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CONFLICT RESOLUTION ATTEMPTS IN TURKEY: INEFFICACY OF EQUAL ETHNIC REPRESENTATION*

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ABSTRACT

In last decades, the phenomenon of equal ethnic representation – electoral engineering – emerged as an important political strategy to prevent ethnic violence and to ensure societal stability in ethnic studies literature. To provide ethnic group representation, different kinds of electoral quotas have been adapted to electoral laws in about 30 countries. Though Turkey is not among these countries, Turkish electoral system – proportional representation – enables ethnic representation through non ethnic parties while limiting the representation through ethnic parties via the general threshold practice of 10 per cent.

Suprisingly, in 2015 general elections; 10 per cent threshold in electoral law served as mechanism for increasing share of votes of Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) – Kurdish Ethnic Party –, and that party attained the record number of chairs in the Turkish assembly. It was expected that more than two years lasting negotiations on Kurdish issue would be implemented easier than before because of the HDP electoral success, but on the contrary of the literature, cease fire was finalized just after the elections.

In this article, it is aimed to explain that equal ethnic representation do not always have the anticipated effects as argued in electoral engineering methods. A faction of ethnic movement may again turn to violence in order to implement its own agenda in case of a lack of consensus between subgroups.

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STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Equal ethnic representation is considered as a potential remedy to ethnic claims and the best tool to accommodate separatist movements without endangering territorial integrity and unity of the state. Turkey's electoral system – d'Hondt/proportional representation – based on integrative perspective, enables ethnic representation through non-ethnic parties. Nonetheless, the 10 per cent general threshold, enforced by the electoral law after the 1980 coup d'état as an obstacle to the rise of political Islam and separatist Kurdish nationalism, has always been central to the criticisms by the excluded societal groups. This level of threshold prevented the inclusion of the HDP and its antecedents, which captured about 5 per cent of the electorate.

In the light of existing data, it can be stated that the Kurdish population living in Turkey today constitutes 8-17.7 per cent of the total population. Thus, if Kurdish population ratio is expected to be the highest estimated value of 17.7 per cent, Kurdish ethnicity needs to be represented with 97 members in the Parliament – total number of representatives is 550 – in order to manage equal ethnic representation through electoral system. In 2015 general election, HDP increased its share of votes to 13 per cent because of the changing political behavior of voters and escalated the number of its MPs from 35 to 80. And, the Kurdish representation in the legislative reached a peak of more than 25 per cent including Kurdish MPs in non-ethnic parties. Though this success was expected to contribute to the ongoing negotiations on Kurdish issue, by contrast with the literature, it generated new violence motives, and brought about the end of ceasefire process.

Politicians and academicians have tried to explain this adverse effect through varying determinants. Some argued that the leading Justice and Development Party – Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Party) – preferred violent environment to gain nationalist voters while others claimed that international effects determined the re-emergence of violence. On the other hand, some explained this unanticipated result with inner dynamics of the Kurdish movement. This study focuses on clarifying the paramount influence of organizational discrepancy in the political and armed wing of Kurdish movement. It is argued hereby that the armed wing planned to resort back to violence in order to implement its own agenda.

With regard to the allegations casting governmental will as the reason for the return to violence, one can argue that the government resorted to use of force following the increasing PKK attacks. Military operations against PKK forces would not have been justified, if PKK did not perform terrorist actions. However, one might reasonably argue government's political ambitions resulting in nationalist policies might complicate a halt to the ongoing conflict for the time being. After the June 2015 election, governmental authorities such as Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister kept making pro-Resolution Process declarations to the media. The government received election results as a message conveying the public opinion to maintain the Resolution Process, and criticized HDP for failing to adopt clear attitude against the increasing PKK actions. Nonetheless, later on, HDP also called for the disarmament of PKK, which was the reason disrupting the Resolution Process.

Moreover, HDP formed a “provocation prevention committee” in Diyarbakir against terrorist attacks and voiced its desire several times to see a restart of the long-stalled Resolution Process. Unfortunately, PKK reacted to the calls for disarmament by reminding that they are the authority for decision-making. Senior PKK members contradicted various HDP declarations rendering HDP dysfunctional in the process.

The argument that the international structure triggered the conflictual environment is also unable to totally explain the end of ceasefire. A claim says that the battle against ISIL in Kobani/Ayn al-Arab and Turkish government’s alleged support to ISIL disrupted the Resolution Process. But on the contrary, the government allowed Peshmergas of KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) to cross into Kobani/Ayn al-Arab over Turkey to fight against ISIL, and moreover, the government decided to move the tomb of Suleiman Shah in Syria, which was surrounded by ISIL, to a safe site. These events were not confirming cited arguments about international structure. However, the need for armed forces in the struggle of Western countries against ISIL might have strengthened the position of PKK, and encouraged PKK to pursue higher ambitions such as autonomy, which might have contributed to the disruption of the Resolution Process. If this assumption were real, it would render the disagreement between HDP and PKK about the continuation of the Resolution Process meaningless; in other words, it implies that HDP, unlike PKK, was not aware of the international developments and of their bargaining power.

