Since the upsurge in violence, beginning in March 2006, the military and the other security forces reemerged and are again taking a more active role.[18]

Secondary parties. The most important secondary parties are the European Union and the United States. Although both recognize the PKK as a "terrorist organization," their positions have differed. Since the acceptance of Turkey's EU candidacy, the union has become an important actor with respect to Kurdish issues, through pressure to implement democratic reforms and to improve the human rights record.

Especially through Turkey's EU application, the Turkish government has taken steps to recognize the conflict.[19] However, the EU's eagerness to solve the issue through democratization, as opposed to referring to it as a Kurdish question per se, from time to time has failed to bring about effective mechanisms. Although EU membership has served as a carrot for the Turkish state to introduce reforms (e.g., broadcast in Kurdish), it has not produced mechanisms to change perceptions and attitudes. Such macro-mechanisms seem to work to a certain degree, at least during the negative peace. However, many CSOs representing the dissident Kurdish population find such attempts to be insincere and temporary (Çelik and Rumelili 2006).

The United States became another important actor after the creation of the autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq, which harbors PKK camps. After the Turkish military operations in northern Iraq, the United States became the focus of bilateral communications on the issue. It is also important to note that while the EU position remains somewhat stable, given its emphasis on democratic governance and cultural rights for Kurds, the US position shifts according to developments in the Middle East. Especially after the state's refusal to open

airbases to the US Army prior to the attack on Iraq in 2003, Turkish-American relations soured. Moreover, the worsening of Turkish-American relations helped the PKK grow its bases in Iraq and to attack targets inside Turkey. There are claims that the United States has allowed Iraqi Kurds access to Iraqi armaments, some of which ended up in PKK hands (Yavuz and Özcan 2006). However, the sharing of US intelligence with the Turkish state during its attack on the PKK in northern Iraq softened relations, even though anti-Americanism has remained high among the Turkish public (PEW 2008,3).[20]

Reasons for the Conflict

Understanding the Kurdish question today requires a summary of the Turkish Republic and Kemalist ideology. Established in 1923 after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic was founded by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. The new republic rested on six arrows (tenets) of the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyetci Halk Partisi—CHP), the oldest party of the republic: republicanism (an emphasis on the rule of law, popular sovereignty, and civic virtue and liberty practiced by citizens), nationalism, étatism (state regulation of economy and investment in areas where there is lack of private enterprise), secularism, populism, and revolutionism (replacing the traditional institutions and concepts with modern institutions). Although Kemalist doctrine, established upon these six tenets and emphasizing civic nationalism, did not make a differentiation based on ethnicity (Kramer 2000), the republic registered only Armenians, Greeks, and Jews as minorities under the terms of the Lausanne Treaty signed between Turkey and the Allied and Associated Powers after the War of Independence in 1923. Moreover, Kemalist ideology registered all citizens of Turkey as "Turkish" without differentiating on the basis of ethnicity. It was partly in response to this aspect of Kemalist ideology that the Kurdish national identity developed later in the century. Mesut Yeğen argues that Kurdish nationalist aspirations flourished as a response to the "transformation of an a-national political community to a national one in the first quarter of the twentieth century" (Yeğen 2007, 121).

This Kemalist ideology explains the failure of the AKP to solve the Kurdish question; since the 1920s, no government was able to address the issue effectively. Yavuz and Özcan (2006) explain the AKP's failure to solve the issue based on the following arguments:

- Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's definition of the Kurdish question is very different from that of the Kurdish actors, especially PKK-led political parties;
- There is a major conflict between the state institutions and the AKP over the conceptualization of the Kurdish issue and the foundations of the Turkish Republic;

- The AKP fears that the Kurdish issue could split the party and under-mine its support in Turkish-Muslim provinces in central and eastern Anatolia; and
- The Kurdish issue has the potential to lead to a major confrontation.

Even though Erdogan's 2005 speech in Diyarbakir stressed the existence of the Kurdish question and offered citizenship rather than "Turkish identity" as a supra-identity for both the Kurds and Turks, and thereby set up Kurdish hopes for democratic resolution, his emphasis on state security in later speeches, and the resort to military means since 2007, dampened any optimism.

Today, the Kurdish question cannot be explained as a reaction to state ide-ology. Heinz Kramer (2000), for example, argues that economic and social un-derdevelopment, political resistance, and the political fallout of the continuous warfare in the southeast are other dimensions. Similarly, Yeğen (2007) argues that while Turkish nationalists viewed the Kurdish question in the first half of the twentieth century as a fatal rivalry between the backward, premodern, and tribal past and a prosperous present, it was perceived in the 1950s and 1960s in terms of tensions between the peripheral economy and national market. In the 1970s, Kurdish unrest was believed to be a product of communist incite-ment. Starting in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Kurdish question was largely shaped by global forces as well as domestic developments. The increasing sig-nificance of human rights discourse in the language of Kurdish resistance; the rising publicity of the Kurdish question after the Gulf War; the growing impact of the European diaspora on Kurdish mobilization; and the formation of an au-tonomous Kurdish authority in northern Iraq—are all the immediate outcomes of globalization. Their impacts on the state of unrest are of major importance (Yeğen 2007, 121).

Despite progress since the 2001 economic crisis, economic disparity among regions is stark. Turkey is often classified as a newly industrialized country by economists and political scientists and is a founding member of the Organiza-tion for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the G20 group of industrial nations. Based on per-capita GDP, Turkey is among the upper-middle-income countries. Turkey has a strong and rapidly growing private sec-tor, yet the state still plays major roles within industry, banking, transportation, and communications. Its economy is still largely agricultural based. Despite relatively moderate economic measures, the greatest flaw of Turkish economy is the disparity among its regions. According to the United Nations Develop-ment Program (UNDP 2007), "human development levels in the southeastern Anatolia region lag behind national levels, while the incidence of human poverty is much higher and there is continued migration out of the region. The region faces development challenges in terms of income level, educational op-portunities, gender equality and socio-economic opportunities and facilities."

Another important issue marginalizing the Kurds' position is the national election quota. The Turkish political structure allows pluralist representation by different political interests. However, the extreme polarization of the political system in the 1970s, leading to the 1980 coup d'état, pushed legislators to impose a national quota on the electoral system, which prevents any political party from being represented in parliament if it fails to garner more than 10 percent of the national vote, even though it might enjoy higher support within specific districts. Even though this was put in effect to prevent chaos, it disadvantages pro-Kurdish political parties, which can receive 65–80 percent of the vote in the southeast but cannot gain more than 10 percent nationally.

