ENCOUNTERS AND PERCEPTIONS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON THE LOCAL AND KURDISH RESIDENTS OF LÜLEBURGAZ

by

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ABSTRACT

ENCOUNTERS AND PERCEPTIONS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON THE LOCAL AND KURDISH RESIDENTS OF LÜLEBURGAZ

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Keywords: *intergroup relations, intergroup contact, social categorization.*

This study investigated the nature of the intergroup relationship and intergroup contact between the local and Kurdish residents of Lüleburgaz. Lüleburgaz was chosen due to the increasing number of Kurdish population in the city. Local and Kurdish residents living in the selected neighborhoods of Lüleburgaz were interviewed. The findings revealed that intergroup relations in Lüleburgaz are shaped around a social hierarchy, where the positions of the social groups are determined by the local people. In this social hierarchy, it was seen that the Kurdish population is placed at the lowest level. As for the intergroup contact, it was discovered that there is an asymmetry between the local people and the Kurdish residents in terms of the generalization of the positive contact outcomes. Local people tend to generalize the outcomes of the negative contact while accepting positive interaction with a Kurdish person as an exception. On the contrary, Kurdish residents are more likely to generalize positive contact outcomes. It was found that this asymmetry between the local and Kurdish residents stems from the asymmetry in social group status as well as the influence of the long-standing Kurdish question in Turkey and the official discourse which shape the perceptions of the people and create stereotypes that are difficult to challenge. In the end, a more structured intergroup contact setting and a reform in the official discourse and the media representations of the Kurdish population and culture is recommended for the generalization of positive intergroup contact outcomes.

ÖZET

KARŞILAŞMALAR VE ALGILAR: LÜLEBURGAZ'DA YAŞAYAN YERLİ NÜFUS VE KÜRT NÜFUSA YÖNELİK BETİMLEYİCİ BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Anahtar Kelimeler: *gruplar arası ilişki, gruplar arası temas, sosyal sınıflandırma.*

Bu çalışmada, Lüleburgaz'da yaşayan yerli nüfus ve Kürt nüfus arasındaki gruplar arası ilişkinin ve gruplar arası temasın yapısı incelenmiştir. Lüleburgaz, şehirdeki Kürt nüfusunda görülen artış nedeniyle seçilmiştir. Lüleburgaz'ın belirlenen mahallelerinde yaşayan yerli ve Kürt sakinler ile görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu görüşmelerde, Lüleburgaz'daki gruplar arası ilişkinin bir sosyal hiyerarşi doğrultusunda şekillendiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu hiyerarşide grupların konumlarının yerli nüfus tarafından belirlendiği görülmüştür. Ayrıca, Kürt nüfusun bu sosyal hiyerarşide en alt konuma yerleştirildiği gözlenmiştir. Gruplar arası temas ile ilgili olarak, yerli nüfus ve Kürt nüfus arasında, pozitif temas deneyiminin genellenmesi bakımından bir asimetri olduğu keşfedilmiştir. Yerli nüfus, negatif temas deneyimini tüm Kürt nüfusuna genellerken, pozitif temas deneyimini bir istisna olarak görmektedir. Buna karşılık, Kürt nüfus pozitif temas deneyimini genelleme eğilimi göstermektedir. Yerli ve Kürt nüfus arasındaki bu asimetrinin, gruplar arasındaki statü farkının yanı sıra uzun yıllardır Türkiye'de devam eden Kürt sorunundan ve kişilerin algılarını şekillendiren ve yıkılması zor stereotipler oluşturan resmi söylemden kaynaklandığı görülmüştür. Sonuç olarak, pozitif gruplar arası temas deneyiminin genellenmesini kolaylaştırmak için daha fazla yapılandırılmış bir temas ortamı ile Kürt halkı ve kültürüne yönelik resmi söylemin ve medya temsilinin değiştirilmesi gerekliliği vurgulanmıştır.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to explore the nature of the intergroup relationship and intergroup contact between the local and Kurdish residents of Lüleburgaz. Its aim is to understand around which factors are the social groups shaped and whether the presence or absence of contact between these groups has an influence on the perceptions of the members of the social groups.

As a result of the recent attempts for the resolution of Kurdish question in Turkey, Kurdish question and conflict resolution strategies of the state have become a popular topic around the country. Within the scope of these resolution attempts, the state officials and governmental institutions have applied many legislative and political practices. Moreover, political debates took place and studies have begun on a new constitution which is expected to be more democratic.

However, peace building is a more comprehensive process which goes beyond legislative adjustments and political agreements between the armed parties. For sustainability, it should also address to the basic level in a state, i.e. the people. Especially in long-term conflicts as in the case of Kurdish question - which has been ongoing for 30 years as an armed conflict with roots that further goes back to the beginning of 1900s – there are long-termed fear, distrust and hostilities. In addition, there are generally deep polarizations and definitely drawn enemy images that are shaped by the protracted violence and fights. Therefore, without addressing these problems that are deep rooted in the society, there is not much hope for a sustainable peace. No matter how well-designed laws and legislation are created, the hostilities and mistrust which are ongoing in the background will eventually find a way to re-emerge.

As for the process in Turkey, this kind of an approach to peace building is what is missing in the resolution attempts. *Akil İnsanlar* (Wise Men) commission was formed as a weak attempt to reach to the society. However, this commission which were

composed of selected scholars, celebrities and journalists, could not go beyond serving as a simple conveyor of the plans of government to the public. Also, considering that they were regarded as the representatives of the ruling government, it is questionable whether they achieved to address to the supporters of the opposition parties.

In this respect, this study is motivated to show that the perceptions of the people matter in terms of designing a solid peace process. To that end, it aims to highlight the need for a transforming approach intended for reconstructing the intergroup perceptions and relationships. With this aim, it presents a view from Lüleburgaz, a Thracian city which is characterized by continuously developing industry and increasing population via migrations. In other words, it provides a micro-level example for the aforementioned assumptions.

Within this scope, the research includes three basic themes. The first one is the analysis of social-categorizations in the city. This involves understanding the self-identifications and outgroup definitions of the people. The second theme is the analysis of intergroup relationships. This theme is involved to take a step forward from the perceptions of groups about each other to the perceptions about people about building relationships with each other. “Which factors shape the relationship between different group members?” is the main question of this theme. The last theme is the influence of social contact on the perceptions of the people. The inclusion of an analysis on the effects of social contact in the study is the result of the assumption that perceptions are transformed through contact, i.e. through getting to know one another. As opposed to legislative and political phases of a transformation process which happen at the institutional level, the stage for perceptual transformation happens at the societal level through mutual recognition and understanding.

The study employs a less structured interview methodology. This method has been chosen due to the opportunity it provides for exploring the people’s perceptions through their own expressions. This method also conforms to the descriptive structure of the study as it enables us to have a holistic view of the social structure and relationships in the city.

