Journal of Conflict Transformation & Security

Diasporas and Imported Conflicts:
Turkish and Kurdish Second-Generation Diasporas in Sweden

By Dr. Bahar Baser*

Abstract

This paper investigates political mobilization for homeland politics among second-generation Turkish and Kurdish diasporas in Sweden. By looking closely at the relations between these two groups, it seeks to understand how an ethnic conflict in the homeland is carried beyond borders and recreated in transnational space. It argues that while there has been no collective violence between the two groups many conflict indicators are evident, including: social distance, separation of social spaces, mutual avoidance, and conflicts at the discursive level. Although the conflict adversely affects their interactions, the animosity and conflict dynamics do not mirror the situation in the homeland and they have taken on a new form as a result of the conditions and experiences in the host country.

Key Words: Turkish, Kurdish, diaspora, conflict import, second generation

Politics and International Studies Department
University of Warwick
Social Sciences Building, CV4 7AL
Coventry, United Kingdom

Diasporas and Imported Conflicts:
Turkish and Kurdish Second-Generation Diasporas in Sweden

Introduction[1]

Since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the "Kurdish Question" has been a source of lingering flux and violence in Turkey. This violence peaked in the early 1980s because of the Turkish state's suppression of the Kurdish ethnic identity and its refusal to grant them political, cultural and linguistic rights. It became a complex ethnic conflict when the struggle turned into a low-intensity civil war between the Turkish Army and the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). Despite the gradual intensification of conflict, inter-ethnic group clashes remained negligible. However, there have been attacks against Kurdish people and their political party buildings in Western Turkey and recent studies show that inter-communal tension between the Turkish and Kurdish populations in Turkey is on the rise.[2] Despite recent developments in the Kurdish-Turkish peace process, Turkey has far to go before reaching a stable, democratic resolution of the long-standing and complex issues concerning the country's Kurdish minority. Due to the Turkish and Kurdish migration flows, the conflict has spilled over to the European countries that have received migrants from Turkey.

The dispersal of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict became visible in the international media with reports of violent confrontations between the two migrant communities in Europe. For example, during the summer of 2011, a group of Turks gathered at Stuttgart to condemn "terrorism." It was a response to a specific event in Turkey but it could also be seen as a reaction to a series of long-standing complaints between the two ethnic groups. PKK-sympathizers immediately began a counter-protest and burned a Turkish flag. The situation deteriorated when the protestors started throwing stones at each other, and at the German police. Similarly, in the autumn of 2011 dozens of Turks and Kurds were wounded or arrested in the Netherlands after a fight broke out between the two groups. After these events many Kurdish associations sent petitions to the Dutch police asking for protection from Turkish nationalist attacks.[3] Other incidents also have been reported in France and Belgium.

Sweden is one of the few countries in Europe with Turkish and Kurdish populations that do not exhibit collective violence towards each other. During an interview in 2009, a Swedish politician told me: "Fortunately, there is no conflict between Turks and Kurds in Sweden. We

---

2. For further reading see: Murat Ergin (2012), 'The racialization of Kurdish identity in Turkey', Ethnic and Racial Studies, pp. 1-20.
3. "Fears of Further Turkish Kurdish Clashes in Europe", 19 November 2011. http://www.rudaw.net/english/news/turkey/4158.html, (Accessed 21 May 2012).

hear what is going on in Germany or in other countries. Turks and Kurds live peacefully here." When I left the Riksdag[4] that day, I began to question what she had told me: *What is conflict? What is peace? What is different about Sweden?* At that time, I had been interviewing Turkish and Kurdish second-generation diaspora members to learn about their perceptions of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict in Turkey and while my research confirmed that there had been no violent clashes between politically active Turkish and Kurdish groups in Sweden, I could not define this situation as peaceful: the absence of violence does not mean the absence of conflict, and thus peace. Based on my observations in Sweden, I would define the situation using the metaphor of negative peace[5]: There is no overt violence, but there is a high level of mistrust and tension between the two communities.

Due to the lack of violent encounters, the relationship between Turks and Kurds in Sweden has received little academic or media attention. Moreover, it has not attracted the attention of hostland policy makers, as it is not considered a threat to domestic security. In other countries, such as Germany, the spill-over of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict has been seen as a threat to public order due to clashes between the two groups, including violent demonstrations that have led to altercations with the police, arson attacks, and attempts at lynching. Nevertheless, despite these events in much of Europe, interactions between the two groups are not always confrontational. On the contrary, both conflict and cooperation are present: business relationships, inter-marriages and friendships, as well as collaboration and solidarity at the organizational level (particularly among the leftist and Kurdish groups), also exist.[6] In Sweden, however, we find *mutual avoidance and social distance* rather than a combination of *negative and positive interactions*. This shows clearly that there is a specificity of the conflict import in each hostland context, and that certain internal dynamics need to be taken into account.

By analysing the relations between the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas in Sweden, this article goes beyond existing studies by looking at how an ethnic conflict is carried beyond borders by migrant groups, and how it is recreated in transnational space through generational continuation. It argues that the change in location transports the conflict from the home country into another context with a different set of opportunities and limitations. As the conflict changes under different conditions, the pre-existing homeland hierarchies between the two groups could prevail or be challenged. The impact of host country policies and politics on the conflict dynamics is more apparent among the second generation who were socialized in this new environment.

Conceptual Clarification and Data Gathering

In the past, the term "diaspora" applied primarily to Jews, and later to Greeks, Armenians and Africans. However, it became such a fashionable concept that numerous groups declared

---

4. The supreme decision-making assembly in Sweden.
5. Galtung defines negative peace as the absence of war or violence and positive peace as the integration of human society. For his definitions of positive and negative peace, see: Galtung, J. 2011. Peace, Positive and Negative, The Encyclopaedia of Peace Psychology.
6. Østergaard –Nielsen, *Transnational Politics*.; Nell, *Transnational migrant politics in the Netherlands;* Baser, *Inherited conflicts.*

themselves to be or were described as a diaspora.[7] Brubaker calls this process a 'diaspora' diaspora- a dispersion of meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space."[8] Thus it is crucial to clarify a standpoint in this literature before beginning an empirical or analytical discussion about diaspora groups.

Some argue that the emergence of diaspora groups can be explained by an essentialist point of view, as a natural and expected outcome of migration. However, this perspective ignores the mobilization factor inherent to the diasporization process and runs the "risk of moving towards essentializing diaspora as an ethnic label rather than a framework of analysis."[9] This paper, in accordance with Adamson,[10] builds on the constructivist approach, which perceives diasporic identity as a social construction of transnational networks and identities. Not all members of an ethnic and religious community in a hostland constitute a diaspora. Diasporic identity is formed as a result of a combination of experiences both in the homeland and hostland. According to this approach, a diaspora is not simply a dispersed ethnic group but an identity constructed by the mobilization efforts of certain elites in the hostland context. Political engagement also constitutes one of the central characteristics of a diaspora group. As Lyons and Mandaville argue, diasporas are not "given, pre-existing social actors", rather, they are "generated by politics". Not every migrant with a sense-of-belonging to the homeland is a member of the diaspora, therefore "diasporas include only those who are mobilized to engage in homeland political processes."[11]

In parallel to the diaspora definition that this article follows, the focus of the enquiry is on Turks and Kurds who interpret "Turkishness" and "Kurdishness" as a *politicized collective identity*. This paper does not represent the *entire Turkish or Kurdish population* in Sweden, but, rather, focuses on second-generation Turks and Kurds with a politicized ethnic consciousness about the political situation in Turkey. To borrow Brubaker's terms, I am interested in Turks and Kurds who take a "stance" or have a "claim" about the politics of the homeland.