In terms of press freedoms, one can argue that new regulations curbing the freedom of the press[21] escalated the conflict. And whereas many Kurds follow the national media, and thus are aware of public opinion and state policies, the Kurdish media,[2] which from time to time is subject to legal bans, is not followed by the average Turkish citizen. Within this context, the lack of peace journalism (Boğa 2006) contributes to the existing conflict and hampers the democratization process initiated by the EU accession negotiations. Except for a few academic studies showing that the media use escalating rhetoric in times of crisis (Boğa 2006), there is almost no research studying the role the media play in the Kurdish question.

Status of Civil Society

Turkish political life has been marked by a "strong state" tradition (Mardin 1969; Mardin 1991; Mardin 1992; Heper 1985), partly due to the Ottoman heritage of absolute power of patrimonial rulers, "whose comprehensive political authority accepted no legitimate rivals" (Kalaycıoğlu 2006, 2). This tradition, however, does not mean that the state is strong in its extractive, regulative and distributive powers, but rather is coercive and arbitrary (Kalaycıoğlu 2002a). It is this coercion and arbitrariness that one needs to take into account in the study of state-civil society relations in Turkey. Related to this, some general observation about civil society in Turkey can be made.

A study has argued that the state is indifferent toward voluntary associations as long as civic activism avoids regime-contesting activism, considered to be against the republican order in Turkey. Other solidarity and self-help, patronage, economic, professional, charity, and recreational groups and associations are neither harassed nor supported by the state (Kalaycıoğlu 2006, 13). What Ersin Kalaycıoğlu describes as civil society actors questioning the raison d'être of the Republican order, and what Krasner calls the "enemies of unity" (Massicard 2006), are those which, by their acts and ideas, challenge the territorial integrity of the state and its secular foundation, principles strongly emphasized by Kemalist ideology. All those who do not refer to the "obligatory consensus," established within such frameworks as the Turkish flag and

the figure of the Ataturk, are not recognized by the state as legitimate and are subject to accusations of separatism (Copeaux 2000; cf. Massicard 2006, 79).

An interesting example is business groups, which, due to close affiliations with the state, have more impact than other civil society actors. One of the most important efforts was undertaken by the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (Türk Sanayici ve İşadamlari Derneği—TÜSİAD). In 1997, TÜSİAD published a report recommending a number of constitutional and political reforms, a solution for the Kurdish question by political means, and more freedom to CS. It is still the case that voices such as TÜSİAD, and others that are ideologically close to the state, are heard to a greater extent by the state. This is because state-CS relations, when it comes to business groups, "seem to be evolving toward a policy of co-optation, which may be best defined as active-inclusive[23]" (Kalaycıoğlu 2006, 13).

In addition to enmity between the state and some CSOs, CS in Turkey lacks the fundamental values of associability. Turkey does not have a CS rich in what Robert Putnam refers to as "social capital" (Kalaycıoğlu 2002a, 71), and primordial relations penetrate most CSOs. Clientelistic relations that exist in society are reflected in civil society membership, where some CSOs (especially hometown associations[24]) become sources of political support for candidates running for political offices rather than fulfilling peacebuilding functions, let alone any civic role (Çelik 2002). "The associational life of Turkey is still influenced by blood ties (*akrabalık*), marital relations (*hısımlık*), local and regional solidarity (*hemşehrilik*), bonds created in military service between men (*askerlik*), and through religious orders (*tarikat*)" (Kalaycıoğlu 2002b, 267).

The results of another project show that the impact of CS on socioeconomic and political developments is low, "partly as a result of limitations on civil society advocacy initiatives (due to state interference), as well as lack of civil society activities in holding the state and private sector accountable and responding to social interests. These limitations however, are balanced by a particularly strong role in meeting societal needs, empowering citizens and increasing level of engagement around policy issue" (Bikmen and Kalaycıoğlu 2006, 13–14; CIVICUS 2006). Civil society is often perceived by the state and some citizens as an arena in which CSOs should fulfill the functions that the state cannot. The most important are founding schools, dormitories, rescue missions and relief efforts for natural disasters, and poverty reduction. The CIVICUS study also reveals that even as a strong and highly capable group of CSOs is emerging, the majority of Turkish citizens remain detached. The report recommends that attention be paid to creating mechanisms to facilitate the flow of resources to civil society, increasing training opportunities around basic skills of fundraising, program delivery, and other areas, and investing in capacity (human and technical infrastructure) (CIVICUS 2006, 13–14).

The CIVICUS report rates the "environmental factors" for the development and nourishment of civil society as 1.4 (on a scale of 3), indicating that

the social, economic, and political context, though improving, still impedes the growth and prosperity of civil society (CIVICUS 2006, 59). Political context, state-civil society relations, and private–civil society relations seem to be in the worst state. [25] In terms of socioeconomic conditions, the presence of armed conflict, severe ethnic and/or religious conflict, dense rural population, rapid urbanization, and unemployment are also barriers to the effective functioning of civil society (CIVICUS 2006, 66). The violence in eastern and southeastern Turkey also affects the functioning of CSOs. For example, "the post-conflict condition in the southeast has led to an increase of CSOs" (CIVICUS 2006, 49), whereas an increase in violence has paralleled increasing restrictions on freedom of association and expression, having the greatest effect on CSOs working for the Kurdish question and human rights.

Civil Society Activities and the Kurdish Question

CS actors dealing with the Kurdish question range from trade unions to bar associations to NGOs to informal gatherings. Historically, it has been easier to address the issue through informal gatherings and platforms than through formal organizations due to the state's legal restrictions and repressive and discriminatory approach.

The first steps in mobilizing Kurdish associations began in the late 1950s and 1960s; these organizations almost exclusively had separated from leftist organizations. The formation of the Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Hearths (Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları—ERCHs) in May 1969 stands as the first important legal Kurdish mobilization.[26] The influence of the ERCHs quickly spread to all types of associations. During the polarized political environment in the 1970s until the 1980 coup d'état, it was common to observe all types of CSOs polarized along the leftist ideologies. After the 1980 coup d'état, the activities of leftist syndicates, trade unions, and professional groups, along with almost all CSOs, have been hampered. Only in the 1990s was there a revival in Turkish civic life (Çelik 2002); however, the tradition of state repression was triggered again by the polarized civil society, mostly on the issues of political Islam and the Kurdish question. Today, along with associations working on human right issues, syndicates, labor unions, bar associations, academia, and some media exist as CSOs trying to make their voices heard. However, it is mostly the associations in the Kurdish-dominated regions that directly identify issues relevant to the Kurdish question.