The study is composed of six chapters. The second chapter following this introductory first chapter, presents a literature review on the social categorizations,

intergroup relationship and social contact theory. The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical basis in accordance with the scope of the study. The third chapter provides a historical overview on the Kurdish Question in Turkey as it cannot be possible to comprehend the perceptions of the people fully without knowing the historical background of the issue. The fourth chapter presents the method employed for this study as well as an introduction to the respondents involved in the interviews conducted. It is followed by an analysis chapter, which summarizes the findings of the research. In the last chapter, I discuss the findings that are mentioned in the analysis chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Blagojevic argues that "[e]thnically diverse societies carry various degrees of conflict potential" (2009:3). Indeed, many researches verify this suggestion by pointing to the post-Cold War period which has been characterized by ethnic conflicts, especially in the ethnically diverse countries in the Balkan Peninsula, Middle East, Caucasus and Africa (Howe & Urell, 1998; Isajiw, 2000; Lake & Rothchild, 1996). Therefore, it is not surprising to see that there has been a great academic interest in understanding the factors that lead to ethnic conflict and possible solutions for these conflicts.

Social-psychology provides us with various explanations about "the ways that people interact with and are influenced by others" (Dovidio, 2013:1), hence offering some answers to the questions regarding the dynamics of intergroup relationships, causes and resolution of intergroup conflicts – including ethnic group conflicts. This chapter will give place to the social-psychological perspectives on the intergroup relations, and will focus on intergroup contact theory which offers improvement in intergroup relations through changing intergroup perspectives. It will also cover the literature on ethnic mobilization as it is an important concept in terms of understanding ethnic conflicts.

The chapter will start with a brief introduction to social categorization and group membership. Then, two mechanisms which play an important role in social discrimination; namely, stereotyping and prejudice, will be explained. Next, intergroup conflict theories will be summarized. Finally, it will cover the studies on the intergroup contact theory. It is important to examine the studies on the influences of the social contact and to see the results of the research so far, because the main purpose of this study is to explore the nature of the intergroup relationship and intergroup contact between two social groups. Ultimately, the aim of this chapter is to offer a theoretical background in order to provide an understanding of how and why groups experience

conflict and whether social contact could promise hope in terms of improving intergroup relations.

2.1 Intergroup Relations

Intergroup conflicts, including inter-ethnic conflicts, have been widespread. Isajiw (2000) notes that there are 233 minority groups around the world that are at risk due to inter-ethnic conflicts. He questions why it is often difficult "to foresee or predict inter-ethnic conflicts and when they occur [it is difficult] to find effective ways of resolution (ibid., 106). Actually, there are many studies on intergroup relations, which attempt to explain the formation of social groups (including ethnic groups), dynamics that lead to conflict between two groups, and ways of solution with regard to intergroup conflicts. Of course, any study or theory can never propose an absolute method to predict conflicts. Also, there is no single way to address a conflict as each conflict has its unique dynamics, actors, and contexts (Çayır, 2012). However, understanding the group formations and different dynamics of intergroup relations is a significant step towards having a knowledge about the reasons of intergroup conflicts, as well as being able to think about resolution methods more effectively.

2.1.1 Social Categorization and Ingroup – Outgroup Formations

Categories are fundamental parts of human world because "they enable us to organize the world" (Kihlstrom, 2013)[1]. Social categorization presents us with mental representations and we make sense of the world and the people around us, and determine our social, political, and economic belonging and position in the society in accordance with these mental representations (Haslam, 1994). According to Kihlstrom

[1] "Social Categorization, Lecture Supplement" at https://bspace.berkeley.edu/access/content/group/cf3d9c57-a0ab-4f22-b55f-4d8b59a1c15e/Lecture%20Supplements/SocCateg/SocCateg_Supp.htm [Accessed: September 17, 2013]

(2013), the most significant outcome of social categorization is the "[division of] the world into two groups: *Us* and *Them*"[2]. To put in a different way, as a result of social categorization, people make sense of the world and their relation to the other people through social groups, namely *ingroups* and *outgroups* (Dovidio, 2013; Tajfel et al., 1971).

2.1.1.1 Ingroup Favoritism/Outgroup Hostility and Social Discrimination

According to Rosenthal & Crisp, "(...) categorization provides a psychological basis for understanding [outgroup] to be different from us" (2006:503). Tajfel et. al. argue that under certain conditions this understanding of being different from the outgroup member may lead to "differential behavior" (1971:151). Competitive situations, perception of threat from the outgroup, and trying to achieve superiority over the outgroup are some of these conditions. These will be explained further in the section related to the intergroup conflict theories.

The differential behavior towards the ingroup and the outgroup is explained by *ingroup favoritism* and *outgroup hostility* (Brewer, 2007; Dovidio, 2013; Rosenthal & Crisp, 2006). Ingroup favoritism refers to the tendency of the people to "value their in-groups positively and maintain positive, cooperative relationships with members of the ingroup" (Brewer, 2007:729). Researches show that even the act of dividing individuals into two separate groups itself is sufficient to create ingroup favoritism and/or outgroup hostility (Tajfel et. al., 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, Fisher, 2000). The findings of these studies are important because ingroup favoritism and outgroup hostility may cause social discrimination. According to Dovidio, individuals would like to "gain or maintain advantage for their group" (2013:3), thus, they tend to show competitive and discriminative attitude.

[2] "Social Categorization, Lecture Supplement" at https://bspace.berkeley.edu/access/content/group/cf3d9c57-a0ab-4f22-b55f-4d8b59a1c15e/Lecture%20Supplements/SocCateg/SocCateg_Supp.htm [Accessed: September 17, 2013]

Sherif's Robbers Cave Experiment in 1949, constitutes a valuable empirical verification for the effect of social categorization on the discriminatory intergroup behavior. Sherif et al. (1954/1961) sorted 24 teenager boys into two different groups. They observed that after the boys were sorted into groups, the basis of the relationships shifted from interpersonal level to intergroup level, causing ingroup favoritism. For example, they tended to favor the members of their own group and use name calling towards the other outgroup. Later, the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) was developed in an attempt to explain intergroup discrimination. Studies on minimal group paradigm[3] found that when people are assigned into separate groups and asked to distribute resources to the people from both their own group and the other groups, they tend to "allocate higher rewards to members of their own category relative to members of the out-group category" (Brewer, 2007:729).

However, it should be noted that ingroup favoritism/outgroup hostility and social discrimination have significant roles in intergroup relations and conflicts. First of all, being exposed to the hostile and discriminative attitude of another group may pose threat to the fulfillment of basic needs such as safety, food, identity, justice, etc. (Kelman, 2008). Also, group members pf a group may feel vulnerable and victim of injustice (Eidelson & Eidelson, 2003) when they face a discriminatory behavior. Consequently, these may lead to frustration and mobilization.

