CONFLICT OVER LANGUAGE RIGHTS:

THE CASE OF KURDS AND CIRCASSIANS IN TURKEY

by

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ABSTRACT

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Language policy, language rights, conflict, Kurds, Circassians

Language policy is used as a tool for regulating the status of languages and allocating benefits and resources in the society among different language groups. Therefore, language policy has both an instrumental and symbolic value for the ethnic groups and is a source of conflict between language groups and the state in many countries.

The positions of language groups towards the language policy are shaped by their perceptions towards language policy, and their relations with the state. Therefore, different language groups tend to perceive language policy in different ways and have differing demands.

This study aimed to analyze the perceptions and positions of two language groups in Turkey, Kurds and Circassians, regarding language rights. During the analysis, the differences between the perceptions and positions of these groups were also investigated. The data for the analysis was obtained out of the texts that are published by some groups in these communities, and interviews with the representatives of these groups.

Overall, language policy is percieved as a matter of recognition by the Kurdish groups, while for the Circassians the primary problem is to increase language use of the

community and to develop the language. Therefore, while Kurdish groups demand their language to be treated equally in status with the Turkish language, the Circassian groups demand support for the education and development of the language. In order to accomodate the needs and interests of each particular language group, language policies should take these differences into consideration.

ÖZET

DİL HAKLARI ÇATIŞMASI: TÜRKİYE'DEKİ KÜRT VE ÇERKESLERİN DURUMU

Burcu Toksabay

Uyuşmazlık Analizi ve Çözümü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2005

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Dil politikası, Dil hakları, Çatışma, Kürtler, Çerkesler

Dil politikası, toplum içinde konuşulan dillerin statülerini düzenlemek ve dil ile ilgili fayda ve kaynakları dil grupları arasında dağıtmak için kullanılır. Dolayısıyla dil politikası etnik gruplar için hem sembolik hem de pratik bir değere sahip olmakta ve pek çok ülkede dil grupları ile develt arasında bir çatışmaya yol açmaktadır.

Dil gruplarının dil politikası hakkındaki pozisyonları, onların dil politikası ve devletle ilişkileri hakkındaki algıları tarafından şekillendirilir. Bundan dolayıdır ki, farklı dil grupları dil politikasını farklı algılamakta ve farklı talepler öne sürmektedirler.

Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki iki dil grubunun, Kürt ve Çerkeslerin, dil hakları konusundaki algı ve taleplerini incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. İnceleme sırasında, bu iki farklı grubun algı ve taleplerindeki farklılıklar da analiz edilmektedir. Analiz için gereken veri ise bu topluluklar içindeki bazı grupların yayınlarından ve bu grupların temsilcileriyle yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir.

Genel olarak, dil politikası Kürt gruplar için bir tanınma meselesi olarak algılanırken, Çerkes gruplar için en önemli sorun dilin geliştirilmesi ve topluluğun dil kullanımın arttırılmasıdır. Dolayısıyla, Kürt gruplar dillerinin Türkçe ile eşit statüde görülmesini talep ederken, Çerkes grupların talebi dilin eğitilmesi ve geliştirilmesi için destek verilmesi üzerinde yoğunlaşmaktadır. Her dil grubunun ihtiyaç ve çıkarlarının korunması ve gözetilebilmesi için dil politikaları bu farklılıkları gözönünde bulundurmalıdır.

Henüz doğmamış yeğenime,

daha güzel bir dünyada yaşaması dileğiyle...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The use of different languages in a single country is usually portrayed as a source of instability in political and social arena by dominant groups within the society. In many countries, language policy has been used as a tool for regulating the status of languages in order to reduce the instability, allocating benefits and resources in the society among different language groups and favoring one or some ethnic groups over the others. In consequence, many ethnic groups mobilize around and conduct political struggle for the recognition of the rights to use their own first languages in certain domains and hence conflict arises between these groups and the state over the extent that languages other than the official language(s) will be used in these domains.

However, not all language groups mobilize for a change in the language policy of the state. Likewise, not all language policies that favor some groups over the others would be challenged by the disadvantaged language groups. A conflict over language rights would arise when the ethnic group is aware of the benefits language rights would entail and hence, demands these rights to be recognized in order to benefit from the resources allocated along linguistic lines within the society. Conflict on language rights, therefore, is closely related with the perceptions of language groups regarding the language policy of the state and the necessity of language rights for them to reach the benefits associated with language use. Their perceptions, in turn, shape the issues that are associated with language policy, their positions regarding the policy of the state and the level of conflict experienced with the state.

In this study, I will analyze the perceptions of language groups regarding the state policy on language use and the conflict over language rights. As ethnic groups' perceptions are determined and shaped by many factors such as their relations with the state, both in history and at present, their identity-formation processes, and the extent of their disadvantage compared to the dominant group and other ethnic groups, I will also try to analyze whether there is a difference between the perceptions of different language groups regarding the same language policy.

Analyzing the perceptions of language groups is important as they determine the positions of language groups, which would, in turn, set the range of difference between ethnic groups and the state concerning language policy. Furthermore, as language policy of the state is an issue for many language groups in the world, such an analysis would be necessary to investigate whether different language groups react differently to the same language policy and to analyze the reasons for these differences.

Throughout the study, I will investigate the perceptions and positions of two large language groups in Turkey, namely the Kurds and Circassians, through their publications as periodicals and web-sites. The analysis is designed to answer two main questions of the study; how these language groups perceive the language policy of the Turkish state and whether there is a difference between the perceptions and positions of these language groups towards language policy and rights. Based on the analysis, I will also try to account for some reasons of the differences by looking at their historical relations with the state and some aspects of their identity-formation processes.

Although language planning is a common theme is sociology and political science literature, much of the studies on the topic deal with the aims, motivations, strategies and consequences of language planning activities carried out by the state. Therefore, there is a significant gap in the literature about the other side of the story, the demands and positions of the language groups within the society. As all political processes can be seen as negotiation processes of the groups that have diverging interests and needs over the resources in the society, I think investigating the demands and positions of language groups towards language use is as important as analyzing the motivations and aims of the state in formulating a particular language policy. In cases where the demands and needs of language groups are not met with a corresponding language policy, language

conflict may arise out of the frustration that language groups experience, which may, in turn, feed the ethnic tension within the society.

Language policy is an understudied issue in the Turkish case. Although there a few recent studies on the issue, almost all of them are concerned about the corpus planning activities of the Turkish state. Throughout my research, I could not come across with a scholarly work on status planning in Turkey, despite its centrality in the process of national identity formation, as well as the allocation of benefits within the society. Therefore, studying the motivations, processes and consequences of status planning are of central importance to understand the ethnic relations in the society since the foundation of the Republic. However, such an aim is beyond the scope of this study.

The topic of the study, is rather, concerned with the reactions of different language groups to the language policy of the Turkish state. As will be discussed below, the reactions and the positions of these language groups will be analyzed over the discussions on how these groups perceive themselves and the other party to the conflict, as well as language use and of the importance and necessity of using particular linguistic rights, in order to investigate what lies beneath the demands of the language groups and the difference between these demands.

The study consists of four chapters. In the first chapter, I will make an introduction to the theoretical and methodological background of the study. As the study is concerned with the perceptions and positions of language groups, the chapter will begin with the discussions in the literature over the importance of perceptions in shaping and determining the positions of the parties to a conflict. In cases of ethnic conflict, scholars tend to underline the importance of perceptions even more. Therefore, I will also look at some aspects of ethnic conflict to investigate how its nature is understood in conflict literature. Being a central aspect of the ethnic identity in many cases, language is one of the resources that ethnic groups compete over because of its instrumental and symbolic value. When ethnic groups perceive incompatible goals over the resources associated with language, language conflict might arise. The rest of the literature review in the first chapter is devoted to the issue of language conflict in the literature, in order to clarify what the term conflict over language rights implies.

The second part of the first chapter deals with the methodological issues. Hence, I will, first, elaborate on the methodology that I have used for my research and the theory

of discourse analysis as a guiding theory for the study. The methodology used should be justified in every study in social sciences as a suitable method to reach the aims and aspirations of the research project. Likewise, in this section I will also deal with the problems and issues that arise during my research, and will elaborate on how the study was designed so that the data obtained help the analysis to be made.

Before going on the analysis of the data, the second chapter makes a brief introduction to the existing language rights standards both in the international law, and in practice. Therefore, in this chapter, I will first account for the basic international documents and instruments that deal with linguistic rights. Altogether, these documents provide the language rights standards of the international law. However, in practice, many countries use different standards while forming their language policy, based on their own social, historical, political and practical realities. Far from being a detailed and exhaustive analysis, in the second section, some language policy options will be presented. Together, these two sections will provide a standing point and tools for comparison in order to understand the language policy of the Turkish state, which is analyzed in the last section of the second chapter.

As perceptions play a crucial role in shaping the positions of the parties, I will analyze the perceptions of the groups that are included in my sample, in the third chapter, before going on to their positions on the issue. All units in my sample will be analyzed in a one-by-one basis, in order to show the differences of their perceptions depending on their ideological tendencies. After all the three groups within the community are analyzed, I will also make a summary of the common points in all of the publications, in order to capture the variations among the Kurdish and Circassian groups in general. Throughout the chapter, I will investigate the perceptions of the groups on the issues of language, identity, language behavior of the community and their relations with the Turkish state, through the texts that are published by these groups and face-to-face interviews conducted with their representatives.

Based on their perceptions, I will investigate the positions of the same groups towards the language policy of the state, their demands regarding language rights and the perceived necessity of each particular right that is demanded. As in the case of the third chapter, the analysis will be presented in a one-by-one basis, followed by a summary of the common points in all of the three groups within the community. The

demands and positions of the groups within the community, influenced by perceptions as well as the needs of the community and their potential for acting on them, are also expected to vary among the Kurdish and Circassian communities.

The conclusion chapter, thus, will start with some discussions over the possible sources and reasons for such variations among the two communities. Based on the analysis and the discussions in the literature, I will look at the different identity-formation processes, historical relationships with other ethnic groups and the dominant group, as well as the characteristics of the two communities in order to trace the reasons for the differences between the perceptions and positions of the groups within the Kurdish and Circassian communities in Turkey. I think these factors are important in understanding the differences in the level and severity of ethnic conflicts and in formulating the policies that would accommodate the demands of ethnic groups from the state. Therefore, a language policy that aims the accommodation of the needs and interests of the ethnic groups should be formulated in such a way that it would be based on an analysis of the differing perceptions and positions of various ethnic groups.

Overall, the study is expected to contribute to the understanding of the motivations, aims, needs, perceptions and demands of the ethnic groups regarding language rights and to explore the variations among different ethnic communities. As indicated above, such an understanding is still very premature in sociology, political science and conflict studies literature. Besides, there are also very few studies on language policy and language conflict in Turkey, although both of these topics would contribute much to our understanding of the identity politics and ethnic relations in Turkey. Although this study focuses on just one side of the story, hopefully, it will inspire further studies on the topic for a more comprehensive analysis of language politics in Turkey.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1. Literature Review

As indicated above, this study will analyze the perceptions of language groups regarding the language policy of the state, which is often a source of conflict among the state and language group. Hence, we should first, look at various definitions of conflict in the current literature in order to discuss the centrality of perceptions in affecting the severity and pace of conflict. Without getting into the discussions on various dimensions of these definitions, we will mention a few of them to familiarize the reader into the subject that we will be dealing with. In general terms, conflict is understood in the literature as the struggle between at least two parties that have differing views, needs, interests and values. For a conflict to occur, the parties involved should perceive that their interests, values and needs diverge or the parties should believe that "the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously". (Rubin, et. al. 1994, 5) A similar definition is provided by Hocker and Wilmot as the "expressed struggle

between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals."(Hocker and Wilmot 1995, 21) Both of these definitions fall into the objectivist category in Tidwell's analysis. Tidwell, examining various definitions of conflict, draws two broad categories of definitions, objectivist and subjectivist, and states that "from an objectivist perspective conflict may be defined as a phenomenon that occurs when one or more parties perceive incompatible goals and then equally perceive interference from the other in their desire to obtain their goal."(Tidwell 1998, 31), while, however, "for the subjectivist school conflict is in the perceptions of the parties in conflict." (Tidwell 1998, 35).

A common point within these definitions, as well as others, is the centrality of the "perceptions" of the parties involved in the emergence of conflicts. The perceptions of the parties are salient for a conflict to arise, along two lines. As the above mentioned definitions suggest, one of the key dimensions of all levels and kinds of conflict is the perceptions of the parties about the issues that the parties dispute over as "we cannot know objects in the world directly; rather, we use our senses, augmented by many kinds of instruments to perceive them." (Kriesberg 1998, 32) As for these instruments, Elridge mentions the role of selective organization of images and the impact of motivations in shaping our perceptions of the objects and situations. (Elridge 1979, 16-17)

Perceptions are crucial in determining the identity of the parties involved in the conflict, as well. That is to say that conflict is also about how we see ourselves and the other parties to the conflict and position ourselves accordingly. There are many factors that affect the perceptions of people towards "self" and "other" identities. According to Rabie, cultural backgrounds, belief systems and social values are the elements that shape cultural perceptions (Rabie 1994, 32) and "cultural perceptions are important to understanding others and appreciating their position. Perceptions, however, are not based exclusively on facts, but also on images, collective memories, and stereotypes." (Rabie 1994, 33)

Ethnic groups, defined as "cultural units whose distinctiveness is marked by contextually defined features such as language, food, clothing, religion, and sense of identity and bolstered by an ideology of common descent which places emotional significance on real and fictive kin ties" (Ross 2001, 236), play an important role in

shaping and affecting the perceptions of their members, by providing them cultural formations and values that frame their social understanding. In other words, ethnic groups, as culture-bearing (Barth 1996) and value-shaping entities and identity groups, heavily influence the members' perceptions by the values and norms that are shared and created by the larger group. In this regard, "ethnicity provides a culturally based framework to explain the motives and actions of others" (Ross 2001, 237) as well as ourselves. Furthermore, it furnishes its members with the idea of distinctiveness, which comes about with the claim to be treated as a distinct group. In this sense, "ethnicity or ethnic identity also involves, in addition to self-consciousness, a claim to status and recognition, either as a superior group or as a group at least equal to other groups. Ethnicity is to ethnic category what class consciousness is to class." (Brass 1996, 86)

The value-shaping nature of ethnic groups has led the scholars in the conflict resolution field to investigate the nature of the conflicts between different ethnic groups under a different category, as an objectivist definition of conflict fails to understand the underlying subjectivity regarding these conflicts. Rabie divides conflicts into two major categories, namely those of interest-related and value-related. While the former tends "generally to characterize state relationships and socio-economic interaction between social, economic and political organizations, not ethnic groups", the latter tends "to characterize relations between cultural groups, particularly ethnic, national and religious communities." (Rabie 1994, 22)

Such a distinction, however, tends to see the nature of the conflict as either black or white; as if when the conflict is between the social and economic groups in a society that means there is a divergence of interests on who will get what, but, on the other hand, ethnic conflict is exclusively about the values of the ethnic groups involved. However, there are a number of problems about using this distinction in analyzing conflict, be it ethnic, political, economic or social in nature. First of all, it would lead us to arrive at quick conclusions about the nature of the conflict by simply looking at the groups that perceive divergent interests. However, the analysis of a conflict is a much more complicated task with the necessity of demonstrating all the underlying causes and processes that affect both the actors and the nature of the conflict. Furthermore, it seems to equate culture with nationality, religion and ethnicity, limiting the culture-bearing and value-providing function just to these groups. However, social and political groups

may also produce a shared culture among their members, and therefore, furnish their members with certain values.

Likewise, such a distinction would also bring about a deterministic view over of the relationship between ethnic and national communities, by simply ascribing the reasons for any conflict to the differing values and identities of these communities and undermining the importance of social and political processes that shape their relationship. However, many instances show that the conflicts that emerge between ethnic groups are not just about the differing values of these groups, but also involve the divergence of their interests. In that regard, Lake and Rothchild state that "competition over resources typically lies at the heart of ethnic conflict. Property rights, jobs, scholarships, educational admissions, language rights, government contracts, and development allocations all confer benefits on individuals and groups. All such resources are scarce and, thus, objects of competition and occasionally struggle between individuals and, when organized, groups. In societies where ethnicity is an important basis for identity, group competition often forms along ethnic lines." (Lake and Rothchild 1997, 100)

While the scarce resources within a society are an important reason for the competition among ethnic groups, the values and cultures of these ethnic groups are important in strengthening the in-group versus out-group identity and provide a strong mobilization incentive for the members of the group. That is to say that while every conflict is both about the interests and values of the parties involved, in ethnic conflict values provide a stronger role in determining the lines and fostering the motivations of the group members in their struggle over their interests. Ross examines the cultural and political features of ethnic conflict and mentions that "while cultural features distinguish one group from another, political dynamics are often central in deciding the relative importance of particular cultural features in any time and place. Political processes are crucial to shaping how and when cultural differences are emphasized. Culture, in this sense, does not cause conflict directly, but political groups and leaders use culture to mobilize followers in their pursuit of political goals." (Ross 2001, 236)

As I have quoted above, Lake and Rothchild have outlined a number of resources that the ethnic groups compete over in a society and stated that when ethnic groups feel that they cannot attain these resources simultaneously, conflict emerges. While they

tend to focus on the economic resources as the main source of divergences, Brown takes the analysis further and outlines four clusters of causes in analyzing the emergence of internal conflicts: firstly, structural cluster, which include weak state structure, intra-state security concerns and ethnic geography; secondly political cluster, which has to do with discriminatory political institutions, exclusionary national ideologies, inter-group politics and elite politics; thirdly economic/social cluster, that consists of economic problems, discriminatory economic systems and economic development and modernization; and finally cultural/perceptual cluster of causes. For the last cluster he states two factors that have been mentioned in the literature. "The first is cultural discrimination against minorities. Problems include inequitable educational opportunities, legal and political constraints on the use and teaching of minority languages, and constraints on religious freedom. The second factor that falls under this broad heading has to do with group histories and group perceptions of themselves and others." (Brown 1997, 4-13)

So far, I have argued that the perception that the ethnic groups have towards both the issues that they have diverging interests over and the identities of themselves and others have a crucial role in the emergence of the conflict. We have also elaborated on the elements that contribute to the emergence of ethnic conflict within a society. These elements are often about both the resources within the society and the values that the groups identify with. An ethnic conflict is, in most cases, neither purely about the interests of the group members, nor is concerned solely with the identities and culture of the groups involved, but rather a combination of these two aspects.

Language is one of the issues that the ethnic groups experience conflict over, as it is both central to group identity and a significant resource within the society. In the modern nation states, which usually include various ethnies, the usage of a single or limited languages as official and national languages and in certain domains can be a source of grievance among the ethnic groups that are not allowed to use their own languages in private and public spheres.

Language is seen as a central element of ethnic and national identity by many scholars. In various definitions of ethnicity and nation in the literature, language is mentioned as a key component that is shared by the group and forms one of the bases that the identity of the group is constructed upon. Moreover, language has been used by

the scholars as the main criteria to define an ethnic group before the advent of nation-state and nationalism as an ideology. That is to say that, before national identity was invented, language was one of the main tools that were used for the identification of ethnic groups.

Hence, language is a widely mentioned and discussed topic in nationalism literature. Following Fichte and German Romantic nationalism, many elites in newly emerging nation-states defined nationness based on the shared language of the members. According to this view, the spirit of the nation is intrinsic to the language spoken, bringing the speakers of the language together joined with multiple and natural bonds. Linking language with national identity has been such a common practice used by many politicians and elites in many countries, many states still use language as a criterion for defining and acquiring citizenship today.

Gellner is one of the most prominent scholars that argued that language is one of the most important factors that defined a nation and make people nationalism-prone. (Gellner 1997) Therefore, in the contemporary scholarship on nationalism, following Gellner, there is a widespread tendency to assume language as a foundational element in national identity. Following a different line of thought, Anderson is also one of the most important scholars in nationalism studies, that paid specific attention to the centrality of language in inventing and imagining of a nation. As part of his historical account for the creation of the nation and nationalism, he argues that the discovery of a national language plays a significant role, followed by the standardization and homogenization of the language by the state in order to create a single national identity within the society. (Anderson 1991)

The homogenization of the language that is used within a state is a feature of the development of modern nation-states that have emerged in the 19th century. The modernizing states had attempted to take full control over the economy, language and religion of the society in order to create a homogeneous entity that shares similar cultural traits and a sense of commonness of identity and belonging. Regarding the language, the modern states have created a shared official language, no matter to what extent other languages are allowed to be used for communal purposes. (Rex 1997, 273)

The usage of an official language is thought to be serving various functions. First, as language is a key component of identity, the usage of a shared language among

citizens would create a sense of commonness in identity and loyalty to the nation-state. Education in the official language has been used as an important vehicle to achieve this common identity and belonging that the state is trying to build, together with the education of "national" geography and "national" history to the citizens. (Sadoglu 2003, 23) The usage of a shared language would also be beneficial for economic and political reasons. As both the economic and political systems of the modern nation-states require the citizens to be able to communicate with each other, a language that is spoken by all the citizens of the state was considered necessary for the functioning of the state.

However, the nation-building and language homogenization processes came into play at the expense of other languages that are spoken by the ethnic communities in the society, because as Taylor states "if a modern society has an "official" language, in the fullest sense of the term, that is, a state-sponsored, -inculcated, and -defined language and culture, in which both economy and state function, then it is obviously an immense advantage to anyone if this language and culture is theirs. Speakers of other languages are at a distinct disadvantage." (Taylor 1997, 3)

The disadvantage of the linguistic groups does not just stem from the difficulties they face in participating in economic and political processes, but their cultural and social well-being are also threatened. Kymlicka argues that the favoring of one language over another by the state means making a crucial choice over the future of these languages and their speakers, because "one of the most important determinants of whether a culture survives is whether its language is a language of government – that is whether its language is used in public schooling, courts, legislatures, welfare agencies, health service and so on. When the government decides the language of public schooling, it is providing what is probably the most important form of support needed by societal cultures, since it guarantees the passing on the language and its associated traditions and conventions to the next generation." (Kymlicka 2000, 15)

On the other hand, the disadvantaged positions of other ethnic groups to the dominant group have been a source of grievance, augmented by the increasing contact between these groups, mobilization and urbanization. Therefore, recent decades in the modern nation-state history have faced an increasing mobilization of the minorities to demand their cultural rights and, more specifically their language rights, that is understood as the "as the right of the community to communicate within their own

language, and, most importantly, to educate their children in their own original or authentic language" (Kook 2000, 49), to be recognized as to overcome the disadvantages that are outlined above.

As I have argued above the perceptions play an important role in the emergence and escalation of conflicts. Similarly, the perceptions of the linguistic groups over their interests about and the values that they attach to the language and linguistic rights would play an important role in determining the course, severity of the conflict as well as its role in the emergence of a wider and more complex social and ethnic conflict. Annamalai, analyzing the use of linguistic rights by different group, argues that "linguistic minorities cannot be taken as one undifferentiated entity with regard to their use of the laws to realize their language rights. They have different political and historical characteristics, which play a role in their desire and action to use language rights and in the success of their actions."(Annamalai 2000, 88) Likewise the political and historical characteristics of the linguistic minorities, among other factors, shapes the perceptions of the minorities towards the conflict, and therefore different groups react in various ways against the failure of the state to recognize their linguistic rights.

The conflict that is experienced between the state and the minority stemming from the failure of the state to recognize linguistic rights can be taken either as a conflict in itself, that is to say as a conflict that revolves around linguistic rights, and has a low level of severity or as a more severe, comprehensive and complex social and identity-based conflict that has been fostered by the lack of these rights.

Language conflict in the former sense is understood as the conflict that is resulting from the presence of various linguistic communities within a state, society or region and the competition of these communities over the resources that are allocated on a language-basis, resulting from their contact. Therefore, language conflict is a modern phenomenon that requires the contact of various monolingual groups via transportation, migration and mass communication technologies. That is the reason why many scholars focus on the urbanization process as an attributed source of the proliferation of language conflicts. (Nelde 1989; Wölck 1989)

The language conflict and the competition over language as a resource within the community is one of the topics analyzed by many scholars within the sociolinguistics discipline. Within that perspective language conflict may arise along the lines of

dialects of a language, class, gender, as well as ethnicity, and the contact between these groups leads the groups to strengthen the in-group out-group boundary in accordance with the language boundaries. When there are groups in a society that use a language or variety that is considered as the "appropriate", the standard language that is used for "high" functions such as broadcasting, writing, reading, in administrative services, in education etc., is considered as the High language, whereas the low variety is limited for low functions in the private sphere. (Romaine 2000, 46) To overcome the difficulties in communication between these groups, and the disadvantages of using one language rather than the other, these groups usually experience a language choice and change their behaviors of using language. One such response of linguistic groups is called diglossia, which implies a compartmentalization of the domains for the use of language, as "each language or variety in a multilingual community serves a specialized function and is used for particular purposes" (Romaine 2000, 46). The conflict over language, however does not arise just out of the difficulty in communication between these groups, but is also about the restriction of access of vital resources within the society, like the restriction of entry to formal institutions such as the government offices and schools. When the two varieties or languages compete for use in the same domains, that is to say that when the members of the "low language" fail to establish the compartmentalization of languages, a language shift is unavoidable, which may in the long-run lead to a language death. (Romaine 2000)

Language death is a primary concern for many minority groups that demand their linguistic rights to be recognized by the state. Furthermore, the importance of linguistic rights in itself is related to the importance of the language for the linguistic group as a vital marker of their distinct identity, so that they consider the risk of losing their language as a threat of losing their identity. That is what Rannut calls as the transformation of language into a political object and a resource in a primordial sense within the society. In this sense, language is seen as a primary component of ethnicity and a symbol of their distinctiveness from the others as well as their rights to be treated differently from the others. Therefore, language is the factor that differentiates these groups from the others, and must be preserved with necessary adjustments for the group to survive as a distinct entity. (Rannut 1999, 100)

On the other hand, language also serves instrumental political functions within a society and therefore linguistic groups experience conflict with the other groups, with

the dominant groups or with the state, as "the increase of the instrumental value of language and its exclusive characteristics, rearranging society on a language domination axis, is inevitably connected to the economic and social well-being of its speakers." (Rannut 1999, 100) Consequently, linguistic rights is demanded by the linguistic groups to "satisfy two needs; a) to be a symbol of identity, and b) to overcome discrimination" (Kook 2000, 52) based on language differences. Consequently, language conflict occurs when the demands of the linguistic groups over the use of language are denied or failed to be implemented by the state as "the decision to grant the right to language to a given group has tremendous symbolic import: it is tantamount to acknowledging the highest level of collective identity, and by implication, the somewhat incohesive nature of the primary political community" (Kook 2000, 52) while, on the other hand, "language acts as a regulator of unequal access to power" (Rannut 1999, 100) within the society.