Shain and Barth divide the diaspora members into three categories: core members, passive members, and silent members. "Core members are the organizing elites, intensively active in diasporic affairs and in a position to appeal for mobilization of the larger diaspora. Passive members are likely to be available for mobilization when the active leadership calls upon them. Silent members are a larger pool of people who are generally uninvolved in diasporic affairs but who may mobilize in times of crises."[12] This paper focuses solely on the core and passive members of both diasporas. Those who are assimilated into Swedish society or show no interest in homeland politics are not included in the sample. My interest is in those groups that act as lobby groups, engage in politics both in home and host countries, seek to affect policy-making and carry their causes to the political platforms in Sweden.

---

7. Cohen, "Diasporas and the nation state", 507.
8. Brubaker, "The 'diaspora' diaspora", 1-3.
9. Butler, "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse."
10. Adamson, "Constructing the Diaspora."
11. Lyons and Mandaville, "Think Locally, Act Globally", 126.
12. Shain and Barth, "Diasporas and International Relations Theory", 452.

The findings of this paper are based on extensive fieldwork in Sweden, which interviews and participant observation (approximately 100 semi-structured interviews over a period of six months with first and second-generation diaspora members). I found the participants of my study through migrant organisations – as well as blogs, discussion forums and protest events. Thus, the subjects of this study are those who voice their opinions on the political events in Turkey – either on the streets, in places of protest, in the parliaments, at seminars, in newspapers or in virtual chat rooms. Not all interviewees belong to a migrant organisation but all are active to some degree in Turkish[13] or Kurdish[14] politics. I conducted extensive research on the Turkish and Kurdish organisations that have homeland-oriented agendas to make this study representative of both diaspora groups. I travelled to various cities in order to conduct interviews and I also took part in a variety of activities – from annual youth organisation conferences to football games, weddings, and protests.

Diasporas and Imported Conflicts

Most of the violent conflicts fought since the Cold War have been intra-state conflicts.[15] These conflicts, which have ethnic, religious or ideological characteristics, are no longer fought solely in war zones within national borders, but are increasingly dispersed and delocalized[16] and not surprisingly, they force large numbers of people to migrate. Often, members of conflicting parties find themselves in the same new country of residence with a different context of rights, duties and opportunity structures. Numerous groups among these migrants, regardless of their status as refugees, asylum seekers or workers, maintain their attachments to their homeland and in one way or another become involved in the homeland conflicts from afar. Moreover, the conflicts - whether on-going or recently ended, play a crucial role in how migrants construct their identities and how they position themselves towards the "others" in their new country of residence. The conflicts are not only transported to the hostland, but also transmitted to new generations, which accordingly causes a continuation of the tensions with each new generation.

Tensions rooted in homeland conflicts usually reveal themselves in the host country in the form of clashes between rival groups, especially after critical homeland events. Other evidence of tension includes non-violent and discursive confrontations, and social distance or mutual avoidance. However, it is usually the violent interactions that catch the attention of the broader public, national and international media, and even politicians. Besides the confrontations between Turkish and Kurdish groups, there are various examples of rival ethnic groups – such as the Tamils and Sinhalese in Canada or Serbs and Croats in Australia – trying to "settle their scores" in their host countries, in places of protests, in the back streets of migrant-populated districts, in parliaments, civil society organizations or cyber space.

---

13. The Turkish organizations included in this study are: TRF (Turkiska Riksförbundet), STRF (Svensk-Turkiska Riksförbundet), TUF (Turkiska Ungdomsförbundet) and TSAF (Turkiska Student- och Akademiker Föreningen).
14. The Kurdish organizations included in this study are: KRF (Kurdiska Riksförbundet i Sverige), Kurdiska Radet, KOMKAR i Sverige (Svensk Kurdiska), UNGKURD (Riksförbundet Ung Kurd) and KSAF (Kurdiska Student och Akademiker).
15. Conflict Barometer 2010. Last access 21 May 2012. http://hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2010.pdf.
16. Demmers, "Diaspora and Conflict", 85.

As Mohammad-Arif et.al.[17] argue, migration is an experience that reinforces the already existing antagonisms and strengthens the perceptions of migrant groups towards each other by underpinning the notions of "us" and "them." However this process can vary significantly from one hostland to another, depending on the models of integration and other factors. The social distance between antagonistic groups is shaped by endogenous and exogenous factors. To fully understand the conflict dynamics that are transported to a host country, it is necessary to explore the mutual perceptions of antagonistic diaspora groups. As Brown suggests: "nationalism in diaspora settings often seems to have a life of its own, independent from political developments in the homeland, but constantly making reference to them."[18] Therefore, it would be short sighted to assume that the interactions between the two groups will not take on another form in a specific hostland context.

One must also consider the role of the second generation in this conflict transformation. Do they avoid homeland politics? Do they participate more than their parents? The discussion of how, and in what ways, the second generation become involved in homeland politics demonstrate competing views. Some argue that the second and third generation are more active because the first generation's primary concern was survival in the hostland and successive generations did not have this fundamental issue to focus on. Others argue that a diasporic sense of belonging weakens with each generation. For example, Zunzer, referring to Somali refugees, has noted that: "There is a gap between the first-generation refugees and second-generation migrants: While the first generation is still highly politicized, the second generation has hardly any interest in even visiting the country."[19] Many disagree with the perception of the second generation as passive by comparison to their parents. For instance, when Batta analyses refugee diasporas, she hypothesizes that second-generation refugees create a stronger nationalist identity than the first-generation refugees in the absence of integration; therefore they tend to be more aggressive than first-generation-refugees.[20] This article argues that, in the content of the case study, the descendants of both conflict-generated and labour diasporas have an interest in homeland politics and continue to mobilize for political issues related to the homeland, despite never having lived there.

Diasporization Process of the First-Generation Turks and Kurds

Immigration from Turkey to Sweden began in the mid-1960s in the form of labour migration. The majority came from a small district called Kulu (Konya), and they were typically of peasant origin, with a low educational background.[21] The migration flows were sustained through labour migration and family reunification. In some cases, 100-150 people from the same village migrated to Sweden and in other cases large families, with several generations, all moved together. Therefore, the migrants from Konya are the most dominant group among the Turkish community and the sense of belonging and loyalties they harbour also revolve around regional identity. The migrant profile shifted with the arrival of asylum-seekers who came to Sweden after the 1971 military intervention and the military coup in 1980. These

17. Mohammed-Arif et.al., "Introduction. Migration and constructions of the other."
18. Brown, *Coping with long-distance nationalism,* 15.
19. Zunzer, "Potential peace actors outside their homeland", 5.
20. Batta, *Refugee integration, long distance nationalism, and refugee-related violence., 19.*
21. Westin, "Young people of migrant origin in Sweden", 991-992.

asylum-seekers were mostly of Kurdish origin. Today, migrants from Turkey constitute the tenth-largest migrant group in Sweden. It is estimated that Assyrians and Kurds outnumber ethnic Turks. However, this data is based on various pieces of fieldwork rather than official statistics.[22] According to the recent estimates the number of Turkish citizens residing in Sweden is around 67,000[23]. However, these statistics also include ethnic Kurds who are registered as "Turkish migrants". Regarding immigrants of Kurdish origin, Khayati suggests there may be some 55,000. However, as these estimates also include individuals of Kurdish origin arriving from other Middle Eastern countries it is difficult to offer an exact figure.[24]

The Turkish Community in Sweden: Prelude to a Diaspora?