Nevertheless, there are also some researchers, who oppose the idea that merely creating groups would lead to social discrimination (Rabbie and Horwitz, 1969). These researchers have suggested various factors related to intergroup relations in order to explain the sources of conflicts among groups. Some of these factors include conflicting interests, perception of threat, struggle for a *positive social identity* (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), etc. In the next section, these mechanisms will be explained under the relevant theories, after a brief introduction to two important mechanisms that play important role in social discrimination; stereotyping and prejudice.

[3] Minimal group paradigm explains that categorizing people into arbitrary but different categories is enough to observe ingroup favoritism (Brewer, 2002).

2.1.1.2 Stereotyping and Prejudice

Stereotyping is a cognitive function, which serves as a "simplifying mechanism" (Stephan, 1977:50) and makes it easier to relate certain personality and behavioral traits to a whole group of people. Stereotyping can be considered as both the result of social categorization and a factor that promotes categorization (Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2010).

Studies on stereotyping suggest that people tend to perceive outgroup members as less diverse than ingroup members. This tendency is referred as *outgroup homogeneity effect* (Turner et. al., 2007). Thus, people make generalizations about "the "typical" characteristics of members of the [out]groups" (Ferguson, 2005). This kind of a generalization affects our judgments about the individual members of the outgroup and influences our attitudes towards them.

Although stereotypes might be positive as well, researches show that positive stereotypes are more likely to be attributed to the ingroup, whereas negative stereotypes are attributed to outgroup members (Stephan, 1977; Fisher, 2000). This tendency to relate outgroup members to negative characteristics is problematic in terms of social relationships, because it leads people to misjudge both the ingroup and the outgroup members. That's to say, it causes people to ignore the positive behaviors of outgroup members and "excuse the negative behavior [of ingroup members]" (Fisher, 2000). Eventually, this fuels the *intergroup anxiety* (Turner et. al. 2007; Laher & Finchilescu 2010; Critcher et al., draft; Greenland et al. 2012), which is defined as "a negative emotional arousal that can characterize intergroup encounters" (Turner et. al., 2007:428). These are all important because negative stereotypes and anxiety may prevent people from communicating with one another. This lack of communication may even lead to hostility toward the outgroup, which can result in violent behaviors and human rights violations. Similarly, favoring the ingroup members and ignoring their negative attitudes may lead people legitimize the abusive, hostile, violent behaviors (Göregenli, 2012).

Actually, prejudice and stereotyping are intertwining concepts, because prejudice involves making generalizations (stereotypes) about the outgroups. Turner et al. suggest that stereotyping is one of the cognitive components of prejudice alongside with

perceptions and judgment, whereas "feelings and emotional responses to a group" are affective components (2007:428). In their study, Miller et.al. (2004) also obtained results showing links between these two concepts. They found that "stereotype endorsement (…) has stronger relations to prejudice" (ibid., 232).

Prejudice is a tendency to behave or evaluate the outgroup in a negative way (Miller et. al. 2004). Miller et. al. (ibid.) suggest that there are two main factors that cause prejudice: *personal history of intergroup contact* and *personality traits regarding the political dispositions*. The former refers to how the individual experiences the contact. For instance, they state that forced contact has a larger influence on prejudice rather than voluntarily involved contact. That's because people who are willing to establish contact with other groups' members have already low levels of prejudice. The latter explains that people with certain political dispositions such as authoritarianism, right-wing views, etc. are more likely to be prejudiced toward certain groups. However, they also confirm that *emotions* have a significant role on prejudice, as well (ibid., 232). In other words, negative emotions like intergroup anxiety may cause a feeling of threat, so the individual may be more likely to stay away from contact situation with the other group. This ignorance of the outgroup may fuel the prejudices toward the outgroup members. On the contrary, positive emotions may emerge as a result of certain conditions such as having a friend from the outgroup, and this may result in eliminating prejudice and developing more positive attitudes towards the outgroup.

Prejudice may shape our feelings and opinions, consequently can influence our attitudes and behaviors directly. This constitutes a serious threat to intergroup relations, especially in multiethnic countries, due to its possible negative effects on *peaceful coexistence* (Duriez et.al. 2007).

Although prejudice and ingroup favoritism may be evaluated as the causes of discrimination, some researchers propose that ingroup favoritism, or social categorization alone are not equal or antecedent to social discrimination (Gaertner & Insko, 2000; Brewer, 2007). They suggest that certain additional individual or context-dependent variables are also effective for differentiation to take the form of discrimination. For instance, Gaertner & Insko (2000) propose that gender is a determinant factor in the emergence of social discrimination. Their research findings suggest that males included in the study discriminate against each other only due to fear

of outgroup or for maximizing economic welfare. On the other hand, females tend to show discriminatory behavior independent of the structure/context, just by being categorized in a group. According to these findings, Gaertner & Insko concluded that females are more likely to show ingroup dependence.

Olivier and Woung (2003) suggest that we should take *relative economic position* and *historical period* into consideration while assessing the causes of outgroup hostility. The findings of their research on the whites and African-Americans versus Asian Americans and Latinos show that "[b]oth blacks and whites in low-status neighborhoods have more negative attitudes and perceive more competition with minorities than those in high status neighborhoods" (ibid., 580). Also, they propose that "sharply defined historical relationship" (ibid., 568) may cause negative attitudes as a result of nationalist or racial feelings that may arise due to bitter memories/war in the history.

Likewise, Saguy and Dovidio (2013), and Hornsey (2008) emphasize the role of social context in intergroup attitudes. For example, Saguy and Dovidio argue that "high-status group members preferred to emphasize commonalities over status differences in intergroup encounters" (2013:11), because they do not want low-status group members question the legitimacy and stability of their high status. Hornsey, on the other hand, argues that social category should fit the "social reality" (2008:208) of the individual and should be accessible when the individual needs to use it.

In the next section main intergroup conflict theories will be explained in order to discuss the conditions that lead to social discrimination, outgroup hostility and hence, intergroup conflict in detail.

2.2 Intergroup Conflict Theories

Literature on intergroup conflict focus on 4 theories to explain the causes and dynamics of intergroup conflict. These are 1) Realistic Group Conflict Theory, 2) Integrated Threat Theory, 3) Social Identity Theory and 4) Social Dominance Theory.

2.2.1 Realistic Group Conflict Theory

According to the realistic group conflict theory, the cause of intergroup conflict and hostility is the incompatible interests of groups on rare resources (Tajfel, 1970; Bornstein, 2003; Dovidio, 2013). Tajfel differentiates between realistic group conflict theory and identity based intergroup conflict theories by saying that the former is a "genuine competition" (1970:96) while the latter is related to the "emotional tensions" (ibid., 96). In other words, realistic conflict theory assumes that the source of the conflict is realistic threat that people encounter, while the identity based theories focus on the perceived threats. As it was shown in Robber Caves experiment, (Sherif et. al., 1954/1961), people develop ingroup favoritism attitudes when they are sorted into groups, because the competitions organized by the research team pose a realistic concern for the group members. Sherif et. al. (ibid.) also demonstrate that the competition over given goals and limited sources easily lead intergroup tension and outgroup hostility, such as name calling and fighting incidents in the experiment (ibid. p.9).