After 1999, and increasingly since then, "Kurdish society, especially in major urban centers, has become much more plural and assertive"; compared to the late 1980s and 1990s, it has started to overcome its position of being "squeezed between the repression of the state on the one hand and the PKK on the other hand" (Kirişçi 2008, 5). However, in the late 1990s there emerged an "uncivil" civil society on the Kurdish question. NGOs with an emphasis on Kemalist principles—government-operated nongovernmental organization

(GONGOs),[27] which are founded by the state—and uncivil social movements led by ultranationalists hamper democratization and the peace process and marginalize Kurdish CSOs. These actors can be considered "uncivil" because their ideas and engagement with democracy (in most cases attacking members of ideologically different CSOs) exclude different opinions and are antagonistic to democratic norms.

Over the years, polarization in the Turkish political system (e.g., left-wing ideologies versus right-wing ones; Islamicism versus laicism; Kurdish nationalism versus Turkish nationalism) has been reflected in civil society. This is also the case for women's CSOs. As in other conflicts, the Kurdish question spawned mothers' movements on each side of the spectrum. Especially toward the end of the 1990s, women mobilized and started to voice their "pain." Whereas mothers of Turkish soldiers joined the Association for the Families of the Martyrs (Şehit Aileleri Derneği), mothers who lost sons and daughters fighting in the PKK mobilized a well-known movement, the Mothers of Peace (Barış Anneleri).

CSOs working on the Kurdish question include: those that concentrate on the economic and social dimensions of the issue (especially poverty), and those that link the issue to legal and political issues (human rights) within the democratization process; those that focus on regional issues, and those that focus on overall cultural and human rights in the country; and those close to the state's position, and those close to the Kurdish nationalist movement. There is also an urban-rural divide. Although CSOs in underdeveloped southeastern and eastern cities provide information (on, e.g., human rights abuses, killings in the conflict), data are used mostly in the reports of the CSOs whose headquarters are in the urban west. Urban CSOs and those working on the democratization and human rights issues seem to have more effect and "voice" due to more moderate positions. Kirişçi (2008) notes that some CSOs in urban centers in the southeast (namely Diyarbakır) were able to distance themselves from the PKK (in contrast to the PKK's dominant public presence in the 1990s) and denounce violence. These organizations were also able to call for democratic dialogue and expressed moderate views.

We can also point to an increase in the number of NGOs[2] and informal gatherings that address the conflict from a rights-based perspective and frame the issue differently from the state. For example, for a long time these CSOs have asked the state to provide compensation to Kurdish internally displaced people (IDPs); the right of return; economic guarantees (i.e., regional investment, solving unemployment); protection of cultural rights (i.e., the right to teach and broadcast in Kurdish); removal of barriers for political representation of Kurds as a group; and demilitarization of the region (especially abolition of the village guard system and the system of emergency rule). We also see an increase in the number of Kurdish women's associations addressing the problems of women IDPs. CSOs in this cluster argue that the state disregards the problem and purges stakeholders.

After 2000 some informal attempts produced effective outcomes. The Initiative of the Intellectuals (Aydın Girişimi), the Initiative of the Citizens (Yurttaş Girişimi), and Peace Group (Barış Grubu) are endeavors to pressure policymakers in Ankara to place greater emphasis on carrying out political/legal reforms and to acknowledge the Kurdish question. These informal gatherings of intellectuals and human rights activists are important not only for their impact on policymakers but also because of the coalescence of Turkish and Kurdish intellectuals under the same banner for the first time.[29] In fact, these initiatives were transformed into the Peace Assembly, composed of academicians, Kurdish NGOs, human rights NGOs, and unions, which proposed solutions to the conflict in September 2007. In May 2008, the Peace Assembly organized a protest in Istanbul against the Turkish military attack on northern Iraq.

INGO branches in Turkey have also started paying attention to the issue despite strong opposition from ultranationalists, who argue that "foreign powers" are trying to divide the country.[30] These claims are directed at the European-based NGOs in Turkey and local NGOs like TESEV, which are partly funded by the US sources like the SOROS Foundation. The Heinrich Böll Foundation of Germany (HBF), for example, started a project on "confronting the past," with the aims of preparing a civic movement to request social forms of truth-seeking and of confronting painful memories in history, including but not limited to the Kurdish question. A small group also claimed that the EU was trying to partition the country through the HBF and protested the NGO's conference in Diyarbakır.

Moreover, in the late 1990s universities emerged as important actors for easing restrictions on academicians working on controversial issues such as the Kurdish question, the Armenian issue, and political Islam. Academicians who addressed the Kurdish question, and liberal universities like Boğaziçi, Bilgi and Sabanci, which hosted conferences on the issue, created a different perspective for analyzing the conflict.[3]

CSOs working on the issue are connected mostly to CSOs in Europe. Kurdish NGOs in Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, and Great Britain try to affect the issue directly through political mobilization or indirectly by acting as pressure groups within EU organizations to compel the Turkish state to grant more rights to Kurds. Within the EU, there are some institutions, such as the EU-Turkey Civic Commission, that are trying to foster international public advocacy. Human rights NGOs report to the international human rights networks minority rights violations, as well as deaths, disappearances, and homicides. The EU has also been influential in areas that affect CSO functioning. For example, the CIVICUS report points out that, according to CSOs, the most significant and positive effects of EU involvement were "related to the enabling environment (reform of CSO laws) and increased ability of CSOs to promote democratic values. Among the least significant yet still positive effects was

promoting capacity for collective action and CSO dialogue with the state" (CIVICUS 2006, 19). Globally, Kurdish local and international civil society is also connected to organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (mostly through reporting and advocacy). The women's and human rights movements especially have become networked. "A comparable increase is observed in the number of meetings and conferences organized with international CSOs—likely a result of EU related initiatives that encourage collaboration. However, [the CIVICUS report] reveals that CSOs continue to remain concerned about cooperation and communication among their fellow organizations—both within and between sub-sectors and internationally" (CIVICUS 2006, 16). The same results can be observed in Euro-Kurdish CS actors (Eccarius-Kelly 2007). European actors have become important players, affecting the Turkish state's stance on the issue indirectly (by lobbying in EU institutions) or directly (by vocalizing "Kurdish voices" in Europe).

The diaspora's influence is also visible in the media. For example, in March 2007 Roj TV, publicizing the PKK ideology, was the main cause of tension between Denmark and Turkey. Roj TV, permitted to broadcast in Denmark despite demands for its closure by the Turkish state, called for a demonstration by Kurds in the southeast, which created a significant uprising.

It is important to note as well that the negotiation process for EU accession enabled most CSOs (especially those based in conflict regions) to receive funding through the EU Commission, which helped inform citizens about rights and mobilized them for democratic participation. Nevertheless, a discourse against EU funding (the so-called pollution of the CS) also emerged. Those who were against EU-funded projects, somewhat reasonably, argued that getting money from the EU was an end in itself and did not carry a civic function. There is also the argument that CSOs can plan good projects yet may not be funded, as applying for EU funds is a complex process, requiring skills and training to satisfy bureaucratic procedures.