Apart from members of a few leftist groups who fled Turkey for political reasons in the 1970s and 80s, the Turkish exodus to Sweden was a result of labour migration. This migrant profile revealed itself in the organizational structure of the Turkish groups. The organizations had no clear political agenda and did not necessarily build transnational ties with political movements in Turkey. Unlike other groups from Turkey, such as Kurds and Assyrians, the Turkish organizations removed themselves from the political sphere and acted as a bridge between the Swedish authorities and Turkish community.

In time, rivalries emerged within the Turkish community, not on the basis of political ideology but rather on regionalism or hometown solidarity. For instance, the first Turkish organization assumed a leading role for two decades among the Turkish population, however, the 'Kulu' domination over the Turks who migrated from other cities and regions harbored dissatisfaction with the activities that were pursued. In the 1990s, another Turkish umbrella organization was formed by second-generation Turks who wanted to follow a more 'integration' and 'Sweden-oriented' agenda. The second umbrella organization also had a partisan-free agenda and until very recently has avoided Turkish politics and concentrated on the situation of Turks in Swedish society. A youth organization was also formed by the second-generation Turks, and focused on the problems facing the Turkish youth in Sweden, as well as on the cultivation of Turkish culture.

One main observation about the Turkish community in Sweden is that there are no significant satellite organizations of political movements in Turkey. For example, the "Grey Wolves" (youth branch of an ultra-nationalist political party in Turkey) are large migrant movements in Germany and the Netherlands with connections to a nationalist political party in Turkey.[25] However, there are no comparable groups in Sweden. While every individual surely has a stance regarding the political issues in Turkey, many have only recently become sufficiently mobilized to be described as a politicized community. Turkish politics has gradually been brought to the organizational agenda because of developments in both Turkey and Sweden. The Kurdish movement's successful campaigns in Sweden caused some aggression among the Turks, resulting in reactionary responses from Turkish diaspora

22. Ibid.

23. Official Website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. http://www.csgb.gov.tr/csgbPortal/diyih.portal?page=yv&id=1#_ftn8

24. Khayati, *From victim diaspora to transborder citizenship.*

25. Østergaard –Nielsen, *Transnational Politics.*; Nell, *Transnational migrant politics in the Netherlands.*

members. More than half of the interviewees claimed the first political activities started at the end of the 1980s and lasted throughout the 1990s however these activities were more ad hoc in nature and did not lead to an established structure that could be called a diaspora.

The Turkish groups only became involved in lobbying activities for homeland issues or promoting homeland politics on political platforms in the 2000s. The so-called diasporic turn that galvanized the Turkish community to become politically mobilized was the 'Genocide Bill', passed by the Swedish Parliament in March 2010, approving a resolution recognizing the 1915 mass killing of Armenians in Turkey as genocide. Combined with the ill ease about Kurdish activism, the bill touched the "nationalistic sensitivities of the Turkish community", as one interviewee put it. The majority of the interviewees perceived the Kurdish diaspora as the driving force behind this recognition process as several Kurdish groups supported the passage of the bill and held demonstrations, before and after, in its favour. Moreover, various politicians with Kurdish backgrounds gave speeches in the Swedish Parliament on this issue. Together, these acts were proof for the Turkish community that a "Kurdish lobby" had played a role throughout the whole process and this heightened the already existing tensions and correspondingly the incentives to mobilize for homeland politics.

While the behaviour of the Turkish diaspora was surely affected by the homeland conflict, their discourses also revealed concerns about their situation in Sweden. Second-generation Turkish diaspora members seem to be more active and reactive to the developments in Sweden regarding the Kurdish Question or the Armenian Genocide issue in Turkey. Thus, while the first generation certainly had politically active members, it is the second generation that carries Turkish politics to Swedish political platforms in a way that the first generation previously had never done. The youth organization's visit to the European Parliament in April 2011 to lobby for the Turkish accession to the EU is an example that illustrates this point.[26]

Sweden: A Land of Opportunities for the Kurdish Diaspora

While small groups of Kurds from the Konya region arrived as labour migrants with the first wave of migration from Turkey, the number of Kurdish immigrants from Turkey rose significantly after the 1971 coup in Turkey. After the 1980 Turkish coup d'état, Kurds fleeing the oppression, non-recognition and persecution in Turkey were accepted as refugees.[27] Today, Sweden hosts a comparatively well-educated Kurdish intelligentsia, consisting of journalists, authors, academics, artists and directors who were in exile, and many are active both in Swedish and Kurdish-Turkish politics.[28]

Kurdish diaspora are highly active in terms of establishing associations and raising their voices on political matters, while the Kurdish identity and traditions are predominately preserved and introduced to the second generation by these associations. Swedish multicultural policies have also been very helpful for the cultivation of the Kurdish identity by supporting civil society organizations and similar types of migrant associations. Because the Swedish system

---

26. "Isvecli Turkler Avrupa Parlamentosu'nda", 31 March 2011, http://www.tuf.nu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1728&Itemid=1203&lang=en (Accessed 25 May 2012).
27. Westin, "Young people of migrant origin in Sweden."
28. Khayati, *From victim diaspora to transborder citizenship.*

officially recognized Kurdishness as a separate ethnic identity, the Kurdish movement was able to flourish. The Swedish government financed the publication of books in Kurdish and, at that time, it was the only country to support the Kurdish cause in this way. There is a Kurdish library in Stockholm, sponsored by the government, as well as several Kurdish publishers in Sweden that have published thousands of books and journals drawing attention to the Kurdish cause or to cultural issues.[29] With these opportunities, "Kurds find themselves in the position of having to consciously acquire the language and culture, which they have been robbed of by the Turkish state."[30] Therefore, Sweden became a safe haven for Kurds who fled the oppression of their homeland, granting them the opportunity to nurture their culture through the preservation of their traditions and the education of their mother-tongue, which was potentially threatened in Turkey. The Kurdish diaspora in Sweden is acknowledged by many as "The Swedish *École*" within the Kurdish movement and it is very much respected for its contributions to Kurdish culture and literature. This undoubtedly occurred as a result of various factors such as the profile of the Kurdish migrants in Sweden as well as the Swedish migration policy and its approach to multiculturalism. While Swedish policies were not specifically tailored to the Kurdish diaspora, they provided a space for a people who were oppressed, disadvantaged and deprived of their basic rights in their homeland.

The second generation is even more integrated into Swedish society than their parents, but at the same time they are very dedicated to the Kurdish cause; making them a versatile group of people who are interested in both homeland and hostland politics. During our interview, the former president of the oldest Kurdish organization in Sweden, Keya Izol stated that:

> The second generation have grown up in the shadow of the first generation. The fact that they grew up in Sweden did not spare them from the impact of exile, resistance and political agenda… it became a part of their everyday life…They have a better vision but they take their strength from the first generations' incredible power for resistance.