2.2.2 Integrated Threat Theory

According to Kelman, conflict occurs due to “collective needs and fears” (2008:171). Integrated threat theory assumes that intergroup conflict results when a group of people perceive threat from another group on the resources, safety, status, etc. (Lake & Rothchild, 1996). This assumption may also be considered as an alternative answer to Hornsey's question with regard to realistic conflict theory why groups prefer competition instead of another strategy (2008). From the viewpoint of integrated threat theory, when people perceive a threat to their resources or safety, they tend to behave in a defensive way and show aggression, which may lead to competition and conflict (Riek et al., 2006).

Rothgerber (1997) says that threat can be perceived in two levels of relationships: interpersonal and intergroup. Interpersonal threat is explained as a threat that is directed

at individual resources or identity, while intergroup threat occurs when a threat is felt by a group of people over their identity, resources, security, etc. There are two types of threats: *realistic threats* and *symbolic threats* (Dovidio, 2013:4). Realistic threats include risk to safety, economy, politics, health or well-being. Symbolic threats, on the other hand, are threats to beliefs and values of a group. (Oskamp, 2000).

Perception of threat from the outgroup may cause ingroup favoritism, causing a need for protection against external threat. Rothgerber (1997) proposes that threat leads to outgroup homogeneity perception, which is in strong relation with stereotyping. According to him, in the case of an external threat, “it appears that the focus on group survival and responding to the out-group is so strong that all members align with the in-group and minimize differences from and within it" (ibid. 1210). For Lake & Rothchild (1996), it is obvious that these fears and perception of outgroup homogeneity have a significant effect on ethnic mobilization. They argue that "[e]thnic activists (...) operating within groups, build upon these fears of insecurity and polarize society. Political memories and emotions also magnify these anxieties, driving groups further apart. Together, these between-group and within-group strategic interactions produce a toxic brew of distrust and suspicion that can explode into murderous violence" (ibid. 42).

2.2.3 Social Identity Theory

This theory proposes that the source of intergroup conflict is people's struggle on achieving a *positive social identity* (Tajfel &Turner, 1979). This theoretical view claims that people use social groups as a means for social identification, which occurs through *self-categorization* – "a person's belief that they belong to a group" (Redmond, 2013). Identification may be either relational or comparative (Tajfel&Turner, 1979:40). To put it more clearly, people "evaluate their group with reference to relevant groups" (Hornsey, 2008:207). However, they do not compare their group with each and every outgroup. Instead, there are some comparability elements such as "similarity, proximity, and pressure toward in-group distinctiveness" (Tajfel & Turner, 1979:41).

As a consequence of this comparison, they would like to see that the social status[4] of their group is high than the outgroup's social status.(Lalonde et al., 1987, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

The concern about social status of ingroup is important in terms of intergroup relations because as suggested by Dovidio, people tend to show ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation in order to "maintain the positive distinctiveness of their group" (2013:3). Apart from triggering stereotyping in group evaluation, this distinctiveness may also cause “depersonalization”. Hornsey explains that “[w]hen a category becomes salient, people come to see themselves and other category members less as individuals and more as interchangeable exemplars of the group prototype" (2008:208). However, this is not a loss of identity, "but rather a shift in identity from the personal to the social level" (ibid., 210). Depersonalization constitutes a serious threat to intergroup relations as it may lead to violent conflicts. As a consequence of depersonalization, people regard outgroup members as less human and tend to ignore their lives (Dovidio, 2013:3), a phenomenon also known as dehumanization in the literature (Brambilla et al., 2011). Hornsey emphasizes the role of "distinct individuals" (2008:210) throughout the conflicts in which depersonalization attitudes between group members exists. He argues that the behaviors and attitudes of these individuals become behavioral norms, which lead the way people think, feel, and act (ibid., 210). In the case of ethnic conflicts, for example, the actions of ethnic and political leaders influence the way people think and feel about other ethnic groups.

2.2.4 Social Dominance Theory

Social dominance theory explains prejudice and ingroup favoritism through dominant group members' support for social hierarchy. It assumes that people are not only concerned about preserving their social identity, but they also strive for a justification of their dominance and their actions as a group (Redmond, 2013; Duriez et al., 2007). According to the theory, there are three components that are used to ensure

[4] “A group's relative position on some evaluative dimensions of comparison” (Tajfel and Turner, 1979:43).

to legitimize group behavior: legitimizing myths, trimorphic structure and social dominance orientation of the group members (Redmond, 2013). Sidanius & Pratto (1999) explain legitimizing myths as "attitudes, values, beliefs stereotypes, and ideologies that provide moral and intellectual justification for the social practices that distribute social value within the social system" (*in* Redmond, 2013)[5]. These myths are not only used by the dominant group. Subordinate groups also use myths to legitimize their demand for resources and identity, as well. Trimorphic structure refers to building a hierarchical system according to age, gender and an arbitrary set that includes ethnicity, race, beliefs, class, etc. (ibid.). The third component, social orientation, is about the relationship between the individual's ideology/personality and their views on hierarchy (Dovidio, 2013). There are several factors that have an influence on a person's social dominance orientation, such as moral concerns (Dovidio, 2013), extrinsic goals (Duriez et al., 2007). For instance, Dovidio claims that high-status group members need "moral acceptance by the low-status group" (2013:10). In this way, they can legitimize their superior status and be comfortable with it. Duriez et al., on the other hand, found that extrinsic "goal pursuits relate to higher levels of SDO" (2007:776).

Pratto et al. point out the role of legitimizing myths in ethnic conflicts. They argue that legitimizing myths normalize "group-based inequality" and "stabilize oppression" (1994:741). Similarly, Sidanius and Pratto report that always praising being strong and powerful "predispose children toward thinking of human relations in terms of dominance and submission" (1999:6). In the end, this causes people to see discriminatory behavior toward the members of other ethnic groups legitimate and normal.

[5] Redmond, B. F. (n.d.). 8. Intergroup Theories (Integrated Threat, Social Identity, and Social Dominance) - PSYCH 484: Work Attitudes and Job Motivation - Confluence. *PSYCH 484: Work Attitudes and Job Motivation*. Available at: https://wikispaces.psu.edu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=41095610 [Accessed: September 20, 2013).