In a nutshell, in the light of the data presented above, armed and political wings of Kurdish issue had different agendas about the Resolution Process. HDP considered the increasing number of Kurdish representatives in the legislature after the June 2015 elections and the probability of success of the Resolution Process as an achievement, while the armed wing saw it as a threat to the “raison d’être” of PKK. All other arguments can be mentioned among inciting factors that interconnectedly led to the disruption of the Resolution Process, but the discrepancy between the political and armed wings of the Kurdish movement has the paramount influence on ending the Resolution Process.

Same determinant can also be observed in other ethnic cases using comparative method. In an attempt to emphasize the corresponding significance of the unitary authority in an ethnic conflict for peace attempts, the Sri Lanka and Kashmir disputes are revisited. Each ethnic conflict has its own particular roots, development process, parties and context. Sri Lanka and Kashmir conflicts having many differences from the Kurdish case overlap with it in terms of multipartite structure in ethnic movement. It is obvious to identify that the peace attempts in Sri Lanka and Kashmir failed generally due to multipartite structure in their organization and the disagreement among them. Consequently, as it is the case in the Sri Lanka and Kashmir disputes, a unitary authority representing ethnic movement is a basic one of the requirements to accommodate ethnic questions.

Keywords: ethnic representation, prevention of violence, resolution process, Turkey

TÜRKİYE'DE ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZÜM ÇABALARI: EŞİT ETNİK TEMSİLİYETİN ETKİSİZLİĞİ

ÖZET

Son birkaç onyıdır eşit etnik temsiliyet olgusu – seçim mühendisliği –, etnik şiddetin önlenmesi ve toplumsal istikrarın temin edilebilmesi amacıyla etnik çalışmalar literatüründe siyasi bir strateji olarak kendini göstermiştir. 30 kadar ülkenin seçim yasalarında, etnik grupların temsilinin sağlanabilmesi için farklı seçim kotası düzenlemeleri uygulanmaktadır. Türkiye, bu ülkelerden biri olmamakla birlikte; Türk seçim sistemi – orantılı temsil –, etnik partiler vasıtasıyla etnik temsiliyeti yüzde 10'luk baraj ile sınırlandırır iken, etnik olmayan partiler ile etnik temsiliyeti mümkün kılmaktadır.

2015 genel seçimlerinde sürpriz bir şekilde; yüzde 10'luk seçim barajı Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP) oy oranının artmasını sağlayan bir mekanizma görevi görmüş ve partinin Meclis'teki sandalye sayısı rekor düzeye ulaşmıştır. HDP'nin bu başarısı sayesinde, Kürt konusu ile ilgili iki yıldan fazla süredir devam eden görüşmelerin daha da hızlanacağı sanılmış, ancak mevcut literatürün aksine seçimlerden hemen sonra çatışmasızlık sona ermiştir.

Bu makalede, eşit etnik temsiliyetin seçim mühendisliği metodlarında iddia edildiği gibi her zaman beklenen sonuçları vermeyeceği açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu kapsamda; devam eden çatışmasızlık ortamı ve fazla etnik temsil oranlarına rağmen, etnik hareket içindeki herhangi bir fraksiyonun kendi ajandasını uygulamak amacıyla şiddete tekrar yönelebileceği ileri sürülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: etnik temsil, şiddetin önlenmesi, barış süreci, Türkiye

Introduction

Power-sharing is an instrument to enable democratic stability in societies divided along ethnic or religious lines. While vertical power sharing models such as self-governance, autonomy, federal states were, rightly or wrongly, seen as the secessionists' stepping stone towards independence, equal ethnic representation is considered to be a potential remedy to ethnic claims and the best tool to accommodate separatist movements without endangering territorial integrity and unity of the state (Wolff and Weller, 2008: p.1).

Some scholars assume that intergroup conflicts – whether violent or nonviolent – can be accommodated, if such societal groups based on religion, ethnicity, race, caste, age, gender and profession etc. are represented proportionately in legislature. In order to provide equal ethnic group representation, different kinds of electoral quotas – nationally mandated or party-based – and reserved seat policies – seats to ethnic parties, groups in parties, special electoral districts – have been adapted to electoral laws in about 30 countries (Krook and Zetterberg, 2014: pp. 3-11). Main goal of these arrangements is equal engagement of social groups in politics. This purpose might be accomplished via different electoral systems like Lijphart's or Horowitz's models¹. On the other

¹ Diamond argues it is inconvenient to implement majoritarian electoral systems in the formation of the legislature in countries where deep ethnic division exists and political exclusion of any of the groups should be avoided. Arthur Lewis'

hand, in some countries like Turkey, equal ethnic representation is maintained through informal modes of inclusion.