The Interactions between the First-Generation Turkish and Kurdish Diasporas

From the testimonies of the first-generation interviewees and diaspora organization leaders, I learned that there is little communication between the first-generation at the individual and organizational levels. Firstly, the majority of Turks arrived in the 1960s as labour migrants while most of the Kurds arrived after the 1970s as asylum seekers. The Kurds were mainly activists and many were university graduates, or had at least completed high school, whereas the Turks came from rural regions and some were not even literate. Therefore, there was already a social gap between the two communities. Secondly, for a long time the Turkish community was not politically active and thus the Kurdish diaspora did not engage with the Turkish community on political platforms until the 2000s.

Some Turkish interviewees mentioned that there was some degree of interaction between the first-generation migrants. Initially, the emergence of the Kurdish movement in Turkey did not prevent the two groups from communicating at an organizational or individual level. The first generations had language, religion or regional affinities in common which created a certain feeling of solidarity until politics drove a wedge between them. Indeed, they were

---

29. Van Bruinessen, "The Kurds in Movement".
30. Griffiths, *Somali and Kurdish refugees in London,* 141.

meeting in coffee houses to watch Turkish football games. As one the Turkish interviewees recounted:

> We would meet, play backgammon, and watch TV together in certain places. When they talked about the Kurdish conflict on the news, we would just change the channel. We could co-exist if we did not talk about politics …but then I don't know what happened… with time we grew apart.

The gradual polarization of the two groups occurred in correlation with the intensification of the conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK. Both groups developed nationalistic sensitivities and certain symbols and discourses started causing discontent such as the Turkish or Kurdish flag, the PKK and its claims, or the territorial integrity of the Turkish state.

Initially, the Turkish and Kurdish labour migrants had some degree of contact, as did the Kurdish asylum seekers and the Turkish leftists who also came as asylum seekers. The former president of one of the biggest Kurdish organizations in Sweden said that they had friends from the Turkish community who defined themselves as leftists. While there were some close relations for a time, with the escalation of the conflict these interactions became less common. A leading figure in a Kurdish Women's organization I interviewed stated that the Kurdish diaspora wanted to disassociate from the Turkish community in order to unite with other Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan, to strengthen national unity. This strategy was to overcome Turkish assimilation policies.

This dissociation cannot be analysed without taking into account the particular Swedish context. Sweden is not simply a place where two adversarial migrant groups found themselves in the same physical environment, the fact that one group is the majority and the other is the minority in Turkey and that these roles have been reversed in Sweden is very significant. Due to the opportunities and environment in Sweden, a shift in the "asymmetries of power" between the two groups occurred, and altered the roles played by the groups as "majority" and "minority" in the homeland. With respect to the hegemony of the Turkish state over the Kurds in the homeland, this "traditional" order underwent significant transformation in the diaspora.[31] In contrast to Germany, where the Kurdish community became a "minority within a minority"[32], the Kurds in Sweden were seen as a distinct ethnic group since the onset of Kurdish migration to Sweden. If one also considers that the number of people of Turkish and Kurdish origin from Turkey in Sweden is almost equal and, moreover, the total number of Kurds from Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey outnumber the Turks, it becomes clear that Sweden presents a starkly different context to Germany and other European countries. The relative and absolute size of the communities allowed the Kurds to completely avoid the Turks. The rejection of the Turkish language and the lack of economic or social dependencies also created a different set of conflict dynamics from those that exist in the homeland. The second-generation Turks and Kurds grew up in a different environment to the first-generation interviewees who had first-hand experience in the homeland including cooperation and co-existence, and thus formed their identity in a different way.

---

31. Baser, *Inherited Conflicts.*
32. Østergaard-Nielsen, *Transnational Politics.*

The Interactions between the Second-Generation Turkish and Kurdish Diasporas

Perrin[33] sees several factors as indicative of an imported conflict: social distance, spatial segregation, conflicts at the discursive level and violent confrontations. She argues that even the lack of contact among adversary communities should be seen as an act of avoidance and thus evidence of transported conflict. Social distance[34] refers to the situation where two ethnic groups do not mix with each other in daily life. The frequency of interactions is low and social ties are cut or kept to a minimum. Spatial segregation refers to the situation of two ethnic communities voluntarily or involuntarily physically segregated from each other. Conflicts at the discursive level indicate that there are verbal attacks between the members of two groups that may or may not escalate into violent confrontations. In the following pages, I demonstrate first the reasons behind the second-generations' interest in homeland politics and then I focus on the factors that indicate conflict import as described above.

Mobilizing for Homeland Politics

Testimonies of the participants reveal that the Kurdish diaspora principally mobilized due to events in the homeland and explained their reasons for being politically active by stressing the experiences of their parents and relatives with the Turkish state. They framed their discourse within the Kurdish political situation in Turkey. Conversely, the Turkish respondents stated that they only mobilized for homeland politics mostly because of Kurdish activism in Sweden. Their discourses were often framed within their situation in Sweden. Therefore for the Turkish interviewees, the behaviour of the Kurdish diaspora was of major importance, while for the Kurdish interviewees the situation in the homeland was the accelerator motive for diasporization.

Most of the Turkish interviewees joined Turkish organisations whilst at high school or university. Aside from those whose parents were already active in these organisations, the reasons given for becoming active members of an organisation varied. Most had very little or no interest in Turkish politics and had joined in order to explore their Turkish identity and take part in integration projects. The majority of my respondents told me that their parents had discouraged their involvement in politics, indeed they had asked them to avoid politics altogether and focus on their studies. They started showing an interest in homeland politics because of developments that affected their lives in Sweden. They decided to unite their efforts to promote Turkish interests because they felt their discursive opportunities in the public and political sphere were hindered by Kurdish diaspora activities. They started blogging about Kurdish activism in Sweden and their support for insurgent groups in Turkey. Increasingly, there were commentaries on newspaper articles related to Turkey, condemning Sweden for letting the Kurdish diaspora show open support for "terrorist organizations." Website chat rooms that publish articles about the political problem in Turkey became a platform for Turkish and Kurdish politically active youths to have virtual fights.

---

33. Perrin, "Beyond the core conflict ", 27-28.
34. The "Bogardus social distance scale' is widely referenced by other scholars when they try to measure social distance between different communities. The scale includes questions in the realm of social relations, willingness to form close kinships like marriages, willingness to become neighbours etc. In this study I also benefit from this approach. Please see: Emory S. Bogardus, "Measuring Social Distances," Journal of Applied Sociology 9 (1925): 299-308.

In terms of political affiliations, the Turkish community in Sweden is not homogenous. These differences of opinions however, do not cause segregation within the youth community. They have harmonized their ideological differences and established a shared opinion regarding the Kurdish conflict in Turkey and in Sweden. They wished to establish a political position that was not considered "inferior" to the Kurds in the eyes of Swedish policy makers, media and the general public. A concern with protecting the image of the Turkish community prevailed over ideological differences. There is no significant mass support for groups linked to political parties or movements in Turkey. Instead, a vast majority of the interviewees invested their time and energy in Swedish political parties.