2.3 Intergroup Contact Theory

Peace building process has gone beyond managing or resolving conflicts. Conflict transformation has emerged as a contemporary approach for dealing with conflicts and building peace. Conflict transformation efforts go beyond the site of conflict and involve “engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict" (Miall, 2004:4). In this sense, addressing and transforming the perceptions of conflicting group members plays an important role. That is because perceptions toward outgroup occupy an important place in intergroup conflicts, including ethnic conflicts. Indeed, Labianca et al. suggest that conflicts are "perceptual rather than behavioral" (1998:56). At this point, intergroup contact theory offers a prominent approach to reduce intergroup bias, improve intergroup relations and address intergroup conflicts in a constructivist way (Dovidio et al., 2003; Bilewicz, 2007; Brambilla et al. 2012; Cehajic and Brown, 2010; Crisp et al., 2009; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006).

Pettigrew (1998) and Dovidio et al. (2003) describe the mechanisms through which social contact reduces intergroup prejudice and promote positive intergroup relations. First of all, bringing different group members together provides *functional relations* (Dovidio et al., 2003:9). As it is seen in Sherif's Robbers Cave Experiment, assigning different group members for a common goal reduces their prejudice toward each other as well as providing cooperation between groups (1954;1961). In other words, common goals create functional relations which lead to interdependency and thus, cooperation instead of competition.

Secondly, social contact results in changes in the behaviors toward outgroup members, and this has positive effects on intergroup prejudice. Dovidio et al. suggest that contact situation can facilitate the development of new norms of intergroup acceptance that can generalize to new situations and to attitudes toward the outgroup as a whole" (2003:9). Similarly, Pettigrew also points out the "potential to produce attitude change" (1998:71) via intergroup interaction.

Intergroup contact also promotes changes in the emotions. As opposed to the negative emotions that come out as a result of ingroup favoritism and outgroup hostility, such as intergroup anxiety and distrust, exposure to outgroup members can "reduce bias by enhancing empathy toward members of the other group" (Dovidio et al., 2003:10). Pettigrew calls this change in emotions as a process of *generating affective ties* and claims that "[p]ositive emotions aroused by intergroup friendship also can be pivotal" (1998:72) by showing examples from World War II. He mentions the non-Jews, who risk their lives as a consequence of their friendship with the Jews and positive emotions that result from their friendship (ibid., 72).

Intergroup contact has also cognitive processes which reduce intergroup bias. One of them is *learning about the outgroup* (ibid., 70). As proposed by Dovidio et al. (2003) with reference to Pettigrew, "'learning about others' is a critical step in how intergroup contact improves intergroup relations" (1998:10). Thus, stereotypes are also challenged and mental representations of the outgroup members are corrected. The other cognitive process is the change in *social representations* of the outgroup members (Dovidio et al., 2003:11). Intergroup contact challenges the social categories and may cause *decategorization* and *recategorization* of the groups (ibid., 11). Therefore, predefined group boundaries, group norms, stereotypes and intergroup prejudice are replaced with more inclusive groups, elimination of stereotypes and reduction in prejudice. Also, exposure to outgroup members may help people see the outgroup members as more human and value their lives more. However, the effects of intergroup contact are not limited to the changes of the perceptions toward outgroup. As discussed by Pettigrew (1998) people also gain insight about their own groups. They re-think about and re-evaluate their ingroups, their ingroup norms and attitudes. Thereupon, they "reshape [their] view of (one's) ingroup and lead to a less provincial view of outgroups in general (ibid. 72).

It should be noted that intergroup contact does not always occur in a direct way. Indeed, there are four other types of contact. First of them is the *extended contact*, which refers to "learning that an ingroup member is friends with an outgroup member" (Dovidio et al., 2011:147). The second one is the *imagined contact*, which means simply imagining yourself in an interaction situation with an outgroup member (ibid.). The third indirect contact type is para-social *contact* which occurs through viewing

intergroup relationship via media, etc. This allows “modeling of positive intergroup behavior” (Harwood, 2010:151). Finally, there is *vicarious contact* which is based on “observing an ingroup member interact with an outgroup member” (Dovidio et al., 2011:147). Studies have shown that these kind of indirect or structured (for example, interaction in a laboratory/research setting or in a dialogue group) contacts are also effective in influencing the perceptions of the people about one another (Dovidio et al., 2011; Harwood, 2010; Cameron et al., 2011; Turner et al., 2007). In case of indirect contacts the influence occurs by taking the other ingroup member or the celebrity on the TV, etc. as a role model. Individuals see (or imagine and feel in case of imagined contact) that the outgroup member does not pose a threat. As a consequence, this may provide a reduction in the intergroup anxiety.

The outcome of the intergroup contact is not always positive. Sometimes social contact may end up with more disliking and strengthened stereotypes (Crisp et al., 2009; Pearson et al. 2008). Intergroup contact with negative outcomes is defined as *negative contact* (Paolini et al., 2010). In order to avoid such negative outcomes, theorists suggest certain conditions that should be met. These include contextual, qualitative, residential and individual-related conditions (Pettigrew, 1998; Hopkins & Hopkins, 2006).

To begin with, Allport's (1954) suggestion of four conditions to facilitate intergroup contact constitutes the base for intergroup contact research. These 4 conditions are: equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law, or custom (*in* Pettigrew, 1998:66). According to this view, if groups perceive their status as equal, work on the same issue in a cooperative manner rather than competitive, and if their contact with the outgroup members are acceptable by ingroup norms, it is more likely to achieve positive outcomes and changes.

Quality of the contact is also regarded as an important condition for positive outcomes. Cehajic and Brown's (2010) research, for instance, shows that contact quality has a significant relation with intergroup reconciliation. Similarly, Liu points out that "mere increased contact between groups is not enough to break down stereotypes and reduce tension. There is something qualitatively different about intergroup behavior (...)" (2012:5). The factors which determine the quality of the contact may vary. For example, Pearson et al. (2008) show that when one of the parties fails to give

audiovisual feedback in time during the intergroup conversation that were set for the experimental purposes, an increase in intergroup anxiety is observed.

Historical, cultural and social context of intergroup conflict also has influential effect on contact outcome. To name a few, Bilewicz (2007) show that the effect of contact depends on the topic discussed during the conversation between different group members. According to his study, talking about contemporary issues has positive effect, whereas talking about past issues has no such effect (ibid. 556). Olivier and Wong, on the other hand, focus on neighborhood contexts and inter-ethnic propinquity, suggesting that "intergroup hostility is higher in metropolitan areas" (2003:567). Another study is on country's norms; Guimond et al. (2013) find that intergroup prejudice reduces when the norms are multicultural and policies are pro-diversity. In other words, in countries where diversity is appreciated and minorities/immigrants are welcomed, people are less likely to have prejudices. This is mostly because in pro-diversity societies, people do not have to worry about the reaction of ingroup members to their positive attitudes towards outgroup members. Apart form this, Liu (2012) points to the fact that concerns about historical issues has also a significant effect on the intergroup contact outcome. He suggests that historical representations of past conflict affects intergroup contact, as they may remind people of bitter memories, thus creating tension during the contact. In such cases, the contact may lead to negative outcomes in terms of perceptions.