Turkey's electoral system – d'Hondt/proportional representation – based on integrative perspective, enables ethnic representation through non-ethnic parties. Nonetheless, the 10 per cent general threshold, enforced by the electoral law after the 1980 coup d'état as an obstacle to the rise of political Islam and separatist Kurdish nationalism, has always been central to the criticisms by the excluded societal groups. This level of threshold prevented the inclusion of the HDP and its antecedents, which captured about 5 per cent of the electorate. In 2015 general election, HDP increased its share of votes to 13 per cent by the virtue of the changing political behavior of voters. Though this success was expected to contribute to the ongoing negotiations on Kurdish issue, by contrast with the literature, it generated new violence motives, and brought about the end of ceasefire process.

Politicians and academicians have tried to explain this adverse effect through varying determinants. Some argued that the leading Justice and Development Party – Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Party) – preferred violent environment to gain nationalist voters while others claimed that international effects determined the re-emergence of violence. On the other hand, some explained this unanticipated result with inner dynamics of the Kurdish movement. Which among these alternatives determines the end of ceasefire can be seen as a blindside of power sharing strategy. In this context; this study focuses on the reasons of failed Resolution attempt in 2015 and it is argued hereby that the organizational discrepancy in Kurdish movement over the Resolution process caused to resort back to violence.

As such, this paper initially examines the Kurdish representation before 2015 general elections. The second section comprises the increasing share of votes of HDP, and the reason(s) for the re-exacerbation of the violent environment in contrast with the existing literature. In this context, the third section addressed the importance of disunity in the Kurdish movement as a primary determinant. The final section revisits the Sri Lanka and Kashmir disputes in an attempt to emphasize the corresponding significance of the unitary authority in an ethnic conflict for peace attempts.

However, non-ethnic policies of the Turkish state restricted this study from using exact numbers of ethnic groups and representation rates in the legislature, and therefore estimates about the numbers of ethnicities based on scientific investigations are preferred in this study.

With reference to the talks with the Kurdish group, various titles including “Kurdish opening”, “democratic opening”, “Imrali process” or “peace process” have been used, but it is preferred to use in this study only the term “Resolution Process” for the sake of clarity.

Field research for the study comprises archival research of primary and secondary resources, which include official and unofficial statements, news accounts, analyses by journalists and scholars.

study on Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, Arend Lijphart's study on the Netherlands and Benjamin Reilly's study on Estonia and Northern Ireland prompted them to argue that divided societies need some form of Proportional Representation to give ethnicities adequate representation, discourage parochialism and accommodate ethnic tensions. They also state that the majoritarian election systems cause the majority to be overrepresented and entail ethnic instability; therefore proportional representation systems should be preferred. However, Horowitz, integrationist liberal democrat, claims that the majority is also constantly represented more powerful in the proportional election systems, the candidates try to win elections using the ethnic sensitivities and AV (Alternative vote) system is a better model in terms of the representation of the groups and provides more moderate candidates of all ethnicities to win the elections. Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 104; Arend Lijphart, “The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation”, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 90, no. 2, June 1996, p. 261; Benjamin Reilly, *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 20-21; Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 2nd ed., University of California Press, London, 2000, pp. 646-651.

Kurdish Population and Their Representation in the Parliament

Turkish Republic comprising different ethnic groups in its territory suffers violent ethnic – Kurdish – conflict since 1984 supported covertly by some western countries (Onal, Ozdag, 2016: p.65, 66). Although the demands vary according to the fractions in the Kurdish movement, ranging from cultural autonomy to secession, Turkish Republic as a unitary state tries to accommodate ethnic claims by including them into politics with non-ethnic approach, which is the basic official strategy since its foundation. This model is based on individual citizenship that ignores all ethnic origins in public sphere, and aims at confining ethnic and religious identities to private sphere. For that reason, there is no official data about the numbers of the ethnic groups in Turkey even today.

In order to overcome the lack of relevant data, academicians and researchers working on ethnicity issues have usually based their studies on some census-questions such as nationality, languages, etc. However, language does not reflect exact population of an ethnic group; mother tongue is supposed to provide an approximate estimation about the size of an ethnicity. In addition, although the results of the question about mother tongue in censuses from 1927 to 1965 were released officially, that date onwards, no information was released about the language population, and the question was removed from the census studies after 1985.

According to precise counting results of 1927 census, 1,184,446 people were identified to talk Kurdish as their mother tongue among a general population of 11,777,814 (Tamer and Çavlin, 2004: pp. 73-88). In 1965 census, the population of Kurdish mother tongue reached 2,219,502 among a general population of 31,391,421 (Buran, 2011: pp.43-57). Generally, rate of the Kurdish population to the general population ranged from 6.6 to 9.1 per cent according to the results of censuses carried out until 1965 (Çay, 2010: p.31). Projections of these results to the year 2013 on the basis of regional population growth rates in Turkey indicate the Kurdish population ratio as 8 to 11 per cent (Güzel, 2013).

Apart from the projections based on past census data, academic researches carried out by the Institute of Population Studies of Hacettepe University are another reliable source for scholars. According to the Institute's 1993 and 2003 Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) data, Kurdish language population constitute 13 and 14.4 per cent of the general population in Turkey (Koç, 2006; Zeyneloğlu and others, 2011). Another source about the numbers of ethnic groups is the 2011 research "Perceptions and Expectations Survey in Kurdish Issue" by KONDA Research and Consultancy Center. The survey revealed that 13.5 per cent of the population in Turkey feel themselves as being of Kurdish origin, and the size of Kurdish language population was 12.7 percent (KONDA, 2011). The same center found out the number of people feeling themselves as being of Kurdish origin to increase to 13,400,000 in 2013 (17.7 per cent) (Erdem, 2013).