Peacebuilding Functions

The following section compares the seven different functions: protection; monitoring; advocacy; socialization; social cohesion; intermediation and facilitation; and service delivery.

Protection

Protection has different meanings in different regions. The western cities from time to time are the target of PKK bombings.[32] Rural people in the southeast have also experienced conflict, including homicides, human rights abuses, displacement, economic disparity, and psychological terror. Accordingly, protection means protecting citizens from PKK violence and violence by state security forces, as well as providing relief to those caught between the conflict parties.

This function in rural areas was crucial during the peak period of violence and the reescalation, but it could not be provided by CSOs due to limitations on mobility imposed by the state. Most places where conflict takes place are considered to be military zones, and access is prohibited to civilians, including journalists; in mountainous areas any contact is difficult. Protection in the cities is still needed in terms of increased security measures against any possible violent attacks on the public; this function is defined by law as belonging to the police force.

Protection of citizens against the arbitrary use of state power is one of the most important functions of civil society, but CSOs have not had much success. Especially at the peak of conflict (mid-1990s), apart from a few independent media journalists there was almost no CSO fulfilling this task. This can be attributed to several factors:

1. The state of emergency (OHAL regime of 1984–2004) totally controlled and suppressed civil society.
2. The civil society tradition against coercive state power does not have a long history in Turkey.
3. The state assumes that the protection function should be under its control as part of its "internal affairs"; thus protection was considered too sensitive a matter to be monitored. The failure to protect is perceived as the failure of the military, one of the most trusted, almost "sacred," institutions in Turkey.
4. Protection also requires effective reporting and monitoring. Especially during the peak period of conflict, such information was not made public due to strong state control in conflict areas.

Since 2004, due to the reescalation of conflict, the protection function became relevant particularly for Kurdish IDPs who returned to villages and those close to the Iraq border, where many PKK camps are located. Due to the increasing role of the military and the reemphasis on the state security and territorial integrity, CSOs cannot perform the protection function. However, NGOs having an organic link to the pro-Kurdish parties maintain a discourse on the demobilization and reintegration of PKK militants. Yet again, there was a demand to the state for general amnesty, rather than the creation of an environment for dialogue. The failure of the protection function even during the negative peace can be explained by the security measures taken by the state even after the state of emergency. Consequently, rather than actively protecting civilians from violence, CSOs focused on monitoring and reporting.

The protection function in the form of human shields was tested by the DTP and CSOs in the southeast, close to the DTP, to generate domestic and international publicity. However, due to military control in the region, it remained an experiment. Moreover, because DTP's aim was to protest the Turkish military's

operations in northern Iraq (Türkiye'de Vicdani Retlerini Açıklayanlar 2008), the test served the advocacy function (perceived by many Turks as advocacy for the PKK, not for peace) rather than the protection function.

It is important to mention the protection of culture as the most important function of CSOs. Although strict state regulations limit public use of the Kurdish language, many Kurdish NGOs formed in the late 1990s worked to protect the culture by teaching the language (illegally, before the law on teaching Kurdish was passed, and legally afterward) and publishing in Kurdish.

Monitoring

The monitoring function means the creation of a human rights monitoring system and forcing the state to accept its responsibility in addressing human rights abuses. Almost exclusively, monitoring is aimed at the state's actions. The state is already keeping a record of PKK violations ("terrorism") and making them public. Moreover, for many CSOs "accountability" rests only with the state because it is considered the legitimate actor; therefore it is the state's responsibility to protect citizens not only from PKK violence but also from any situation where citizens feel threatened. It is also important to note that most CSOs considered that civilians need to be protected only from the state and did not address PKK violence.

Among the main activities under this function are watchdog activities undertaken by human rights organizations (such as Human Rights Associations, TESEV, Human Rights Foundation, Mazlum-Der) and the newly emerging civic initiatives (e.g., on the abolition of landmines). Human rights organizations, bar associations, and international NGOs issue annual reports in cooperation with international partners (such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International) and check on relevant local laws. Before the 1990s, this function was mainly performed by INGOs with the help of media based in Kurdish-populated regions.

Although monitoring seemed to be the most important function during the peak of the conflict (1991–1994), it was hampered by the coercive state presence in the region. Today, civil society is fulfilling this function without necessarily developing a system for early warning. It would require an analysis of conflict indicators and well-trained CSO personnel to evaluate the conflict and produce effective measures.

The monitoring function is relevant because the state perceives itself as the single most powerful actor in the conflict; only CSOs can publicize issues pertaining to monitoring and accountability. The 1980 coup d'état silenced civil society so strongly that any attempt to monitor the state became a threat to its existence; the reaction was the closure of informal associations, syndicates, and other organizations. However, the impact and effectiveness of monitoring became more influential when the EU emerged as an important actor and during Turkey's period of democratization, in which CSO capacities increased.

Advocacy and Public Communication

The CIVICUS report "reveals an increase in the number of CSOs which wish to take a more active role in the policy-making process, which will be of great value to society given the immense amount of legislative reform awaiting Turkey in the EU accession process" (2006, 18). The emergence of the EU as an important actor, overseeing Turkey's democratic practices, caused CSOs to pay more attention to the advocacy function. The reports prepared by some CSOs tackled issues such as Kurdish IDPs, human rights abuses in southeast Anatolia, broadcasting in Kurdish, and allowing private courses in the Kurdish language. It can also be argued that by drawing international attention to such issues CSOs also protected citizens.

Advocacy for CS usually meant informing the public about state abuses and the "democratic rights of the Kurds." Demands for political, cultural, and economic rights of Kurds as a group and the cessation of violence are made in public via demonstrations, press releases, and other statements. Interestingly, most public demonstrations for the "rights of the Kurds" are perceived by the state as pro-PKK (which is true for some) and become violent as a result of the security forces' overreaction to protesters. However, starting with the period of negative peace, public advocacy in the form of printed declarations by influential Turkish and Kurdish intellectuals were much more successful.

Advocacy and public communications function is the strongest function. However, this is undertaken without receiving feedback from, or establishing communication with, the state. There is also little coordination among CSOs for advocacy. Leftist-oriented and human rights CSOs are more successful in coordinating advocacy activities at the local level than at the macro level. In the cities of southeastern Anatolia, especially in Diyarbakır, the most populous city among Kurdish-dominated regions, platforms are created by labor unions, human rights associations, professional groups (especially bar associations), and sometimes political parties. These so-called Democracy and Labor Platforms address important issues in democratization, including those pertaining to the Kurdish question. Raising themes through public campaigns (e.g., on landmines and village guards) and awareness workshops are the most common activities.