Besides these contextual factors, researchers also point out the role of individual attributes. Among these are need for closure[6] (Dhont et al., 2011), individual's being extrinsically oriented or intrinsically oriented (Duriez et al., 2007), individual's ideology (Hodson, 2011), and individual's being a typical group member or not (Brewer, 2007). To put it more clearly, in the case of people who have high need for closure, intergroup contact leads to more discriminatory behavior as a result of intergroup anxiety (Dhont et al., 2011:525). Similarly, if a person is more concerned about his/her extrinsic goals, the chance of positive contact decreases due to competitive behavior (Duriez et al., 2007). However, it is observed that contact among people with intolerant ideologies results in more positive changes in attitudes, decrease in prejudice and perceived outgroup threat (Hodson, 2011:155). This may be explained

[6] Defined as "the individual's desire for firm answers and aversion toward ambiguity" at http://www.psych- it.com.au/Psychlopedia/article.asp?id=212 [Accessed: August 30, 2013]

by the argument that individuals with tolerant ideologies already have positive attitudes, so the experiment results may not measure a high level of change in attitudes. Last but not least, Brew (2002) shows that if a member of the group does not see himself/herself or is not perceived by the other members as a typical group member, he/she tends to behave more negatively towards outgroup members as they "need to be concerned with being similar to other in-group members, (…) [and] that they are not confused with the out-group" (ibid. 734).

2.4 Migration, Residential Segregation and Intergroup Relationships

It should be noted that migration is a process which is accompanied by continuous social change in the country or city of immigration. It transforms the societies (Castles, 2003) in sociological and economical terms. Social and cultural diversity in addition to the interaction between different social and cultural groups challenge the existing categories in the society and lead to "the reconstruction of selves and identities" (Horenczyk, 2008). As a result, economic and cultural considerations of the people may vary. For example, a minority group which was considered negatively before, may become closer to the majority group as a result of the arrival of a new migrant group which is regarded as less favorable. As a result, social status of groups may change.

Sometimes these categories constitute a hierarchical social structure. As Marshall (1950) suggests, class categories are organized in a hierarchical manner based on the status of the relevant categories, migrant groups with different nationality/ethnicity/race, etc. may also be classified into different status levels and in a hierarchical order. Accordingly, migrants coming from a certain country, etc. may be less favorable than migrants coming from another country, hence positioned in a lower level in the social hierarchy. Kalra and Kapoor (2008) point out that the determiner of the social hierarchy is the majority group, because majority group defines "what are considered as acceptable values" (ibid., p. 6). As a result, the position of the social groups and the values attained to these groups take shape in accordance with the preferences of the majority group.

Moreover, in some cases, the differentiation among groups become more salient through residential segregation. Residential segregation can be considered as a geographically marked form the hierarchical social structure. According to Balakrishnan et al., it is a "reflection of social class differences" (2005:206). However, this reflection should not always be considered as an outcome of the marginalization by the majority group. There are also studies which propose the term "self-segregation" (Kalra and Kapoor, 2008:5); some people may chose to maintain their customs, values, family ties, etc. without the influence of the majority culture, hence choose to live in a segregated area.

In either case, residential segregation has an important effect on the intergroup relations. Various studies show the correlation between ethnic-residential segregation and violent conflict (Kasara, 2012; York et al., 2011). Briefly, ethnic-residential segregation widens the gap between the groups and leads to conflict. In parallel with this, residential segregation has been considered as one of the effective factors in intergroup contact. It is obvious that living in the same neighborhoods, seeing each other on a daily basis increase both the possibility and the outcome of the contact.

2.5 Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, various approaches to intergroup relations were presented. Firstly, social categorization processes were outlined and the factors affecting the ingroup-outgroup relations were identified. It was seen that people tend to perceive the world in accordance with the social categories that they created. In line with these categories, people also associate groups with certain mental representations. Later, in the section about the intergroup conflict theories, it was seen that these mental representations play a very important role in the intergroup interactions; the stereotypes attained to outgroup members and the negative perceptions which take shape in line with these stereotypes are indeed the core dynamics of intergroup relations. Basically, these stereotypes do not only reflect the intergroup perceptions; they also provide hint about the positioning of the groups in the social hierarchy. Therefore, it is obvious that understanding the social categorization process in a society is key to have a holistic

view of the intergroup perceptions. Accordingly, social categorization processes and the stereotypes attained to group members will be the first focus of the current study in attempt to understand the underlying perceptions of the people in question about each other.

The second section of the chapter covered the theories of intergroup conflicts. This section shed light on the factors which lead to intergroup anxiety and conflict. In summary, researchers who approach the issue from a realist view see the competition over rare resources as the source of the discrimination and conflict. Some of them, on the other hand, point to the perceived threat from the outgroup. Social dominance orientation is also predicted as an important factor in creating intergroup discrimination and helping discriminatory behavior persist with the help of legitimizing myths. However, for the social identity theorists, it is the strive for achieving and maintaining a positive social identity that causes ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. These explanations about the intergroup conflicts once again point out to the influence of the perceptions on the intergroup relations. Apart from the cases where people fight for rare resources, it was seen that conflicts are mostly perceptual. Within the scope of this study, it is clear that attention should be paid to the main factors affecting the intergroup relations. In other words, it is important to understand whether there is real competition over the resources or people perceive threat as a result of their prejudice against the outgroup members. It is also essential to see whether the negative opinions and feelings remain at the perceptual level or reflected in the behaviors during intergroup interactions.

In the end, all the information gathered regarding the formation of social groups and the relations between these groups will provide us with the data that we need in order to interpret the outcome of intergroup contact. As it was seen in the third section of this chapter, there are various factors affecting the outcome of the contact situation. Some of the researchers assume that the topic discussed during the interaction, historical background of the intergroup relations, quality of the contact, etc. are effective in obtaining positive outcomes, while some of them point out to the environmental factors, such as residential proximity (as referred in the fourth section), reactions of the ingroup members around, etc. It is sure that being aware of the factors that shape the social structure and relations in the city will be of great help in terms of

understanding the concerns of the people and how these concerns affect the intergroup contact outcomes.

To sum up, the literature reviewed in this chapter does not only provide us with a theoretical basis regarding the subject of the study; it also indicates us where to look at to comprehend the study findings. In accordance with the scope of this study, the factors that we should pay attention to are the formation of social groups and the dynamics of intergroup relations in the city. Ultimately, I will refer to these factors to interpret the effects of intergroup contact on the intergroup perceptions and/or relations in Lüleburgaz.

CHAPTER 3: KURDISH QUESTION IN TURKEY

This chapter will present the historical background of the Kurdish question in Turkey. By doing this, the chapter aims at providing an understanding of the actors, dynamics, and turning points of the Kurdish question. Having an overall knowledge about the historical development process of the issue is important in order to comprehend how the conflict has taken its current shape and how the Kurds and non-Kurds in Turkey have become polarized through this process.