Table 1. Kurdish Population Percentage in Turkey

Type of Research	Censuses Held by Governments from 1927 to 1965	Projections of Past Census Results to 2013	Institute of Population Studies (Hacettepe University)	KONDA Research and Consultancy Center
Kurdish Mother Tongue Population Percentage	6.6 – 9.1	8 - 11	13 – 14.4	13.5 – 17.7 Q-Who feel themselves Kurdish origin?

In the light of these data, it can be stated that the Kurdish population living in Turkey today constitutes 8-17.7 per cent of the total population. Thus, if Kurdish population ratio is expected to be the highest estimated value of 17.7 per cent, Kurdish ethnicity needs to be represented with 97 members in the Parliament – total number of representatives is 550 – in order to manage equal ethnic representation through electoral system.

Kurdish ethnicity was represented only through non-ethnic political parties until 1995. Later on, People's Democracy Party (HADEP) and Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) were established with a claim to represent the Kurdish ethnicity, but state authorities considered them as the political wing of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK); these parties failed to surpass the nation-wide threshold in the 1995, 1999 and 2002 general elections respectively, and to get represented in the Turkish Parliament. Nevertheless, those Kurdish electors who used their votes for non-ethnic parties were represented.

In order to overcome the political impasse, the candidates of these ethnic parties circumvented nation-wide threshold by running as 'independents' in their respective constituencies since 2007. The 'independents' constituted the party-group and the fourth voting bloc after entering the Parliament (IDEA, 2012: p.189). In 2011 general election, 35 candidates were elected as independents, and constituted the group of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP).

Table 2. Share of Votes of Kurdish Ethnic Parties Claiming to Represent the Kurdish Ethnicity

	1995	1999	2002	2007	2011
HADEP	4.2 (-)	4.7 (-)			
DEHAP			6.2 (-)		
INDEPENDENT (DTP-BDP)				5.2 (26)	6.6 (35)

Turkish Statistical Institute, "General Elections: 1923-2011" (TÜİK, 2012: pp.93-95).

*The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of deputies in the Parliament.

Meanwhile, other non-ethnic political parties also kept providing seats for their candidates of Kurdish origin. According to the announcements of the AK Party leadership and parliamentary minutes (Parliamentary Minutes, 2007), AK Party had 75 MPs of Kurdish origin in the Parliament. Additionally, as they put into effect the rule of primary election within the party before general elections, the Republican People's Party (CHP) can be expected to have at least proportionate number of Kurdish MPs among its overall MPs. Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), a Turkish nationalist party, also had representatives of Kurdish origin, but, this study preferred to ignore them in order to avoid speculation on the data about the number of Kurdish representatives and to ensure some consolidation between them and the MPs of Turkish origin within BDP.

In the light of the above-given assumptions, there were at least 137 (35 BDP, 75 AK Party, 27 CHP) MPs of Kurdish origin, approximately 24.9 per cent, in the Parliament until the 2015 June general election. This percentage is about 7 points higher than the highest estimated Kurdish population ratio of 17.7 per cent.

June 2015 Election and Over-representation of the Kurdish Ethnicity

The 10 per cent general threshold, enforced by the electoral law after the 1980 coup d'état as an obstacle to the rise of political Islam and separatist Kurdish nationalism, has always been central to the criticisms by the excluded societal groups. This level of threshold prevented the inclusion of the HDP and its antecedents in politics actively; meanwhile, the independent candidacy strategy of BDP neutralized this threshold. Before the 2015 general election, HDP made a public declaration

about taking part in the election as a party, not as independents. HDP decision makers wanted to maximize their seats in the Parliament in order to increase the bargaining power in talks with the government (Turkish Daily News, 6-7 June 2015: p.3). This political maneuver could leave the party outside the Parliament, but also had the potential to carry HDP's share of vote over 10 per cent thanks to the Resolution Process.

The Resolution Process had been officially carried out since the announcements of the government and Kurdish political decision makers in Diyarbakir in March 2013. After HDP's decision to take part in the election as a party, electorate perceived it as a threat to the Resolution Process fearing that HDP would not surpass the nation-wide threshold and that this would lead to the resurgence of violence. Moreover, some electors from different parties voted for HDP in order to prevent AK Party from having qualified majority in the Parliament if HDP failed to surpass the 10 per cent threshold. This approach encouraged some electors from other political parties to vote for HDP and to guarantee stability in the country.