This function challenges the state discourse in crucial areas. For example, there exists a conflict over the terminology used to define internal displacement. The Ankara branch of the UNDP translated the official Guiding Principles into Turkish. This official translation adopted the active phrase *yerinden olma*—giving no indication that displacement was done by someone—despite opposition from NGOs. NGOs claimed that the correct translation should be passive—*yerinden edilme*—indicating that displacement was done by some agency.[33] Most CSOs adopted the latter, which has become public usage. This opposition to discursive hegemony of the state delegitimizes CSOs in the state's eyes and implicitly makes them "enemies of the state."

The conflict was internationalized with establishment of the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq and attacks by the Turkish Army in the northern Iraqi territories. Advocacy thus became yet another tool for CSOs and the DTP. On controversial issues such as the status of Kirkuk, in which different ethnic groups in Iraq and Turkey claim rights, and whether the Turkish Army should enter northern Iraq, Kurds in Turkey and northern Iraqi authorities, on one hand, and the Turkish government on the other have clashing views. Kurdish political parties and some CSOs close to them echoed the views of northern Iraqi authorities. Massoud Barzani, president of the Autonomous Kurdish government in northern Iraq, for example, argued Kurdish forces would intervene in Diyarbakır if Turkey intervened in Kirkuk (Radikal 2007). This is why advocacy by CSOs and pro-Kurdish political parties triggered a harsh response by the state and the general anger of Turkish citizens.

In-group Socialization

Socialization means building or consolidating Kurdish identity. Along with increased violence in the 1990s and subsequent democratization in the early 2000s, many "Kurdish" institutions emerged.[34] While some worked to protect culture, especially language, most performed a political function (similar to that of the political parties) rather than a civic one (Çelik 2002). In the 1990s, two women's associations doing similar work emerged in Istanbul, reaching out to Kurdish women in the city; but they were not in touch with, or perhaps were even hostile to, each other because they were direct extensions of pro-Kurdish political parties. Although most Kurdish CSOs helped Kurds learn legal mobilization, most NGOs maintain organic links to political parties and follow in their footsteps, rather than teaching members civic attitudes (Çelik 2002) or skills for peacefully handling conflicts.

Hometown associations in the western parts of the country still provide necessary social capital (e.g., trust, finding housing and jobs, making the transition to urban life easier for the IDPs). However, they also challenge social cohesion by keeping the identity boundaries exclusive to place of origin and by reproducing the traditional life in the city (Çelik 2002).

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is one of the hardest functions to assess. The Kurdish question is perceived by many as one between the state and the PKK (with Kurds providing human capital for the PKK). Through this perception, the social cohesion function can be interpreted as bridging the gap between the state and Kurdish citizens. Although this might have the most significant impact on the conflict, any peace attempt would be likely to fail unless tensions were lessened between ultranationalist Turks and Kurdish nationalists. Thus, building *trust* between the state and Kurds, and creating *empathy* and *collaboration* between

different groups in Turkey, are the most important elements for social cohesion (Çelik and Blum 2007).

The CIVICUS report indicates that civil society is an arena where many groups remain divided by ideology, geography, and in some cases ethnicity. Although CSOs express concern about such divides, and attribute an important role to civil society, they remain vague and uncertain when addressing the root causes and building greater social cohesion (CIVICUS 2006, 17). Turkish society is not tolerant of diverse views. Regional differences are problematic. For example, in Diyarbakir and Ankara, CSOs report low tolerance for diversity, and in Istanbul and Izmir (the Aegean region), participants express that formerly high levels of tolerance are deteriorating rapidly (CIVICUS 2006, 67).[35] It is hard to bring people together with different opinions to discuss issues surrounding the Kurdish question. One positive exception was a conference ("Turkey Is Searching for Its Peace," a dialogue project of the Peace Assembly, composed of Kurdish opinion leaders, politicians, and academicians, along with many Turkish, Armenian, and Arab academicians and activists.[36]

Intermediation

The intermediation function means enabling a dialogue between Kurdish actors and the state. However, since the state does not consider the PKK as a legitimate actor, and treats the DTP as its political representative, it refuses to engage in a dialogue with these actors. So far, only the AKP government has taken the initiative and held a dialogue with Kurdish intellectuals and civil society representatives. This changed in the wake of increasing violence. Nevertheless, most Kurds believe that the PKK should be accepted as a "party" in any dialogue or negotiation.

When intermediation is performed, politicians rather than CSOs usually undertake this function. Such was the case in the PKK's hostage-taking incident in October 2007. After a sudden ambush of the Turkish military in Hakkari, the PKK took hostage eight Turkish soldiers; it returned them after the DTP members of parliament (MPs) acted as intermediary. However, these MPs later were accused of being traitors.

Despite these shortcomings, the intermediation function is one of the most important functions for CSOs. Any attempt by CSOs to fulfill this function, however, is perceived by the state as a demand to accept the PKK as a legitimate actor; the state outright rejects such efforts. Due to restrictions on access to information, one can never be certain whether negotiations on any issue in the conflict are taking place.[37]

Service Delivery

Service delivery usually means relief, rehabilitation, and socio-psychological help provided to conflict-affected populations; this function is defined by the state as the only role for civil society in the Kurdish question.

During the peak of conflict, service delivery meant assistance in finding housing and jobs for Kurdish IDPs in big cities, as well as trauma-healing and legal services for conflict-affected populations. Hometown associations in eastern and southeastern Anatolia promote social capital via services provided to members in an urban setting, forming a "decadent environment"—a community based on the principles of social cohesion, solidarity, and moral support. These networks also promote vertical relations, such as political patronage and/or clientelism, among members. This is a source of deterioration of social capital (Çelik 2002).

Such activities are still among the largest functions (both in quantitative and qualitative terms). However, it is important to note that CSOs have recognized the crucial importance of this function and have become more professional in reaching a wider population in need.

Service delivery creates entry points for other functions, such as advocacy and public communication, monitoring, and socialization. Through service delivery, CSOs collect data and mobilize members to insist on rights vis-à-vis the state.

Although the demand by Kurdish civil society for delivery of services in Kurdish is unacceptable to the state, the latter is not unaware that the CSOs in the southeast deliver services in Kurdish, especially to women who cannot speak Turkish. Therefore, through service delivery, the protection of culture is also provided. However, there is a difference of opinion between the state and CSOs not only on the scope but also on the nature of service delivery. For example, the state's understanding of humanitarian service delivery to Kurdish IDPs means assistance to them as citizens of Turkey, without discussing the root causes of the problem, whereas many CSOs claim that undertaking humanitarian action requires accepting the issue as one related to identity rights, returning dignity to these people, and healing their pain via understanding and sharing. Almost all NGOs emphasize the need to use the Kurdish language in reaching out to IDPs, some of whom (especially women) cannot speak Turkish.