The Kurdish participants' motivations for mobilization were very different to those of the Turkish interviewees. There was no mention of Turkish activism in Sweden; their political interest and efforts were directed towards Turkey and its policies regarding Kurds. The high level of activism related to homeland politics does not mean that the Kurdish second generation was not active in Swedish politics. Indeed it can be argued that they were more active in Swedish and Turkish-Kurdish politics than their Turkish counterparts.

Of the Kurdish respondents, the descendants of politically active Kurds demonstrated the greatest interest in the Kurdish cause. They had attended seminars, meetings, and demonstrations since they were young, and, due to their parents' status as asylum seekers, the Kurdish political situation in Turkey was a part of their lives. Many respondents said it was often the subject of "dinner-table conversations" with their parents. The level of involvement was higher if one of their parents had personal experience of prison, torture, or discrimination as a result of their Kurdish background or Kurdish nationalist activities. Only a few respondents whose parents came from the Konya region as labour migrants in the 1960-70s stated that their parents were not very politically active in Sweden and that they had been recruited by Kurdish activists recruited while at university. The diaspora organisations also play an important role for the mobilization of the Kurdish youth. They are making a particular effort to mobilize young Kurds by organising concerts, language and history courses, all of which are aimed at strengthening the Kurdish identity.

Specific personal experiences also affected the Kurdish interviewees in terms of their perceptions of ethnic identity. One respondent recounted a childhood memory from the 1990s when, during his first visit to Turkey, he went to a wedding in a village in Konya and Turkish soldiers interrupted the event to check the identification of the guests. He said: "At that moment, I understood why my parents had migrated to Sweden. Being Kurdish in Turkey was a crime." The majority of my respondents had, or still have, relatives who joined the PKK as armed fighters. Being politically active appeared to be an unspoken "duty," in honour of their parents, or those who were left behind.

The Kurdish diaspora is also vulnerable to inter-group rivalries. There are many different perspectives about what the movement's strategy should be towards the Kurdish issue. Like the Turkish community, the second-generation Kurdish diaspora in Sweden has also managed to unite around a core issues, regardless of ideological differences: ameliorating the situation for Kurds in Kurdistan. This common ground has created a well-functioning system that enabled them to channel their energy into a cause that satisfies all the groups within the

diaspora. The majority of respondents said they are "trying to unite Kurdistan" in Sweden by sustaining a sort of plurality in the movement. Despite the intra-group disagreements, the public face of the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden is always portrayed as united and strong.

Shifting the Assimilation-Resistance Paradigm in the Diaspora

The identity-maintenance of a group involves criteria for determining membership and exclusion. Ethnicity is not primarily conceived as the interactions between pre-defined groups, but as a process of recreating groups by identifying the boundaries between them.[35] In this case, the diaspora became the transnational space in which these two groups reproduced their social boundaries with respect to the situation in Turkey. They reproduced a collective memory based on experiences from both the homeland and hostland. The second-generation Turks and Kurds were born into a political and social context where both ethnic identities are recognized, and more importantly recognized as "equal"; where each had the right to mother tongue education, to form associations, and freedom of speech. Moreover, the majority-minority relationship in the homeland had undergone a significant change i.e. the second-generation Kurds have no experience of living as a minority under Turkish domination. In Sweden both groups were minorities and the Swedish system did not differentiate between the two groups in terms of granting rights and opportunities. Therefore, in Sweden the situation is very different to that of the homeland: a Turkish community disappointed to have lost its hierarchy over the Kurds and a Kurdish community that has gained its self-confidence and resists the imposition of a hegemonic identity.

Analysing the formation of the "other" in South Asian communities in London, Gayer explains that diaspora groups can build confidence in their new diasporic spaces to form a separate identity, replacing the one *imposed* by the home or host country. In doing so, they reconstruct their uniqueness by stressing the differences from their constructed *other* to finally "be themselves."[36] This account also applies to the Kurdish diaspora's situation, which gave them the freedom for *boundary drawing* to cultivate their own Kurdish identity. This process required that they focus on their differences and limit their interactions with the Turkish community, as demonstrated by the Kurdish diaspora's use of opportunity structures within the host country to counter the "Turkish identity".

The Turkish respondents mentioned the common history of Turks and Kurds and focused on shared aspects of identity and culture such as religion or their migrant background. While they tried to underline the commonalities between themselves and Kurds, the Kurdish respondents formed mutually exclusive identities by reconstructing and deconstructing historical narratives, past experiences, and official statements of the Turkish state. In spite of the Turkish respondents' references to common customs and traditions, the Kurdish interviewees argued that these similarities stem from the Turkish "invasion" of Kurdistan and described the diaspora's duty to "right" these historical "wrongs."

A unique part of Kurdish identity boundary development in Sweden is that the diaspora Kurds were particularly careful with their use of the Kurdish language. Griffiths argues that:

---

35. Wimmer, "Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making".
36. Gayer, "The volatility of the 'other'".

"Acquisition of the Kurdish language is seen as central to restoring the sense of national integrity," and that conscious acquisition of the language and culture are a part of the Kurdish elite's strategy to foster Kurdish nationalism.[37] The testimonies of the interviewees shot that the majority of the first generation Kurdish migrants refused to teach their children Turkish – the "language of the oppressor." The mother-tongue education offered by the Swedish school system allows the Kurdish diaspora to improve conditions for the cultivation of the Kurdish language and identity, protecting it from Turkish influence.

Aydın claims that in the process of limiting the unity of identity and culture, Kurds may follow two patterns. First, they posit the cultural differences against the hegemonic culture, and second, they create cultural homogenization within their own community.[38] These objectives have been achieved in Sweden and Kurds have separated their political, social and economic spheres from the Turkish community, and distanced themselves from the Turkish language or Turkish music and in some cases even from Islam – as they see it as a tool of manipulation used by the Turks and Arabs. Their boundary drawing excludes Turks as far as possible, while including Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan.

Confrontations at the Discursive Level, Social Distance and Spatial Segregation

Interviewees from both groups acknowledged that verbal confrontations between the two groups start at an early age, usually at school. Verbal aggression tends to occur when they are young and these early experiences gradually develop into social distance and mutual avoidance. From the testimonies, the two main themes that frequently came up throughout the interviews were the word Kurdistan and the approach to the PKK.

In Sweden, Kurds will refer to their homeland as 'Kurdistan', not 'Turkey' or 'Turkish Kurdistan'. Both Kurds and Turks had developed sensitivities about this term within their own spheres for different reasons. For the Turks, the word suggested "separation" and rekindled the "separation-phobia" among the Turkish community. With the exception of one interviewee, who defined himself as a leftist, the respondents were against the use of this word both in Turkey and in Sweden. As one interviewee explained:

> Every time I hear that word I understand that they want to divide Turkey. I love Turkey very much and I don't want it to be divided. Even if you refer to a region, when you say Kurdistan, in my mind it means separation and I am sure the Turkish state will not let this happen.

The majority of the Turkish interviewees believed that the "real Kurds" in Turkey do not want to be separated and it is only the "diaspora Kurds in Sweden" who have these utopic ideas. Their "others" were in the diaspora, not in the homeland. As a Turkish respondent said:

> The land they refer to as Kurdistan is a part of Turkey and I love south-eastern Turkey, I love the people there. Last summer I was there and they treated me really nicely. I do not understand the Kurds in the diaspora and their obsession with separation.