After the June 2015 election, the ruling party lost its parliamentary majority, and no party was able to form the government alone. The most critical election result was HDP's success in exceeding the 10 per cent threshold (Akyol, 9 June 2015: p.5). Following the achievement of 13 per cent share of votes, HDP escalated the number of its MPs from 35 to 80. And, the Kurdish representation in the legislative reached a peak of more than 25 per cent if the decrease in the number of the AK Party's Kurdish MPs is estimated to be less than HDP's new 45 MPs in 2015 assembly in accordance with election analysis².

According to the electoral engineering literature, such an increase in ethnic representation should appease the ethnic tension, which means the election results should have accelerated the ongoing peace process and advanced it into the final stage. However, to the contrary, HDP's success brought about the resurrection of the violence.

Only two days later, the head of IHYA-DER Association – an Islamic charity –, Aytac Baran, was killed near his home in Diyarbakir, and his lawyer stated that Baran had been receiving threats from the outlawed PKK members, and blamed PKK for the murder (Turkish Daily News, 10 June 2015: p.2). On July 12, there were clashes in Ardahan's Gole County. Authorities accused PKK of opening fire on gendarmerie forces. Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), a supra-organization of PKK, issued a statement explicating that construction of military outposts, dams and roads by the Turkish government for military purposes had violated the ceasefire. On July 11, they declared the end of the Resolution Process and would target the construction of military dams in the region (Turkish Daily News, 13 July 2015: p.3). PKK militants also opened fire on gendarmerie forces in Adiyaman, and a soldier was killed, another two were wounded (Turkish Daily News, 21 July 2015, p.3). On July 22, two police officers in Sanliurfa's Ceylanpinar County were found dead in the house they shared, which marked the turning point in terms of the Resolution Process, because Turkish Armed Forces subsequently attacked PKK main base in Kandil, which represented the bilateral termination of the Resolution Process. PKK took responsibility for the attack, saying the men were punished for their links with the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), and it was a response to the

² According to June 2015 Election Analysis of the KONDA Research and Consultancy, only half of the shifting votes to HDP comes from pro-AK Party Kurdish electors. The source of HDP's success is mainly new electors who did not vote in 2011 general elections since they found it impossible, an independent candidate would win the elections outside the mostly Kurdish populated electoral districts. KONDA, *Polls and Voter Analysis of June 7th*, 18 June 2015, p. 33-35. Especially in the east of Turkey with high Kurdish density, the vote shift or new electors do not change the overall Kurdish representation, since candidates of all political parties in the districts are of Kurdish origin. But in other cities of Turkey such as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Mersin, Adana, Mugla, Hatay, Malatya etc., the increase in HDP votes (referred to in the analysis) provide additional Kurdish representation in national assembly.

July 20 suicide bombing in Suruc by an Islamist sympathizer that left 32 dead and around 100 injured (Turkish Daily News, 24 July 2015, p.4).

In brief, even though the Kurdish ethnicity began to be overrepresented in the Parliament compared to its population rate in the aftermath of the June election, in contrast to the literature, this drove the Resolution Process towards a conflictual environment instead of facilitating the ongoing talks. Politicians and academicians set forth various justifications for the resurrection of violence, which might be gathered under three main groups. Some have asserted that the decline in the ruling party's share of votes compelled them to follow nationalist policies and use force deviously. Another group has argued that the international structure triggered the conflict process and it could not be explained by internal factors. Lastly, the dispute between the armed and political wings of the Kurdish movement was suggested as a reason for the resurrection of armed struggle (Akyol, 2015). There are signs that all these factors might have an interconnected influence on the re-emergence of violence, but one played a paramount role in ending the ongoing Resolution Process.

Divergence Among the Armed and Political Wings in the Kurdish Movement with respect to Agenda

There have been historically multiple attempts for conflict prevention in Turkey such as Ozal's in 1993, Erbakan's in 1996 and Erdogan's in 2006, all of which failed for different reasons. These new talks started as early as November 2012, and three stages to follow were identified by both parties. The first stage was supposed to end by July 2013, but PKK's withdrawal from Turkey, a part of the first stage, was not completed according to the state authorities, and therefore the parties did not reach an agreement on the implementation of the stages. After this point, the Resolution Process slowed down, but did not end (Lokman, 2013: p.4). The government took such important steps as legalizing education in mother tongue, approval of using Kurdish names for villages, establishing official mechanisms for Resolution Process such as the "Wise People" committee and parliamentary research commission, as well as legal arrangement for "Ending Terror and Strengthening Social Integration" and discharging detainees. There were also some terrorist incidents during this process, but it was delineated by the PKK as actions of its extremist extensions, and ignored by the government representatives as well (BBC, 2013; Aljazeera, 2013). Such behaviors are crucial indicators of the willingness of both parties for the Resolution Process.

With regard to the allegations casting governmental will as the reason for the return to violence, one can argue that the government resorted to use of force following the increasing PKK attacks. Military operations against PKK forces would not have been justified, if PKK did not perform terrorist actions. However, one might reasonably argue government's political ambitions resulting in nationalist policies might complicate a halt to the ongoing conflict for the time being. After the June 2015 election, governmental authorities such as Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister kept making pro-Resolution Process declarations to the media. The government received election results as a message conveying the public opinion to maintain the Resolution Process, and criticized HDP for failing to adopt clear attitude against the increasing PKK actions (Turkish Daily News, 4-5 July 2015 and 9 July 2015). Nonetheless, later on, HDP also called for the disarmament of PKK, which was the reason disrupting the Resolution Process (Turkish Daily News, 16 July 2015). Moreover, HDP formed a "provocation prevention committee" in Diyarbakir against terrorist attacks and voiced its desire several times to see a restart of the long-stalled Resolution Process (Turkish Daily News, 13-14 June 2015).