However, there is, usually, a wider context in which the confrontation over linguistic rights between the linguistic minorities and the state takes place. The conflict over linguistic rights is sometimes studied as part of a wider identity-based conflict within the multi-ethnic societies, in which the ethnic groups mobilize around language as a source of their grievances. As a case study, Kook analyzes the conflict between the Palestinian minority and Israeli state over linguistic rights and states that "one must not forget that in contexts in which the right to language is demanded we should assume a somewhat confrontational relationship between the state and the minority requesting the right: indeed, within harmonious cultural-ethnic relationships no such demands will arise." (Kook 2000, 57) While Kook's argument takes identity as a source and reason of the conflict over linguistic rights, Philipson et. al. take a different approach on the issue with an emphasis on the instrumental importance of language within the society. Consequently, they argue that the lack of linguistic rights might create frustration for the linguistic minorities because of the benefits that using a language in certain domains entails and the issue can be a source of ethnic conflict as the injustice caused by the failure of the state to recognize linguistic rights is "in several ways one of the important factors which can contribute to inter-ethnic conflict – and often does." (Phillipson et. al. 1995, 7)

The state, meanwhile, by granting the official status to one and a few language(s), and using this language as the medium of instruction in schools, in administrative offices, official documents etc., is not considered neutral by the linguistic groups and

therefore becomes a party to the language conflict. That is why most of the studies in the literature revolve around language policy and planning as a source of language conflict, as well as a route for its resolution. Schmidt contributes to our understanding of the divergent interests of the parties by examining the language policy conflict in the United States. He mentions three preconditions for language policy conflict; language diversity within a state, language contact and competition, the expectation among political actors that the state should play an active role in doing something about the social facts of linguistic diversity, contact and competition. (Schmidt 2000, 38-39) Schmidt argues that although these factors are necessary for the emergence of language policy conflict, the conflict should be analyzed in a much broader context with all the social, cultural, economic, historical and political background. For him, all these factors contribute to the identity-creation and maintenance processes of ethnic groups: "language policy conflicts can be best understood in terms of the politics of identity. In other words, the dispute between nationalist and ethnic minority activists is essentially disagreement over the meanings and uses of group identity in the public life of the nation-state, and not language as such." (Schmidt 2000, 47)

Similarly, Jacob and Beer emphasize the underlying historical and political factors that determine the existence and nature of linguistic conflicts. They state that language conflict is a changing and dynamic historical phenomenon, (Jacob and Beer 1985, 4-5; Jacob 1990, 45) closely related with the political culture and history of the state- and nation-building processes. That is to say, that the response of the state to multilingualism within the society is shaped by the historical relationship between linguistic groups and the state policies followed for the maintenance of internal cohesion. (Jacob and Beer 1985, 2-3) Consequently, the authors outline seven factors that determine the severity of linguistic conflicts: 1. industrial/industrializing society 2. democratic capitalist/communist state system 3. centralized/federal state 4. regional language groups/urban language groups 5. equal size/unequal size of linguistic groups 6. lingua franca/no lingua franca 7. bilingual/polylingual society. (Jacob and Beer 1985, 5-8)

The relative deprivation theory is also one of the theories that help us to understand the sources of linguistic conflict and the relationship between the presence of various linguistic communities within the society and the emergence of ethno-political conflict. The first authors that have investigated these aspects of linguistic

conflict with a relative deprivation-oriented approach are Inglehart and Woodward. The authors, analyzing various language conflicts, state that ethno-political conflict and the demands of politically mobilized ethnic groups for secession and separation from the state, is not directly related with the existence of plural language groups, but is dependent on two factors: "the level of economic and political development attained by the country in question and the degree to which social mobility is blocked because of membership in a given language group" (Inglehart and Woodward 1972, 359). Therefore, the societies that are undergoing a rapid industrialization and modernization process are particularly prone to the politicization of linguistic differences, when the benefits are not fairly distributed within the society and when "language cleavages are linked with the presence of a dominant group which blocks the social mobility of members of a subordinate group, partly, at least, on the basis of language factors" (Inglehart and Woodward 1972, 360).

The theory has been elaborated further by Beer with an emphasis upon the changes in the situation and status of previously subordinate groups. Beer argues that a stable maldistribution of status, wealth and power does not lead to language conflict, "but when certain subordinate groups break out of a traditionally subservient position and improve their situation relative to others, the likelihood is that there will be conflict. The conflict may erupt as a result of the insufficiently satisfied demands of the aspiring group or resentments on the part of others. If previously privileged groups see themselves as losing out in the distribution of desired resources, their reaction will be political or extra-political mobilization" (Beer 1985, 217) Furthermore, he makes a refinement to the theory of relative deprivation, with an instrumentalist approach of ethnic mobilization, discussing on the role of elites of linguistic groups, which experience the relative deprivation and the consequent frustration in their personal contact with the dominant group, in the political mobilization process of the whole group. (Beer 1985, 224-227)

Whether the conflict between linguistic groups and the state is a language conflict in itself or it is a conflict that has deeper roots in the broader social and political context, should be analyzed in a case-by-case basis. In this sense, Jacob and Beer are right in asserting that "the dilemma for students of ethnic mobilization lies in disentangling language as an end, from the use of language as an instrument in the post-industrial era for the assertion of broader political and economic demands against the state" (Jacob

and Beer 1985, 4) Hence, it is important to acknowledge these two possibilities while studying language conflict, for not falling into the traps of underestimating and overestimating the severity and complexity of language conflict and offering the path towards the resolution of these conflicts.

2. Methodology

For this study, I have investigated and analyzed the texts that some groups within linguistic communities publish, to be able to trace their discourse(s) regarding the linguistic rights and the conflict over these rights. During the analysis, I used secondary text analysis methodology, while I have also made extensive use of the discourse analysis theory, which, I believe, has strengthened the method I have used.

For the purposes of this study, a text is understood as a body that forms a coherent and meaningful unit either in a written or a verbal form (Halliday and Hasan 1976, 2). As the language of text is "dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life" (Fairclough 1995, 2) and is not immune from the effects of the speaker's ideas, opinions and intentions, an analysis of the text would be expected to reveal information about the positions and perceptions of the speaker regarding a certain issue or a certain situation. Therefore, the analysis of the texts that the linguistic groups publish is expected to reveal certain clues about how these groups perceive (and position themselves regarding) the conflict over linguistic rights in Turkey.

Studying discourse out of a certain text involves the action of reflecting upon the meaning of the text within a particular social context. The relationship between language and social context is a reciprocal one: as we speak what we say is shaped by a particular social context and thus reflects the social reality (Gee 1999, 82; Phillips and Jorgensen 2002, 61-62; Fairclough 1992; 1995). However, at the same time, what we

say is also a part of the construction of that social context and situation, as what we say also creates that social reality (Gee 1999, 11). Gee outlines six areas of reality that the language constructs and builds: the meaning and value of aspects of the material world, activities, identities and relationships, politics (distribution of social goods), connections and semiotics (what and how different symbol systems and different forms of knowledge count). (Gee 1999, 12) Consequently, discourse analysis theory is used to analyze all these functions of the language in a particular text. The text is studied to sort out what is beyond the text itself (discourse), how it is connected to other texts (intertextuality) (Fairclough 1995) and how it is connected to social events and realities (context) (Yule 1983, 26; Wetherell et al. 2001, i; Titscher et al. 2000, 150-4). Therefore, the text is treated as the data to work with "what has actually been said or written, explaining patterns in and across the statements and identifying the social consequences of different discursive representations of reality" (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002, 21)

The motives for me to choose these two groups, the Kurds and Circassians in Turkey, as my case studies to analyze the conflict over linguistic rights are many. In the first place, as the Turkish state has traditionally defined minorities based on religious differences, both Kurds and Circassians are not granted minority status in the Turkish Republic since both groups are predominantly Sunni Muslims. On the other hand, they are both significantly different from the dominant group with their ethnic origin and language, which would provide a justification to classify them both as minorities based on international law. Secondly, however, they are fundamentally different from each other, as one is an indigenous group, while other is a migrant one. I hope that the difference between the demands of Kurds and Circassians regarding linguistic rights will also reflect this distinction between migrant groups and indigenous communities, that has been touched upon frequently in the literature. Moreover, both have a significant number of population and both regard themselves as a founding element of the Turkish state with their historical role during the Independence War. Lastly, Kurds and Circassians are communities that are both organized around either associations and foundations, or political movements and parties and they both raise their voices to some extent for the recognition of their cultural rights, through these organizations, especially through the democratization process in Turkey. As the legislation for the use of language in certain domains are the same for both of these groups, the difference

between their perceptions and demands are important for us to understand how their perceptions shape the nature of conflict over linguistic rights.

In order to analyze and compare the perceptions of these communities I will be using two forms of texts throughout the study: as articles or pieces in journals that they publish and in web sites that they broadcast and also as the transcripts of face-to-face interviews with the people who are responsible for the editing, publishing and broadcasting the journals and websites or who are contributing to these journals and web-sites with their writings on the issue. The selection of the web-sites and journals to be included in the analysis was aimed to reflect the diversity of the positions within the linguistic communities. As I hypothesize that these linguistic communities do not form monolithic entities regarding their positions towards linguistic rights, I expect that perceptions of various groups within these communities will vary. Therefore, I chose to select the journals and web-sites to reflect various political positions and ideologies[1].

For both communities, I have selected three cases that would represent some of the mainstream political positions within the groups. While selecting my samples, I tried to find, as much as possible, the journals and newspapers that the groups publish and among them, I selected the journals that are published to date without any significant intermittence. For the journals that have been published for long years, I analyzed all the issues starting from the first issue published in the year 2001, which is the year before the amendments in the language policy of the state have started to be made. In cases when I could not find any journal that would fit these criteria, I searched for web-sites that represent some group within the community. However, as creating and running a web-site is relatively easier, I paid specific attention to find the web-sites that are run by some sort of organization, as that would be the only way to ensure the sustainability of their main positions. Analyzing the web-sites of organizations also helped me to have easier access to the people that I could interview about their perceptions and positions regarding language rights.

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[1] Another criteria in this regard would be the number of sales of the journals and the number of visitors for the web-sites. These numbers would give us clues about how many copies are read by the audience that is targeted and therefore how much influential they are within that linguistic community or within the society in general.

I conducted two interviews for each of the unit in my sample, with the editors of the journals and newspapers and senior representatives of the organizations. All interviews were conducted in the interviewee's office in Turkish. The first interviews were designed to introduce the interviewee with the subject of my research and gather basic data about the journal or the organization, while the second ones were aimed to investigate the perceptions of the institution on language rights, while they also included questions about the language behavior of the community and of the interviewee himself, and their demands regarding language rights.

The positions and perceptions expressed in the journals and websites are of course difficult to be generalized for the entire Kurdish and Circassian communities. Of course, the number of readers for both the journals and websites that I give below are not compatible with the entire population of these communities in Turkey. Most of the members who identify themselves with Kurdish and Circassian minority do not have access to the texts that I analyze, or choose not to be involved in political issues for various reasons. Although the same problem would arise with any study that is conducted on a certain group via journals and websites, it is possibly more acute with the communities that I investigate because of their inability to participate in political processes in its full sense. Furthermore, both Kurdish and Circassian groups have a significant number of rural population, who cannot be represented in the political arena via any possible tool such as a political party, an association, or a journal. Therefore, the findings that I draw will be limited mainly for the "elite" sections of the minority groups, composed of the authors and readers of the journals, and members of the civil organizations, who are predominantly urban and politically engaged. The investigation of the positions of the whole community would necessitate more sophisticated research methods, with more time, energy and resources and possibly a quantitative research design. I will, therefore, limit the findings of the study with the groups that are organized around the political positions and movements that are represented with the journals and associations in my sample.

For the publications that are produced by the Kurdish community, I have selected three journals that have different ideological backgrounds. All three journals are published in Istanbul and are distributed nation-wide. All are published bilingually and

contain articles and poems in Kurdish[2] and Turkish. Although these journals do not represent all the political positions and ideologies within the Kurdish people, they are the publications of main groups, read by large numbers of people and standing out as the most important ones among the other journals that represent the same ideological positions within the community.

"Nu Azadi" is a monthly socialist newspaper, sold 2500-3000 copies every issue, and is an influential one as it is the only newspaper that is published by Marxist-Leninist camp within the Kurdish community. Politically, Azadi is standing against the European membership and the Kurdish political movements that are supporting Turkey's accession to the EU. The European Union is seen as an "imperialist" force, and therefore the Kurdish political organizations that support Turkey's accession process (including the ones headed by Leyla Zana and Abdullah Ocalan) are criticized to be the accomplices of the European "imperialism". Consequently, the solutions that are offered by these groups, that stresses the democratization and the adoption of multiculturalism in Turkey, are not solutions at all for Nu Azadi.

"Tiroj" is an "art and culture" magazine which is published bilingually and bimonthly since 2003. Compared to the other journals in my sample, Tiroj has a more structural organization, composed of short novels, poems, news and reviews of the recent events and publications regarding Kurdish culture and has a special section that is devoted to a particular topic in each issue, which is discussed among the Kurdish community, like Kurdish movie industry, publications in Kurdish, the Turkish Republic and the Kurds, etc. Overall, the journal has a more moderate stand on political issues and aims to reach both Kurdish and Turkish readers that are interested in Kurdish art and culture. The journal is sold some 2000-2500 copies per issue through a mainstream distribution agency. Tiroj states that Kurdish journals and newspapers should have a significant role in the teaching and encouraging the use of Kurdish among the urban population and therefore devotes a two-pages section to the basics of Kurdish grammar, information about the history of Kurdish language and a little dictionary. This aim is consistent with the overall target of the journal to contribute to the development of the Kurdish culture and art and gathering Turkish and Kurdish intellectuals to serve as a

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[2] The texts in Kurdish have been translated by an interpreter, whose native language is Kurdish.

platform to discuss and debate the problems and issues of Kurdish cultural development.

"Özgür Halk" (Free People) is a monthly political journal that is published since 1991 with some 160 issues so far, although there are also some 15 issues that is published by the same group under the title "Yeni Özgür Halk" (New Free People) because of the legal ban on the journal. The journal sold some 20.000 copies during the 90s until 1999, but the number of sales has dropped significantly after that date, to some 11500 in 2005. As the journal is politically close to Abdullah Ocalan movement, the democratization process of Turkey that is aspiring to become a member of the European Union is supported with the condition that the Kurds are given their equal status within the society. The articles in the journal state in various instances that the rights of the Kurdish community should be recognized as a distinct nation, because the Kurdish community does not aspire to form a separate state but want to live within the borders of the Turkish Republic in a peaceful manner, if their social and cultural rights are to be recognized by the state.

As for the Circassian groups, both the literature and the publications of groups within this community seem to be more limited than the case of Kurds living in Turkey. On the other hand, there are a number of associations and foundations that are aiming to bring Circassians living in Turkey and to lobby for the cultural and social rights of this linguistic group. As there are limited resources on which we can trace and analyze the positions of this ethnic group regarding linguistic rights, I will be able to use just one journal that is published by Kafkas Derneği (Caucasus Association) first, and then the Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu (Caucasus Associations Federation), which is entitled Nart, and two web-sites that are founded by civil initiatives and foundations, but have different standing points ideologically. One of these civil initiatives is called Demokratik Cerkes Platformu, composed of the intellectuals in Circassian community, who can be considered as leftists. The other one is Kafkas Vakfı, which identifies itself more with religious sensitivity and is close to the Islamic movements both in the Caucasus and in Turkey.

"Demokratik Cerkes Platformu" (Democratic Circassian Platform) that has been founded in 2000 to monitor the developments related to the European Union adaptation process and to lobby for the cultural and social rights of Circassians. The group is

composed of journalists, writers, academics and intellectuals and was formed to voice the demands and discuss the possible contributions of Circassian group along the way through the democratization process in Turkey. While most of the participants of the Platform are members of the Kafkas Derneği and its predecessor, Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu, it has a more political stance on cultural rights and other issues concerning the Circassian diaspora in Turkey, because the Platform is not bound by the laws regulating the activities of associations and foundations, which is the reason why it has been established in the first place.

As have been indicated before, Nart, which was entitled after the mythological ancestors of Circassians, has been published bimonthly by Kafkas Derneği (Caucasus Association) since 1996 until 2003 and by Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu (Caucasus Associations Federation) since then. "Kafkas Derneği" was founded in 1993 and functioned as an umbrella organization for various minor local Circassian associations. In 2003, Kafkas Derneği disbanded and Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu was formed with almost the same functions and aims but a less centralized structure. Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu has 47 member local Circassian associations, out of a total of some 80 Circassian civil organizations that are established in Turkey as associations, foundations and civil initiatives. Since the journal Nart has been published by these two organizations, the texts in the journal and in the web-sites of these organizations will be analyzed together in this study. Overall, the articles in the journal and in the web site are aiming to introduce the Circassian culture, traditions and history to the Circassians in Turkey, whom they are considering to be losing their Circassian identity.

Kafkas Vakfı (Caucasus Foundation) was established in 1995, with an aim for the preservation and development of the socio-cultural identities of the Circassians living both in diaspora, and in the homeland. The Foundation has also established a library and a Caucasian online news agency. It is hard to estimate the number of people who are benefiting from or participating in the activities of the Foundation, since there is no membership system for the Foundations in Turkey as in the case of associations. However, about some 200 people are estimated to be visiting the website of the news agency every day, most of them being Circassian in origin. The Foundation is representing Islamic segments in the Circassian community, and is close to conservative political parties in Turkish politics.

The interviews that have been conducted with the editors of these journals and web sites were aimed to illuminate some aspects that cannot be determined from the texts that are analyzed. The editors were asked the journal's and the web site's policy towards the linguistic rights, their objectives, the target community and their expected influence over the target community, alongside some technical details like number of circulation, the contributors, the publication policy regarding the language used in the articles, etc. As indicated above, the interviews were expected to contribute to the analysis where there is little information that can be obtained from the written texts. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, the interviews were also useful in gathering information about what is not and could not be written in the journals and web sites. Putting these together with the data that is provided from the text helps us to get a clearer picture of the positions of Kurds and Circassians regarding the conflict over linguistic rights.

The fact that the journals and web-sites are subject to different regulations and control mechanisms may result in a change of style, content and discourse of the texts that are included in my sample. Therefore, the difference between the texts obtained from the web-sites and those from the journals will be treated with caution, although I do not expect them to be radically different from each other, because of the laws that regulate them. Moreover, as I indicated above, the interviews with the editors and contributors to the journals and web-sites will provide me with an opportunity to check what cannot be obtained from the texts because they were not written due to the possibility of any trouble with the authorities that monitor the activities of the journals and websites.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF LANGUAGE RIGHTS

In the previous chapter, I tried to summarize some brief discussions on the concepts of conflict and ethnic conflict, while going deeper into the debates on the role of language in political communities and the sources of language conflicts. I have also outlined a number of issues about the methodology of the study and gave a brief introduction to the data used throughout the analysis. This chapter will build upon the theoretical and conceptual discussions presented in the previous one, to investigate the historical background of the issue, with the legal regulations on language rights, in the world and in Europe, together with some case studies of language regulation in multilingual societies. The legal framework and the practices of language planning in the world will shed some light on the analysis of historical and legal situation in Turkey, which is to be elaborated in the next section. However, before going on to the history of language rights, I will mention a few arguments on the nature of language planning activities of the state and language rights.

Language planning, in its broadest meaning, refers to "the deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocations of their language codes" (Cooper 1989, 45). Although this definition does not limit the language planning to administrative agencies, for this study, we will consider the language planning policies of the state to change the language behaviors and solve the language problems of the whole society. (Rubin and Jernudd 1971, xvi; Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971, 211) However, as de Vries argues not all language problems result in language planning by the state. Instead, for the language planning process to be developed, we need to analyze and consider three aspects of language problems: "extent (how many persons are affected by the problem?); stability (how long is the problem expected to last? alternatively, how long has the problem persisted?); and intensity (what is the amount of damage, disadvantage or discomfort incurred by individuals affected by the problem?)" (de Vries 1991, 43-44)

Although the definition that I use for the term language planning implies that it is designed primarily to regulate the language behaviors of the communities and institutions in the society, its target and implications reach far beyond that domain. Because of the symbolic and functional aspects of the language use behavior, that I have discussed in the first chapter, language planning activities aim to serve non-linguistic ends as well. (Cooper 89, 34-35; Karam 1974, 108; Spolsky 2004, 6) The domains that any language planning activity is having implications upon, may be political, social, scientific, religious, cultural and economic. Moreover, Cooper asserts that the primary motivations of language planning are in fact regulating these non-linguistic domains, rather than the language behavior of the society. Therefore he argues that "language planning is typically carried out for the attainment of nonlinguistic ends such as consumer protection, scientific exchange, national integration, political control, economic development, the creation of new elites or the maintenance of old ones, the pacification or co-option of minority groups, and mass mobilization of national and political movements." (Cooper 89, 35) A similar stance is taken by Ager in his analysis of the motives of language planning. Ager agrees with the statement that language planning should be analyzed within a wider perspective than the language domain and outlines seven motives of language planning and actions concerning language regulation policies carried out by the state: these are identity, ideology, image creation, insecurity, inequality, integration with a group, and instrumental motives for advancement. (Ager 2001)

In order to avoid confusion and narrow down the focus of the study, we should, however, differentiate between the functions of language planning. In the literature, language planning is analyzed through three different categories, status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning, with different functions. (Cooper 89, 31-33; Sadoglu 2003, 38-42; Kloss 1969) Although the distinction between these categories are clearer in theory than in practice (Fishman 1983, 382), the categories are yet useful to capture the motives and strategies of language planning in different cases.

Corpus planning is about a single language and refers to the creation of new forms, standardization and homogenization of the written and spoken forms of the language, and the modification of the old codes. (Cooper 89, 31; Spolsky 2004, 11; Kloss 1969) While corpus planning is carried out within a single language (however, it involves the purification of the language from the elements of other languages, that are usually the languages that have been used within the territory for some time (Sadoglu 2003) or continues to be used by a significant number of people), status planning is carried out by the state to regulate the status and relationship of different languages, as well as, their functions and domains of use, (Cooper 1989, 32) within bilingual or trilingual societies (Spolsky 2004, 60). Acquisition planning, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the education of official, regional, local and foreign languages and is directed toward increasing the number of speakers of these languages. (Cooper 89, 33)

This study will specifically focus on the reactions of different language groups to the status planning activities in Turkey, and exclude the corpus planning attempts both in Turkey (Sadoglu 2003) and in Kurdish and Circassian minorities, although these are important and understudied fields of inquiry as well. The status planning activities of any state is usually debated around the values of equality and national unity (Schmidt 2000, 37-38) within the society, and is a tool in the hands of political elites to define and maintain the identity and participation attitudes of the society, through regulating the formal status of indigenous, official and foreign languages, in education, media, government, and in communication between the citizens, the society and the government. (Esman 1990, 185; Weinstein 1990, 1) The target functions of status planning, outlined by Stewart, are official, provincial, wider communication, international, capital, group, educational, school subject, literary, and religious. (Stewart

1968, c.f. Cooper 89, 100-118) With all its functions, status planning, affects the society in a significant way and determines the nature of inter-ethnic relations. (Kibbee 1998, 1)

Status planning decisions can be analyzed within three clusters of aims; "to maintain, to reform and to transform either the society and the state". (Weinstein 1990, 9) By regulating the status of languages, the political elites may try to protect the existing state system and the society by strengthening the identity and participation patterns or by barring change. Reformist planning decisions, on the other hand, aim to expand the participation of citizens into the political system and facilitate the process of accessing to wealth and prestige within the society. The purpose of the transformation-oriented language planning instead, remove the old patterns of identity and participation, bringing new definitions of identity to the society and changing the patterns of access to power and wealth through economic and political participation.