According to various respondents, the diaspora was not representative of the Kurdish population in Turkey. Their prejudices and antagonisms were targeted at the diaspora Kurds

---

37. Griffiths, *Somali and Kurdish refugees in London,* 139-141.
38. Aydin, *Mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey,* 2.

rather than Kurds in general, and their references always addressed the Swedish context rather than Turkey. They recognized the Kurdish identity as a separate identity but there is a common trend of not recognizing "a Kurdish homeland" as it overlaps with their imagined borders of "a Turkish homeland." Consequently, the Kurdish flag and Kurdish national anthem were also sources of discontent among the Turkish community.

On the other hand, for the Kurds, "Kurdistan" is a very loaded word. Being able to say "I come from Kurdistan" is a liberating sentence for the Kurds, as one of my interviewees stated: "it feels like an uprising in one sentence." In this vein, referring to the Kurds as a community "from Turkey" is controversial for the Kurds in Sweden. One interviewee's response is worth mentioning:

> You are offending us when you say Iraqi Kurdistan, Turkish Kurdistan… There is nothing Turkish about Kurdistan. You should say Northern Kurdistan…" he added: "Kurdistan existed before. Kurdish people lived there for 7000 years. The land belongs to them, but not the borders. It belongs to the Kurdish people but it is not owned by the Kurdish people.

A member of UNGKURD explained what happens whenever he says he is from Kurdistan:

> I say I am from Kurdistan. They ask me where it is. Each time I know there will be a second question, but I say it anyway. It is not my fault that our country has been divided by artificial borders.

The fact that it is a forbidden word in Turkey makes it even more loaded and the young members of the diaspora perceive it as part of the Kurdish struggle for recognition.

Another key issue that divides the two ethnic groups is their positions towards the PKK. As the Turkish respondents generally believe "almost all Kurds support the PKK in Sweden", it can be problematic for their interactions with Kurds in Sweden. This stance against the PKK unites diaspora members who support different political parties or ideologies within the Turkish diaspora. Respondents were disturbed by the fact that the Swedish authorities do not put more pressure on the Kurdish organizations and media when it comes to the PKK:

> The PKK is a terrorist organization. It is internationally accepted as one. So why does Sweden let these people go around with Öcalan[39] posters? There are also Swedish MPs who spread PKK propaganda from the Riksdag.

With regards to the Kurdish participants, in general it can be said that the majority of the participants had enormous respect for the PKK:

> The PKK wants something good, wants something beautiful between Turks and Kurds. I can understand everything that Öcalan says, it all makes sense. He wants peace; I want peace. I don't want to hurt anybody.

The majority of the participants justified their sentiments about this by mentioning that the PKK had made the Kurdish issue visible in the international arena. According to many, if it were not for the PKK the international community would ignore the Kurdish situation in

---

39. The leader of the PKK.

Turkey. The interviewees asserted that "the Turks have their army and the Kurds have the PKK." Among the interviewees, there were various Kurds who were critical of the PKK's activities and approach to the Kurdish situation, yet they said they would still offer their full support and would defend it "against the Turks."

Competition and conflict between groups enables boundary maintenance and group solidarity. In both groups there were differences in terms of ideology, religion and other matters however they managed to overcome these to reach their goals. The Turkish-Kurdish conflict in the homeland as well as the Turkish-Kurdish political competition in the hostland undoubtedly contributed to this process. Both groups maintained their boundaries and social distance from the other at the individual level.

The majority of Turkish and Kurdish respondents admitted to having very few friends from the other group. As children they had some contact with each other, but as they grew up and became politically active the distance grew. Some Turkish respondents argued that: "someone who supports a terrorist group cannot be my friend." Others said it would be hard to communicate with people who "want to divide their country." The testimonies indicated the assumption that Kurds were always hostile to them. One interviewee suggested reasons for the social distance between the two groups:

> I think the Kurds grew up with the idea of revenge. But the Turks did not care at all. I don't even remember one occasion that my parents talked about the Kurds or the Kurdish question at home.

An interviewee offered his opinion:

> There used to be class differences between the Turks and Kurds. Kurds would not hang out with Turks because they were not intellectual enough for them. But now… there is blood that divides us. We have our martyrs and they also have lost some family members to the war I guess.

The Turkish interviewees expressed their scepticism about Kurds and their assumption that *all* Kurds in Sweden support the PKK, which they consider a "terrorist organisation." They often made a distinction between the "diaspora Kurds" and the "real Kurds" (Kurds in Turkey). The Kurdish community in Sweden is seen as an outlying "community of extremists and supporters of terrorism". The first-generation Kurds, as asylum seekers and refugees, were redefined in the interviews as people who had committed "wrongs" in Turkey. Many interviewees stressed they had nothing against the Kurds, but emphasized the particularity of the situation in Sweden, which has what they describe as "extremist Kurds".

Regarding their relationships and social interactions with the Turkish community on an individual level, the Kurdish respondents answered similarly. Many said that they have no problems with the Turkish people, only with the Turkish state. During the interviews, however, statements about "fascist Turks who support the state's policies" or "Kemalist Turks who are against Kurdish rights" arose frequently, which revealed the importance of defining the enemy as an ethnic group. Many claimed that: "all Turks are fascists" or "all Turks dislike Kurds." From the interviews I saw that there is very little dialogue between the two groups at the individual level on political or indeed any other issues. For example, one

interviewee asked: "How would a Turk react to an Öcalan poster in my home? If I cannot invite them to my home, how can I call them a friend?"

In addition to their political position, they referenced memories from their childhood in which they had had altercations with their Turkish peers. Many mentioned experiences at school when they first talked about being "from Kurdistan" and the negative reactions they received from their Turkish classmates. These experiences convinced the Kurdish respondents that Turks and Kurds were unable to get along. Interviewees from both groups had a tendency to stereotype the other group and to perceive it as a monolithic entity.

The interviews revealed that the two groups' prejudices and mistrust also affects their choice of spouse. Skrbis argues that "the marriage market" is an indicator of contentions between diaspora ethnic groups. He explains a diaspora member's perception of marriage with someone from the same ethnic background as an insurance policy against losing his or her cherished social and cultural homogeneity. While looking at Serbian-Croat relationships, he found that even the most liberal interviewees had very negative opinions about marrying someone from the antagonistic group.[40] When I asked my interviewees if they would consider marrying a member of the *other* group, the answer was a resounding "no". Both groups favoured intra-group marriages. Indeed, folk dance nights, ethnic festivals, concerts and picnics as well as migrant association meetings serve as occasions for singles to find suitable spouses from the same ethnic background. Most of the Kurds said they would never consider marrying a Turk, but even if they did have a Turkish partner, they would find it very difficult to introduce him/her to their parents. Many Kurdish participants argued that marrying a Turk would present significant problems in the future because they refused to speak Turkish and would not want their children to speak what they saw as the "language of assimilation." The majority of the Turks said marrying a Kurd would not pose a problem unless their partner supported the PKK or secession from Turkey. For the Turks, a Kurdish partner would only be acceptable if she/he respects the territorial integrity of Turkey and national symbols such as the Turkish flag.