Unfortunately, PKK reacted to the calls for disarmament by reminding that they are the authority for decision-making. Senior PKK members contradicted various HDP declarations rendering HDP dysfunctional in the process. They rejected the "lent votes" issue, arguing that their potential was about 20 per cent of the electorate, and condemning HDP's proposal to be "open to all

coalition” as “being a party of the system”³. The isolation of Ocalan, who is serving a life sentence, was also declared as a cause of the war in itself (Turkish Daily News, 17 July 2015). It was apparent that all these statements conflict with HDP’s approach to the Kurdish issue. HDP later admitted its inability to make PKK consider their calls as an instruction (Turkish Daily News, 14 July 2015). This sudden divergence generated multiple symptoms of sharp disagreement on Resolution Process between the political and armed wings.

The argument that the international structure triggered the conflictual environment is also unable to totally explain the end of ceasefire. A claim says that the battle against ISIL in Kobani/Ayn al-Arab and Turkish government’s alleged support to ISIL disrupted the Resolution Process. But on the contrary, the government allowed Peshmergas of KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) to cross into Kobani/Ayn al-Arab over Turkey to fight against ISIL, and moreover, the government decided to move the tomb of Suleiman Shah in Syria, which was surrounded by ISIL (Kaya, Ozalp, 2015: p.296), to a safe site. These events were not confirming cited arguments about international structure. However, the need for armed forces in the struggle of Western countries against ISIL might have strengthened the position of PKK, and encouraged PKK to pursue higher ambitions such as autonomy, which might have contributed to the disruption of the Resolution Process. If this assumption were real, it would render the disagreement between HDP and PKK about the continuation of the Resolution Process meaningless; in other words, it implies that HDP, unlike PKK, was not aware of the international developments and of their bargaining power.

In a nutshell, in the light of the data presented above, armed and political wings of Kurdish issue had different agendas about the Resolution Process (Cumhuriyet, 9 November 2015, p.14). HDP considered the increasing number of Kurdish representatives in the legislature after the June 2015 elections and the probability of success of the Resolution Process as an achievement,⁴ while the armed wing saw it as a threat to the “*raison d’être*” of PKK. All other arguments can be mentioned among inciting factors that interconnectedly led to the disruption of the Resolution Process, but the discrepancy between the political and armed wings of the Kurdish movement has the paramount influence on ending the Resolution Process.

Corresponding Cases: the Sri Lanka and Kashmir Disputes

Each ethnic conflict has its own particular roots, development process, parties and context. Within the frame of Adam Przeworski’s and Henry Teune’s comparison method “Most Different Systems Design”, Sri Lanka and Kashmir conflicts having many differences from the Kurdish case overlap with it in terms of multipartite structure in ethnic movement.

Historical causes of the Sri Lankan case can be found in the dispute over self-determination between the Sinhalese in the south (Sinhalese-speaking Buddhists) and Tamils in the north and the east (Tamil-speaking Hindus). After the termination of the British colonial rule in 1948, until when Tamils were the privileged and ruling ethnicity, Sri Lanka emerged as an independent state under the control of the majority, the Sinhalese – 74 per cent of the population Sinhalese, 11.1 per cent of the population North-Eastern Tamils, 4.1 per cent Up-Country Tamils (Tamils of Indian origin, known as also plantation Tamils), 9.3 per cent of the population Muslims (Report of International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, 2016: p.1) –.

³ Upon the unexpected success of HDP in June 2015 election, some concluded that some electors from different parties voted for HDP in order to prevent AK Party from reaching qualified majority in the Parliament, if HDP failed to surpass the 10 percent threshold. These votes were entitled “lent votes” saying by the HDP leader Demirtas “We will not let down those votes who lent their votes to us”, Akif Beki, “How Will the HDP Bring Peace to Turkey”, *Turkish Daily News*, 17 June 2016, p. 5

⁴ The head of the HDP announced on the night of election day their being of Turkey Party because they received votes out of all segments of society. Taha, Akyol, “The National Will”, *Turkish Daily News*, 9 June 2015, p. 5

Religion sometimes overlaps and sometimes diverges from ethnic ties. Just like the subgroups among the Sinhalese, there are at least four distinct groups among the Tamils, including Colombo Tamils, Muslim Tamils, Hindu Tamils and Christian Tamils (Kleinfeld, 2003: p. 108).

After the independence, decades of cultural and political repression and violence carried out by the Sinhalese led to the commencement of Tamils' insurgency in the country (Jeyapal, 2013: p.559). The riots of the Tamil groups started in 1970s. Upon the growing discontent of the minorities, electoral system was changed from a first-past-the-post to proportional representation in 1978 (Haniffa, 2011: p.51). But it did not prevent the escalation of violence.