Conclusion

The Kurdish question reinforces the basic notion that CSOs can be important actors in peacebuilding. Because they work with people on the ground, they provide a holistic picture of the problem. However, conflict parties can instrumentalize CSOs and they can become restricted by those in power. In most cases, CS is a training ground for the political arena; especially in asymmetric relations, it is an opportunity to speak up for the diverse needs of society. However, there is a tipping point at which CSOs become "political." In cases like the Kurdish question, a hard task awaits: to reach out to Kurds and represent their demands and needs, but also not to antagonize the state and those with different opinions in society. Failure might result in CSOs remaining

weak, too isolated from recipients, and unable to develop skills to work with diverse populations. That is why the most important functions of CS are advocacy, along with social cohesion and intermediation, although all other functions are also relevant given the different phases of the conflict. Intermediation and social cohesion (along with protection) have been the weakest functions performed by the CSOs in Turkey.

CSOs that are engaged in peacebuilding provide advocacy and service delivery (see Table 8.1). These functions peaked during the armed conflict and reescalation, due to the asymmetric relationship and state limitations on CS. Such findings are not surprising given the conclusion of the CIVICUS report. It argues that challenging context factors, such as weak state-CS relations and problems in democracy, prevent nourishment of CS in Turkey. In a political environment where political parties are closed and precluded from the arena, political parties can instrumentalize CSOs. In this context, CS becomes the only game in town; CSOs focus mostly on advocacy and mobilization for political causes. Moreover, the presence of "uncivil" CSOs leads to the hardening of this position.

Because service delivery is recognized by the state as the only legitimate function for CS, it is not surprising that most activities fall under this category. CS has only just realized this crucial need and that it can serve as a channel to collect data and publicize the "other side of the story."[38] Therefore, service delivery becomes an important entry point for other functions seen as more critical by the Turkish state.

The general conclusions are that for CS to fully serve its peacebuilding functions the state's perceptions of CSOs should be altered; third parties should pressure the Turkish state to stick to its democratization process. Therefore, the EU's direct role in pressuring the state to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria (as part of the EU accession negotiation process)[39] and democratize the country can be the most important enabling factor for CS to perform peacebuilding functions. However, a word of caution is also needed when evaluating the EU's role in fostering the role of CS in Turkey. Depending on the timing of EU intervention in funding CSOs, the EU could produce positive or negative outcomes. Especially during the negative peace, EU funds fostered the advocacy and social cohesion functions by allocating money to CSOs. But during the reescalation of violence and the increase in nationalism on both sides, EU funding was perceived as a threat to national unity. In fact, regardless of the conflict stage, the EU can educate CS personnel, providing skills to analyze the conflict context and produce effective projects. It can also provide money for peace education to CS. However, there is a strong emerging need to fund projects that foster social cohesion as well as advocacy. The EU is funding projects to deliver services where such service can provide a basis for advocacy and monitoring.[40] However, there is a greater need to carry out projects bridging different actors in the conflict.

Table 8.1 Relevance and Effectiveness of the
         Peacebuilding Functions in the Kurdish Question

Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding	Relevance of functions in context	Effectiveness of implementation with reference to phases of conflict
1. Protection	1984–1987: Relevant 1987–1999: Most needed 1999–2004: Protection of culture becomes important 2004–?: Important	• Effectiveness depends on state limitations on CS. • Lack of analysis by CSOs prevents effective conflict prevention mechanisms.
2. Monitoring and Early Warning	1984–1987: Relevant 1987–1999: Relevant 1999–2004: Relevant 2004–?: Relevant	• Impact differs based on the environment (level of democratization) and coordination between local and international CSOs. • Always linked to public communication. • Impact is stronger if all parties are addressed.
3. Advocacy and public communication	1984–1987: Relevant but limited due to state's power 1987–1999: Relevant and most performed function in this stage 1999–2004: Relevant 2004–?: Relevant	• Most commonly exercised function but also sometimes counterproductive. • Most effective role through agenda-setting and mass mobilization.
4. Socialization	1984–1987: Not very relevant 1987–1999: Somewhat relevant 1999–2004: Not very relevant 2004–?: Not very relevant	• It leads to politicization rather than producing social capital. To be effective, it needs to be linked to intragroup social cohesion.
5. Social cohesion	1984–1987: Not very relevant 1987–1999: Relevant but necessity not recognized 1999–2004: Relevant 2004–?: Relevant	• Effectiveness depends on the parties' willingness, capacity, and leverage. • More effective when groups address smaller issues (e.g., internal displacement, human rights issues) rather the macro conflict (the Kurdish question). • More relevant in negative peace period but could affect peace attempts more if addressed in reescalation as well.
6. Intermediation/ facilitation	1984–1987: Relevant but necessity not recognized 1987–1999: Relevant 1999–2004: Relevant 2004–?: Relevant (peak)	• Not existent at all due to the fact that state does not recognize "the other party," but this is perhaps the most important function especially in peak and deescalation.

(continues)

Table 8.1 continued

Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding	Relevance of functions in context	Effectiveness of implementation with reference to phases of conflict
7. Service delivery	1984–1987: Relevant 1987–1999: Relevant 1999–2004: Relevant 2004–?: Relevant	• Most exercised function without necessarily addressing the conflict per se. • Depends on the messages sent to the receivers and parties to the conflict. • Becomes a source for advocacy and monitoring functions. • Efficiency requires reaching the wider population in need and professionalism in service delivery.

There is also a pressing need to study whether projects funded by the EU with the aim of bridging Kurdish citizens with state officials succeeded in their objectives. If and when EU provides such data, this can also be used to analyze the barriers to social cohesion. Evaluation of project success can provide crucial insights into CS's role in peacebuilding.

1. The "Kurdish question" is the academic phrase used to refer to the conflict. It has been argued by Ayata and Yükseker (2005) that its use was an attempt to escape state repression by academics in the 1980s and 1990s when the state refused to acknowledge the existence of the conflict.

2. The PKK has also used such names as KADEK (Kongreya Azadî û Demokrasiya Kurdistanê, or Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress) and Kongra-Gel (People's Congress).

3. The state of emergency rule known as OHAL (Olağanüstü Hal) has been defined by the 1982 Constitution and Extraordinary Governing Law No. 2935, and later by laws 424, 425, 430. Under the OHAL regime, governors of the cities gained the right to pass regulations functioning like laws. Among several rights the governors enjoyed, one can list the right to expel citizens from the region, restrict ownership and freedom rights and liberties, and restrict freedom of the press and expression.