Apart from forming close relationships, interviewees from both groups were also sceptical about business relationships with each other. As other studies have demonstrated, in other European countries such as Germany and the UK[41], Turks and Kurds manage to form business partnerships despite their political differences, but this seems unlikely in Sweden. The testimonies showed that the interviewees would not be happy working with someone "who denies the existence of Kurdistan", "who supports the PKK", "who calls the PKK a terrorist organization" or "who insults Turkey".

Interactions at the Organizational Level: Mutual avoidance
Moving beyond the scope of individual relations to organisational interactions offers a broader understanding of the conflict between the diasporas. As with interactions at the individual level, there is almost no communication between the two groups at the organisational level. To my knowledge, there are no joint declarations, no co-organised

---

40. Skrbis, "Nationalism in a transnational context."
41. Baser, *Inherited Conflicts.*

events, or petitions among the first-generation Turkish and Kurdish organisations. The panels organised by Kurdish organisations did not invite representatives from Turkish organisations. The case was the same for the Turkish panels and seminars. I illustrate this point with an example involving the intention of Turkish association members to celebrate the *Newroz* (a festival that has gained a political character as a result of the Kurdish movement using it to mobilize the masses) together with the Kurdish groups.

The Turkish youth organisation invited the Kurdish associations to a *Newroz* gathering but the Kurds, who wanted to celebrate *Newroz* only with other Kurds, rejected the invitation. The Turkish interviewee admitted that he was relieved they had declined the invitation as he had concerns about the two groups getting together. He suggested that disputes would have been inevitable and added his concerns about members of his organisation protesting about an event with the Kurds. On the other hand, the Kurdish respondents said that they interpreted the invitation as part of the Turkish official policy aiming to "Turkify Newroz" and, therefore, did not wish to celebrate this traditional festival with the Turks. They described the "absurdness" of this idea because, first, they could not conceive of celebrating without the Kurdish flag, which the Turks would not consent to and, secondly, other members of the associations would not accept it, especially due to the symbolic meaning of the festival. Both groups are aware of the mutual lack of communication and want it to continue, so as to avoid further possible tension between the groups and negative reactions from their own constituencies.

A shared migrant background has the potential to bring these communities together, which could be the basis for an umbrella identity encompassing an ethno-national identity. Most of the respondents from both groups stated that the common "migrant background experience" is not relevant for establishing a better relationship, unless a Swedish umbrella organisation were to unite them behind one project. Respondents from both sides indicated the improbability of Turkish and Kurdish organizations initiating a shared common integration or anti-discrimination project in Sweden. To address this possibility, one of the Kurdish interviewees stated: "Nothing is bad enough in Sweden to make us form an alliance with the Turks. If we have to, we will choose Swedish racism over Turkish assimilation." As the interviewee accounts reveal, coping with experiences of discrimination did not prevail over inter-ethnic tensions in Sweden.

Can "Negative Peace" Turn Violent in Sweden?

My interviews with the leaders of both diaspora associations show that none of the groups condoned violence against the other community. The former president of the Kurdish association stated that one of the main reasons for the lack of violence was that the elites of both groups discourage this and secondly the Swedish integration policies are much better than in other European countries and it is difficult for extremists to recruit people to their cause. Similarly, the leader of a Turkish diaspora organization said the following:

> There are no ultra-nationalist Turkish groups here that organize attacks on Kurds or Kurdish organizations. If we have a problem, we communicate with the Kurdish organizations or Swedish authorities. That is the way to do things in Sweden...violence is unacceptable.

It also appears that the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden consists of certain elites who prefer to make cultural and linguistic contributions to the Kurdish cause. There have been almost no violent demonstrations organized by Kurdish diaspora in Sweden (unlike in Germany where highways were blocked and embassies were invaded). There are also no arson attacks on Turkish and Kurdish properties. This has a lot to do with the approach of both diaspora organizations and secondly with the Swedish system that enables migrants to bring their demands to political platforms through conventional methods such as lobbying. This line of thinking was echoed by the second-generation interviewees, suggesting to me that collective violence between the two diasporas seems very improbable in Sweden.

While interviewing the second generation, I came across new concepts mentioned both by the Turkish and Kurdish respondents: Swedish values, Swedish mentality, and the Swedish way. The majority of the second-generation Turks and Kurds used these terms to explain how they cope with conflicts at the individual or community level, and to make their voices and grievances heard. Many juxtaposed several concepts while defining the so-called Swedish way: democracy, equality, tolerance, respect for others, avoiding conflict, freedom of speech, respecting the ideas of others, and, finally, the belief that violence never works. The respondents frequently mentioned the principle of mobilizing in a collective manner in order to raise awareness and lodge collective complaints. Based on the interviews, it seems that the second generations' mentality about conflict management is strongly shaped by their socialization in Sweden. I illustrate two examples from my interviews with members of both groups:

> For me, Swedish values accept every kind of opinion. You have the freedom to think anything you want. In Sweden you have no fear of your thoughts, and no one should have a fear of expressing himself or herself. (Kurdish interviewee)
> The Swedish way is the only way. We have to apply this to all problems we have. You get organised, go to your destination and make a collective complaint to make your voice heard. I think this is the best way. (Turkish interviewee)

The majority of the interviewees said they would never resort to violence to solve their conflicts with the members of the opposite group because "it is not the right way" and it is not "acceptable" in Sweden. The leaders of the organisations also mentioned that if any violent protest or counter protest occurs in Sweden, they are sure that their activities will be criminalized, jeopardising the state subsidies they receive and their reputations in the eyes of Swedish society. Therefore, they adapt their discourses to the Swedish way.

The diaspora groups had internalized this idea and framed their strategies accordingly. All the arguments, grievances, and even antagonisms are channelled and institutionalized in harmony with the Swedish system. The diaspora elite, in particular, played an important role in calming aggressive stances and sustaining unified action by prioritizing "protecting the group image" above all else.

Conclusion

In the literature, there has been a growing tendency to focus on the attachments of diaspora groups to the homeland and their role in conflicts. However, the subject of conflict-import to the host country and the interactions between the rival groups, especially with a focus on the

second generation, has been understudied. This paper's main contribution is that it demonstrates how homeland conflicts move into the diaspora and that each diffusion results in a different form – depending on the hostland context as well as the profile of the migrants themselves. One of the main aims of this paper was to analyse the political mobilization of the second generation and contribute to previous discussions on this subject. It clearly shows that diasporic mobilization is not a single generation phenomenon. The second generation shows an interest in creating transnational ties for various reasons, such as the political background of their parents, their individual experiences in the homeland and hostland, or the efforts of diaspora elites and organisations. Although the conflict dynamics are transmitted to the second generation, they reconstruct the conflict through the prism of their experiences in the host country. Therefore, while the roots of the contentions originate in the homeland, the ways of expressing dissent originate in the host country.

In Sweden the majority of the interviewees displayed an attitude of strong enmity, but they did not engage in violence. However, there is a complete separation of social, political and economic spaces and interactions between the two groups. The Kurds used the political opportunities in Sweden to benefit from boundary drawing mechanisms, and have distinguished themselves from the Turks at every possible turn. A confluence of factors, such as the small size of the communities and separating shared values of language and culture, helped the Kurdish diaspora to reverse the impact of Turkish hegemony on their culture and identity. The fact that Kurds outnumber Turks in Sweden has reversed their minority-majority position in Turkey, and this change of status in Sweden has helped build the confidence of the second generation in rejecting Turkish hegemony.