The strategies that the state employs for the regulation of language in a multilingual society can be analyzed by two broad categories: assimilationist and pluralist. (Esman 1992) Schmidt draws a more detailed typology and divides language policy conflict resolution strategies into four as domination/exclusion, assimilation, confederation and pluralism. (Schmidt 2000, 57) These strategies are relevant only when the minority groups demand their language rights to be recognized. Accordingly, we should now deal with the range of responses that a state may have to the demands of linguistic groups for the recognition of language rights, while leaving the analysis over the legal framework of language rights and the actual cases of implementation to the next section.

If we categorize the possible responses as the attitudes of the state towards minority languages, we would see that they fall under one of the three possible categories: language is considered to be a problem, a right and a resource. (Ruiz 1984; Kontra et. al. 1999, 5-6) In many countries, language is considered to be a problem, since it is perceived as a threat to the national unity. Therefore, any demands for the recognition of language rights for linguistic groups have to be reconciled with the views of the majority and the general social policy. Moreover, there are practical problems to be solved, such as the funding for the education of mother-tongue for linguistic groups, recruitment of officials and translators for government services and official documents, or funding for research that would reveal the best solution for the accommodation of the

demands. Language is usually considered as a right by the linguistic communities, who are trying to achieve the recognition of these rights by the state. A third possible attitude is the consideration of language as a resource, a richness of diversity, which can be used for the advantage of the state and the society.

With an emphasis of the institutional responses that a state may have to language rights demands, Esman makes a more refined typology with four categories. The first category of response is "studied neglect", in which the state denies any legitimacy for the claims for minority language rights, with the assumption that the stability of the language problem is low and will not extend to a serious conflict between the minority and state. A second option is "ridicule" the language of the minority, so as to lower the prestige of the language and question its potential for use as a medium of instruction, in the media, etc. (e.g. the officials consider the language as a dialect or variety rather than a distinct language, or argue that the language is not developed enough to be used as a medium of instruction in schools) In cases where language conflict spills over into ethnic and political conflict in a mass scale, the state may respond with the strategy of "repression", which implies a complete denial of all language rights of the minorities. A fourth possible option is, however, "accommodation" and can be analyzed in two sub-categories: concessional accommodation, which involves the granting of minority language rights in certain domains, and structural accommodation, which implies a more radical change in the overall political structure of a society such as granting autonomy to specified linguistic regions. (Esman 1977, 371-390)

Although structural accommodation is a less frequent option, increasing ethnic awareness of language groups on the one hand, and international organizations and instruments on the other, are pushing many monolingual countries to seek concessional accommodation of the linguistic conflicts within the society and recognize the rights of the linguistic groups to use their own mother-tongue in certain domains. Before going on into the analysis of international instruments on language rights and some case studies, it is useful to note here some discussions over the nature of language rights.

There are three terms that are commonly used in the literature to denote the rights that are granted to regulate the use of minority, indigenous and immigrant languages within a society in public and private spheres: "language rights", "linguistic rights" and "linguistic human rights". Although "language rights" and "linguistic rights" mean the

same thing (Paulston 1997, 75) the term "linguistic human rights" differs from the other two. One of the leading scholars and proponents of the linguistic human rights approach, Shutnabb-Kangas, states that language rights encompass a much broader scope, while linguistic human rights are those that are necessary for the fulfillment of the basic needs of the individual and the group. Therefore the latter concept does not cover the enrichment-oriented rights such as the right to learn a foreign language, which can be, however, categorized under the term language rights. (Shutnabb-Kangas 2000, 497-499)

However, the concept and the approach have been criticized of being a tautology in itself - over the question of how can linguistic not be human? - and of being biased towards the claims of the language groups by reframing the concept in such a way that it comes to mean that language rights are basic human rights so that they cannot and should not be alienated or violated. (Paulston 1997, 76; Spolsky 2004, 119-120) However, aside from the right to learn a foreign language, all language rights are already considered as a human right in all international instruments and in the literature. Thus the articulation of the term linguistic human rights brings complication and confusion to the terminology, without a strictly defined distinction from the other concepts used to refer to the same thing.

Another discussion in the literature arises out of the question whether language rights are individual or collective rights in their nature. In the liberal tradition, human rights are considered as individual rights and language rights can be derived from the basic principles of non-discrimination, freedom of expression and equality before the law. (de Varennes 2001) However, the implementation of the language rights requires a collectivity that would communicate in a certain language among themselves. If there is a certain community that is willing to use their first language in their transactions among themselves and with the state, the rights to use their language in certain domains would be granted to that collectivity. This situation is further verified by the international instruments that deal explicitly with the conditions that the states should observe in granting language rights to language groups. In a number of articles of international conventions and agreements dealing with the language rights, as I will argue below, it is stated that the signatory states are to grant the language rights to a group where they are traditionally present, in substantial numbers and when there is sufficient demand. Therefore, language rights is usually understood to be both

individual and communal, depending on the situational and contextual characteristics, in the legal instruments used and in the literature. (Annamalai 1986)

The last distinction that should be noted here is the two principles regulating the granting of the language rights: the territoriality and personality principle. Although these principles are not mutually exclusive, many multilingual countries use the territoriality principle for granting the rights of the language groups. The principle can be used either via a federal system or by granting cultural autonomy to a specific region where the language group is traditionally settled, or by establishing the necessary conditions for the usage of the regional and indigenous languages in certain administrative units, such as regions, towns or villages. On the other hand, personality principle implies that the usage of the language rights depends solely on the linguistic status of the individuals, regardless of the territory. As in the case of Canadian language legislation, personality principle is employed for the maintenance of the rights of all the people in the society that want to use their mother-tongues within the borders of the whole country. (Paulston 1997, 79-81; McRae 1975) The choice over the personality and territoriality principles is and should be done on a case-by-case basis, depending again on the specific conditions of the state and language group.

Having acknowledged some of the discussions over the nature of language planning activities and some controversial points regarding language rights, the following sections will examine the international instruments that regulate the language rights and some countries that choose to accommodate or repress the claims of the language groups over the usage of their language rights in certain domains. These sections will shed some light over the analysis on language legislation in Turkey, which is going to be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

1. Linguistic Rights: The Current Framework in the International Law

Although linguistic rights have generated a huge academic debate especially within legal circles, it is a very recent topic in international law, propelled by a couple of legal instruments and treaties adopted since the end of the Cold War. Major language legislation in the area of language policy has occupied central attention of the policymakers but only recently it became an area of international law, whose guidelines began to be shaped by legal norms. In the past, the issue of linguistic rights have been addressed and described as human rights without any specific references to any other conditions. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, language rights were not recognized and were, in fact, totally ignored by those involved in the process. No direct reference is made to language rights in European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and Universal Declaration of Human Rights because of the general view that the primary focus of human rights should be placed upon rights of all human beings irrespective of their race, sex and religion. (Yildiz 2004, 74-75) The dominant view was that, if properly enforced, these treaties would also address the problems and concerns of minorities and provide adequate solutions. The fact that Hitler had used the issue of national minorities as a pretext for his aggressive foreign policy, in the aftermath of the WWII, persuaded many diplomats that the issue of national minorities was a dangerous and controversial topic and led them to refrain from directly touching the issue.

Approaching from the perspective of human rights, these two landmark treaties dealt with the issue of linguistic rights only in so far as ensuring the prevention of discrimination with reference to language to take place. Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms states that "the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status". In other words, governments were not required to implement any policies that are specifically designed for the minorities as long as it succeeded in preventing discrimination and establishing some notion of political equality among its citizens. According to these treaties, then, language rights are recognized only to the

extent of providing freedom of expression and non-discrimination to members of a linguistic minority. This point is reflected by the reluctance of European Court of Human Rights to uphold the rights of minorities beyond the issue of non-discrimination. (Yildiz 2004, 79)

The first legal document in international law that directly made reference to linguistic rights in any form was the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 and signed by its member states in the following years. According to Article 27 of this treaty, "in those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language". According to the treaty, forbidding the private use of a language would be a breach of the right to freedom of expression and, thus, is unacceptable in international law. Without properly establishing the right of individuals to use their native languages in their private conduct, freedom of expression cannot be considered to exist in its proper sense. Should such a restriction only refer to individuals belonging to a linguistic minority, it would be a violation of Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

There exists a debate on the issue of the nature of language rights, mainly to determine whether language rights are individual or collective. (Paulston 1997, 73-85) In international law, however, contrary to the generally held view, language rights are often considered as individual rights, part of universal human rights, rather than group or collective rights. The "persons belonging to such minorities" statement in Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, for example, indicates that the intent of the diplomats was to define minority rights to be individual rights with their direct reference to individual persons rather than linguistic minorities and communities. In other words, linguistic rights framed in international legal instruments are enjoyed by all persons regardless of their membership of a national minority and therefore, apply to all governments. This means that a state cannot forbid individuals to use a minority language in private sphere such as use in groups or organizations, political associations or parties, private educational facilities, private economic activities, religious worship or religious practices, private broadcasting, media and publication, private posters as well as other forms of private correspondence and

communication. (de Varennes 1999, 118-134) Moreover, in accordance with the same article, individuals have the right to the private use of topographical as well as their own names in any language. Moreover, the right to an interpreter in criminal proceedings is recognized as a fundamental right in international law because an individual can best defend himself in his mother tongue.

Despite being the first treaty that embodies minority rights as a separate legal norm in international law, however, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights falls short of properly handling the problems faced by language groups in their countries. While the article 27 aimed only to protect freedom of expression and freedom of conscience of minority groups, it also failed to introduce positive obligations for states in the issue of minority rights. Recognizing the inadequacy of the existing law regulations, the international community began to enact additional treaties that specifically make reference to language rights. Recent treaties and legal instruments introduced positive rights to members of linguistic minorities, while also bringing additional obligations for states to better ensure the use of these minority languages. Due to the general consensus on the need for updating internal law with the purpose of better protecting minorities in the uncertain and dangerous global environment created by the end of the Cold War, United Nations General Assembly adopted Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities in 1992. The same year, member states of the Council of Europe signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in order to create a multilingual Europe that would be based on the principles of democracy and cultural diversity. While the latter is mostly considered to be a political document that sets certain administrative targets and standards, the former has become one of the primary documents of minority rights in international law. Moreover, Council of Europe has adopted the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 1994 and opened it for signature by member states the following year. The importance of this framework treaty stems from the fact that it is the first document in Europe, which is legally binding the signatory states. These treaties brought forward some additional legal protections for national minorities and had a much broader scope for linguistic rights than the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. While defining linguistic rights in a more clear and detailed fashion, these treaties have also created obligations,

which, despite the weak instructional procedures, ambiguous guidelines and flexible language used, were difficult for states to ignore.

According to the Article 1 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, "states shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity" and "adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends". As clearly specified in the legal document, states are required to create the conditions upon which the preservation of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities can happen so that they have a positive obligation towards their minorities that would become a part of the norms of the international law. This point becomes even clearer with Article 3, which requires states to "take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue". The purpose of this legal instrument, then, is to make sure that linguistic groups have the right to enjoy all aspects of their culture by using their language in private and in public and preserve their cultural traditions without any interference from public authorities.

While these rights are enjoyed by all individuals irrespective of their belonging to a national minority, states have additional duties and obligations towards members of a linguistic minority, who are territorially concentrated. Where a sufficient number of students of a linguistic group in a country are concentrated territorially, the state is required to use their native language with a reasonable degree as a medium of instruction in public schools. It is crucial for states to provide students of a linguistic minority with some opportunity to exercise their own languages to prevent any disadvantages that they may otherwise suffer from the discriminatory policy of exclusively using an official language in public schools. (de Varennes 1999, 130) This right is defined in Article 4 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and Article 14 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Since governments are required to provide a reasonable or appropriate degree of minority language education and are constrained by their resources and capabilities, enforcement of this policy is practically left at the discretion of policymakers.

In cases where an individual cannot or barely speak the official language, any ban on non-official languages of that country would be infringing on his or her ability to fully express his or her ideas, constituting a breach of the freedom of expression and also put him or her into a very unfavorable and, even, disadvantaged situation vis-à-vis the other members of the community. Recognizing the necessity of enabling every person to enjoy communicating with his or her language, the recent treaties and international instruments all contain articles that grant the right to use any language in private and public. According to the Article 2 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, "persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination". In the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, this right is presented in a more direct fashion. According to the 9th article, "the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers".

As Fernand de Varennes argues, "there is a growing legal acceptance in treaties that states have a positive obligation to provide public services, benefits and privileges in the language of a specific minority", especially in cases where the speakers of that minority language are mostly concentrated territorially in a region. (de Varennes 1999, 127) However, there is an ongoing debate on this issue between legal experts, who think that international law specifically requires public authorities to use minority languages in accordance with the non-discrimination with respect to language clause in many treaties and others, who make the argument that no strict guidelines are developed in international law to consider this as a universal norm. According to Fernand de Varennes, this is a very important debate because it deals with the question of whether a government must develop a proper response to the needs of a linguistic minority or if instead it only should. (de Varennes 1999, 127)

It is only with the help of these legal instruments that linguistic rights would fully become a part of the international law accepted by all governing parties and enforced by governments without any hesitation. This could, however, be possible only by making

sure that international actors rather than specific governments would be in charge of implementation. Currently, the treaties that recognize the primacy and importance of linguistic rights for minorities furnish the individual governments with the responsibility of carrying out the specified obligations. Thus, governments have the chance to interpret these treaties in a pragmatic fashion and implement the required articles with their own methods that give them the opportunity to determine their own language policies according to their own specific historical, social and political conditions.

2. Case studies

Having reviewed some basic documents that regulate language use and minority language rights in international law, I will now outline the language policies of some countries, which would shed more light into our understanding of the language policy in Turkey and the demands of the language groups regarding this policy. As language policy usually results from the exchange between the motives of the state in status planning and the claims of the minorities to use their language, these case studies will help us understand the possible options of language policy in specific conditions.

The fact that there are about 6000 to 7000 (Shutnabb-Kangas 2000, 30-32) languages actively spoken in the world and about 200 sovereign nation-states is a striking evidence of the presence of multilingual societies within the borders of almost all states. The sole exception to this statement is Iceland, in which 100 percent of the Icelanders speak Icelandic as their first language and the dominant language in all spheres of their lives. Consequently, there is no status language planning activity held in Iceland and as such, no mention of language in the constitution. (Spolsky 2004, 61) However, in most other countries there is some kind of a status planning activity that would determine the status and the domains of use for the languages used within the society. We can analyze the countries according to their language policies in three sub-

headings: monolingual, monolingual with recognized linguistic minorities and multilingual.

Monolingual countries usually tend to recognize a single official language in their constitution or by laws, which is associated with the national identity and thus serves as a tool for the centralization and homogenization of the society to become a single polity, a nation. (Tollefson 2002, 180) A typical example of a country with monolingual state policy is France, which has ruled a ban on the use of regional languages and imposed the use of French just after the French Revolution, as regional languages were perceived to be a threat for the survival of the State and the Revolution. (Ager 1996, 41-42; Jacob and Beer 1985, 14; Jacob and Gordon 1985, 106-107) Consequently, the thirty-seven languages spoken within the borders of France, of which seven had more than 500.000 speakers, were not allowed to be used in education or in media, by the government etc. until 1951. In 1951, a law was introduced by Deixonne, that allowed four of the regional languages, Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan, to be used in education for up to three hours a week as part of the general education, but the law did not foresee any support or positive encouragement by the state for the teaching of these languages. Corsican was added to the list in 1974, and the law was extended further to other languages since then. Since 1994, the government accepted to pay for the teachers in Breton and Basque bilingual schools, but a decision that the government took in November 2002 annulled the earlier decisions that permitted bilingual education in regional languages. (Ager 1996, 68-69; Spolsky 2004, 67-71; Jacob 1990; Jacob and Gordon 1985) France did not sign the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages until 1999. In that year, France argued that its own interpretations of the Charter did not necessitate the granting of collective rights to linguistic groups and put a reservation to the Charter, although she has not ratified it yet. (Spolsky 2004, 66)

The underlying motive of the French language policy stems from both the importance attributed to a single language spoken by all citizens of the French state in creating a homogeneous society composed of equal and responsible citizens and the threat perceived by the spread of English within the world and the society. In Ruiz's terms, the presence of multiple languages within the society is not considered as a resource for the French state (Ager 1996, 206), but as a threat to national unity. However, as Spolsky notes, the assimilation policy emerged with the French Revolution and aimed at the regional languages could not succeed in destroying them altogether,

which is an evidence that shows us the powerlessness of language management policies in achieving their aims. (Spolsky 2004, 74) Moreover, Jacob and Gordon assert that the increase in the level of ethnic consciousness and conflict in mid-1970s can be partly explained by the role of French state and its assimilationist policies in provoking ethnic discontent. (Jacob and Gordon 1985, 125)

Greece is another good example of the countries that have monolingual state policies, although there are a significant number of languages other than Greek, spoken by significant numbers of people. Like the Turkish state, Greece grants minority status based on the religious difference and denies the claims of minority groups for their language rights. Although Turkish is available as a medium of instruction in the primary level of schooling, regulated by agreements between Turkey and Greece, Macedonian, for example, is not recognized even as a language, while the speaking Macedonian has been subject to punishment. Similar to the other cases of monolingual state policies, Greece perceives the presence and use of minority languages as a threat to the national unity and therefore prohibits the use of any language other than Greek in public, unless it is recognized by the law. (Romaine 2000, 15; Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Report on Language Rights 2003, 21; Spolsky 2004, 153)

Syria, a former French protectorate, has proclaimed its independence by declaring Arabic as its only official language. Having been under oppressive French rule with the compulsory use of French, opposition to the French rule have run in parallel with a growing appeal to Arab nationalism and language. The speakers of other languages, like Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian, have been deprived of any rights to use their languages, as a medium of instruction in schools, in the media, in government services, etc. The Syrian government has been particularly oppressive on Kurdish, banning its use and replacing Kurdish personal and place names with Arabic. (Spolsky 2004, 136)

A second category of language policy comprises of the monolingual countries that revise their language policies for the use of minority and regional languages and choose to accommodate the claims of the linguistic groups, due to the realization that the assimilationist policies fail because of the extent and durability of the problem, external pressures, or political and economic changes that would bring about a change in the meanings of the concepts such as citizenship and nation. One such political and economic change is globalization, bringing major impacts on most of the states'

policies, as it changes the definition of state, sovereignty, citizenship and nation. At the same time, in the supranationalism process, there are increasing pressure on the language policies of monolingual countries that ban the use of regional languages, or impose the use of the official language on the citizens. These two phenomena are "opening up space for difference in ways that the nation state system does not accommodate and would not tolerate". (Wright 2004, 182)

Slovak Republic, which split from Czechoslovakia in 1993, has 86 percent of its population Slovak and 11 percent Magyar. Slovak is the official language of the state but the Constitution guarantees the protection of the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups. Accordingly, any language group that composes 30 percent of the population in a town can use its own language before the administrative authorities. Magyar schools are available, although the majority of the schools use Slovakian as the medium of instruction. Slovakia ratified the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages in June 2001, with the guarantee that Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Polish, Ruthenian, Ukranian, Czech and Roma language speakers will use the rights pertaining from the Charter in the districts where they compose over 20 percent of the population. (Spolsky 2004, 156-157)

In Iraq, the official language is Arabic, but the Iraqi government recognized the Kurdish language as the official language of the Kurdish districts alongside Arabic in 1970, after a long struggle between the Arabs and the Kurds. Since that time Kurdish is taught at the primary and secondary level of schooling in the region and Kurdish studies is taught at the Baghdad University, as well as University of Sulemaniye. Kurds also have the right to use Kurdish in TV and radio broadcasts and in print media, which are followed and watched by the other Kurds living in the region across the borders. Especially after 1991, the Kurdish district has increased cultural autonomy from the Iraqi government due to the political situation.

The third category is multilingual countries, which have officially recognized two or more major languages, with the corresponding partition, determined based on geography, locality, or by function. In these countries, the members of the major linguistic groups played a significant role in the history of the country, so that any assimilation or marginalization policy cannot be accepted. In certain cases, this accommodation is reached after long struggles between the members of linguistic

groups and the conflict has been quite widespread and durable so that the parties cannot compromise on an option that foresees a single official language with some restricted rights for the use of other language(s).

Belgium chose to draw geographic boundaries for three languages, as a solution to the long-term struggle between the Flemish- and French-speaking populations. The Belgian constitution recognizes French, Dutch and German as official languages in their respective geographic zones, while in Brussels, both French and Dutch are used as official languages and as the medium of instruction in schools. However, Belgium has experienced language conflict due to the fact that there are numerous unofficial varieties of each official languages and most Belgians speak these unofficial varieties as their first language, which are corresponding to their differing socio-economic status in the society. The intensity of conflict diminished with the federal solution adopted in 1992, that transfered the power to the regions where there are separate institutions established for each official languages. However, the territorial formulation of language policy in Belgium increases the scope of difference between the educational policies of the regions and falls short of offering any solution for the use of languages of the migrants, which are increasing in number in the recent decades. (Hartig 1985; Spolsky 2004, 164-165)

Switzerland, like Belgium, uses the territoriality principle in defining the boundaries of language regions and their use in education. When the Swiss Confederation was established the twenty-six cantons were given the highest autonomy concerning their language policies. While the majority speaks German, French, and Italian, Romansh is also widely used, and education is conducted bilingually in most of the schools. The Swiss Constitution differentiates between the national and official languages of Switzerland, and designates all the widely spoken languages the national languages status, while all except Romansh are also accepted as the official state languages. (Shutnabb-Kangas 2000, 304) However, in the recent decades the second language taught in schools alongside the most commonly used language in the canton, is replaced by English, an action which decreases the chance of communication among citizens of different cantons in one of the national languages in Switzerland. (Spolsky 2004, 166)

Rather than separating the language communities from each other as in Belgian and Swiss cases, Canadian language policy proposes an officially bilingual and bicultural society, to increase the level of integration and understanding between the French- and English-speaking communities. (Esman 1985, 52) Consequently, Canada employs a personality rather than a territorial principle of multilingualism, and foresees the rights of the both communities, to use their first language in their dealings with the authorities, when employed in the public service sector, in media and in education all over the country. Moreover, all citizens are encouraged to learn the second official language of the state, and the government subsidizes second- and minority-language education programs. However, the socio-economic status of the people who use French as their first language have been lower than the ones who use English and the continuity of this trend has been protested by the French speakers. In Quebec, where the population is composed predominantly of the French Canadians, the official language is established as French and the local government restricts the use of English in various domains. As a consequence, inter-ethnic relations remain vulnerable in Canada, with certain implications in Canadian politics (Esman 1985, 61-63), while language planning is further complicated by the presence of numerous indigenous and migrant groups.

The type of the language policy employed by the state is directly linked with the ideology and political system of the country in question, as well as the historical relationship between the minority and the state. In strictly monolingual countries, as I have noted in the French case, language and national identity are so closely linked to each other that the nation-building process involves the homogenization of language in the society and the presence of language groups is perceived as a threat to national unity. However, some countries recognize the presence and rights of the language groups within the society, through a discourse of equality and democracy, which foresees every citizen equal before the law so that the citizen can express him/herself in any language, including regional or minority language. Where there are polylingual countries, the political system is usually in the framework of confederation, in which every language has its own geographic regions and thus linguistic nationalism is not considered as a threat to the unity of the state.

In the last two sections, I have tried to outline a very brief overview of the legal framework of the language rights in the world and some illustrative language planning types of countries. These sections were aimed to provide the reader with some reference

points for comparison and understanding of the Turkish case. Hence, I will now turn to the legal and historical overview of the language rights in the Turkish Republic, as the perceptions and positions of the language groups towards the language rights demands and conflict over them will be directly shaped by the position and treatment of the state towards these claims.

3. The Turkish Case: Language Planning in Turkey

In international law, minority groups are accepted as the groups that show significant differences from the majority groups, along ethnic, religious and linguistic lines. In other words, the definition of minority is made with reference to ethnic, religious or linguistic components within a society. (Oran, 2004: 63) However, the Turkish case strikes out as an exception since the Turkish state consistently refrains from accepting a classification of minority groups based on these accepted universal norms, relying instead on the diplomatic settlement reached by the Lausanne Treaty. During the negotiations of this treaty, the Turkish government has succeeded in replacing the concept of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities with non-Muslims. (Oran, 2004: 62) As a result, the Republican elites have gained the right to only consider non-Muslims to be minorities in Turkey, while the rest of the groups were considered to constitute parts of the Turkish community. During the negotiations of the Lausanne Treaty, Turkish delegation succeeded to make religion, but not ethnicity and language, the main criteria to prevent Alevites, Kurds, Circassians and other ethnic groups from being considered a minority in the future. With this concession from the European powers, as Riza Nur explains in his memoirs, the Turkish state, then, gained the opportunity to implementing assimilationist policies towards especially Kurdish and Alevite groups, which would not be under the protection of international law. (Nur 1967, 1044)

The Turkish national law and its domestic regulations differ from some international treaties and fail to make it possible to fully implement the obligations specified by European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, signed by Turkey in 1954; by International Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by Turkey in 1995; by International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, signed by Turkey in 2003 and Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted by Turkey in 1992. (Oran, 2004: 64) Since the constitution recognizes international treaties to be equivalent to national law, Turkish state is legally required to fulfill the obligations specified in the diplomatic documents it signs. Relying on the Lausanne Treaty, however, the Turkish state has put reservations on various international treaties that regulate the issue of linguistic rights and found room for maneuver against diplomatic pressures for granting more rights to minorities especially on the issue of the minority languages use. In other words, the Turkish state reserves the right to take a different course of actions in articles that differ from the propositions of the Lausanne Treaty and rejects any additional obligation placed beyond the ones accepted with it. (Oran, 2004: 49) The fact that Turkish state signs these legal documents with interpretative declaration and diplomatic reservations on some articles weakens the diplomatic position of Turkey and separates the language planning in Turkey from the norms of the international law. The European Court of Human Rights, the primary inspector of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in many cases that are related to human rights including minority rights have found the Turkish state guilty and punished it to pay fine.