The chapter will start with a brief information about the Kurdish population in Turkey to provide a demographic background. Then, it will cover the history of the Kurdish question under eight periods of which starting and ending points can be defined as critical turning points for the conflict. According to Barkey and Fuller, looking at the turning points are important in terms of understanding the conflict, because they "represent fundamental choices in the way societal relations are constructed" (1997:61). Accordingly, this chapter will start with a brief introduction to the situation of Kurds under the Ottoman Empire, with a focus on the start of the Kurdish rebellions after the Tanzimat Reforms (1839-1876). Then, the focus will move on to the effects of one-party policies (1920s-1945) on the Kurdish mobilization. Thirdly, the chapter will give place to a rather less conflictual period (Çelik, 2012?), which is the transition period to multiparty regime in Turkey (1945-1960). After that, it will show how the period beginning with the 1961 Constitution and lasting until the start of armed conflict in 1984 influenced the Kurdish movement. As for the intense the armed conflict period (1984-1999), it will cover the effects of the conflict on the people as well as the consequences of the fight between the Turkish security forces and the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK). Later on, the chapter will move on to the reform process in Turkey (1999-2004), which began after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan – the leader of the PKK, and with the declaration of ceasefire by the PKK and Turkey's EU candidacy. Then comes the re-escalation of the conflict in 2004. The section related to

this period (2004-2009) will review the influences of the establishment of a federal Kurdistan in Northern Iraq (2004) and the PKK's declaration of end of ceasefire on the resurrection of the armed conflict. More importantly, this section will address the spread of the conflict to the Western cities of Turkey, causing a growing tension between the Kurdish and non-Kurdish people (Ergin, 2014; Çelik, 2012). This point is important because until then, the conflict was mostly limited to the Eastern cities and the main struggle was between the Kurdish people and the state. However, by mid-2004, Turks also began to involve in the conflict and this caused an acceleration in the social stratification (Ergin, 2014). Finally, the chapter will cover the period beginning with the 'Kurdish Initiative' in 2009 by touching upon the resolution attempts until today as well as the incidents overshadowing the peace, such as the KCK (Group of Communities in Kurdistan) arrests in 2009 and PKK attacks in 2010.

It is important to note that the aim of this chapter is not to provide a detailed historical or political analysis on the Kurdish question in Turkey. The overall purpose is to show the critical events that have shaped the course of the conflict, as it is assumed that they play an important role in shaping the perceptions of the people and the intergroup relationship between the Turkish and the Kurdish people in Turkey.

3.1 Kurds in Turkey

Kurds are “the largest transnational and stateless ethnic groups" (Ergin, 2014:324). In general, they are spread around the four countries in the Middle East: Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. In Turkey, they constitute 18% of the overall population according to CIA Fact Book[7]. The number of the Kurdish diaspora is also significant; "there are some 850,000 Kurds in Western Europe, of which 500,000-600,000 live in Germany" (Baser; 2011:8). According to Ergin (2014), the mostly Kurdish-populated areas of Turkey are the Eastern regions. This information is confirmed by the "Kurdish

[7] Turkey. [online]. CIA: The World Factbook. Available at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html [Accessed: July 5, 2014].

Lands" map by the CIA[8], indicating the area that is heavily populated by the Kurdish people.

According to the KONDA Report in 2011, which was based on a representative sample, the majority (33%) of the Kurds are primary school graduates, and only 7% of them are university graduates. In the Eastern regions, the ratio of the illiteracy is as high as 17-20% (ibid.). In the Western regions, however, the percentage is 5-8%. More than half of the Kurdish people (51.9%) gains below the minimum wage, which is an indicator for the economic struggles they have. Also, the socio-economic development index in the same KONDA report, shows that the ratio in the Eastern regions is the lowest (-1.50 to -0.50), while it is relatively higher in the Thrace region (0.50 to 1.49). and the highest in Istanbul (3.50 to 5.00).

As it is seen there is a significant gap between the Eastern and the Western regions in terms of economic and social matters. The presence of the armed conflict in the region plays an important role in the underdevelopment and the disadvantaged position of the Eastern cities. After the start of the armed conflict in 1980s, the Kurdish people have begun to migrate to the Western cities to find better jobs and to escape from the conflict. According to the DPT (State Planning Organization) report in 2008, the rate of the internal migration increased from 9.3% in 1980 to 11.0% in 2000. Again according to this report, the outgoing internal migration rate is the fastest in the Eastern cities (p. 63). The majority of the people from the Eastern cities – Diyarbakır, Mardin, Siirt, Bingöl, Hakkari, Muş, Tunceli and Van – responded the question about their reason to leave their cities as “security concerns” (p. 55).

[8] The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (1992). *Kurdish Lands (location map)*. [image online] Available at: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kurdish_lands_92.jpg [Accessed: April 01, 2013].

3.2 Historical Background of the Kurdish Question

Pre-Republic Era

Originally, the Ottoman Empire was based on the *millet* system, which enables communities from different religions being ruled by their own religious leaders/institutions (Soysal, 1999). In this system, there was no ethnic differentiation; communities was classified according to their religions (Çelik, 2012). In accordance with this context, Kurds were part of the Muslim community, and there were no ethnic differentiation between Kurds, Turks, Muslim Albanians, and Arabs, etc.

Towards the end of the 1880s, partly with the influence of the nationalist view introduced by the French Revolution, minorities living in the Ottoman territory had begun to organize uprisings to achieve their national independence. In order to prevent the dismemberment of the communities, the Ottoman rulers offered a series of reforms, known as Tanzimat Reforms (1839, 1876). The aim of these reforms was to "centralize the empire" (Akyol, 2009) and thus, to create a common Ottoman citizenship regardless of ethnicity and religion.

However, these reforms were not welcomed by the Muslim communities, including Kurds. Until these reforms, the Muslim communities had political and economic autonomy unlike the non-Muslim communities. For instance, they were exempted from certain taxes that was being paid by the non-Muslims. Also, they were had control over their internal affairs as a community (Akyol, 2009). In other words, Tanzimat Reforms meant reduction of autonomy for the Muslim communities with different ethnicity.

Nonetheless, as the minority uprisings throughout the Ottoman territories became widespread, the idea of *Ottomanism* (Osmanlıcılık) began to shift to *Turkism* (Türkçülük), especially in the beginning of 1900s, among the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) members, whose aim was to achieve the establishment of constitutional monarchy in the Ottoman state. *Turkism* was based on the idea that "Turkish people were the *unsur-i asli* (main ethnic group) in the Ottoman Empire" (Yeğen, 2007:123). In accordance with this idea, institutions founded by the minority ethnic groups were

banned (ibid.). Turkish nationalism became more dominant especially after the revolution of 1908 (Second Constitutionalist Period – İkinci Meşrutiyet). Consequently, reduction in autonomy and rise in Turkish nationalism led to a discomfort and ethnic mobilization among the Muslim non-Turk minorities including Kurds. Two important outcomes of this discomfort were the uprisings such as the Bedirhan revolt in 1847, and formation of "the first nationalist organization, the Kurdish Society for the Rise and Progress" (Kürt Teali Cemiyeti) in 1918 (Barkey and Fuller, 198:8).