4. The first internationalization of the Kurdish question can be considered to be the mass influx of Iraqi Kurds into Turkey in the early 1990s. World attention focused on the Kurds at the end of the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and continued throughout the 1990s with increasing levels of forced migration from the Kurdish-populated regions of eastern and southeastern Anatolia. Although this event was a spillover effect of what happened in Iraq, the "Kurds" as a group became known in the international arena after this.

5. The only exception is the short-lived Mahabad Republic in present-day Iran in December 1945. That republic ceased to exist when Soviet forces and support, which helped found the republic, were withdrawn in December 1946.

6. Alevism is a sect in Islam. There are significant differences in the beliefs and worship practiced by Sunnis and Alevis in Turkey, which has created long-lasting animosity. Alevi Kurds are large in number, especially in the cities of Bingöl, Tunceli, Erzincan, Sivas, Yozgat, Elazığ, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Kayseri, and Çorum. Although there are no accurate statistics on the number of Alevis in Turkey, estimates indicate that there are 8–9 million Alevis, of which 2–3 million are Alevi Kurds (Shankland 1999, 136).

7. Internal displacement, or forced displacement, is one of the most important subcategories impacting the Kurdish question. The conflict-induced internal displacement of the Kurds in the 1990s was the result of the evacuation of villages by the military, allowed by the 1987 emergency rule; the PKK's intimidation of villagers who did not support the PKK to leave their villages; and insecurity resulting from being caught between the PKK and Turkish security forces. Many Kurds left their villages and moved to the nearest urban centers (Kirişçi 1998). A significant proportion of the population has moved from the region since the early 1990s, mostly to the periphery of nearby cities, as well as to shantytowns surrounding the big cities, such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and Adana. Although the state claims that there are around 350,000 internally displaced people (IDPs), local and international organizations argue that their number ranges from 1 million to 3 million and that they are Kurdish citizens. A recent report prepared by a Turkish University, commissioned by the Turkish government following the recommendations of the Representative to the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, the size of the population migrating from the fourteen provinces due to security-related reasons is around 1 million (HÜNEE 2006).

8. There are other pro-Kurdish political parties and groupings such as Hak-Par (Hak ve Özgürlükler Partisi—Party of Rights and Freedoms) and KADEP (Katılımcı Demokrasi Partisi—Participatory Democracy Party). However, DTP stands as the only political party that can garner a significant amount of votes in the southeast.

9. Village Guards are locally recruited civilians armed and paid by the state to oppose the PKK. According to Abdülkadir Aksu, the former minister of the interior, there were 12,279 voluntary village guards in the region as of November 2003. Also according to Aksu, 5,139 provisional village guards "committed crimes" between 1985 and mid-2006. The national media have carried various stories about village guards' criminal activities such as the abduction of women, aggravated assault, and forming armed gangs (Kurban et al. 2006).

10. The Gendarmerie is a military law-enforcement organization, which carries out security and safety services in rural areas. It is also responsible for assuring internal security and general border control.

11. Doğan is one of the four Kurdish deputies who were stripped of parliamentary immunity in 1994. These deputies were given thirteen-year sentences based on the claim that they were members of an armed group (the PKK).

12. With recent operations under the Turkish Army against PKK camps in northern Iraq, it is not clear whether the number has changed. During the recent northern Iraqi operation that took place between February 22 and 29, 2008, the military claimed that 240 PKK rebels were killed and that twenty-seven Turkish soldiers died (CNN 2008). However, it is also a known fact that PKK has great human potential to mobilize for its cause.

13. According to Köknar (2006, 2), the PKK used the period between 1999 and 2003 to reorganize its command structure, recruit new members, and, especially after

Saddam's quick defeat in April 2003, to acquire former Iraqi Army weapons and explosives. This is also the period when the PJAK was founded.

14. By "democratic republic," Öcalan meant the use of democratic means to resolve the Kurdish question without changing the territorial integrity of the state. "As long as it adheres to the democratic system and its state structure, every party can offer a solution without resorting to violence. There is no question here of either imposing a religion by force or breaking and shattering the structure of the state" (Öcalan's testimony at the 1999 trial).

15. *Akil adamlar* refers to those who are experienced in ombudsmanship on the issue, such as opinion-makers (intellectuals, academicians, etc.) and international mediators.

16. DTP is the fifth party whose political ideology can be considered pro-Kurdish. The first pro-Kurdish party HEP (Halkın Emek Partisi—People's Labor Party) was founded in June 1990 by Kurdish MPs, who were expelled from the Social Democratic Party (SHP) after their participation in an international conference held on the Kurdish question in Paris. After HEP's closure by the Constitutional Court, the three consecutive pro-Kurdish parties, namely DEP (Demokrasi Partisi—Democracy Party) and ÖZDEP (Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi—Freedom and Democracy Party), DEHAP (Demokratik Halk Partisi—Democractic Society Party) shared the same destiny.

17. According to Çağaptay, for example, Öcalan was intimately involved in the movement, and Turkish intelligence officers have traced communications between Öcalan and the deputies. Öcalan acknowledged his role in shaping DTP's policies in remarks published in the Kurdish nationalist daily *Özgür Politika*.

18. Although Turkish security forces have always been a central actor in this conflict, their significance has varied over time depending on the context within which the Kurdish question was perceived by the Turkish public. Recently, their role has become more pivotal, mainly as a result of the PKK rescinding its promise of "inaction."

19. For example, in a speech delivered in Diyarbakır, the most important city for Kurds in southeast Anatolia, on August 12, 2005, Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that "the Kurdish Question is a problem of everyone, especially of mine. Disregarding the mistakes made in the past is not an attribute of the big states. The solution lies in providing more democracy, citizen law, and welfare" (Radikal 2005 b).

20. According to the latest results of the PEW's Global Attitudes Project, the percentage of the Turkish population who expressed positive opinions of the United States increased from 9 percent in 2007 to 12 percent in 2008, but the percentage has remained much lower than that in the rest of the countries who participated in the survey. According to the survey, a large majority in Turkey say they think of the United States as "more of an enemy" rather than as "more of a friend" (70 percent in Turkey).

21. For example, a recent amendment to the Turkish penal code (Law No. 301), adopted on June 1, 2005, made it a crime to "insult Turkishness." The law mostly affected journalists, activists, and academicians. Since passage of this law, charges have been brought in more than sixty cases, some of which are high-profile. The law makes the Armenian issue and the Kurdish conflict hard to discuss openly in public and punishes any statement contradictory to the founding principles of the Turkish Republic.

22. There are a few Kurdish daily newspapers, among which *Özgür Gündem* is the most popular among the Kurds. The publication of *Özgür Gündem* has been suspended several times, most recently in November 2007 following the capture of Turkish soldiers by the PKK. Many Kurdish websites are used by Kurds in Turkey and abroad.