While relying on Lausanne Treaty as an excuse not to fulfill some of the obligations of the international law, various Turkish governments have even failed to carry out some of the articles of the treaty. Even among the non-Muslims, for example, Turkish state enforced the requirements of the treaty and fulfilled its duties only to three communities, Greeks, Armenians and Jews, leaving others without much legal protection or government services. Other non-Muslim groups such as Suryanis and Nasturis, whose rights have been mostly ignored by the Turkish government, were not lucky enough to receive the same level of protection from the government. (Oran, 2004: 67-68) The Lausanne Treaty contained some articles referring to those groups other than the national minorities, which were also ignored. According to Article 39/4, for example, persons living in Turkey are given the right to use any language they choose in their private matters. In addition, Turkish citizens, who speak a language other than

Turkish, are allowed to use their own languages during the criminal proceedings and at courts for defense. This right, obviously, refers to those, whose mother tongue is a language other than Turkish and gives them the opportunity to use their native language to better express and defend themselves at courts. This clause has a primary importance in Turkish context because as a result courts have become the only public institution where Kurdish and other languages are allowed and tolerated. In practice, however, especially following the September 12 military coup, it was non-existent.

The examination of the language policy of each state necessitates an historical account of the political, ideological, and social characteristics that created the policy. As I have argued in the introduction section, such an historical account is crucial in following the nation-building attempts of and identity politics in the Turkish Republic, but is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, I will try to summarize some historical events that shaped and influenced the current language policy here, in order to shed some light for the motivations and reasons of the status planning activities of the Turkish state.

As indicated before, the Turkish state granted minority status only to those groups who are religiously different from the dominant group since the Lausanne Treaty. Such a legal definition of minority was also consistent with the founding ideology of the Republic that argued for an ethnically unified society. However, following the identity policies of the Ottoman state, Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities were to be accepted and treated differently by the Turkish state as they could not accepted as parts of such a union. During the nationalist struggle and for a certain period afterwards, the founding elites have argued that the Turkish society formed a single polity, unified with a common religion, history, and willingness to live together. Therefore, in some cases the terms Turkish and Muslim were used interchangeably, while all ethnic categories, such as Kurdish, Circassian, etc., were deemed unnecessary, as reflections of false-consciousness.

However, soon after the foundation of the state, serious challenges to the stability of the state emerged as a result of the ethnically and religiously inspired rebellions. One of the first rebellions, and perhaps the most shocking for the state elites, started in 1925 in the Eastern cities and formed a serious threat to the security of the region for some time. The Seyh Said Rebellion, and following rebellions, brought about a significant

change in the political mindset and ideology of the period. The elites of the Republic realized that the nation-building process that was supposed to result in a voluntary assimilation of the ethnic groups into the dominant identity could not be achieved so smoothly. Therefore, a forced assimilation policy started to dominate the identity policy of the Turkish state.

As part of this forced assimilation policy, language policy was designed to impose Turkish as the dominant language used both in the state and the society. Except the minority languages, the only language that was allowed was Turkish as the medium of instruction in all levels of schooling and for the expression and dissemination of thought. "Citizen, speak Turkish" campaign has been a reflection of the language policy of the period, that considered the use of languages other than the official language a threat to the national identity and unity of the state. The official ideology was designed to create a single Turkish nation within the borders, and therefore official monolingualism and language homogenization policies were directed to reach the same aim. (Sadoglu 2003, 278) "Citizen, speak Turkish" campaign, which has started in late 1920s and reached its peak in 1937, aimed to create a monolingual society through forcing both religious and ethnic minority groups to speak Turkish in public places. (Yıldız 2001, 286-288)

Until the recent changes in the law, Turkish state has not reviewed its linguistic assimilation policy towards the members of language groups in the society. While the strategies used during the initial stages of the language policy were "studied neglect" and, in some cases, "ridicule", as the political elites of the country seems to have thought that the potential of these languages to survive and the resistance of the speakers to assimilation policies would be low. (Esman 1977, 371-390) However, as the Kurdish movement gained strength and support during 1960s and particularly in 1970s, the state elites realized the potential of the language conflict to spill over into an ethno-political conflict of a mass scale and that the extent and durability of the language conflict were higher than expected for the Kurdish case. The result was a shift in the language policy towards the strategy of repression after the 1980 military coup and the subsequent bans on language use.

The current language policy of the Turkish state is regulated by the 1982 Constitution and the related laws on the use of languages other than Turkish. The 1982

Constitution includes a number of articles that limit and forbid the use of regional, migrant and indigenous languages. Regarding the use of minority languages in press, Article 26 reads as "no language prohibited by law shall be used in the expression and dissemination of thought. Any written or printed documents, photograph records, magnetic or video tapes, and other means of expression used in contravention of this provision shall be seized". The use of other languages in the publications has been banned in Article 28 as well, which states that "publication shall not be made in any language prohibited by the law".

Apart from the ban on the use of regional and minority languages in press, it is also forbidden to teach these languages. (Yildiz and Duzgoren, 74) This ban is based on the Article 42 in 1982 Constitution, which forbids the use of any language other than the official language in any institution. Considering the fact that other languages are taught in schools by being classified under the foreign language status by the cabinet, the decision of the ministers to include other languages to the list would constitute the necessary legal ground for incorporating these languages into the education system in Turkey. (Yildiz and Duzgoren, 76)

Law No. 2932 published on October 22, 1983, has further regulated the use of languages other than the official language by declaring that "it s forbidden to express, diffuse or publish opinions in any language other than the main official language of states recognized by the Turkish state." The law has further planned the status of languages by designating the mother tongue of Turkish citizens as Turkish. The use of any language other than Turkish as a mother tongue and to carry, at public gatherings and assemblies, placards, banners, signs, boards, posters and the like, written in a language other than Turkish, were forbidden by this law and those who act contrary would be sentenced of six months to two years punishment. (Gunter 1997, 10) This ban has been in effect until 1991.

In the recent years, the aspiration of the Turkish Republic to become a member of the European Union has been the major factor in the authorities' attempts to revise the language planning and policies. Susan Wright examines the process and states that:

> where a state is in the process of relinquishing some sovereignty and economic autonomy, in order to join a supranational regional group for prosperity and security purposes, then it may also pull back from the dogged pursuit of national homogeneity, if this is the price it is asked to pay for

entry. Where a government makes application to join such a group, policies for homogenization within the nation may seem less necessary. In addition, the practice among the other states in the supranational regional group may be to accord minority rights and thus there will be pressure on new applicants to apply minimum standards... It has not been the Kurds' long refusal to assimilate to Turkish nationalism that has brought about change in Turkish attitudes and legislation. It is Turkey's need to show the international community that it is moving towards the international code on minorities that is influencing its first moves to acceptance of diversity. (Wright 2004, 182)

The law packages introduced for the adaptation of the Turkish laws to the *acquis communitaire* of the European Union included some provisions for the regulation of the status of minority languages and their use in certain domains. In 2002, the government legalized the broadcasts and private courses for the education of the first languages of linguistic groups in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria that are maintained as requirements of European Union membership, which is defined as "the most important modernization project of the Turkish Republic". Consequently, the state radio and television started broadcasting short programmes in languages other than the official language in June 2004, and some private language courses, predominantly in Kurdish, have been established since April 2004.

In order to make a comparative analysis of the Turkish legislation vis-a-vis the existing rights in international law, the categories that are outlined by de Varennes can be used in a chart. Since these categories are drawn for the existing language rights in international law, I have omitted one category that is about the language rights of religious minorities during religious ceremonies and other civil rites, as this category does not match our case studies. For other categories, I tried to find out the relevant legislation, which can be problematic in some cases as some rights are not quite articulate in law. For avoiding confusion, I will specifically focus on the case in the legal arena, without getting into the debates whether these rights are implemented or not.

TABLE 1. Language rights in Turkey

PRIVATE USE	USE BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES
1. To speak and write a language 1a. verbal communication (R) 1b. written communication (R) 1. cultural and musical expression (R)	1. use by administrative and public authorities (NR)
2. names and toponomy 2a. names and surnames of the individual (PR, only if Latin characters are used) 2b. localities and topography (NR)	2. public education 2a. use as medium of instruction (NR) 2b. teaching of language in public schools (NR)
3. displays 3a. Public displays on private posters, commercial signs, etc. (R) 3b. private use of minority script on posters, commercial signs etc. (NR)	3. the judicial system 3a. by judicial authorities (NR) 3b. the right to an interpreter in criminal proceedings (R) 3c. the right to be informed promptly in a language one understands (R)
4. the media and telecommunications 4a. publication (R) 4b. private broadcasting (R, for national television and radio channels) 4c. avoiding discrimination over state licensing and allocation of frequencies (R)	4. official use of names and toponomy 4a. state refusal to register and recognize names and surnames (PR, only if Latin characters are used) 4b. official toponomy (NR)

PRIVATE USE	USE BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES
5. private educational activities 5a. the right to create and operate private educational facilities (R)	5. public media and publications (R, however, not sufficient to fulfill non-discrimination principle)
6. the use of language in private economic activities (NA)	6. political representation, electoral process, etc. 6a. not to be excluded from elected position (NR) 6b. no denial of the right of minorities to vote (R) 6c. party registration and administrative use of minority languages during elections (NR) 6d. use of minority languages within elected bodies (NR)
7. private organizations 7a. groups and organizations (R) 7b. political associations and parties (NR)	

R – recognized; NR – not recognized; PR – partly recognized; NA – not available

Despite the current amendments in language policy, the controversy over the linguistic rights remains, as some linguistic groups, especially the Kurds, demand more rights than the ones granted with the last amendments in the law. The following chapters of this study will hence analyze the demands of two large language groups concerning language rights and their positions toward the conflict that arise out of the failure of the Turkish state to recognize these rights.

In this chapter, I tried to present the discussions over language planning and language rights, while analyzing the case of the rights that have been foreseen within the current international law. Then I have outlined the language policies of a few countries briefly, in order to provide comparable cases for the Turkish language planning. In the next chapter, I will analyze the demands of two linguistic groups and categorize them in accordance with the current international law and understanding in the literature. The demands of these groups will be analyzed via the publications of these groups and the interviews that have been conducted with the people who are responsible for the publications.

CHAPTER 3

THE PERCEPTIONS: THE CENTRALITY AND IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE RIGHTS FOR KURDISH AND CIRCASSIAN GROUPS

The parties to a conflict position themselves based on their perceptions of the issues that are related to the conflict and of the images of themselves and other parties to the conflict. Hence, conflict theory suggests that positions of the parties to the conflict could only be analyzed through an investigation of their perceptions, as these are not based only on facts, but also on the identities, memories and images. The identity and culture of the party is providing a lens through which it interprets the world, what the conflict is about and who the parties are. The party positions itself accordingly, and sets its needs and interests that are crucial for the emergence of the conflict.

Language policy in Turkey is subject to a conflict between certain language groups and the state and is reacted differently by different groups. In this chapter, I will analyze varying perceptions of the groups in two ethnic communities in Turkey, the Kurds and Circassians as my case studies, before investigating their positions and demands towards language rights, which are to be elaborated in the next chapter.

Through the data gathered from the texts that were published by and from the interviews conducted with the representatives of these groups, I will examine their perceptions and discourses over the issues of language and language rights. Throughout the analysis, I will elaborate on how these groups perceive the language rights issue, the language policy of the state and the importance of language and as well as language rights in maintaining the identity and well-being of the community. As I hypothesize that the perceptions of different groups within the same community will vary according to their political identities, I will analyze the texts published by different political groups one by one. In the meantime, I will also look for the differences between the Kurdish and Circassian communities in general. Therefore, the differences between the communities are expected to be greater than those among them, which, I hope to demonstrate by providing the summary of the common points for the three groups in each community. The reasons for the variations of perceptions between the communities will be examined in detail in the last chapter of the study, under the light of the arguments developed through the third and fourth chapters.

1. Ozgur Halk

Ozgur Halk (Free People) is a monthly political journal claiming to be the "voice of the Kurdish movement" in the words of an interviewed member of the editorial board. As a political journal it follows the political events both in Turkey and in the world and publishes a number of analysis pieces evaluating the events in the eyes of the Kurdish people. On the other hand, the journal also aims to inform the readers about the developments and the political debates within the movement it represents. Hence the majority of the articles reflect the debates within and among Kurdish political groups.

Granted that Ozgur Halk is a journal published by the Kurdish groups that are close to Abdullah Ocalan's movement, it claims a widespread popularity among the

Kurdish society, despite a significant fall in its number of sales since 1999. The journal is composed, in a great portion, of the articles written by Abdullah Ocalan himself and the senior leaders of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK) groups, and the interviews conducted with these political elites of the Kurdish community. This helps to create a discourse that claims to be speaking on behalf of the majority of the Kurdish people, as can be traced in the framing of the statements that do not differentiate between their own demands, or claims directed to the Turkish state and the wishes of the Kurdish people. The clauses "Kurdish nation", "Kurds" and "Kurdish people" are substituted with the pronoun "we" in many instances, while the other segments and political groups within the Kurdish community are narrated with the wordings implying their limited capacity to represent the Kurdish nation as a whole, such as "some segments of our nation/society", "some environs", or "primitive nationalists" etc.

Consequently, the journal positions the movement it represents directly against the state, as the interlocutor of the state and as the source that anyone interested in the resolution of the Kurdish conflict should apply to. Granted that the PKK and its successor the KADEK are the political groups that have been carrying out an armed struggle against the Turkish state in the recent decades, the Ozgur Halk presents itself as the spokesperson of these groups, which experience the conflict with all of its aspects and the problems that the Kurdish people encounter and therefore of the groups that can bring an end to the conflict. With such a claim, the journal publishes road maps that would bring peace to the Turkish and Kurdish communities and the lists of conditions that should be fulfilled to bring the armed struggle to an end and eventually, to help the peaceful resolution of Kurdish conflict. By so doing, Ozgur Halk considers itself as a journal speaking on behalf of the groups that have the power to set the rules of the "game", which the Turkish state should consider seriously for the resolution of the Kurdish conflict. Such a positioning is evident in the discourse created through the articles in the journal: the authors "warn" the state to do certain things for the resolution of the conflict, or they "accept/do not accept" the policies and actions of the state as steps toward the resolution or escalation of the armed conflict.

The self-declared position of Ozgur Halk as the sole representative of the Kurdish people in Turkey stems, according to the journal, from the legitimacy of the movement , which was gained through a long armed struggle in the eyes of the Kurdish people.

During the 1990s, the journal declared itself as a party to the armed conflict and the member of the editorial board whom I have interviewed argued that the journal has lost its objectivity during this period. Since 1999, however, he stated that the journal has gone through a transformation in its political stance in line with a transformation in the movement. One purpose of this transformation was to open up the journal to intellectual arguments and environs in the Kurdish community because the support of the intellectuals has been lost in the last years of the struggle. According to this argument, the PKK movement has started as an intellectual movement with strong Marxist-Leninist tendency, but over the years it has become more "ruralized", with the weakening of the "scientific socialism" aspect of its ideology. However, the political environment since the 1999 provided a chance to the movement and the journal to open up for intellectual discussions and try to get the movement in line with the ideological position they aimed at the beginning.

However, the journal also states, in a number of occasions, that the movement is going through a process in which it cannot produce policies and politics any more, which leads to a decrease in the journal's number of sales. The authors are now criticizing the prior position of the movement that was led by the purpose of seceding from the Turkish state and establishing a new independent state in the region. For the time being, this aim is declared to be a "utopia", which cannot be legitimized within the socialist paradigm. Instead, they argue, the purpose of the political struggle should be the recognition of cultural and political rights of the Kurdish people and the establishment of full equality between the Kurds and Turks in the Turkish political system. In the meantime, however, they also realize that there has been an ongoing and significant change in the Kurdish community, as well as the Turkish political system, that translates into a diminishing legitimacy and support for the movement's cause and the methods used for this cause.

Although the readers of the journal are predominantly Kurdish living in big cities, such as Istanbul, Izmir, Diyarbakır and Van, the journal is published exclusively in Turkish, both because the low level of literacy in Kurdish among the Kurdish population and the aim of the journal to reach the Turkish readers as well. Besides, the member of the editorial board states that the language of politics is still Turkish in Turkey and therefore none of the authors choose to write a political article in Kurdish. Moreover, the hegemony of Turkish in politics is so strong that it is also the main

language used for communication among the members of the editorial board, as well as for other Kurdish groups that are involved in politics. For many Kurds living in big cities outside the region, the member I have interviewed said, the use of the Kurdish language is limited to the private sphere, and they have to switch to Turkish in order to integrate into the public life.

Language rights are considered as fundamental aspects of the Kurdish conflict by Ozgur Halk and therefore are common themes elaborated through the articles. The right to use one's mother-tongue is closely associated with the well-being of the linguistic group. In addition to the advantages that using one's first language brings, Ozgur Halk also mentions the importance of the language as a fundamental aspect of the identity of a nation, a people. Therefore, Ozgur Halk states, a nation is not recognized as a nation unless its language is recognized by the political establishment. Furthermore, being a crucial aspect of the culture of ethnic groups, the variety of languages contributes to the cultural diversity in human trajectory. Thus, depriving a nation of its language rights means both the killing of a nation and a culture and a threat to the heritage of the humanity:

> How can a people who has no language be considered as human? How can a people who are not considered even as human beings, say "I live, too"? It is not only the Kurdish language and identity that are denied and massacred here, it is also a cultural treasure. It is not only Kurdish people that are denied, in fact, it is the humanity itself, its essence and its roots. It is with the same reason that we are saying that Kurdish problem is a problem of the humanity in its essence, in all of its aspects. Because, humanity is degraded most with the actions regarding this issue. (Ozgur Halk, 123, December 2001, 34)

Ozgur Halk considers the failure of the state to recognize language rights of a nation or language group as a problem not only for that particular language group but for the humanity as a whole. Language is considered as a resource in Ruiz's terms (Ruiz 1984), and thus, should be protected and strengthened at least for the sake of diversity. As the ban on the language rights would endanger the survival of the language and the culture associated with that language, monolingual state policies that do not give other regional and indigenous languages a chance for survival, are, in fact, crimes committed against humanity.

Since recognizing a language would mean a recognition of the ethnic group that uses the language, Ozgur Halk argues that the hesitation of the Turkish state to

recognize the presence of Kurdish as a language and the right to use the language in certain fields, stems from the refusal of the state to acknowledge the presence of ethnic and linguistic minorities living within the boundaries. The Turkish Republic, since its foundation, Ozgur Halk argues, has tried to create a monolithic political community and, in so doing, has insistently disregarded ethnic and linguistic variations, to form a single nation, speaking a single language:

> The Republic has, rightfully, set the Turkish national identity creation process as a primary goal. The creation of a national identity for the Turkish people is an appropriate attitude. But it is impossible to accept the denial of the Kurds and other groups, which have the roots in the depths of history, in the name of the national identity formation process for Turks. This aspect of the Republic is unacceptable. Just as it is a modern step to form a national identity for the Turks, it is equally anti-modern to destroy the Kurds and other nations in order to establish a base for the Turkish national identity. Like the Turkish people, other people have the right to be in a process of development in a variety of aspects, such as language, culture, economic, political, etc. For the formation of Turkish national identity, ethnic groups, particularly the Kurdish people, have been subject to destruction. Denial and destruction policy does not grant the right to survive to anybody except the Turks. (Ozgur Halk, 125, February 2002, 44)

An important tool used by the Turkish state for the denial and destruction policy directed against ethnic groups, is the ban on the use of regional and minority languages in the public sphere, and even in private sphere for certain time periods. Therefore, language policy is designed to serve the creation of a single national identity, and consequently, is one of the basic tenets of the founding principles of Turkish Republic. Ozgur Halk stresses the importance of language planning so strongly that it believes the recognition of the minority languages would necessitate a redefinition of the national identity and political principles that are fundamental for the Turkish political culture.

Meanwhile, the recent amendments in the language policies are not seen as a significant change and rupture but as the continuation of the same political principles governing the language planning in Turkey. Even the wording of the laws recently issued allowing the use of minority languages, are criticized to be demonstrating the hesitation of the Turkish state to recognize ethnic and linguistic groups because of the threats that they would supposedly pose against the national unity and the territorial integrity of the state. Consequently, Ozgur Halk states that the language planning, as well as social and political policies regarding the situation and status of ethnic groups,

are still carried out with some unsubstantiated fears regarding the disruption of the political and territorial integrity of the state:

> [The law] reads as the "languages spoken other than Turkish", not to mention Kurdish. As if the worlds would tear apart, when it mentions Kurdish. This would, actually, be the case in a certain regard. If it mentions Kurds and the Kurdish reality, that would necessitate the reconsideration of its current political system, ideological approaches, and political approaches as a whole. The acceptance of the presence of Kurds would bring along a restructuring of Turkey in all fields. That is for certain. That is the reason why there is no mentioning of the word Kurdish [in the law]. (Ozgur Halk, 115, April 2001, 4)

The fact that there is no mention of the names of the minority languages and the ethnic groups is important, for Ozgur Halk, to show that even the recent democratization packages passed by the National Assembly do not represent a sharp break from the project of creating a national identity, that dates back to the Lausanne Treaty. Such a policy change allowing the use of minority languages in certain fields, without necessarily recognizing the existence of the ethnic group, and eventually, of course, the collective rights that are crucial for the maintenance of their culture, identity, social, political and economic well-being, is unacceptable for the Kurdish people, says Ozgur Halk. Such a minor change in the language policy does not translate into a change in the Turkish political system regarding the Kurdish question, which is essential for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Moreover, taken together with the regulations that the laws foresee, the actual motive behind the amendments are, in fact, insults directed against the Kurdish people, by making fun of their claims for their identity and language rights.

However, the assimilationist policies of the Turkish state, aiming the destruction of the Kurdish identity and the death of their language, have not reached their aims so far, Ozgur Halk argues, because of the firmness of the identity of Kurdish people and the values that these people attach to their language. Furthermore, the Kurds are organized enough for taking the precautions necessary for the survival, maintenance and development of their language, despite the restrictions imposed on its use by the Turkish state. In this regard, Ozgur Halk states that even if the Turkish state does not reconsider its language policy and allow the use of minority languages in education, media, government etc., Kurds would still be able to develop and maintain their language since they have already started to make significant attempts for the

standardization of the language and the use of it for literary and scientific purposes. Three factors contribute to this development; first of all, Kurds are an organized nation so that they do have the willingness and opportunity to communicate in their own mother-tongue and develop strategies for its education and use in many realms; secondly with the help of the development of communication technologies, Kurds do have access to the platforms where they can freely use their language without the intervention of the Turkish state; and lastly, as the Iraqi Kurds have had the opportunity to use, teach and develop the Kurdish language for the recent decades, the chance of the Turkish Kurds taking advantage of the opportunities created there is increasing, along with the changes in the political situation of the region.

What Ozgur Halk is trying to say actually is that the policies of the Turkish state to assimilate the Kurdish language are destined to fail. The ban on the use of Kurdish language has not brought the death of the Kurdish language and its impact on the fate of the language is constantly decreasing. The Kurdish people are not afraid that their language is dying away, and therefore they do not demand language rights for the purpose of preventing the extinction of the Kurdish language. What is more important for the Kurds, as revealed through an analysis of the articles in Ozgur Halk, is the benefits that the use of their language in the Turkish society would bring, together with the transformation that the recognition of the language and thus the identity would create in the political system.

In consequence, Ozgur Halk states that the recognition of the language rights would serve as a step towards the resolution of the Kurdish conflict, only when accompanied with the recognition of the presence of Kurds as a distinct nation, speaking a distinct language. Therefore, contrary to the fears that Turkish political elites have, the recognition of language rights is not a threat to the political integrity of the Turkish Republic, but will constitute a step towards the democratization of the political system and the integration and participation of the Kurdish citizens into the society and the state. Hence, language rights are associated closely with the level of democracy in the political structure:

> The democratization of Turkey is not contrary to the interests of Turkey. The acceptance of the Kurdish people's identity, the acceptance of its language and culture, are not contrary to the interests of Turkish people. These would not weaken neither the political interests, nor the social, cultural, economic and global interests. On the contrary, these would bring a

result that would strengthen and develop the interests of Turkey in all domains. (Ozgur Halk, 115, April 2001, 12)

In this way, the discourse over the conflict over language rights is structured in such a way that the resolution of this conflict is considered to bring a win-win solution for both of the parties. While the Kurds will reach the benefits that stem from the recognition of their identity and their language, without giving up their language and assimilating into the Turkish national identity, Turkish state, on the other hand, will establish a more democratic state system with an increased level of societal and political integration, through the peaceful resolution of the Kurdish conflict, which has been one of the most important and most costly problems of the state in the recent decades.