The interviewees have a high level of trust in the Swedish system in terms of providing space for claims-making. This could explain the absence of violent encounters between the two groups to some extent, and it seems unlikely that the contentions between the two groups will turn violent in the foreseeable future. While this situation is preferable for the host country, as it does not threaten public order, it is possible that the mistrust and social polarization between the two groups will increase with every successive generation. As long as the homeland conflict persists, the political context will have repercussions on the Turkish and Kurdish communities abroad in various forms.

Bibliography

Adamson, F., "Constructing the diaspora: Diaspora identity politics and transnational social movements", paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 49th annual convention, San Francisco, CA, USA, 2008.

Aydin, D., *Mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey: Newroz as a myth*, MA Thesis, Ankara, Middle East Technical University, 2005.

Baser, B., *Inherited conflicts: Spaces of contention between Turkish and Kurdish second-generation diasporas in Sweden and Germany*. PhD Thesis, Florence, European University Institute, 2012.

Batta, A., *Refugee integration, long distance nationalism, and refugee-related violence: When myths become reality,* Denton, TX, University of North Texas, Department of Political Science, 2007.

Brown, G. S., *Coping with long-distance nationalism: Inter-ethnic conflict in diaspora context,* Austin, PhD thesis, The University of Texas, 2004.

Brubaker, R., "The 'diaspora' diaspora", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *28*(1), 2005.

Butler, K. D., "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse", *Diaspora,* 10:2, 2001.

Cohen, R., "Diasporas and the nation state: From victims to challengers", *International Affairs, 72*(3), 1996.

Demmers, J., "Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, long-distance nationalism, and delocalisation of conflict dynamics", *The Public, 9*(1), 2002.

Gayer, L., "The volatility of the 'other': Identity formation and social interaction in diasporic environments", *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* , 2007.

Griffiths, D. J., *Somali and Kurdish refugees in London: New identities in the diaspora,* London: Ashgate, 2002.

Khayati, K., *From victim diaspora to transborder citizenship? Diaspora formation and transnational relations among Kurds in France in Sweden.* PhD thesis, Linköping University, 2008 .

Lyons T. and Mandaville P., "Think Locally, Act Globally: Toward a Transnational Comparative Politics", *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 4, 2010,.

Mohammad-Arif. A., and Moliner C., "Introduction. Migration and constructions of the other: Inter-communal relationships amongst South Asian diasporas", *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, 2007.

Nell, L. M., *Transnational migrant politics in the Netherlands: Historical structures and current events*, PhD Thesis, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2008.

Østergaard-Nielsen, E., *Transnational Politics: Turks and Kurds in Germany,* London /New York: Routledge, 2003.

Perrin, N., "Beyond the core conflict: new minorities, new confrontations & new policies", Final report of the research project "International Civil Society forum on conflicts (INFOCON)", 2010.

Shain, Y. & Barth A., "Diasporas and International Relations Theory", *International Organization,* Vol.57, No.3, 2003.

Skrbis, Z., "Nationalism in a transnational context: Croatian diaspora, intimacy and nationalist imagination", *Sociological Review*, (*3-4)*, 2001.

Van Bruinessen, M., "The Kurds in movement: Migrations, mobilisations, communications and the globalisation of the Kurdish question", Working paper no. 14, Islamic Area Studies Project, Japan, 1999.

Westin, C., "Young people of migrant origin in Sweden", *International Migration Review, (37*:4), 2003,.

Wimmer, A., "Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making", *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 31*(6), 2008.

Zunzer, W., "Potential peace actors outside their homeland", *New Routes: Journal of Peace Research and Action*, *10*(1), 2005.

POLITICAL REFLECTION welcomes contributions from scholars, students, and professionals in all aspects of international relations, politics, and political economy.

- Articles submitted should be original contributions and should not be under consideration for any other publication at the same time.

- Articles for the Magazine should be submitted via email to the following addresses: **oztufekci@cesran.org; editors@cesran.org**

- Author's name, title and full address with a brief biographical note should be typed on a separate sheet.

- Authors are encouraged to submit their manuscripts by electronic means as Word format attachments in Times New Roman and 1,5 space. 12 font should be used within text while 10 font should be preferred for footnotes.

- The minimum length for Articles is 1000 words.

- Quotations should be placed within double quotation marks ("……"). Quotations larger than four lines should be indented at left margin and single-spaced. Use footnotes (not endnotes). Dates should be in the form 3 November 1996; 1995-1998; and 1990s.

- Foreign language text should always be italicized, even when lengthy. American spelling is accepted but spelling practice should be consistent throughout the article.

- If a submitted article is selected for publication, its copyright will be transferred to **Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis (CESRAN)**. Published papers can be cited by giving the necessary bibliographical information. For re-publication of any article in full-text permission must be sought from the editors.

- Authors bear responsibility for their contributions. Statements of fact or opinion appearing in **Political Reflection Magazine** are solely those of the authors and do not imply endorsement by the Magazine or the **CESRAN**.

- Submissions whether they are published or not are not returned.

Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS)

Postgraduate Programmes

CPRS courses are aimed at those who have an academic interest in issues related to peace, conflict, reconstruction, peacebuilding and reconciliation, and mid-career professionals who seek a meaningful addition to their qualifications and experience.

Online MA in Peacebuilding

MA in Peace and Reconciliation Studies (PRS)

MA in PRS as Distance Learning Programme

Postgraduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution Skills

Our programmes aim to:

- Develop the knowledge and skill base necessary to understand the causes of destructive conflict around the world.

- Understand the theory and practice of conflict transformation, peacemaking and peacebuilding at the various levels.

- Evaluate alternative modes of action and intervention in the attempt to transform violent and destructive conflict along non-violent and constructive channels.

- Draw the attention to the issues of human security and the dilemmas of humanitarian intervention in conflict zones.

www.coventry.ac.uk/peacestudy

Coventry University

JOURNAL of CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION and SECURITY

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) is for academics, policy makers and practitioners to engage in discussions on a wide range of peace, conflict and human security related issues in a multidisciplinary forum with contributions from political science, security studies, international relations, development studies, post-conflict reconstruction studies, economics, sociology, international law, political history, and human geography.

As an international refereed e-journal, edited by a group of acclaimed scholars indicated in the Editorial Board, the Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security is published at its own website **http://www.cesran.org/jcts**. It welcomes submissions of **articles** from related persons involved in the scope of the journal as well as **summary reports of conferences and lecture series** held in the social sciences. Submissions in comparative analysis, with case studies and empirical research are particularly encouraged.

Prospective authors should submit 5.000 - 10.000 word articles for consideration in Microsoft Word-compatible format. For more complete descriptions and submission instructions, please access the Editorial Guidelines and Style Guidelines pages at the CESRAN website: **http://www.cesran.org/jcts**. Contributors are urged to read CESRAN's author guidelines and style guidelines carefully before submitting articles. Articles submissions should be sent in electronic format to:

Prof. Alpaslan ÖZERDEM - *Editor-in-Chief* **-** *alpozerdem@cesran.org*

Publication date: Spring issue — April
                          Autumn issue — October