Large-scale violent struggle of numerous Tamil groups launched in 1983. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rose as the only organization refusing each democratic settlement falling short of independency. During entire conflictual process against central governance, LTTE eliminated any structure which it deemed an obstacle to its target. It also branded all other Tamil groups as traitors and implemented attacks against them (Lilja, 2011: p.321). Since the ceasefire in 2001, LTTE have killed at least twenty Tamil politicians and party workers (Ross, 2004: p.16).

This separatist movement has been interspersed with five attempts – The Thimpu Talks, The Indo-Lanka Accord, The Talks in 1989, 1994 and 2002 – at conflict resolution (Stokke, 2009: p.935). Each failed peace process was carried out with decentralization bids, but concluded with recentralization again.

Current electoral system provides minority political parties such as Ceylon Workers Congress representing Tamils of Indian origin with the opportunity to play an influential role in politics since they have had sufficient seats to form a coalition government through negotiations with the ruling party (Report of International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, 2016: p.3). Some territorial decentralized designs were also introduced to Tamils by Sri Lanka government in 1987. Through the adoption of the 13th amendment to the Constitution, they earned the right to establish provincial councils, and to merge north and east regions of the country under single unit of North East Province (NEP). However, LTTE argued that NEP was granted limited political autonomy and little power in comparison to their demands. Following the dissensus, intensification of conflicts in 1990 resulted in complete dysfunction of the NEP council and centralization of power again (Schou, 2014: p.308). Yet, military success of LTTE brought extensive areas under its control and helped create dual state structure (Stokke, 2006: p.1022).

The final attempt for peace in 2001, which included Norway as the mediator in the talks, resulted in withdrawal of LTTE from the negotiation table in 2003, but four months later LTTE introduced its own proposal for the east and north Sri Lanka (McGregor, 2006: p.47). For the first time, LTTE was accepting a power sharing model. LTTE leader's statement about positive approach to federalism entailed repercussions among military commanders, but he could not foresee the divisive impact of federal solution within LTTE and subsequent reversion of commanders back to militaristic means (Lilja, 2011: p.324). Following the peace talks, new militant groups emerged within LTTE (Brun, 2008: p.403). The most prominent breakaway faction was Karuna's group in the east, named Tamileelam Makkal Viduthalai Puligal (TMVP) (Goodhand, Clem and Korf, 2009: p.685). Even though the federal system meant more than any equal ethnic representation model in a unitary state in terms of self-determination, it created a deep split within Tamils' struggle and brought about the end of subsequent peace talks.

Probable achievements of Tamils also led to adversary voices among Muslims living in the east of NEP, who constituted roughly 20 per cent of the NEP population, but made up 30 per cent of the east region. Besides, Sinhalese minority in the east also opposed to any demands of LTTE about merging the regions and self-governance. Just like the case in Turkey, different agendas of the subgroups in LTTE harmed the peace process.

Negative effects of disunity in the ethnic movement over the prevention of violence can be observed in Kashmir issue as well. Following the division of British India in 1947, India and Pakistan emerged as sovereign states with a contested region between them, namely Jammu and Kashmir (JK). JK, an old princely state since long before the British rule, consists of different sub-regions currently administered by India – Jammu, Ladakh, Kashmir Valley, 45 per cent of the territory –, by Pakistan – Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, 35 per cent of the territory – and by China – Aksai Chin, 20 per cent of the territory –.

The origins of the Kashmir dispute lie mostly in Kashmir valley controlled by India. Its population was predominantly Muslims – over 90 percent – with minorities of Sikhs and Pandits (Mathur, 2014: p.7). Even in the entire JK, Muslims constituted 77 per cent of total population according to 1941 census results (Hussain, 2009: p.1008). Subsequently, over five million Kashmiri Muslims continually migrated since 1947 by force (and some voluntary) during conflicts and insurgencies in 1947, 1965, 1971, 1989 and 1999. These refugees were mostly settled in Azad Kashmir controlled by Pakistan (Zutshi, 2015: p.270), thus, the overall religious demography in JK did not change significantly.

That unique nature of the region was recognized by India and, with the Article 370 in the Constitution, most governing powers were granted to the Kashmiris except for some nation-wide powers such as foreign affairs, defense and communications. Though Indian federal system had tendencies to unitary state structure, Kashmiris had their own constitution, assembly, flag (Cenoy, 2006: p.24) and Prime Minister, which reflects the fact that the JK was more sovereign region compared to other constituencies in India (Pandita, 2015: p.127, 136). But these concessions did not prevent the war in 1965. In terms of ethnic/religious representation, JK has had 6 reserved seats in Indian Parliament – Lok Sabha – since 1967, and in the JK assembly, 46 seats for mostly Muslim populated Kashmir Valley, 37 seats for 30 per cent Muslim populated Jammu, 4 seats for Ladakh were reserved out of total 87 seats (Chowdhary, 2015: p.171). This reserved seats policy also failed to neutralize the conflictual environment in JK region. Pandita's following statement is also a confession of inefficacy of political inclusion when read backward.