2. Tiroj

Tiroj (Sun Shine) is the journal that is representing the more intellectual segments of the Kurdish community, and aims to bring Turkish and Kurdish intellectuals in a platform to discuss and debate over the issues and problems concerning the Kurds, their culture, art, and relations with the Turkish state and the society at large. Therefore, the articles in the journal do not form a single or similar voice(s) on the issues elaborated, but rather are chosen to be published in order to represent the variety of opinions among the intellectuals. In this regard, Tiroj differs from the other two journals analyzed for this study and targets to collect multiple voices under a single publication to create a more lively discussion.

The overall aim of the journal is to contribute to the development of the Kurdish "progressive" culture, to advance the relation between the local and global cultures, and to defend democracy and national culture against the surrounding of cultural imperialism. As we read the introductory article of the journal published in the first issue, we can see the missionary discourse between the lines. Tiroj targets to advance the Kurdish culture with an enlightening mission and, hence, is against not only the hegemonic powers who aim to assimilate the Kurdish culture, but also the

fundamentalist and ultra-nationalist environs within the Kurdish population. For this purpose, Tiroj aims to reach the laborers and introduce them with the universal democratic culture to add their understanding of the world a more "progressive" and "democratic" vision. In so doing, Tiroj gets into an exchange with other cultures in the world, and particularly with the culture of the Turkish people, who are considered as the brothers of the Kurds.

Another self-stated mission of Tiroj is to contribute the development of the Kurdish language through the encouragement of using language in a more decent and pure fashion, in line with the literary writings of the early intellectuals in the Kurdish community, such as Ehmede Xani. The contribution of the media instruments to the use of the Kurdish language in a decent fashion is considered necessary as a tool to struggle against the suppression over the Kurdish language and culture. Thus, Tiroj aims to provide tools that are deemed essential for the spread of the Kurdish language use; almost half of the articles in the journal are to be published in Kurdish (and Tiroj declares that it will be published exclusively in Kurdish when literacy in Kurdish becomes more widespread), a two-pages section is devoted to the basics of the Kurdish grammar and a little Kurdish - Turkish dictionary is published in each issue since the 7th, specifically providing the meanings of the words that the politicians and political scientists use frequently, such as "human rights", "questioning", "nation", "official", "knowledge" etc. These words may be chosen to be translated in order to serve the development of the political language in Kurdish.

Truly, the majority of the articles published in Kurdish are literary pieces, such as poems and short stories. The amount of the articles in Kurdish, which are related with the political and social issues, increases in time from the first to the last issue, but is still less than the amount of the articles written in Turkish. When asked about the reasons for this trend, the editor of Tiroj states that it is not about the policy of the journal, but rather about the capability of Kurdish intellectuals to read and write in Kurdish, and to use a language sophisticated enough to elaborate on political and social issues. Intellectuals in the Kurdish community seem to be more comfortable when using their own mother-tongue when writing a piece for creative and literary purposes, while being less content with the thought pieces. The words included in the little dictionary in Tiroj can, therefore, be seen to be designed in order to break this trend and build up a political and social vocabulary in Kurdish.

Tiroj, is overall, a more structured journal than the other Kurdish journals examined for this study, with a more professional outlook. As indicated before, it is an "arts and culture" magazine, and accordingly, contains articles, interviews and pieces about the Kurdish culture and art works. Starting with the third issue, the journal devotes a large amount of its pages on a specific topic, on which Kurdish and Turkish intellectuals are asked to elaborate. The topics chosen are usually about the cultural and artistic works among the Kurdish community, such as the Kurdish movie industry, Kurdish music, media, etc., but the authors also mention the political and social side of the issues, in one or another way. On the other hand, in some issues the topics of these exclusive sections are directly about the political and social problems of the Kurds, such as the cultural rights, forced migration, and the role of the Kurdish groups in the European Union accession process.

Regarding the Kurdish conflict, the hottest debate in the journal revolves around the question whether Kurds are a minority group or a primary component in the Turkish society. The authors that contribute to the debate usually give references to the history of the Kurds in the Turkish Republic and the relations between Kurdish community and Turkish state. Those who argue in favor of the recognition of Kurds as a minority group argue that since the Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish state has defined minority status with reference to religious differences, while choosing to assimilate other ethnic and linguistic groups. For reaching this aim, the state has used every strategy that were directed towards the weakening of Kurdish identity and the creation of a single national identity of "Turkishness". The Kurds have been deprived of their history and culture, ridiculed through the creation of false stereotypes for Kurdish characters in Turkish movies, forced to migrate to other parts of Turkey, and left without any tool for the expression of their identity, either through politics, or through music and literature. All of these strategies were developed and implemented with one basic assumption in the minds of the Turkish political elites: "a nation, whose culture has been weakened and moral values neglected, surrenders more easily". (Tiroj, 9, July August 2004, 46) The response of the Kurdish community to such assimilationist strategies, on the other hand, has been the politicization of all aspects of their culture, like arts, music, literature, language, and movies.

Granted that language is a key component of the culture and identity of an ethnic group, it has also been one of the targets of assimilation policies of the Turkish state.

The compulsory monolingual education system, according to the journal, is a central tenet of the aim to destroy the Kurdish language. The loss of the language, in turn, brings the extinction of the culture, history and identity of the Kurds:

> The shortcut way to deprive a people from the consciousness of history is to separate those people from their language. In time, the other historical legacies of this ethnicity, its wealth of art, music and literature will be forcefully taken away too. (Tiroj, 10, September October 2004, 51)

However, due to the strength of the identity, Kurds have strongly resisted the assimilation policies of successive governments in the Turkish Republic:

> Deputy Chief of Staff General Yasar Buyukanit said in a speech in May 2003: 'Our biggest fault is not being able to teach these people Turkish for five hundred years now'. What the general detected as a fault for his own part is an evidence as to how rooted and resilient Kurdish is as a language. (Tiroj, 3, July August 2003, 43)

According to these authors, the persistence of the identity, culture and language of the Kurdish community and the political struggle conducted throughout the history of the Turkish Republic has forced the state to revise its language policy and grant some limited rights to the Kurdish people. However, they argue, the recent regulations do not provide the necessary legal environment in which Kurdish language and culture can be maintained and taught and which would constitute a major step through the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Therefore, granted that these amendments are gained through a politicized struggle over the language rights, the only way to achieve further recognition for the language and linguistic rights is furthering the political struggle. In many instances, Tiroj voices the concerns of the intellectuals within the Kurdish community regarding the status of language:

> My biggest concern is that the Kurdish children would not be able to play out speaking Kurdish. Their mothers would not tell them tales or sing them lullabies in Kurdish while they went to sleep. Because the lullabies and the tales of the generations before this were in Kurdish. I had seen the writing 'I love you delal' on the walls in Diyarbakir and Batman in English but I had never come across a wall writing like 'ez ji te hez dikim' (Tiroj, 11, October December 2004, 47)

On the other hand, it also calls the cultural elites to shoulder and advance the struggle. The journals, publishing agencies, and moreover, local administrations and municipalities are all responsible for the spread of the use of the language and conduct

the political struggle for the recognition of linguistic rights and other cultural and social rights.

Meanwhile, those who argue that Kurds are a primary component of the Turkish state, also use the Lausanne Treaty and National Struggle period as a reference point to demonstrate that the foundations of the Republic were built by the Turks and Kurds together. All the official documents and speeches of the time counted the Kurds among the groups that fought against the occupation, and founded the Turkish state. The authors that support this idea also account for other reasons why Kurds cannot be defined as a minority group:

> First of all they hold a big proportion of Turkey's population around 25-30 percent. Secondly they have the territorial unity on a large piece of soil in the East and the Southeast to constitute the majority. Therefore the problem cannot be solved with frameworks confined to 'minority rights', granting them schools and cultural rights. Because a national entity also necessitates the recognition of political rights of language and equality of rights. Evaluated from the vantage point of the Kurds, the status as a non-minority requires the equalization of all its rights with Turks as the other constitutive nation. Therefore there is nothing as natural as Kurds possessing the very same rights as those born in Turkey from a Turkish descent. (Tiroj, 12, January February 2005, 37)

As can be seen from the quotations cited above, determining the status of Kurds is crucial for the articulation of possible suggestions for the resolution of the conflict. If we take the Kurds as a minority group within the Turkish state, the conflict would be resolved by the recognition of their minority status and their consequent cultural and social rights. However, if they are identified as the primary components of the Turkish Republic, full equality should be established between the Turks and Kurds in political, economic, social and cultural realms. Constitutional citizenship is one option offered to establish equality between the primary components of the state. If the Kurds and Turks are accepted as equal citizens by the Constitution, "Kurds would not have any responsibility to a sense of Turkish belongingness other than learning the language". (Tiroj, 12, January February 2005, 40) Another possible way of achieving equality between Kurdish and Turkish citizens is to establish a federal system.

Regardless of the status of the Kurds as a group in Turkey, equality is a primary concern for all the authors that contribute to the journal with their writings. Language is a key aspect of establishing equality of opportunity within the society but the ban on the

use of regional and indigenous languages put the ethnic groups in a significant disadvantaged position vis-a-vis the dominant group. Depriving the Kurds of their linguistic rights means a significant inequality within the society, regarding political, social and economic participation of the citizens into the system. This is especially true for Kurdish women, granted that the majority of them do not get any kind of formal education and therefore, have no chance to learn the official language, which is the only vehicle to participate in the economic, political and social life. Moreover, when they are forced to migrate to big cities outside the region, they cannot even communicate with the people they encounter in their daily lives. Tiroj pays specific attention to the disadvantage of the Kurdish women in public life. On the other hand, it does not limit its focus with the Kurdish people, and argues that depriving all ethnic groups of the rights to use their first languages stands as an obstacle before their integration into the society. Hence, language is a key issue in the social and political conflict that ethnic groups experience and the discrimination that they face when using their rights as citizens of the Turkish Republic.

There is also another problem frequently mentioned in the articles about language in Tiroj. For the authors, the failure of the state to recognize the linguistic rights of the Kurdish community has contributed the current state of underdevelopment for the Kurdish art and the lack of cultural activities that are conducted in Kurdish or by the Kurdish people. According to the journal, as a result of the ban on the usage and education of the Kurdish language, Kurdish people could not freely express themselves in the public sphere in their own way, and hence could not develop their art and culture. Therefore, such a ban decreases diversity within the society, which, in turn, means a loss for both the Kurdish community and the society at large.

3. Azadi

Kurdish movement in Turkey has been influenced by the Marxist-Leninist ideology since the 1960s. Such a Marxist-Leninist tendency could also be observed

clearly in the PKK group, especially in the 1980s, although there have been more leftist groups within the Kurdish community, criticizing the PKK for not being radical enough in their ideology. Azadi can be considered as one example of these latter groups, with a self-stated mission to add a Marxist perspective and ideology into the Kurdish movement, which has been neglected for some time, and especially after 1999, according to the newspaper. For the newspaper, such a publication is necessary to fill in the vacuum that came out when the PKK and its leader turned their faces to the imperialists for the solution of the Kurdish conflict and therefore abandoned and betrayed the Marxist ideology that has a strong history within the Kurdish political movement and community:

> Azadi will be a newspaper of a mission. It will strive to reflect the Kurdish struggle for freedom from a socialist patriotic perspective; will try to offer solutions and to engage in debate. It will voice the actions, the activities of the struggle for freedom. It will make visible the imperialist tyranny, the pressures upon the public. And of course it will show the ways to struggle against these. (Azadi, 1, March 2004, 1)

As can be seen from the quotation cited above, Azadi is a more action-oriented newspaper than the other two journals examined in this study to represent the Kurds. Being a newspaper, Azadi consists mainly of the news regarding the Kurdish socialist movement, what campaigns they run, how many people are gathered in the meetings, how many copies of the newspaper are sold in which city, etc., but does not get much into the news regarding the Kurdish community at large. Analysis and editorial pages are also elaborating on the topics that are mostly related with the socialist movement that is organized around Azadi. There are, however, also some analysis pieces published, regarding the problems of the Kurdish community in Turkey, and the situation of the political movement, run by the HADEP and Demokratik Toplum Hareketi. The newspaper also devotes a few pages to the letters from the readers and the interviews conducted with ordinary people on one specific topic, such as the major problems that they have, or the university entrance exam, etc.

As every people have the right to determine their own fate, from the view-point of Marxist-Leninist ideology, Azadi states that the Kurds have the right to decide whether they want to live within the borders of the Turkish state of an equal status as of Turks or with a system of federation or use their right to secede to establish their own state. However, in each option, the parties should recognize the fact that Kurds are a nation,

not a minority or an ethnic group that can be incorporated into the system under an upper identity, and therefore they should be given their due status with all the rights attached to a nation. Hence, minority status and rights are unacceptable for the Kurds, as well as the solutions offered by the Turkish state and the European Union and accepted by the PKK and HADEP groups, Azadi argues.

On the other hand, being a nation, Kurds must be given all their rights regarding their mother-tongue, as part of their natural and legitimate rights. In this regard, Nu Azadi states that the denial of the language and language rights of Kurds in Turkey is a "mass torture against our people", a reflection of the "intolerance" towards other groups and of the Turkish colonization, and it forms a major part of the "denialist and assimilationist policies/attacks" of the state directed to the Kurds. A reader's letter entitled as "It is sad and it is slavery not to speak your language" reads as:

> Language is the honour, the labour, the art, the culture, the tradition of a people. In short, it is their lifestyle and right. To deny the language of a nation is disrespect against that nation, it is to deny the existence of that nation. That is sad in its own right, that is enslaving the people and the persons. How sad, how shameful it is that a person does not, or cannot speak his language. Kurdish is, like the other languages in the world, the language of a nation. No one has the right to deny that, to tease around with that, much less to engage in political games with that. It should be remembered that the Kurdish people will someday demand accountability from those who do that. These actions will be accounted for. (Azadi, 3, May 2004, 23)

If the language ban is a strategy used by the colonizers to serve the aim of assimilation, the response of the Kurds has been and should be political as well, using every method that is at hand, and carrying the struggle "in the streets" to achieve a recognition of their rights to use their language as a nation. Hence, as language is a tool used for the colonization of Kurdish people, the claims towards language rights and the methods used during the struggle, are legitimate:

> To develop of the Kurdish language, to make it thrive as a wealth of the world's peoples is first and foremost a political issue. Throughout its struggle, our people has reinforced, developed its identity, embracing its literature, culture and art. As assimilation, policies of denial and extermination were ousted politically, Kurdish has gained power and livelihood as a language. Hence those that speak Kurdish, as well as those who sing in Kurdish have to be aware of its political content, to voice and to defend it. (Azadi 1, March 2004, 9)

As can be seen through these lines, as well as others, Azadi calls every Kurdish people for action towards the use of their languages. Language rights are seen and should be taken as motives for mobilization, and be defended regardless of the costs for action:

> It should be the duty of all of us to learn our language at whatever cost, to die if necessary to that end, to bear every burden, should be the duty of us all. Only if we had the consciousness and the faith for that cause. I invite everyone to act in unity and to defend our language and our freedom. Let us learn our language and teach it to the others, for peace, freedom and independence. (Azadi, 3, May 2004, 23)

The newspaper also accounts for the tools that can be used through this struggle. As well as the struggle conducted in the streets, specifically during the occasions for the expression of the Kurdish identity, Kurdish people should also use some tools to encourage the Kurdish people to use their own language and force the state to recognize the language rights. Among the tools to be used in this struggle are panel discussions and seminars on Kurdish language and language rights, some cultural activities like Kurdish music concerts, publishing small journals that have names written with the Kurdish letters that are not used in the Turkish alphabet, sending chain emails to public institutions that demand rights to use Kurdish language so that their email addresses will be blocked, petition campaigns and running small-scale language courses in university campuses among the students. (Azadi 9, November 2004, 16)

The position of Azadi as a newspaper will be supportive of these movements by publishing and announcing them to other socialists in Turkey and by publishing Kurdish articles, with an increasing amount in time, in order to support the use of Kurdish in every domain:

> Azadi will be published primarily in Turkish for the time. Kurdish articles and commentaries will appear on our pages at increasing rates in time. But we have to acknowledge that the level of assimilation, the backwardness in Kurdish literacy rates still obliges both the people, as well as the socialists and other patriots struggling to reach out to the people, to use Turkish as a publication language to a significant extent. This is a case that needs to be altered gradually and therefore the socialist patriots will maintain their position as resolute defenders of demands for education in Kurdish, and Azadi will be making publications to that end. (Azadi, 1, March 2004, 1)

Truly, Azadi attaches such an importance to the role that should be played by the print-media regarding language use, it publishes one article in Kurdish every issue since

the first one, providing the Turkish translation in a different page. Moreover, some members of the editorial board, which is formed predominantly by ethnic Kurds, attend to the private Kurdish courses to be able to write in and read their first language and until they acquire proficiency in that language, they pick one article for every month and send it to a professional interpreter to publish it in Kurdish.

On the other hand, Azadi does not accept the recognition of the language rights as part of the rights of the Kurdish group as a minority, and extends the motives of the struggle far beyond. Consequently, the decision of the Turkish state to grant (partial) linguistic rights as part of the European Union adaptation process, is welcomed on the one hand and saluted as a gain of the long-lasting struggle of the Kurdish people in Turkey, but is criticized to be aiming to divide and weaken the movement on the other:

> The imperialist and denialist intolerance against the Kurdish language and identity prevails. Imperialist forces have had to recognize our Kurdish language (what they call the 'divisive' language) as a result of the struggles of our people and the democratic public and the pressures formulated in that direction. Not, however, as the language of a nation, not as the expression of a collective identity! As a local dialect! This is abject denialism. It is an assault against the existence and the freedom of a people. To present it as a dialect, as 'broadcastable' within the confines of a couple of hours and in an extremely limited manner, is also impertinence and disrespect against our people. First of all it should be made known that the Kurdish people does not need such charity. Our people speaks its own language despite all the offensives and the efforts to make forget. And with stronger consciousness than before. Our broadcasts survive in the form of books, magazines, newspapers and websites. The issue is the abolishment of the long-standing refutation and denialist policies, and is whether or not the collective Kurdish identity will be acknowledged. Undoubtedly the abolishment of all the bans on our native language will be one of the manifestations of that. (Azadi 1, March 2004, 24)

Overall, language and language rights are highly politicized issues referred directly with reference to the Kurdish conflict. Particularly in the last years, political, social and cultural elites within the Kurdish community have a growing interest in the importance of the recognition of the rights to use language in certain domains, as can be traced by the increasing frequency of the publications of periodicals and books that touch upon the issue. (Yıldız 2004; Aksamaz et. al. 2005; Ekinci 1997; Tekin 2002; Yıldız and Duzgoren 2002; Hasanpur 1997) A common point in all the three periodicals that we have analyzed here, as well as in most of the publications on the issue, is the

perception of language as a central aspect of the Kurdish identity, which should be preserved into the next generations for the survival of the ethnic group. Therefore, they argue, language rights are fundamental human rights that should be granted in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination and equality of all citizens before the law.

The current language policy of the Turkish state is criticized, by all the three journals, to be assimilationist, exclusive and unfair, as a reflection of the official policy of nation-building project that aims to create a monolithic Turkish national identity and the unsubstantiated fears of the political authorities towards the use of different languages within the society and its implications for the territorial integrity of the state. They argue, on the other hand, that the current language policy stands as an obstacle in the integration process of the Kurdish people into the Turkish society and hence, is a source of the severe, and sometimes violent, conflict that the Kurdish people have with the Turkish state.

Although Kurdish language use seems to be low among the elites writing for the journals that I have examined, all three journals argue that Kurdish people have resisted assimilation policies and insisted on using their language in all spheres of life as a kind of a political struggle against the Turkish state. The reason for the elites to use Turkish language more often in their daily lives and writings can be partly explained by the fact that they are usually settled in urban centers outside the region where the Kurdish population is concentrated. Besides, as all the three periodicals are political publications, the elites that contribute to the journals are integrated, to a certain extent, to politics are acting as political actors, for which they should be able to speak the Turkish language in order to enlarge their audience. Hence, all journals mention in many occasions the hegemony of Turkish as the language of politics, while Tiroj and Azadi also declare their mission as the development of the Kurdish language and the spread of its use for political purposes as well.

4. Nart

Nart is a journal published by Kafkas Derneği (Caucasus Association) since 1996, and by Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu (Caucasus Associations Federation) since 2004. Alongside the distribution of the journal through a membership system, the journal is also broadcasted through the web-sites of these associations. Although there are other journals published by various Circassian associations, Nart seems to be the only professional journal published by the Circassian community, as the others serve as more like internal bulletins of the organizations they represent, aiming to inform the members of the developments regarding the organization and the news concerning the members. Nart, however, is composed of the articles written by the members of the Circassian diaspora, regarding the issues about the community as a whole and the developments in the Northern Caucasus region, which the Circassians identify themselves with, as their homeland. There are also articles in the journal, that are written by the experts or academicians on the discussions about identity, language, the Circassian languages and history, as well as the policies and politics of the Russian Federation and the Republics founded in the Northern Caucasus. Since 2004, the journal has gained a more professional outlook and structure, in order to renew the interest to the journal, increase the number of sales, and attract readers from other ethnic groups as well as the Circassian community.

"Circassian" is an umbrella name used to refer the ethnic groups who live in North-Western Caucasus. The diaspora in Turkey, as defined by the Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu and Kafkas Derneği, is composed of the ethnic groups that were pushed out by the Tsarist expansion into the Caucasus and forced to migrate into the Ottoman Empire during the "Great Migration", which reached its peak in the year 1864. (Shami 1998) Like the organizations it represents, Nart claims to be the voice of all the members of the Circassian community in Turkey, regardless of their political and ethnic background. Moreover, it is stated that the mission that Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu has to the Circassian diaspora in Turkey is similar to the mission that the Turkish state and government have to the Turkish citizens: the Federation aims to solve all the problems of the Circassian community. However, some environs in the Circassian

community, particularly the Caucasus Foundation, direct criticisms to such an approach, which will be elaborated further in the study. Still, if we consider the number of organizations that participate in the Federation, we can see that it has a significant power of representation of the Circassians in Turkey who are organized around a civil initiative.

The identity of the Circassians is a central issue mentioned frequently in the journal, as the organizations and the journal define one of the central aims as the preservation and promotion of the Circassian identity and culture. The authors writing on the issue are usually complaining or expressing their anxiety about the weakening of the Circassian culture, traditions and language and the subsequent assimilation of the Circassians in Turkey into the Turkish society, and the loss of identity-consciousness. Reminding the community of the character of the population as a diaspora, the articles in the journal stress the likelihood of assimilation of all migrant people into the culture of the host society and warn the members of the Circassian community for such a "threat":

> Lest anyone forget! We are a generation of exile. We should never erase that from our memories. The generation of exile must be resistant at all times. The generation of exile must resist resolutely against disappearance. (Nart, 22, January February 2001)

According to the journal, there are a number of factors that accelerate and facilitate the process of assimilation. First of all, as indicated above, the authors mention the fact that being a migrant group increases the possibility of assimilation into the dominant culture, compared to the case of indigenous communities. Diasporas, especially when they don't have established links and relations with their homeland, are more prone to accept the dominant culture and face a weakening of their identity. For the journal, this has been the case for many years for the Circassians, as they did not have direct relationship with the North-Western Caucasus until the dissolution of the Soviet Empire. Since 1989, however, the diaspora is getting into close relationship with the Republics founded in the homeland, and in turn, is going through a renewal of ethnic consciousness.