23. Kalaycıoglu borrows the term from Dryzek, who argues that "oppositional groupings can only be included in the state in benign fashion when the defining interest of the grouping can be related quite directly to a state imperative" (Dryzek 1996, 479–480), and when there is active inclusion, states co-opt certain economic, social, cultural, or environmental groups (Dryzek 1996, 482).

24. Hometown associations are formal voluntary associations founded on the spirit of *hemşehrilik*—solidarity based on sharing geographical origin. They are borne out of the conditions following rapid urbanization that Turkey began to experience in the late 1950s to the 1970s. The main objective for the foundation of such associations was to provide a "comfort zone" for recent migrants to cities by providing them the necessary adaptation skills as well as by preserving the traditional norms of their places of origin.

25. The remaining four are basic freedoms, socioeconomic context, sociocultural context, and legal environment.

26. However, note that even the title of the organization indicates that it brings together the people of the "East," not necessarily mentioning an ethnic group, the Kurds. The founding objectives of the ERCHs are: (a) to attract Kurdish university students to some cultural activities and mobilize solidarity among them; and (b) to destroy all the racist-chauvinist ideologies of Turkey and mobilize Kurds through the democratic and revolutionary institutions, which struggle for the brotherhood and equality of the nations (*Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi* 1988, 2119).

The Hearths were first established in Istanbul, Ankara, and Diyarbakır and later in Ergani, Silvan, Kozluk, and Batman. The founders of the ERCHs were usually Kurds who split first from the WPT along with their "fellow Turkish leftist friends" and later from this leftist movement. Although the members of the ERCH supported the WPT in elections, it became a movement by itself. What is important to note about the ERCH is that it mobilized a significant number of Kurds, especially among the youth. Some scholars argue that this young generation replaced the old one, "whose traditional ties limited its rebellious temptations" with "one raised with all the symbols of nation and state" (Barkey and Fuller 1998, 15).

27. Especially in the southeastern cities there are NGOs founded directly by the state governors or their wives. In most cases, these are the only CSOs besides bar associations and syndicates.

28. Due to the state regulations on associations and the enormous numbers of CSOs that exist in the country, it is not possible to get statistics on the number of associations in Turkey. The arguments made here come from the author's fieldwork. Most of the CSOs, whose leaders the author interviewed, were founded in the post-1990 period.

29. In the 1970s, there were similar attempts, but mostly under socialist/communist causes and are referred to as an "underdevelopment" problem rather than the "Kurdish question."

30. These claims are widely known as "Sevres paranoia," which refers to fears that there are external powers who are trying to challenge the territorial integrity of the Turkish state and implement the provisions of the Sevres Treaty of 1920 signed between the Allied and the Associated Powers. Article 62 of the treaty in particular calls for local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia, and north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia. Even though this treaty was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne, signed between Turkey and the Allied Powers on July 24, 1923, the fear that Turkey's borders are under the threat of such reconfigurations still exists among many Turkish citizens and officials.

31. These universities also engaged in bringing about new perspectives and opening up a channel for a dialogue on the Armenian issue. These three universities held a national conference on the Armenian issue in 2005.

32. In early 2008, the biggest city of southeast Anatolia witnessed a bombing by the PKK. Otherwise, this type of PKK attack would be seen in the West.

33. TESEV, for example, insistently uses *yerinden edilme,* arguing that based on Principle 6, Para. 1, of the Annotations to Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

such actions done arbitrarily for security reasons are *"ülke içinde yerinden edilme"* (Kurban et al. 2007).

34. It should be remembered that the recognition of Kurdish people is the product of the late 1990s, when the state discourse shifted from the claim that Kurds are Turks who lost their language because they were isolated from the general population. Although the constitution prohibits forming political parties along racial, ethnic, and religious lines, associations can be established on a cultural basis. However, there are a few associations that work on Kurdish culture. Yet again, there also exist some NGOs that concentrate on the needs of the Kurdish people without referring to Kurdish culture.

35. Also note that Istanbul and Izmir are the cities that have the highest level of Kurdish IDPs.

36. However, this attempt, while unable to attract the attendance of those close to the mainstream and far-right ideologies, was successful in having a former member of MIT (Turkish intelligence) participate.

37. In fact, in summer 2006 a Turkish journalist argued that the Turkish government was negotiating with the PKK to demobilize and dismantle it by granting a general amnesty to its lower-ranking militants and enabling EU countries to provide residence to higher-ranking PKK members (Sabah 2006). However, this was quickly denounced by the government and military.

38. For example, after the Law on Compensation for Losses Resulting from Terrorism and the Fight Against Terrorism was passed in late 2004, many CSOs reached the Kurdish IDPs to collect data about their stories and losses to be submitted to the compensation committees formed at the district level. Unfortunately, by June 2008 there has been only one recent attempt to publicize these human stories.

39. The conditions for starting the EU accession negotiation process *(acquis communautaire)* with candidate states are set forth in the Copenhagen Criteria, adopted in the Copenhagen European Council Meeting of June 1993. According to the Copenhagen Criteria, candidate states must fulfill several standards: (1) political standards: stable institutions governing democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights; (2) economic standards: the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure; (3) compatibility standards: the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the principles of political, economic, and monetary union.

40. A close look at EU funding trends in its European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights Turkey Program (EIDHR) can provide us a better understanding of the EU role in promoting different functions. According to data collected from the European Commission's delegate in Turkey, there have been sixty-five micro and macro projects funded by the commission since 2000 (EIDHR 2008). It is obvious that EU funding over the years has focused on fostering advocacy and monitoring functions. This is no surprise given the objectives laid out in the program's objectives: promoting freedom of expression and independent journalism; safeguarding freedom of assembly and association; enhancing the role of civil society organizations in monitoring and advocacy for nondiscrimination based on race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation ;enhancing human rights education, as well as respect for human rights in education and the media; and fighting the occurrence of torture and ill-treatment, restricted to the fight against impunity and advocacy for independent monitoring of detention facilities. Out of sixty-five projects funded, nineteen deal with some aspect of the Kurdish question or include Kurds as part of their target group. Although in these projects advocacy and monitoring are also prevalent, the service delivery function seems to be a bit more dominant (seven projects for advocacy, seven for monitoring, and ten for service delivery). More interestingly, when it comes to dealing

with the Kurdish question, the social cohesion function has become important (six projects). However, we have to note that both service delivery and social cohesion functions usually occur in tandem with advocacy and monitoring functions. Also, the program funds projects to protect the minority culture's rights and the cultures of other groups (e.g., Alevis, Assyrians, Armenians, Lazs, etc.), but no specific project includes "Kurds" in its title.