“...in the general election during the year 1996, the period when Kashmir Valley was on boil with gun culture, social unrest was at its peak, law and order problem was around, but masses showed their resolution and participated in the democratic process of the country, something unbelievable, which may not go well among the hardliners of Kashmir, but a harsh reality.” (Pandita, 2015: p.136)

Many reasons have been brought forward for the ongoing violence, like oppression of the Indian army, human rights abuses, unjust accession act of JK into the Indian union, existing Line of Control – territories controlled by countries –, United Nations' unfulfilled resolution about plebiscite in JK, and so on. Doubtlessly, lack of unity among ethnic/religious movement is at least as important as the above-mentioned factors.

The last peace process between Pakistan and India began in 2006, when both governments decided to take Confidence Building Measures regarding the Kashmir dispute. Expectations for the accommodation of conflict were on the rise when Pakistan and India reached a framework for settlement in 2007. But the solution of Kashmir question halted due to the Mumbai attack by militant groups in November 2008, though Pakistan had already banned them and dismantled their networks (Fayaz, 2016: p.72).

Ethnic policies in Kashmir have been carried out by various formations, e.g. JK Liberation Front, People's League, Haji Group, Al Barq, Al Fateh, Hizbul Mujahedin, Al Jihad, Jamaat-e-Islami, Tehreek-e-Hurriyat JK, Lashkar-e Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Muhammed, pro-Indian Muslims' National Conference. The formation of “All Parties Hurriyat Conference” alone includes 7 parties

and 20 groups of Kashmir. Unfortunately, other parties of the JK conflict such as India – Congress Party, Bharatiya Janata Party, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh –, Pakistan – Government, Army/National Intelligence, Conservative Parties – and international actors – UN, USA, China, Russia, England – are also divided in themselves with different agendas (Tavares, 2008: p.278, 279; Fayaz, 2016, p.70, 75). From 1947 to 2008, documented key proposals made by above-mentioned parties exceed 60 copies, which roughly comprise plebiscite, condominium, confederation, partition and independence with changing levels, borders and scope (Yusuf and Najam, 2009: p.1504; Fai, 2012: p.9; Hussain, 2009: p.1011). That fragmentation inside parties has been one of the factors threatening each attempt at peace.

Conclusion

Turkish electoral system with non-ethnic approach provides equal ethnic representation to meet the claims of ethnicities without endangering its territorial integrity and unity of the state. In this context, still existing Kurdish separatist movement in Turkey is unique and the most resistant ethnic problem with its violent content.

Kurdish ethnicity had been represented only through non-ethnic political parties until 2002. Besides individual candidacy from non-ethnic parties, forming alliance with them was also another way of ethnic representation such as the acquisition of 22 seats among 88 won by the electoral alliance of Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) and People's Labor Party (HEP) in 1991 legislative elections. Later on, Kurdish candidates overcame the nation-wide threshold, which prevented their representation through ethnic parties, by running as 'independents' in their respective constituencies since 2007. As for the 2011 general election, 35 candidates were elected as independents, and have constituted a group of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in the Parliament. There were at least 137 MPs of Kurdish origin, approximately 24.9 per cent, in the Parliament until the 2015 June general election. Following the achievement of 13 per cent share of votes in the 2015 June election, HDP increased the number of its MPs up to 80, and Kurdish representation in legislative reached a peak of more than 25 per cent, based on the increase in the number of MPs compared to the previous legislature.

However, contrary to the literature, this increase turned the Resolution Process into a conflictual environment instead of facilitating the ongoing talks. Various justifications have been put forward by politicians and academicians. Some have asserted that the decline in the ruling party's share of votes compelled them to follow nationalist policies and use force deviously. Another group has argued that the international structure triggered the conflict process and it could not be explained by internal factors. Lastly, the dispute between the armed and political wings of the Kurdish movement was suggested as a reason for the resurrection of armed struggle.

Such factors as international structure and nationalist policies might have partial influence on the re-emergence and endurance of violence, but it is irrefutable that different agendas of the armed and political wings of the Kurdish issue over the Resolution Process played the main role in the return back to violence. HDP considered the increasing number of Kurdish representatives in the legislature after the June 2015 elections and the probability of success of the Resolution Process as an achievement,⁵ while the armed wing saw it as a threat to the "*raison d'être*" of PKK. All other arguments can be mentioned among inciting factors that interconnectedly led to the disruption of the Resolution Process, but the discrepancy between the political and armed wings of the Kurdish movement has the paramount influence on ending the Resolution Process. Consequently, as it is the case in the Sri Lanka and Kashmir disputes, a unitary authority representing ethnic movement is a basic one of the requirements to accommodate ethnic questions.

⁵ The head of the HDP announced on the night of election day their being of Turkey Party because they received votes out of all segments of society. Taha, Akyol, "The National Will", *Turkish Daily News*, 9 June 2015, p. 5

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