The second factor mentioned as one of the reasons for the easier assimilation of the population is the lack of geographic concentration for the Circassian groups. This has been the case since the arrival of the tribes into the Ottoman Empire, as the political

elites of the time had a settlement policy that aimed to disperse the population among several regions, in order to prevent the organization of the Circassians against the Empire, and decrease the ratio of minority, and particularly the Kurdish and Armenian, populations in those regions:

> Both the Russian perception of the Circassian people's love for independence as a threat and its aspirations on the coasts of the Black Sea, and the deceptive attitude of the Ottomans in line with their own interests, the Circassian people who were deported from their land have not been allowed a geographical unity in the regions where they have been sent to exile, and were dispersed across different regions and even different countries as a result of the Ottomans' settlement policy. The biggest problem that this fragmented life brings is the tendency of the culture and the language to disappear. (Nart, 30, May June 2002)

Moreover, the demographic changes thereafter caused a further dispersion of the diaspora. A secondary migration to the European countries, Canada and United States, as well as the urbanization of the population in Turkey added to the difficulties Circassians have in communicating with each other, which is crucial for the preservation of language and culture. The concern of the Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu over the impact of urbanization on the weakening of Circassian identity can be traced through the lines of the journal:

> Urbanization and the cultural interaction that are experienced in the meantime, leads to the dissolution of a particular ethnic group. The ethnic group will lose most of the cultural and social institutions it has had prior to urbanization. Therefore it faces the problem of not being able to reproduce its culture in the urban surrounding. The erosion of cultural elements like the language and traditions in particular, those that can only survive and thrive within the group, accelerates. Consequently we could say that urbanization is one of the most significant among factors that create assimilation. But this is not to say that assimilation is an inevitable consequence of urbanization. Assimilation will only follow as an inevitable outcome when the ethnic group is incapable of formulating the social, cultural and economic institutions that will enable the maintenance of its existence. (Nart, 28, January February 2002)

For Nart, a significant determinant of the level of assimilation is the decrease in the number of people who speak and use the Circassian languages in their daily lives. Language is counted as one of the three basic tenets of the Circassian identity, alongside tradition and ethnic consciousness. The identity and language loss is therefore, seen to be closely connected to each other and the current behavior of the community towards the language use is worth paying attention to and taking precautions against the threat of

language extinction. Many authors are concerned about the level of learning and use of the Circassian languages among the population, particularly the urban and young community:

> Let's just face the facts. I, and my neighbours around my age can speak our mother tongue because we lived in the countryside; we learnt it casually, not at schools (while we had Circassian-teaching schools at Ottoman times). At least we can communicate our basic needs. However, 70-80 percent of our under-20 children from urban or rural areas cannot speak their (native) language at all. We are obviously being assimilated. This being the trend, at some point in time our native language speakers will go extinct altogether. (Nart 22, January February 2001)

According to the journal, language loss is not just a problem in itself, but is also the most important indicator of identity loss because language is the central aspect of the Circassian identity that should be preserved "in order to preserve the nation" (Nart, 22, January February 2001), as it is the defining characteristic of the identity that distinguishes the population from the others and draws the border between "us" and "them". The centrality of language to the identity is therefore stems from the fact that there is no such aspect of identity that defines the borders of the Circassian identity within the Turkish society so strongly. Regarding religion, for instance, the Circassian diaspora in Turkey is composed exclusively of Sunni Muslims, and therefore do not feel themselves different from the majority of the Turkish society. Regarding the traditions and cultural practices, the Circassians have further difficulties of identification, since these practices are usually associated with the feudal system and therefore seen as unfit with a modern and urban lifestyle, which is the main reason why they are mostly abandoned. On the other hand, language is the element of which the Circassians are proud for its ancientness and level of sophistication, and perceive as the indicator of their distinct identity from the rest of the society.

The importance of the relationship with the homeland is another crucial concern for the journal and the associations. Language is also important in establishing the continuity of this relationship. In consequence, the diaspora should establish a continuous and direct relationship with the homeland, which is seen as the "cultural reservoir" for the Circassians in Turkey:

> The only way to prevent this cultural assimilation is a lifestyle that depends on Caucasian foundations. This implies a life that is in one way related to the mainland. The most primary relation that can be established in this sense

is RETURN. Because return to mainland is the expression of the light of hope that shines on our faces right after the pain we feel in our hearts every time the word exile is pronounced since 1864. (Nart, 30, May June 2002)

Alphabet used for the Circassian languages is a tool for establishing such a continuous relationship with the cultural reservoir of the homeland, according to the journal. In all of the texts that are produced by the Circassian elites for this study there are mentioning of the debate on the standardization of alphabet for the teaching and writing of the languages. As the Circassian community is dispersed in a number of countries, the members are exposed to different alphabets in their host countries, but they have used predominantly the Cyrillic alphabet in their writings in Circassian languages up to date. In the Turkish case, the members of the Circassian community are exposed to two different alphabets for using their first language and the official language and there has been a debate on whether the Cyrillic alphabet constitutes difficulty in learning the language and therefore is a cause in the decline of the number of students learning the languages. Consequently, the Circassians question whether any shift to the Latin alphabet use for Circassian languages would increase the demand for language acquisition. Moreover, the Latin alphabet is also considered useful for the integration of the community into the globalization process, for decreasing the Russian influence over the Circassian language, and for practical reasons such as the ease of using the language on internet.

On the other hand, Nart states that it is essential for the Circassian languages to be written in a standardized Cyrillic alphabet, in order to create a unified language used by the diaspora communities in different countries and the Republics in the Caucasus. By learning the Cyrillic alphabet, in the meantime, the Circassians in Turkey will be able to make use of the written resources produced by the Circassian groups in different parts of the world, which would in turn contribute to a shared sense of history, culture and belonging among all Circassians in the world. Hence, the corpus planning of the Circassian languages is seen as a matter of identity for the Federation. Besides the use of the Cyrillic alphabet is considered to be useful in keeping the desire of the diaspora to return to the homeland alive, decreasing the sense of alienation for the people who return.

The "return to the homeland" has been a central issue for all the Circassian organizations in Turkey (Shami 1998; Taymaz 2001), and is perceived as crucial for the

maintenance of identity both for the diaspora and the Circassians living in the Republics in Caucasus. There is a central concern for the future of these Republics among the Circassian diaspora, because the Circassians amount for about just 5 to 22 per cent of the total population in those states. Language shift is a prominent threat in those Republics, as well:

> Similarly, the same threat exists in North Western Caucasus, that is the historical land of Adige clans, Abhaz-Abazas and the Wubihs. Although we have all sorts of means, the Russian language and culture prevails there as we don't have enough population. In contrast, in Chechnya, Dağıstan, Inguşetya, Osetya and partially Khabardey-Balkar where we have the population majority, the language of our indigenous peoples are the prevalent languages. (Nart, 35, March April 2003)

Therefore, Nart warns that the diaspora, which is far exceeding in number the people living in the homeland, has a duty to return, in order to maintain a majority in the Republics and therefore establish the survival of the Circassian identity in those lands. However, as there are a number of problems with the return, many Circassians choose to stay in Turkey, while some have future plans and intentions to return. With the realization of the fact that there have been few families returning to the homeland after the break-up of the Soviet Empire, which was defined as a historic chance for return, the Circassian organizations began to focus more of their attention to the well-being and cultural and social rights of the Circassians in Turkey. Coinciding with the democratization process of the Turkish state, in the last years, the Circassian organizations started lobbying activities for the recognition of the language rights for the Circassians. Hence, Nart started to voice more about the claim for language use in certain domains, although the articles before 2002 used to call the families to teach their languages to their kids, and no demand was made for the recognition of language rights from by the state. Meanwhile, Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu started to participate more in the civil initiatives that defend the recognition of language rights for the major ethnic groups in Turkey and in discussions over the status of these groups. The recent law packages that are introduced in line with the EU adaptation process are welcomed in this regard, while Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu declares its commitment to use the rights granted with these laws:

> As Circassians, our contribution to the establishment of the Republic of Turkey is no less than that of any cultural group living in our country and we are, as everyone else, the founders of this country and its responsible citizens for the future. We do not consider ourselves within the context of

primary elements, secondary elements or minorities. We have been subject to unjustifiable accusations and insults on some media platforms and some internet publications for expressing on our general assembly meeting on December 22, 2003 our desire to exercise our right to broadcast on televisions and radios and to open literacy courses in our native language. We would like to live from now on as holders of equal rights with every member of the 70 million, as voluntary citizens, in unity and fraternity without being subject to any discrimination, most significantly ethnic discrimination. (Nart, 42, March April 2005, 39)

5. Demokratik Çerkes Platformu

Demokratik Cerkes Platformu (Democratic Circassian Platform, DCP) is founded in 2000 by the intellectuals of the Circassian community to monitor the developments regarding EU adaptation process and to lobby for the cultural rights of the Circassian groups in Turkey. The platform is close to the Federation in many respects, but has a more political stance than the Federation on the issues regarding the cultural and linguistic rights of the Circassians. In its founding declaration, the Platform declares its aims as:

To increase the resistance of our community against assimilation and ethnic and cultural erosion, to defend our language and literature, our dances, our music, our crafts, architecture and cuisine, all our cultural heritage that makes us who we are, to produce and support projects that will protect and develop this heritage.

The web-site of the Platform consists primarily of the articles written on the issue of language rights; the cases in some European countries, the demands of the Circassian groups, the standards set in international law and the recent changes in Turkish law regarding the status language planning. The Platform perceives the lack of linguistic rights for the linguistic groups and the Circassians as a reflection of the assimilation policies of the Turkish state that have been in effect since the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The Turkish state, in order to create a unified national identity, constructed an

"artificial identity" for the Circassians, the Platform argues, that defined the Circassian people as Turkic tribes. When that failed, Turkish state used the religious identity as to suppress the feeling of distinctiveness of Circassian groups. In one or another way, "the official ideology" suppressed all the attempts to express the Circassian identity in the public sphere and tried to "make the Circassian community forget their identity".

However, the mind set of the Turkish state officials is going through a change in the recent years. The presence of multiple identity groups within the society have come to be perceived not as a threat to the territorial integrity of the state, but as a richness of culture. The democratization process in Turkey opened up a space for the expression of the identities of ethnic groups, leading changes in the legal arena that would maintain the legal adjustments for the teaching and preservation of the culture and language of the minority groups:

> So the Democratic Circassian Platform emerged to inject hope and self-confidence to our community in this very process. This platform, created by people determined to put their Circassian identity above other identities, works both to support the democratization of Turkey and to elevate the expectations of our community as a requisite for democratization.

However, the threat of language and identity loss did not disappear yet. After long years of assimilation policies, there are few people in the Circassian community that would defend the recognition of the linguistic and cultural rights for the Circassians and would help the realization of the rights that they have. Moreover, the mass migration to the cities caused a dispersion of the population that endangers the possibility of the use of language, and thus, constitutes another threat for the survival of the Circassian languages. The awareness of the community is quite low that the Circassians do not get organized around political causes, and therefore, even the most basic collective rights are not demanded:

> At the moment, our society stays behind the democratic change with its existing situation. In other words, we are under the criterion of the government and official ideology, according to its demands and requests. We are in the situation of a crowd which doesn't and can't show volition to its identity, culture and language. The question which we must discuss and ask to ourselves with all our loyalty and courage is: Do we want to possess our own identity, culture and language? If the answer is "yes" then we should have the volition which is needed.

There are a number of reasons why the Circassians are not pressing strong enough for the recognition of their language rights. As we have indicated above, there is a certain segment of the population who has assimilated into the dominant culture and therefore do not feel distinct from the Turkish culture and identity. Secondly, there is a widespread feeling of "guestness" on these lands. Being a migrant group, the Circassians feel that their roots do not belong to here and thus do not consider it legitimate to demand their rights so as to ensure the maintenance of their culture and language. "Guestness" also means that they can return to their homeland whenever they want, whenever they feel that their well-being is in danger. The possibility of returning to the homeland prevents the members of the Circassian community to mobilize around long-term political goals such as the recognition of their identity and collective rights.

DCP further argues that the majority of the Circassians think that demanding recognition and language rights would discomfort the political authorities about the position of the Circassian community, which has been considered "loyal" to the political system since the foundation of the Republic. The authors argue that the Circassians have always felt some level of gratitude to the Ottoman and Turkish states for accepting them to their lands and therefore, consider it inappropriate to express their distinct identity, as that may be perceived as a threat to the territorial integrity. However, the Platform states that the recent changes in the Turkish official ideology regarding the presence of cultural and ethnic groups show that the expression of identity is not counted as a threat any more:

> Turkey now believes and trusts that ethnical and cultural richness are not "weakening" but "strengthening". Let us trust and believe in this, as well.

Overall, the platform is pessimistic about the future of Circassian identity and language in Turkey, as these aspects are not protected and preserved by the majority of the community. Hence, they think that it is the duty of the intellectuals to promote the rights of the community and to increase the level of ethnic awareness within the diaspora, and the duty of the state to take the precautions necessary for the maintenance of the language and culture. Although the recent changes are positive as they indicate a change in the official ideology, DCP argues that they are not sufficient for the survival of minority languages. On the one hand, the regulations issued for the implementation of the laws are obscuring the rights granted by the recent law amendments. On the other hand, the rights such as the broadcasting in private television and radio channels in

mother-tongue and education of the language through private courses, necessitate financial resources that cannot be generated within the Circassian community for the time being. Hence, the recent laws do not bring much of a change for the situation of the Circassian languages, and the state is criticized of leaving the ethnic communities to their own fate regarding the issues of language use and education, contrary to the principle of equality of all citizens before the law.

6. Kafkas Vakfı

Kafkas Vakfı (Caucasus Foundation) is different from the other two Circassian organizations included in this sample, in many respects. First of all, while the other two organizations represent the Circassian diaspora in Turkey, which originate from the North-Western Caucasus, Kafkas Vakfı is interested in a broader geography of the whole Northern Caucasus. It is founded by the Circassians in Turkey as well, but Kafkas Vakfı argues that the stability in the North-Western Caucasus is directly related with the stability of the Northern Caucasus as a whole, therefore the Circassians should be concerned with the political and economic situation there, as well. While the other two organizations blame the Foundation with intervening much in the political situation in the Caucasus, the Foundation criticizes the other two for being too passive about, and trying to stay out of the politics of the region, which, for them, is closely related with the well-being of the Circassians in the world.

Another crucial difference is the Foundation's stress on religion as the most important aspect of the Circassian identity. Truly, most of the articles in the Foundation's web-site mention the Islamic identity of the Circassians, religious practices of the Circassians, the openings of mosques in the region, etc., which cannot be encountered in the journal and web-sites of the other two organizations. Moreover, the activities of the Foundation include the gathering of Circassians for the special meal that

is eaten to break the feast and calling the members of the diaspora for an organization that is designed for the fulfilling their sacrifice duty in the Caucasus.

Kafkas Vakfı, on the other hand, shares the observation of the other two organizations regarding the weakening of identity among the Circassians in Turkey and the loss of traditions, language and culture. However, this process, according to the Foundation, was blocked after the dissolution of the Soviet Empire, when the diaspora started to establish closer links with the homeland. Although there is a threat of language and identity loss as well for the people living in the Republics of the Caucasus, the revitalization of Circassian languages and traditions can be maintained by the migration of the members of the diaspora back to their lands.

The reason why Circassians have not migrated back since 1989, according to the Foundation, is the lack of democracy in the region. Therefore, according to the Foundation, the diaspora should become involved in the political situation in the region and support the democratization and democratic political organizations there. The reason for the close involvement of the Foundation should, therefore, be seen under the light of this argument. The Foundation, by taking part in the political conflicts of the region, and by cooperating with the Russian human rights organizations and activists, aims to accelerate the democratization process, which would open the way for the return of the Circassians to the Caucasus en masse.

The demands of the Foundation from the Turkish state are also in parallel with the aim of establishing closer links with the region. Kafkas Vakfı, in an open call to the Turkish state officials, demands the resolution of the problems regarding the visa procedures between the Russian Federation and Turkey, facilitation of trade with the region, opening up branches of Turkish commercial centers and banks, and building large mosques in the capitals of the federal Republics in the region.

For the Foundation, the vitality and survival of the Circassian culture and language can only be maintained by the return of the members of diaspora to the Republics in the Caucasus because:

> The presence of every culture is related to its geography in which it was born and developed. Each culture that leaves the homeland is obliged to disappear.

Language can be only maintained with the return to the homeland, as well. Therefore, the Foundation deems it impractical to teach the language to the younger generation through courses or television programs. The head of the foundation says that for long years, they decided to open up language courses for young people, but they did not, as there was no or very few people registered for the course. Therefore, he concludes, the recent law packages are positive developments for some ethnic groups and are supported by the Foundation, but they are not of any practical use for the Circassians. When asked about what should be done instead and whether this situation can be solved by the recognition of other language rights, he said that the problem can only solved with the return of the diaspora into the homeland.

The lack of any claim for language rights in certain domains is consistent with the identification of the Circassians primarily with the Islamic religion, by Kafkas Vakfı. The Foundation does not consider the Circassian community as a minority group, but it usually stresses that they are one of the primary elements in the state since the Turkish Republic is founded by the Muslims living within the borders together. Hence they consider Turks and other Muslim groups as brothers to the Circassians, belonging to the same *ümmet*. They also argue that the ethnic problems in Turkey can be resolved through the democratization of Turkey, the establishment of the freedom of speech and conscience, and the maintenance of equal participation of the citizens in the political system.

Overall, the range of difference between the perceptions of the three Circassian groups included in the sample of this study seems to be far greater than those among the three Kurdish groups. Although the DCP and Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu are close in their political positions, there can still be seen a difference in the tone of the publications regarding their perceptions of the language policy of Turkish state. Yet, there is the case of Kafkas Vakfı, which stands in a totally different side of the political spectrum, and hence perceives the issue of language rights with a quite different perspective.

However, there are still common issues elaborated in the publications of these three groups. Among them, the most frequently mentioned issue is the ideal of return to the homeland, both to preserve the identity of the diaspora community and the

Circassian identity of the North Western Caucasus, in which the majority of the population is Russian. The need for the return of the diaspora to the homeland in order to preserve the identity is considered so vital that Kafkas Vakfı argues even that an ethnic group can only retain its distinctive identity in its own homeland, but it is destined to disappear in foreign lands. On the other hand, the number of people who return to the North Western Caucasus is still less than expected, which is a concern for all the Circassian groups analyzed here leading them to launch campaigns to encourage the diaspora population for return.

As in the case of identity, the preservation of Circassian languages is also argued usually with reference to the ultimate return of the diaspora to the homeland. However, both DCP and Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu mention the need for taking immediate action against the threat of language shift, if Circassian diaspora in Turkey is to retain its ethnic identity at all. The use of the Circassian languages is so low for the urban young population that these two groups are alarmed to warn and educate the community for the consequences of language shift and the need for the recognition of the language rights by the state. Through the lines of the DCP web site, one can even witness a pessimism about the Circassians' awareness regarding the importance of learning and using their first languages. The intellectuals are, hence, assigned the task of increasing such an awareness among the Circassian diaspora and mobilizing the community for a struggle for the recognition of language rights, as the teaching and use of the languages in certain domains is perceived crucial for the survival of the Circassian identity.

This chapter of the study has been devoted to an investigation of the perceptions of Kurdish and Circassian groups in Turkey regarding language and language rights. Throughout the investigation, I have looked for the perceptions and discourses of various political groups regarding their self identity, the language use behavior of the community and the language policy of the Turkish state. As perceptions are crucial in determining the positions of ethnic groups in a conflict, the next chapter will build upon the discussions presented in this one, and will analyze and compare the demands of these language groups regarding the language policy of the state. An overall comparison of the positions and perceptions of the Kurdish and Circassian groups, as well as the possible sources of the differences between them will be outlined in the last chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE POSITIONS: WHAT DO KURDISH AND CIRCASSIAN GROUPS DEMAND?

Having examined the perceptions of two language groups towards language and language rights, I will now analyze their language rights demands from the state. During the analysis, I will also try to investigate the reactions of these groups to the current language policy of the Turkish state that was narrated in the second chapter of this study, and the importance and benefit of each specific language right for the community. Similar to the structure of the third chapter, I will make the analysis by examining the demands of each publication in a different section and will then provide a summary of the common points in all three publications of the ethnic groups. In light of the arguments developed through the third and fourth chapters, the last chapter of the study will present some preliminary thoughts of the sources of difference between the Circassian and Kurdish communities regarding their perceptions and positions on language rights.

1. Ozgur Halk

The journal Ozgur Halk states that the resolution of the Kurdish conflict necessitates recognition of the national identity of the Kurds by the Turkish state. (Ozgur Halk, 124, January 2002, 12) As such, all the linguistic rights demanded are seen as natural and legitimate rights of the Kurds, granted that they are a distinct nation within the Turkish state and therefore they should be treated as such, in equal terms with the Turkish nation. As we will see below, for Ozgur Halk, the recognition of the linguistic rights are taken as a whole with the recognition of Kurds as a distinct nation and granting the former without the latter would not accommodate the claims of the journal and the groups it represents.

As the journal is claiming to be the political voice of all Kurds, the articles published are usually elaborating on the hot topics that are debated within the larger Turkish context, and hence, the journal can be said to be quite receptive to the developments in Turkish politics. As such, the issues regarding language rights are discussed in line with the legal amendments of the Turkish state in 2002 and 2003 and the opening of the Kurdish language courses and the starting of the Kurdish TV programs in the official state television. Therefore, it would be useful to trace the demands raised in a chronological order, to be able to analyze them within the broader political context.

In March 2002, the second European Union adaptation package was accepted in the Parliament, which had outlawed the ban on broadcasting in legally outlawed languages, that has been regulated in the Print Law. But linguistic groups had to wait until August 2002 for the Parliament to pass the law package that foresee amendments in the related laws that forbid the education and broadcasting rights in the languages and dialects that are used traditionally by Turkish citizens. Between these two dates, in April 2002, Ozgur Halk published an article that stated Kurdish education and broadcasting rights are crucial conditions that would pave the way for a democratic resolution of the Kurdish conflict:

Issues like Kurdish education and broadcasting rights, making policy and joining the ruling power in democratic ways would be opening a new path to fulfill the democratic solution. Solutions that will be procured on this basis will make possible to gain the strengthening support of the Kurdish society. (Ozgur Halk, 127, April 2002, 39)

Two months later, while there are discussions in the national television channels and newspapers about the rights to use local languages in education, Ozgur Halk participated in the discussion through its editorial page and said that it is both a natural and legitimate right to use Kurdish in education, and it will, actually, be the case regardless of the legal conditions:

It is a well known fact that the Kurdish people will make their native language an education language because they have an existing organization level that can provide it. Improving their own language and literature which is the most natural and legitimate right of their people should also be a necessity of the democracy. Even if it is tried to be prevented by the, its legitimacy is out of question. Thus this study is carried on under any circumstance. (Ozgur Halk, 129, June 2002, 1)

The journal uses a two-fold argument by debating the question with reference to both the moral standards of human rights and the actual case regarding the determination of the Kurdish people to use and learn the language. Both of these arguments are recurring frequently through the articles in the journal, while elaborating on the necessity for legal adjustments allowing the use of language in education and broadcasting since 2001. The moral and international standards of human rights are usually mentioned with regards to the education rights, by focusing on the question "how can a child be deprived of the right to get education in his/her mother tongue, in a language he/she understands?" or with reference to the cases of language rights in education in Western and developed countries. The actual case argument, on the other hand, is more commonly used regarding the right to use Kurdish in broadcasting as there are already television and radio channels established in foreign countries and on-line facilities in Kurdish that the Kurds in Turkey do have access to.

The limited scope of the education and broadcasting rights in minority languages and the regulations on them, caused a widespread disappointment among the authors writing for Ozgur Halk and were declared unacceptable for the Kurdish population. Moreover, they argue that these amendments are actually insulting and making fun of the Kurdish demands with the limitations imposed on the use of these rights and with the wording of the laws. The need for the recognition of Kurds as a nation and the

consequent recognition of collective rights, appears frequently again through the lines of the journal. In this respect, Abdullah Ocalan argues:

> People have as much right to learn Kurdish as they have to learn Turkish. Turkish could be taught whether it is the native language or not, we do not oppose that. There is no right of radio and television. Time will be restricted and broadcast will be subtitled, there will be censoring minute to minute. There will be nothing other than music and news. This is not what we call the right to broadcast. This is called teasing and insult. You can not fool us and make us accept it as a step forward. If the EU accepts this as a step, they will also be underestimating the Kurds. Such a broadcasting policy is irrelevant to freedom and is impossible to accept. (Ozgur Halk, 144, October 2003, 11)

However, the recognition of limited rights for the education and broadcasting of regional and minority languages has resulted in a renewed interest in the language rights issue and an extension and further articulation of the demands of the Kurdish groups for the resolution of the conflict. While some authors elaborate on the extension of language rights in the fields of education and broadcasting, some other domains are added to the list as well. There are a number of articles published in the journal particularly debating the extent of language rights claims. In April 2003, the journal accounts for the general guidelines that the state should follow in further status language planning actions. According to these guidelines, for a democratic resolution of the conflict, the state should guarantee the use and development of the Kurdish language with constitutional amendments, the restrictions on the use of language in education, television, radio and in other areas should be outlawed and a full freedom should be established in these areas. (Ozgur Halk, 137, April 2003, 21) In August 2003, a relatively more articulate list of demands is published as part of the road-map towards the peaceful resolution of the Kurdish conflict. As the three conditions are taken as a whole, closely connected to each other, I will here quote all of them, although the first one is not mentioning the language rights directly:

> 1. By providing constitutional and legal security to the Kurdish identity, the Kurdish society should be accepted as the original and constitutional citizens of the republic. Turkey will really become the common country of both the Turks and the Kurds by the participation of the Kurdish people to the secular, democratic, social legal state of the Turkish republic. The Kurdish society will be responsible of fulfilling their duties to this democratic country.
>
> 2. Linguistic and cultural rights are protected by law. There are no restrictions on the radio stations, tv channels and press. The radio-tv

broadcasting in Kurdish, Turkish and all other languages are bounded by the same legal regulations. The same legal regulations and procedure are valid for also cultural activities.

3. Kurdish is used as the education language in the primary education. Any willing parent is free to send their children to these schools. Kurdish culture, Kurdish language and literature courses are given in high schools. These take their places in the educational agenda as elective courses. Kurdish language literature, culture and history faculties are founded in universities. (Ozgur Halk, 141, August 2003, 22)

The most important principle observed through all the three conditions is the equality of Kurdish and Turkish nations and languages. Language rights is, hence, a vehicle for establishing and gaining the recognition of societal and political equality for the Kurdish people. As we have argued in the third chapter, for Ozgur Halk, as the Kurds are a primary element in the Turkish state, since the foundation of the Republic, the resolution of the conflict requires not the recognition of the status and rights of the Kurds as a minority, but as fully equal citizens of the state.

A consequence of such a position is the demand towards the recognition of the rights for the use of language not in a certain region, but in the whole country. Although Kurds have been originally concentrated in a certain geography, as a result of the mobilization of many Kurdish people through both voluntary and forced migration, Ozgur Halk argues, regional resolutions would not accommodate the interests of millions of Kurdish people living in the cities outside the region and therefore the rights for the use of language should be applicable throughout the country. Another clause added to the list in November 2003, however, expresses the demand for bilingual state officials in the administrative offices in the region. (Ozgur Halk, 145, November 2003, 32)

It is important here to note that the demand of Ozgur Halk for the education in mother-tongue in all levels of schooling does not exclude the right to get education in the official language of the state. In a number of occasions, Ozgur Halk states that like the right to education in one's first language, the teaching of the official language of the state is another basic human right that should be respected in all regions and all levels of schooling. Moreover, the journal calls the Kurdish people to learn the Turkish language, as early as February 2002, in an announcement for the commencement of a civic political campaign for the education of Kurdish through language courses:

[During the campaign] Approaches such as the denial of education in Turkish should not be considered. Education in Kurdish is not an alternative to that of Turkish, speaking, reading and writing in both languages must be complementary. Just as we stand against the pressure on Kurdish, we should be standing against the denial of other languages. Such an attitude is not only democratic but also realistic. It is not disadvantageous, indeed advantageous that the Kurds learn and use another language as long as they speak, write and read well in their own language. (Ozgur Halk, 125, February 2002, 46)

Overall, we can say that the demands for the use of Kurdish language are closely associated with the recognition of the Kurds as a distinct nation and a primary element in the foundation of the state, that would guarantee the maintenance of full equality between Kurdish and Turkish citizens regarding the use of their mother-tongue in certain domains. The clauses such as the application of the same procedures for the use of languages may imply that Ozgur Halk demands positive measures taken by the state for the implementation of these rights, as well as the encouragement and maintenance of the use of Kurdish, although there is no mentioning of these aspects in any of articles published since 2001. Another domain that is not mentioned at all in the journal is the use of Kurdish in the names of people and places, which is usually accounted among the international standards for language rights. Interestingly enough, with regards to the official language, Ozgur Halk declares that the Kurdish people do not demand Kurdish to be one of the official languages if they are to be accepted as equal citizens in the Constitution. In conclusion, we can quote the general points outlined in September 2004 issue, which is the last issue that overtly mentions language rights, as a summary of the demands put forward by Ozgur Halk, that have been elaborated so far:

The main points that are needed to be given significance are the recognition of the Kurds as the founder member on the axis of the republic's foundation perspective, the constitutional security of their cultural identities and the equal and free declaration and application of their cultural, educational and press rights and demands. (Yeni Ozgur Halk, 1, September 2004, 49)

2. Tiroj

Since Tiroj is a journal that comprises of the articles written by the intellectuals in the Kurdish community that devotes each issue to one specific topic, the debates and arguments in the journal do not follow chronologically as in the case of Ozgur Halk, in line with the developments in the legal and political sphere. That does not mean, of course, that the arguments are not shaped by the political context. Rather, it means that in order to follow the arguments, we should better choose a thematic order rather than a historical one.

Language rights in education is the most frequently mentioned aspect of the conflict over language rights. Many authors suggest that the ban on the use of language in education is the violation of a basic human right, leading many problems for the disadvantaged ethnic group and children. Moreover, the recent changes in the language policy takes a limited approach to language rights, and therefore envisage the right for education of the mother-tongue, despite the necessity of granting the right of education in the mother-tongue as a requirement of the principle of equality.

Why is it important for the Kurdish people to get education in their mother-tongue? Aside from the principle of equality of all citizens before the law, the authors argue that education of the children in a language other than their mother-tongue, leads to a decline in the chance of self-improvement, success and self-esteem development as they cannot express themselves properly in school. However:

> Children who get educated in their native languages are more successful, as well as learning the language of the country they live in more easily, and possess their culture and ethnic identities stronger. (Tiroj, 3, July August 2003, 51)

Therefore, the authors argue that education in mother-tongue is crucial to maintain "the healthy development of the children and their well being in their future life". Language in education is also considered vital for the maintenance of the language itself, which is a primary aspect of the distinct identity of many ethnic groups:

> The best way to learn the native language orally and literally is education. For this reason, a language without education is obliged to disappear or at least lose its strength. (Tiroj, 9, July August 2004, 22)

Education in regional, indigenous and minority languages, Tiroj argues, should be conducted in all levels of schooling (Tiroj, 6, January February 2004, 31), and in the universities as Kurdish Language departments and elective courses (Tiroj, 6, January February 2004, 25), and by the state (Tiroj, 6, January February 2004, 24). Leaving the task of the establishment and funding of education to language groups would be contrary to the principle of equality among citizens, as all people pay taxes for the funding of public education system regardless of their ethnic background. The schools that are established for the education of regional and minority languages should also teach the official language of the state, so that the children would not be disadvantaged vis-a-vis the dominant group, and also an additional language that is spoken globally, such as English, French etc. The education of three languages, the authors argue should be available throughout the whole country, in order to adapt the educational system to the standards set by the United Nations. Such a system, Tiroj argues, may be opposed on the grounds of its cost, but we should bear in mind that:

> Education in three languages is not a question of budget, but a question of mentality. Priorities of budget can be changed with changes in mentality. (Tiroj, 1, March April 2003, 31)

However the responsibilities of the state do not end with the establishment, funding of the schools that would teach the first languages to the children of linguistic groups. In order to maintain the regional languages in all domains of life and encourage bilingual and even trilingual schools, the state should also take the necessary precautions for providing economic and social mobility to the members of the linguistic group. In this way, the state can be considered to make positive adjustments for a multilingual policy, which is required for a peaceful resolution of the conflict over language rights:

> A rooted solution of this problem could be attained if and only if Kurdish becomes an education language and knowledge of Kurdish can provide employment guarantee. (Tiroj, 8, March April 2004, 37)

The ban on the Kurdish education is also considered as the main reason for the underdevelopment of Kurdish print sector and the fact that Kurdish books and journals do not sell well enough. As we have argued in the third chapter, Tiroj argues that many

Kurdish people cannot read and write in their first language, and therefore Kurdish language and literature stays underdeveloped compared to Turkish and other languages which serve as the medium of instruction in public schooling system. For the development of the language, as well as the print sector, therefore:

> First of all there should exist a Kurdish education so that number of Kurdish literates will increase, and complete freedom so people can follow a book or a periodic publications, purchasing power so people can afford the publication. (Tiroj, 9, May June 2004, 23)

However, the task of the development of Kurdish language, as well as art and culture cannot be seen fully on the shoulders of the state. In March-April 2002, an article in the journal argues that Kurdish and Turkish intellectuals should take responsibility for the maintenance and development of Kurdish culture and language, which would contribute to the overall cultural livelihood within the Turkish society:

> Kurdish language must be improved to become a language of literature, culture, science and culture, this is as important as its freedom. This makes Kurdish and Turkish intellectuals share a great mission. Studies must immediately be started to build a Kurdish language and literature department to improve Kurdish in a scientific environment. An institute of Kurdish history must be built to spread Kurdish culture. This way, Kurdish culture and language will improve as a result of being studied on. Kurdish and Turkish workers and poor classes will exchange culture art and literature and will benefit from each other. (Tiroj, 1, March April 2003, 25)

Meanwhile, the use of regional and minority languages in broadcasting is also debated through the pages of the journal. Here, again, the authors criticize the limited scope of the amendments regulating the right and the hesitant wording of the law. In this regard, the journal states that the law should recognize the Kurdish language as the Kurdish language, rather than as a "local language or dialect". Such a phrase signals that the state is still refraining from the official recognition of the Kurdish language and therefore has not changed much in its attitude towards the Kurdish people. Moreover, the law allows the broadcasting in Kurdish for an hour a day, not exceeding 5 hours a week, which is "quite insufficient" for the Kurdish people. A more proper understanding of the right would entail:

> The right to broadcast must be given not only to TRT, even not only national private channels, but also to local radio and television channels. (Tiroj, 6, January February 2004, 23)

The discussion over the demands for language rights in certain domains, tend to focus on these two aspects. However, there are also other rights demanded, although not debated in detail. One of them is the recognition of the Kurdish alphabet and outlawing the ban on the use of letters that do not exist in the Turkish alphabet. The authors argue that every language is worth equal respect and therefore accepting some parts of the language, while banning the others is unacceptable. There is a criticism for the ban on the use of languages other than the official language by the political parties, as well. Furthermore, some authors argue that Kurdish should be declared as one of the official languages of the state, as the Kurdish group is the second largest ethnic group in Turkey.

Overall, Tiroj argues that the conflict over language rights can only be resolved with the establishment of full equality between the Kurdish and Turkish people, and by removing the disadvantages that the Kurds experience because of their use of Kurdish. Furthermore, the state should take positive action towards the development and maintenance of Kurdish and other regional languages, and they should be seen as a resource that is enriching the society and culture, rather than as a threat to national unity and territorial integrity of the state. As a last word, the quotation below can be read as a summary of the position of Tiroj regarding the way for the peaceful resolution of the conflict:

> People must be able to come on the scene with their own cultures and languages, this must be accepted as a social affluence, and a chance must be given for people who want to represent themselves in their own languages and this society must tolerate. (Tiroj, 13, March April 2005, 32)

3. Azadi

The activist nature of the Azadi newspaper can be clearly seen through the discourse over the conflict over language rights. The newspaper tends to be quite straightforward in listing the demands that "must" be fulfilled by the state. In addition to that, the demands are usually outlined in the form of lists, without elaborating on the details for any justification for such a demand. Moreover, these lists are usually followed by the calls to the Kurdish people for struggle in case they are not fulfilled by the state. Out of the three publications that represent certain segments of the Kurdish group, Azadi seems to be the one that makes the longest list of demands, although that does not necessarily mean it is the one that demands the use of language in most domains.

As in other Kurdish journals, the most important and most frequently mentioned language right in Azadi is the right to use Kurdish in education as a medium of instruction. The newspaper even started a campaign with the slogan "Freedom to our mother-tongue, Kurdish cannot be banned" and called Kurdish people, and particularly the university students to make demonstrations, sign petitions and use every strategy possible for the recognition of the right to get education in Kurdish.

The newspaper defines the ban on the use of Kurdish in education as a mass torture against the Kurdish people and a strategy for the colonization of Kurdish people, culture and language. In consequence, for the newspaper demanding this right is "the most basic and democratic human right", and all the actions taken by the Kurds for protesting the ban on the use of Kurdish in education are legitimate in themselves.

The stress on the language rights in education in all levels of schooling may be due to the age range of the newspaper's target population, because the newspaper is read by mostly young people, and particularly by university and high school students. That is why the issue of education is a recurring topic within the newspaper, through the demands for education in regional and minority languages, the problems with the Higher Education Board (YOK) and the difficulties that Kurdish people have with the

University Entrance Exam (OSS). Among these issues, however, the right to get education in one's mother tongue is presented as the most problematic one, as the compulsory education in Turkish is seen as a major factor that decreases the level of success for Kurdish students.

The resolution of this problem, according to the newspaper, is the recognition of Kurdish as a medium of instruction in all levels of schooling and providing funding by the state for the education of Kurdish to the students. Moreover, Kurdish language should be maintained and developed through institutions established within the universities or independently, there should be Kurdish language and literature departments established in public and private universities, Kurdish language should be provided as an elective course in all levels of public schooling, as well as the universities, to all people that want to learn Kurdish and private Kurdish schools should be allowed.

Other rights that are demanded for the use of language, is related with the establishment of free television and radio channels that broadcast in Kurdish, the recognition of Kurdish as an official language and providing translation services in public places like hospital and court and in administrative offices, as well as the employment of Kurdish-speaking government officials.

For the recognition and implementation of these rights, Azadi argues, the state should recognize the Kurds as a nation and grant these rights as collective rights. Hence, the amendments made in the law during the EU adaptation process are not accepted as sincere steps by the newspaper, criticizing the state aiming to divide and weaken the movement by granting some limited individual rights to Kurds, out of the desire to be accepted into the European Union. The law-suit opened against Eğitim-Sen, because of the article in its regulatory statute regarding the right to use regional and minority languages as a medium of instruction, is symbolic for Azadi to show that there is no change in the state's approach and attitude towards the language rights and the Kurds demanding these rights. However:

> The question is about abolition of denial and ignorance policies as well as recognizing the collective Kurdish identity or not. Another expression of this would be the lift of all bans on our language. (Azadi, 1, March 2004, 24)

As indicated in a number of occasions, language rights are seen, by all the Kurdish groups examined here, as basic human rights that must be recognized in order to ensure the equality of all citizens in the legal, political, social and economic sphere. Hence the deprivation of the Kurdish people of certain language rights is presented as an unfair treatment by the state, that violates the most basic standards of human rights. Accordingly, the demands put forward by these groups are aimed to correct the mistreatment of the Kurdish citizens of the Turkish Republic and establishing full equality between the Kurdish and Turkish people.

Besides, the widespread debate about the status of the Kurdish community in the Turkish state, whether they form a minority group, a nation, or a founding element of the Turkish society, results in differing perspectives and demands regarding the language rights. Despite the traces of such a debate, the argument that Kurds constitute a founding nation of the Turkish Republic stands out as the dominant position in all of the three periodicals analyzed. Therefore, all of the publications argue that any satisfactory resolution for the conflict over language rights would necessitate the recognition of the language rights, as collective rights granted to the Kurdish nation. In this way, Kurds will also be officially recognized as a distinct nation by the Turkish political system, which means a sharp break from the official position of the Turkish state that has prevailed since the foundation of the Republic up to date.

Although there is no mention of the language policies in different countries as sample case studies, the language policy demanded by all three Kurdish groups can be categorized as a multilingual state policy that is based on the personality principle, which is similar to the Canadian case[3]. Although some authors in the periodicals demand the Kurdish language to be declared as the official language of the state, this is not a common demand of all the three groups in the Kurdish community. On the other hand, the multilingual language policy is particularly demanded with reference to the rights to use Kurdish language in the public education system, in broadcasts on local, regional and national television channels, in administrative services and institutions and

[3] For a discussion over the personality principle and the application of it in the Canadian case see pages 26 and 37 of this study.

in names and surnames. All these rights are demanded to be recognized based on the personality principle, rather than a territoriality principle, as the Kurdish population is dispersed throughout the country.

4. Nart

The journal of the Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu, Nart, does contain many articles on language, but these are usually about the importance of language for the Circassian community, the threat of extinction for the Circassian languages, the calls for the Circassian communities to teach their first languages to their kids, the debates over the standardization of the alphabet for many languages, and the negative affects of modernization, urbanization and assimilation policies of the Turkish state on the use of languages. On the other hand, there are not many articulate demands found in the journal through the use of language in certain domains. About these rights, the journal prefers to follow the developments in the Turkish legal system, and comment on the regulations with statements over what should be done by the Circassian community and civil organizations for the implementation of these rights. In order to trace the demands of the Federation, I will also use the data obtained from the face-to-face interview that I have conducted with the General Secretary of the Federation.

As the most important aspect of the language problem is the threat of extinction of various Circassian languages, the Federation pays utmost attention to the education of the Circassian languages to pass these to the younger generations, who seem to be caring less for learning their mother-tongues in the last years. The language courses have been conducted since the 1960s in the associations and foundations of the Circassian community, usually teaching the Cyrillic alphabet to the Circassians that already use the languages in their daily lives, so that they can read and write in their first languages. However, in the 80s and 90s there has been a sharp decline in the use of

language, especially in urban families, so that the language courses began to lose their function, as it is difficult to learn a language simply by two- or three-hours long lessons. Around the year 2000, the associations started discussions over what can be done in order to prevent the extinction of the language use in the Circassian diaspora in Turkey, and they began to voice more frequently that Circassian language courses should be integrated into the mass education system.

As we have argued above, we cannot come across an articulate demand for the education of the language and the use of it in broadcasting through the pages of Nart. However, in line with the amendments of the Turkish language policy, Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu expresses its determination for the implementation and use of the rights that were envisaged by the law. In this respect, the journal considers the amendments as positive changes as they signal an end to the assimilation policies directed against regional and minority languages, but adds that there are a number of problems about the implementation of these rights:

> Law of Education in Native Language was made in reference to National Education Ministry Private Education Institutions Regulation. According to this Regulation, it is difficult for an ethnic group to be educated in their native language because the setting where the education will be given must be prepared considering Regulation conditions. According to the Private Schools Regulation, the laboratory, classes and necessary indoor arrangements should be made. Besides the people who will be hired as teachers need to have completed their education in the language they will be teaching and ought to have pedagogic formation. This is a compelling condition since there is no institution giving Circassian education. In addition, the education has to be given in a manner that will not impede the regular education of the students. This compels our conditions even further. However, this issue is still being studied. A well known fact is that the most common ethnic group in Turkey is the Kurds. Once they take a step and clear the way, we will be able to act more easily. The Circassian courses that used to be given by our associations will then have to be organized within this legal framework. This has eliminated the once existing freedom but did not make it impossible. (Nart, 35, March April 2003)

There are also further problems with the opening of language courses in Circassian languages. The main problem facing the Circassian associations is the financial resources problem, for which the Federation expresses its demand of state's contribution. The argument used for the demand stems from the equality principle: as Circassians and Turks are subject to the same regulations regarding tax pay, why should it be the case that the resources generated used for the maintenance and teaching of the

Turkish language, but not the Circassian and other regional and minority languages. Meanwhile, there is also the alphabet standardization problem for the teaching of the Circassian languages. Among the community, the choice over the using of Latin or Cyrillic alphabets, is widely discussed, but most of the articles in Nart tend to favour the Cyrillic alphabet. However, the meetings of the Federation leaders with the government officials have not resulted in a favorable outcome for the Federation, allowing the use of Cyrillic in the teaching of the Circassian languages through courses. Hence, another demand of the Federation is the respect of the state to the languages as they are, without any ban on some parts, or some aspects of it.

Even if all these problems are solved, the Federation thinks that teaching language through private and charged language courses is not a practical solution to the problem of language, particularly for the Circassian community. The Federation, therefore, thinks that a new legislation is necessary to incorporate Circassian language lessons into the mass education system as elective courses. Since Circassians are not concentrated in some regions, the courses should be made available in all parts of the country and for all students and should be funded by the state.

In a special issue devoted to the language issue, there is another article elaborating on the practical problems in establishing a radio channel broadcasting in Circassian languages. The most important problem mentioned is the financing of the radio. Under the current conditions, all the associations participating in the Federation are asked to contribute some amount of money for the funding of the radio, but the article also expresses the wish of the Circassians that the state would devote some resources for it. Regarding the television channels, however, the Federation thinks that television broadcasts are neither practical nor necessary for the community.

While the Federation limits their demands with these two rights, they also agree on the necessity for the recognition of other linguistic rights for other ethnic groups, particularly the Kurds, in principle. It also supports and participates in the civil initiatives lobbying for the recognition of these rights. In September – October 2004 issue, for example, Nart published a declaration of the Federation that expresses its support for the report on minorities published by Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Danışma Kurulu (The Prime Ministry Council for Human Rights), which has been subject to prolonged debates in the Turkish media at the time of publication.

5. Demokratik Cerkes Platformu

There are very few articles in the web-site of the DCP, but almost all of them are elaborating on the issues of identity, language and cultural rights of the Circassians. As in the case of Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu, the demands of the Circassians regarding language rights are not put forward in a direct and overt manner, but are implied within the articles that comment on the current legal policies of the state towards language use. However, there is still a more straightforward language used in these articles, perhaps stemming from the fact that the Platform is not subject to the legal regulations applied to the Federation.

As the issue of language rights is debated through the recent legislation, I will use the reactions of the Platform to trace the demands of language rights. First of all, we should note that the Platform celebrates the amendments in the law that foresee the rights of the teaching and broadcasting in traditionally used local languages and dialects, as they are considered as a break from the traditional attitude of the state towards the presence of linguistic groups within the state, opening the path for the recognition of further rights, and the democratization of Turkey. Moreover, the Platform expresses its hope that if this process would not be blocked, the Circassian community will have courses and schools that will teach the Circassian languages and institutions that will develop the Circassian culture in the near future.

On the other hand, the Platform also criticizes some aspects of the regulations. For example, for the Platform, the regulation is not carried out because of the attitude of the state officials to the language rights as part of the natural human rights, but just as a compromise during the European Union accession process. That attitude implies that

the state still needs to reconsider its language policy to make a significant change in the legal and political sphere regarding the use of the regional and minority languages.

There are also practical criticisms to the law, similar to those that can be seen in four of the other cases analyzed above:

> Has anyone learned a language with only weekend courses, let alone a native language? An application of this kind is claimed to be followed in many European countries but they also have this; if a certain number of students (10 to 15 usually) demand to be educated in a specific language, that language is taught as an elective course, and the teacher is provided by the government. Turkish Education Ministry's budget consists of taxes paid by Kurds, Circassians, Georgians and Lazes as well as other ethnic groups, so it must not be meaningless to expect support from the government.

There is also another article on the possibility of establishing a Circassian radio station, which is the same published in the journal Nart, and analyzed in that section.

Along these lines, we can say that what DCP wishes to have as the right to use Circassian languages includes the education of Circassian in schools as an elective course, the establishment of institutes for the development of Circassian language and culture and the financial contribution of the state for the establishment and running of a radio station that will broadcast in Circassian languages.

The member of the Platform that I have interviewed indicated that the relative modesty of the demands stem from the fact that Circassian people are not organized around yet to voice their demands to the state. Because of this reason, as well as the others elaborated in the third chapter, the Platform does not make any further demands with the fear that these demands will not be backed up by the Circassian community. He also stated that Circassian community needs a lot more discussion and consensus before they articulate the needs of the community and stand firm behind the demands, about language rights.

Overall, however, the Platform asserts that the peaceful resolution of the conflict over language rights require a change in the ideology of the Turkish state, and the identity projection, which would then automatically bring the recognition of the language rights that are consistent with the demands of the society and the international standards on the issue:

> Lift of bans on language is no doubt an important progress, but the important matter is the settlement of a view that evaluates existence of different languages in Turkey as an abundance but not as a threat and cultural pluralism must become a government policy. If being a Turk is an identity about citizenship and not ancestry, than all cultures and languages of this identity must be represented.

6. Kafkas Vakfı

As I have argued in the third chapter, the publication of the Kafkas Vakfı reveals the least amount of mentioning of language. The web-site usually focuses on the Islamic identity of the Circassian people and the traditions that they have. I have also quoted a list of demands directed to the Turkish state, published in the web-site, but none of the articles in the list make any mention of language and language rights. During the interview with the head of the Foundation, I have asked in many questions whether they have any demands of language rights, any concerns for the threat of language extinction and the precautions that should be taken in order to prevent such a threat. The head of the Foundation said that the Foundation shares the concern of the two organizations about the language loss within the community, but also added that it is a natural process for minor groups in the society, as they are dominated by a larger language group and that it happens in the Republics of the Caucasus as well, where the Circassians are not forming the majority of the population. For the Foundation, on the other hand, language rights is of little practical use for the revitalisation of the Circassian languages, but the solution requires the return of the Circassian diaspora population into their homeland, so that they can form the majority in those Republics and use their own language in every domain. Until the return, the diaspora should take precautions for teaching the languages to the younger generation, such as using the first languages at home:

> I don't think state is the source of danger for validity of minority languages of Caucasus, either literary or not, but there is a problem with parents' lack of interest who cannot understand the importance of transferring a piece of information about their native languages to their own children. Many

people, quite natively, assume that education with only one native language is necessary to give a better start for life to their children, and that children must be exposed to their education language at home. Of course children must be allowed to be exposed to their education language, but children must be addressed with their native languages rest of the time.

As can be seen through these lines, language preservation and teaching is considered as a responsibility of the community, by the Foundation, which can be fulfilled with speaking and teaching Circassian languages at home in the host country and ultimately, returning to the homeland, to unify with the Circassian groups there. The state, on the other hand, is considered as having no responsibility over the preservation of indigenous and minority languages. Rather than the rights to use the language, Kafkas Vakfı tends to focus on the freedom of conscience and to practice religion without the interference of the state, as a human right, and therefore they have been content with the policies of the Turkish state, with which they identify themselves as an ümmet, except a short period of time when, according to their claims, the freedom of conscience has been under significant pressure, which is the monoparty period that continued until 1945.

The publications of three Circassian groups analyzed for this study reveal no language rights demands common in all of them. As the Kafkas Vakfı has a quite different perception of the issue, the demands that are put forward by the other two organizations, DCP and Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu, are not mentioned in the web site of the Foundation at all. Yet, what is common to all three groups is a concern for the threat of extinction of the Circassian languages for the diaspora community in Turkey. The proposed solutions to such a threat vary, however. While Kafkas Vakfı argues that language shift can only be avoided by the return of the diaspora to the homeland, the other two organizations demand that the Turkish state should recognize the language rights that would ensure the survival, maintenance and development of the Circassian languages.

As the high level of language shift is the central concern for both DCP and Kafkas Dernekleri Federasyonu, the demands are articulated accordingly, as precautions that would encourage the Circassian community to learn, teach and use their first languages. Hence, the education of the language via public education system the most frequently

mentioned demand through the publications of these groups. Meanwhile, they also demand that the state should allow local and regional, as well as the national, television and radio channels to broadcast in Circassian languages. Another demand that is common to these two groups is the establishment of the institutions and research centers that would develop and help the standardization process of the Circassian languages. Alongside these demands, the two Circassian groups argue that the financial and institutional support of the state is needed in order to implement all these rights. State support is crucial for these groups, as they think there is a declining interest among the Circassian community for the use of their first languages, and little awareness regarding the consequences of language shift, which prevent the Circassian community both from mobilizing for the recognition of language rights and from gathering the resources that are necessary for the implementation of the rights granted.

In this last chapter of the study, I have tried to outline the demands of different groups in Kurdish and Circassian communities towards language rights and the reasons of the demands, i.e. the needs and interests of the community to use the rights demanded. Together with the analysis in the third chapter, I hoped to demonstrate a significant difference between the Kurds and Circassians regarding the conflict they have over the language rights issue. The last chapter is, therefore, devoted to some discussions over the possible sources for such a difference between the communities, that can be traced through their identity formation processes, the political, economic and social status within the country vis-a-vis the other groups, and their relations with the state and the dominant group in the society.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The publications of the Kurds and Circassians reveal clearly that language shift is considered a threat for both of the communities. Therefore, we can say that at least some elite groups within these communities have developed an awareness regarding the threat of language extinction and the need for taking precautions against such a threat. Language is a central aspect of identity for both of the communities, if they do not prioritize some other aspect of the identity, such as religion in the Kafkas Vakfı case and in religious circles among the Kurdish population that could not be analyzed within this study as any publication of these groups could not be found.

Meanwhile, however, the loss of language is perceived as a closer threat for the Circassian group[4] than for the Kurdish groups, for which we can talk about a relative stability of language use within the community, especially in regions where the Kurdish population is concentrated. Moreover, the publications of two leading organizations in the Circassian group show that language is considered as a "core value" of the community, "because of its essential role in the culture's integrity and creative force".

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[4] The findings of a survey conducted by Dr. Ayhan Kaya with the members of the Circassian community show that a significant portion of the Circassians do not speak or read and write in their first languages. Of the 510 respondents to the survey, conducted in August 2000, 128 do not speak the Circassian languages at all, while this figure rises up to some 316 for reading and 327 for writing in these languages.

(Smolicz and Radzik 2004, 512) As I have argued before, the threat of language extinction is perceived as a threat of identity loss for the Circassian community by these two organizations.

The claim and demand of language rights vary among different language groups depending on their perceived needs and interests. Hence the demands should be analyzed accordingly, together with the perceptions of the groups towards the necessity of that particular right for the community. According to what the publications reveal, education of the language is the most important linguistic right for both the Kurds and the Circassians. As outlined in the literature as well, education of the language is the tool for achieving the survival of the language into the next generations, which is vital for preventing the extinction of the language use in society. The education of the language is also considered crucial for the maintenance of equality between minor language groups and the dominant group within the society, because both of the groups argue, the public education system is financed by all the citizens' taxes, paid regardless of the ethnic origin of the taxpayer. Therefore, all citizens should benefit from the public education system without any discrimination, i.e. all should have the right to get their children to be educated of their mother-tongue.

Regarding the right to use one's first language in their dealings with public authorities and officials, linguistic groups have differing demands depending on the ratio of people who have proficiency in the official language, within the community. As for the Circassian community, most members of the young generation in urban areas do not even speak the Circassian languages. Among those using Circassian languages, almost all are bilingual, except very old members of the community, who, living in rural areas, had no formal education, and therefore have no need for proficiency in the Turkish language to sustain their daily lives. Hence the right to communicate with the public officials in the Circassian languages is not considered a necessity by the organizations that are included in the sample of this study. Among the Kurdish people, however, a much greater portion of the population is monolingual in Kurdish language, or can communicate much better in that language, for whom some rights are essential to be recognized to be able to participate in public life. This is true particularly for the women living in the region and in ghettos as a result of forced migration as they have no or little contact with the institutions that are aimed to spread and maintain the use of official language in the society, such as compulsory public education and military

service. While the education of these women is also another issue that can be raised for the solution of these problems and integrate them into the public life, the Kurdish community demands that these women, as well as Kurdish men, should have a right to communicate with the public authorities in the language they speak, and benefit from public services in that language. Hence they claim that public and administrative services should be also provided in indigenous and local languages and the state should allocate resources and employment for Kurdish-speaking officials, particularly in the region, but in other cities where Kurds constitute a significant population, as well.

Another domain that is subject to status language planning of the state is the media and communications field. Regarding the print media, the Turkish government does not prohibit the use of any languages by any legal instruments. The amendments made in the law concerning the use of languages in 2002, have also allowed the use of indigenous and minority languages to be used in public and private national TV and radio channels. Both Kurd and Circassian groups, however, argue that the regulations over the broadcasts are violating the equality principle and they demand the state to grant the broadcasting right to regional and local channels as well. Circassians also argue that since the community is not able to finance running the media facilities, the state should allocate financial resources for the support of such activities in order to maintain the preservation of the Circassian languages.

On the other hand, there are certain issues regarding the use of education and broadcasting rights in the first languages, for both of these communities. As I have quoted in the third chapter of this study, there are debates within the Circassian community over the language that should be used in education and media as Circassian diaspora is going through a standardization process regarding the dialects of the Circassian languages and the script used. These issues are still standing as an obstacle for the establishment of the institutions teaching and broadcasting in Circassian languages. On the other hand, for the Kurdish community, language standardization attempts has been under way since the beginning of the 20th century and a good deal of progress has been accomplished in this respect, particularly for Kurmanci. The broadcasts of Kurdish radio and television channels established in other countries and the studies of some Kurdish intellectuals for the standardization of the alphabet, script and the language, make it easier for most of the Kurdish population to be able to

communicate in a standardized language and establish language courses and media facilities in Kurdish language.

Moreover, the very same developments, i.e. television and radio channels in the Kurdish language and the attempts of the Kurdish intellectuals to develop the tools necessary for the standardization and the teaching of language, lead the Kurdish elites to argue that the state should recognize the de facto situation and grant the Kurdish group their rights for the use of Kurdish language in these domains. In the meantime, however, the lack of any consensus among Circassian elites on a standardized language, among other factors that will be debated below, constitute a situation in which Circassians ask the support of the state for the development of the languages and their teaching, as they cannot start any activity in the domains of education and media by themselves. The support should be provided, the Circassians state, both financially and as the establishment of institutions and research centers for the development and the standardization of the languages. The homeland is also seen as a resource in this regard, providing the tools for the education and broadcasting of Circassian languages and, consequently the state is asked to establish the legal conditions that would develop the relations between the diaspora and the homeland.

As I have argued through the third and fourth chapters, the periodical publications of the Kurdish groups reflect a tendency to perceive the linguistic rights as an equality issue; as tools necessary for the establishment of full equality of Turkish and Kurdish citizens and their equal participation into the society. On the other hand, the primary concern for the Circassian groups is the survival of the language and hence linguistic rights as tools to prevent the extinction of the Circassian languages. In consequence, while some Kurdish groups assert that the recognition of the Kurdish language as an official language is essential for achieving the equality of the two groups, the Circassians tend to limit themselves with the right to use their first languages in education and broadcasting, as well as the founding of institutions vital for the development of the languages.

Overall, then, we can say that language rights is an end that should be used in order to ensure the survival of the language for the Circassians, and their granting is immediately needed so as to preserve the language before the languages become extinct. For Kurds, language rights is a tool for the recognition of the identity and the

integration of the Kurds into the political and social system. Although the need for the rights is severe again, the threat of extinction is less and what matters more seems to be the solution of the ethno-political conflict rather than the conflict over language rights alone. That is to say that, any language planning activity that would recognize the rights of the Kurdish population towards language use, but would not recognize the community as some sort of a collectivity (depending on the political position of the Kurdish group, this collectivity can be called a nation, a founding element, an ethnic group, a minority etc.,) and establish the principles of non-discrimination and full equality, would still be illegitimate and insufficient in the eyes of the Kurdish groups that have been analyzed here. Based on this fundamental difference between the perceptions of these two groups, there is also a difference in the severity of the conflict that they experience with the state over the recognition of language rights. As the aspirations of the Kurds are higher in this issue, the range of difference between the group and the state grows larger and consequently the severity of the conflict is higher for the Kurdish groups. On the other hand, the demands of the Circassian groups seem to be closer to the current language policy of the state, hence the range of difference between the positions of the language group and the state smaller.

However, the severity of the conflict is not determined solely by the fact that the demands are higher for one group than the other, but also from the potential of the groups for taking action in order to realize their aspirations. Therefore, we should now consider the strength of the demands and claims of these groups, by looking at their potential on acting for them.

According to Gurr, there are four predisposing traits that shape disadvantaged groups' sense of grievance and their potential for acting on it, regarding their political, economic and cultural rights. He lists these traits as; the extent of collective disadvantage ("the extent of a communal group's collective disadvantage vis-a-vis other groups"); the salience of group identity ("whether the sense of common identity is strong enough to overcome more narrow loyalties to clans, classes and communities within the group"); extent of group cohesion and mobilization ("the extent to which group members are prepared to commit their energies and resources to collective action on behalf of their common interests"); and repressive control by dominant groups ("the extent that a group's disadvantages have been established and maintained by force). (Gurr 1993, 124-129) Gurr states that if these four traits are high for a communal group

and it can mobilize its members around some cause for the whole community, the possibility of becoming politicized and getting into direct conflict with the state increases for the group.

All these factors are, to a certain extent, based on the long historical relationship between the communal group and the state, as well as other groups in the society, and social dynamics within the community. Consequently, the extent of their presence, is difficult to assess, as this would require an in-depth analysis of the history and identity-formation processes of these two groups, which is beyond the capacity of this study.

However, there are a few points that should be noted for a better understanding of the perceptions of these two groups over the conflict on language rights. As the perceptions of the conflict is also based on the perceptions of ourselves and the others, so it would be useful to look at some elements of the ethnic identity formation processes of these groups and their relations with the state.

First of all, there is a significant difference between the nature of these two groups in relation with the lands they are settled, affecting directly their identity-formation process, relations with the state and therefore their demands regarding the language rights. While the Circassians are a migrant group that were forced to migrate into the Ottoman state in 19th century, Kurds are an indigenous group that were enjoying some level of autonomy under the Ottoman rule since the 19th century. Kurdish nationalism is based, in one aspect, on the claims for the authenticity of the Kurds in these lands, even so much in some cases that some analysts argue that the authenticity theories of some Kurdish nationalists resemble the Turkish History Thesis of 1930s. (Bozarslan 2002; Şengül and Kardeş 2003) Claims of authenticity, beside being a tool for national identity-building process, also furnishes the demands of all sorts of cultural, social, economic, political rights, and for equality, with some level of legitimacy. On the other hand, being a diaspora population (Clifford 1997, 284) tend to bring a feeling of guestness on these lands, which, in turn, reduces the ability of the group to articulate their cultural, political and economic rights strong enough.

There is a distinction of immigrant and indigenous communities regarding their claims and use of cultural rights in the multiculturalism literature as well. One of the most important figures of this theory, Kymlicka, is among the first analysts of this distinction. Kymlicka notes that all minority groups face a choice over either integrating

into the larger society or "seeking the rights and powers needed to maintain their own societal culture", in order to avoid marginalization in a society where all public institutions are running in another language. While immigrant groups tend to choose the former, national minorities, defined as "historically settled, territorially concentrated and previously self-governing cultures whose territory has somehow become incorporated into a larger state", tend to mobilize for the latter option. According to Kymlicka, there are two main reasons for the relative ease in the integration of immigrant groups. First of all, immigrant groups have chosen to leave their own culture, and they have the expectation of integrating into the culture of their host country. Secondly, they also lack the territorial concentration and corporate institutions needed to form a linguistically distinct society alongside the mainstream society, since they usually migrate as individuals and families, rather than as large groups or as a community. (Kymlicka 2000, 18-19; Kymlicka 1999, 131-132) On the other hand, Kymlicka also notes that many immigrant groups are resisting assimilation into the host country's culture and preserving some aspects of their cultural practices and identities, but this does never take the form of nationalism as in the case of national minorities.

Although the distinction is useful in analyzing the perceptions of the language groups towards their claims for language use, the two reasons outlined by Kymlicka for the choice of immigrant groups in integrating into the dominant culture do not hold for the case of Circassian diaspora in Turkey. As we have noted before, the migration of the Circassians into the Ottoman state was forced by the expansion of the Tsarist Russia into the Caucasus, and therefore was an en masse forced migration, leading to the deportation of large numbers of people into the Ottoman lands, that are now within the borders of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Israel and Jordan. However, the settlement policy of the Ottoman state led to a dispersion of the community among different regions, so that the Circassians could not form the majority in any region of the country. (Kymlicka 1999, 139-140)

Therefore, the reasons for relatively more inarticulate and weaker demands of Circassians on the use of their languages need further elaboration. One such explanation might be the prevailing relationship, belonging and interest of the diasporic communities, and in this case the Circassians, with their homelands, which prevent them from mobilizing for their rights in the host countries, but lead them instead to focus their attention to the homeland with a consistent idea of return. Hence the

preservation of the identity and culture is closely associated with the established links with the community in the homeland, and the ideal of return. On the other hand, the diasporic community is inclined less to mobilize for the recognition of their cultural rights in their host countries.

Furthermore, another aspect of the distinction between Kurds and Circassians regarding their identity-formation processes and claims for their cultural, social and political rights could be the extent of the collective disadvantage of these groups vis-a-vis the majority group. Truly, when the resources are allocated along ethnic lines in the society, the group identification and nationalist ideology of the ethnic group that experiences a "relative deprivation" vis-a-vis the other groups strengthen:

> The psychological bases of group identification are reinforced by cultural, economic and political differentials between the group and others: treat a group differently, by denial or privilege, and its members become more self-conscious about their common bonds and interests. Minimize differences, and communal identification becomes less significant as a unifying principle. (Gurr 1993, 3-4)

The economic, social and political marginalization of the Kurds have been a resource of conflict since the Ottoman times starting from the time when the autonomy of the Kurdish regional organizations was abolished in the 1844 in order to ensure the centralization of the state authority. (Bruinessen 1978; 1992) However, with the gradual transfer of the local power from the aghas to the sheikhs, the Kurdish regions resisted the centralization policies and some kind of autonomy prevailed, despite the efforts of the state. (Bruinessen 1978; 1999; Menteşaşvili 2004) With the foundation of the Turkish Republic, a new national identity creation process was forged, which had little legitimacy in the eyes of Kurdish people as a result of the ethnic character of the state identity, the abolishing of the title of the Caliphate, and a rapid modernization and centralization process initiated by the political elites of the new Republic. The Kurds, resisted both the centralization and assimilation policies of the state, and, consequently, they were not fully integrated into the political and social system of the state, and were considered as a constant threat to the system by the Turkish state. (Yegen 1999) In consequence, the Kurds could not be Turkified to a large extent during the history of the Turkish Republic and they resisted assimilation policies, with the survival of a strong ethnic awareness. Although there have been many attempts to prove that Kurds are a Turkic tribe that have lost their identity, they failed to succeed in integrating the Kurds

into the Turkish national identity. (Yegen 1999; Yıldız 2001) Starting in 1990s, even the political elites of the state began to talk about Kurds and Kurdishness, which also affected the ongoing process of identity reconstruction among the Kurdish community.

For the Circassians, however, the same processes of modernization, centralization and national identity formation brought a different process of identity maintenance. Since the "Great Migration", the Circassians have been employed in the military posts of the Ottoman and Turkish states, achieving highly prestigious positions in these states. (Avagyan 2004) Circassians, in this era, were even used as a tool to achieve centralization against the groups that are resisting it. In the national identity formation process the Circassian identity was identified as a "false consciousness" in the beginning, but a new identity was also invented through the presentation of Circassian groups as Turkic tribes under the name of Circassian Turks. Some groups within the community have accepted this identity and assimilated into the society even as much as to become members of the Turkish nationalist political parties. (Alankuş-Kural 1999; Bora 1999) In all these periods, Circassians could be integrated into the economic, political and social life and some could even achieve some highly prestigious positions in the Turkish society. A reawakening of the ethnic identity, however, started after the 80s and especially during the 90s, due to the increased contact with the homeland as a result of the Soviet dissolution, and the impact of identity politics in the world and in Turkey, developed particularly in relation with the Kurdish conflict and rising nationalist tendencies within both the Turkish and Kurdish populations.

Yet another reason for the mobilization of the ethnic group is the extent of group cohesion. For the Kurdish population the factor that increases group cohesion is the historical and geographical concentration of the population, which increases the chance of communication among the members, while also has been a source of marginalization of the Kurds from the mainstream political, economic and social life. Kurds are constituting the majority of the population in some Eastern and South-Eastern cities and therefore they claim the Kurdishness of the region. On the other hand, Circassians are dispersed in many regions of the country, both as a result of the settlement policy of Ottoman state and a further second migration to foreign countries and urban areas. When ethnic groups are dispersed among different territories in a country, their chance of communication, organization and mobilization diminish accordingly, which could be

seen as a reason for the relatively weaker organization and mobilization of the Circassian community in Turkey.

All these factors contributed to the development of a nationalist ideology among the Kurdish people in Turkey. With the influence of other Kurdish movements across the borders, Kurds have a legacy of nationalist uprisings and movements since the end of the 19th century, and significantly of the Seyh Ubeydullah and Seyh Said uprisings. (Olson 1992, Jwadieh 1999) Some groups in the Kurdish nationalist movement have also made an alliance with the leftist groups in Turkey since the 1960s (Bozarslan 2002; White 2000) and starting in 1980s, the nationalist ideology with an adding of a Marxist-Leninist tendency has been represented by the PKK group to a large extent. (White 2000) Hence the Kurdish political movement, for the time being, is an organized movement, with a long historical legacy that adds to the legitimacy of these organizations. Consequently, the Kurdish movements perceive themselves powerful enough to assert their demands for the recognition of their rights and the equality of the Kurdish nation with the Turkish people, having the leverage of a threat to start a mass armed struggle again. On the other hand, Circassians are not organized around an established nationalist ideology, which can be a reason why there are greater differences of perception between the Circassian groups analyzed than the Kurdish groups included in this study. Moreover, Circassians are also known as a loyal group to the Turkish Republic and they fear that any demands for cultural rights would estrange the political authorities.

For all the reasons accounted above, Circassians cannot articulate and assert their demands as strong as the Kurds do. Circassians do not demand to be recognized as a minority as they already feel that they are equal with the dominant group in many respects but have a different ethnic background. Concerning language rights, survival is the priority of the Circassian organizations and language is a primary aspect that should remain for the survival of their identity. Hence some precautions to be taken by the state in order to revitalize the languages are sufficient for the Circassian groups to solve the conflict over language rights. On the other hand, the Kurdish group developed a nationalist ideology, based on the distinctiveness of their identity from the mainstream identity in the society and their perceived collective disadvantage vis-a-vis the dominant group and other ethnic groups, bringing, in turn, the demand to be recognized and treated as equal citizens with all the other ethnic groups living in Turkey.

A Tower of Babel in a single country is considered as an unstable and problematic social reality by the political elites of the state in many countries in today's world. As much as it is a common case to be seen, it is also a situation that is responded in quite a number of ways by different states in the world. In one or another way, states get into a kind of status planning activity in order to regulate the status of the languages spoken in the society, and to determine the domains and the functions of their use. However, much of the status language planning activities tend to favor one or a few language(s) over the others for practical, political and ideological reasons, while leaving many languages spoken in the society with no officially recognized status and no rights to be used in various domains.

However, with an increasing frequency and intensity, many language groups around the world are mobilizing with the demands for their languages to be recognized officially to be used for certain functions. Language rights is a common issue in the political agenda of many ethnic groups and the states, for both the instrumental and symbolic values attached to them and the benefits that they entail. The perceptions of the language groups towards the use of language rights, and towards language in general, is central in shaping these demands, put forward by the elites of language groups.

This study has focused on the analysis and elaboration of the perceptions of language groups towards language rights, as I think that understanding the positions of language groups on the issue necessitates such an analysis. The first chapter is, hence, dedicated to such discussions over the centrality of perceptions in the positions of ethnic groups in language conflicts. It also includes some theoretical discussions over the importance and functions of language and language rights in the existing literature, as well as an introduction to the methodology used throughout the study. In the second chapter, I have further discussed the functions and the strategies of language planning, and have outlined the standards regarding language rights in the international law. In order to make a comparative analysis, I have also included brief outlines of the language policies in some countries, in this chapter, and finally, I have made a more in-depth, yet brief, analysis of the legal situation regarding status planning of the languages in Turkey. The international law standards, case studies of language planning activities in

some states and the legal situation in Turkey were all elaborated in order to provide a standing point to analyze and compare the demands of language groups vis-a-vis the actual and legal regulations on the language rights issue.

Where the demands of language groups over language rights and the policies of the state towards the status of languages seem to diverge, we can talk about a conflict over language rights. Hence, as perceptions play a central role in shaping the issues, the positions and the severity of conflict, it is important to analyze the perceptions of the language groups for a better understanding of these aspects of the conflict over language rights, where it exists. For studying the issue, I have chosen two large ethnic groups in Turkey as my case studies and analyzed the texts published by some groups in these communities in the form of a periodical or web-site. Thus, in the third chapter, I analyzed the perceptions of the groups in the Kurdish and Circassian communities, by elaborating on the issues of language, language policy and language rights in each of the publications of these groups.

By making a one-by-one analysis of the publications I have also aimed to reflect the differences of perception both between different political groups within the same community, but more importantly, between these two communities in general. These differences, were designed to provide an analysis of the second research question posed for this study; whether there is a difference between the perceptions of different language groups towards the same language policy and, accordingly, the positions of them in demanding language rights.

Perceptions of the issues are, to a significant extent, influenced by the perceptions of the groups about the parties to the conflict, the "self" and "other" identities. Identity, in the meantime, is constructed and reconstructed in a process whereby the historical relationship of the self and others play an important role. The needs and interests of the ethnic group, as well as its history and relationship with the other groups and the state are central to the formation of its identity and perceptions. Hence, throughout the third and fourth chapters, I have tried to demonstrate that there is a significant difference between the Circassian and Kurdish communities regarding their perceptions over and positions to the conflict that they experience with the state over language rights.

Consequently, the most striking difference between the perceptions of the elite groups in Kurdish and Circassian communities regarding the language policy and rights

is that while Kurdish groups perceive the issue as a matter of equality, the Circassians tend to see it as a matter of survival of the languages and the identity of the community. Such a difference could be partly explained by the character of the ethnic groups; while Circassians are a migrant group forced to move into the Ottoman lands in the 19th century, the Kurds are an indigenous community that have been historically settled in this geography. Another reason for this difference, however, is the relative deprivation of these two groups in the history of the Turkish Republic and their historical relationship with the state.

The fourth chapter of this study was devoted to an analysis of the positions and demands of these ethnic groups regarding language rights, which is in a close relation with their perceptions that I have analyzed in chapter three. Similar to the differences in the perceptions, there is a parallel difference between the positions of these groups regarding language rights, while the Circassians are focusing on the survival of the language that can be attained by the rights to use languages in education and broadcasting and the establishment of the facilities that would help developing the language, the Kurdish groups demand their language to be treated equally with the Turkish language in status, as well as the official recognition of the language and identity by the state. The positions analyzed, are also affected by the ability of the ethnic community to act for the recognition of the rights that are demanded. Hence the political organization and the development of a nationalist ideology among the Kurdish community set the demands more articulate and straightforward, the tone of the demands stronger, and the severity of the conflict higher, than in the case of the Circassian groups.

As different language groups have different needs, identities and interests, their perceptions over the language rights and the positions to language conflict varies accordingly. Hence, analyzing the perceptions and demands of language groups is crucial to understand why and how they react differently to the same language policy of the state. Such an understanding would make us to see and offer more appropriate language policy options in order to achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict for each language community that is experiencing such a conflict over language rights with the state.

The current language policy of the Turkish state, amended recently, is one example of a failure to accommodate the needs and demands of the Kurdish and Circassian groups. The private courses allowed were of little practical use for both of these communities and the right to use of the languages in national television channels cannot be implemented for the Circassian community. Therefore, when the community in question has limited resources and interest in learning and using the language, language policies should be designed accordingly, in order to revitalize the language and increase the language use within the community. Likewise, in cases where the speakers of a certain language are not concentrated in certain regions, the application of the territoriality principle in granting the language rights would put some speakers of that language at a certain disadvantage compared to the ones that live in the regions where the use of language is allowed.

Hence, designing a language policy necessitates an understanding of the needs and interests of each language group, while observing a balance between the equality and non-discrimination principles and the availability of resources necessary for the implementation of the language rights. In order to offer and design a policy that aims the accommodation of the demands of ethnic groups, both academics and political elites of the country should apply to the language groups themselves. Another task that should be realized by the academics would be, perhaps, the analysis of the differences between the perceptions and demands of various language groups in order to sort out the reasons behind the motivations of ethnic mobilization around linguistic rights.

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