One-Party Period

One of the most important documents which framed the situation of the ethnic communities within the territories of the Turkish Republic was the Lausanne Treaty (24 July 1924). According to this treaty, non-Muslim minorities gained some rights in terms of education and publication in mother tongue, whereas Muslim communities with different ethnicity were deprived of such rights as they did not hold minority status (Yeğen, 2009; Tank, 2005).

Also, the primary concern of the newly founded state was to build a uniform national identity "to maintain territorial integrity in the aftermath of the Lausanne Treaty" (Tank, 2005:72) and to provide an "ultimate bond for political adherence" (Yeğen, 2007:126). With this aim, the Turkish state applied a broader definition of the citizenship which can be defined as an *inclusive citizenship* (Harkestad, 1998). This type of citizenship accepts "all the citizens of the Turkish state (…) constitutionally Turks" (Kushner, 1997:222). In other words, the state was ignoring the ethnic diversity in the country and rejecting the existence of any identity other than Turkishness. Consequently, Kurdish nationalism began to rise and the ethnic demands to obtain their ethnic rights and political autonomy ignored in the Lausanne Treaty and by the citizenship policies of the state, became more explicit (Barkey and Fuller, 1997). Many uprisings occurred until the end of the 1930s. Three of them have an important place in the history of the Kurdish question and collective memory of Kurds as their narratives "have been passed from generation to generation" (Çelik, 2012:244) and they have been reinterpreted by the Kurdish nationalists "in an attempt to establish continuity in the Kurdish resistance" (Tezcür, 2009:6). These are the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925, Mt. Ararat revolt in 1930, and the Dersim rebellion in 1937-38.

Sheikh Said rebellion emerged in February 1925. It was "the earliest large-scale Kurdish rebellion in the Republic" (Çelik, 2012:245). It was led by Zaza speaking Sunni Kurdish *sheiks*[9] (religious leaders) and Azadi[10] (nationalist) leaders (Çelik, 2012; Barkey and Fuller; 1998). The main aim of the rebellion was to establish an independent Kurdistan (Olson, 2000; Çelik, 2012). Also, Martin van Bruinessen points to the religious motivations in this rebellion and describes it as "neither purely religious nor a purely nationalist one" (as in Olson, 2000:69). Although there is no consensus on whether the Sheikh Said rebellion is religious or nationalist in nature, it is still important in terms of Kurdish nationalist movement as it put the demand for an independent Kurdistan into words (Olson, 2000).

The reaction of the state to the rebellion was harsh. To deal with the rebellion, the state put Law on the Maintenance of Order (Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu) into force in 4 March 1925 and established two Independence Tribunals (one for the Eastern provinces and one for the rest of the country) in 6 April 1925 to execute the Law and punish the rebels (Zürcher, 2000). The rebellion was suppressed in 27 April 1925, and Sheikh Said and many other rebels was executed by hanging (Barkey and Fuller, 1997). In the aftermath of the rebellion, the state also performed "systematic deportations" (Çelik, 2012:245) to Western cities. According to Zürcher (2000) the number of the Kurdish people who were forced to migrate is above 20.000.

Sheikh Said rebellion is considered as a turning point as it "signifie(s) a change in the regime's attitude, from one of ignoring the Kurds to a policy of violence" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998:11). In other words, until then, the existence of the Kurdish community as a separate ethnic group had been ignored by both the *Ottomonist* view and the *inclusive citizenship* understanding of the Turkish Republic. However, the Sheikh Said rebellion was an attempt to make Kurdish existence visible. As this was not preferable for the state and its 'integrity' (Tank, 2005), the ignorance started to be accompanied by violent means to suppress Kurdish movements. As a result, the state in Turkey created a gap between itself and the Kurdish people.

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[9] Sheikh is an Islamic honorific used to refer to elderly religious/tribal leaders who has a spiritual training and who guides his followers as a spiritual authority. (Available at: http://hasankamilyilmaz.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=171&Itemid=29 [Accessed: March 16, 2014). Sheikh Said was an influential sheikh among the Zaza tribes (Zürcher, 2000).

[10] Kurdish nationalist party mostly supported by Zaza-speaking tribes (Çelik, 2012).

The second important Kurdish rebellion was between 1927-1930; Mt. Ararat rebellion. It took its name from the Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı), around which the rebellion occurred. It was led by General İhsan Nuri Pasha, a former Ottoman soldier (Çelik, 2012). The preliminary factors of the rebellion were the assimilation policies of the state after the suppression of the Sheikh Said rebellion (Çelik, 2012). Also, Nuri Pasha points to the intimidation policies by referring to "the devastation, destruction, and fear inflicted upon the Kurds by the TAF [Turkish Air Force] commencing in 1927" (Olson, 2000:81). This rebellion was suppressed by the state with a heavy bombardment by the Turkish Air Force (ibid.).

After these two large-scale rebellions, the state came up with a Law of Resettlement as an attempt to solve the Kurdish question via "Turkification (assimilation) of non-Turks" (Yeğen, 2007:129). This law proposed assimilation of the people into Turkish culture and evacuation of the regions that were resistant against assimilation policies (Çelik, 2012). As a result, 25,831 people were forced to migrate from Eastern and Southeastern provinces to the Western provinces (ibid.). Another law that is passed in accordance with the policies of the state was related to the name of Dersim, a city in the Eastern Anatolia known its Alawite and Kurdish population. According to Çelik, "Dersim was commonly known as the main problem area" (2012:246). The residents of Dersim reacted against this direct state control and assimilation attempts by gathering under the leadership of Sheikh Said Rıza and initiating a rebellion in 1936 (ibid.). Although this rebellion was Kurdish in nature (Barkey and Fuller, 1997), the state's attitude was to deny the ethnic-nationalist nature of the rebellion and show it as an "incitement by the outside forces" (Yeğen, 2007:131) and a tribal backward opposition to the Turkish revolution (ibid.). In parallel with this attitude, the state banned "references to Kurds as a distinct group in society (…) and use of the word "Kurd" (…) in the media" (Barkey and Fuller, 1997:64) during the rebellion. The revolt was was suppressed violently, Sheikh Said Rıza was hanged and thousands of people were executed (Çelik, 2012). Just like the other two rebellions, this rebellion also followed by forced "deportations and population control" (ibid.).

Transition to Multiparty Era

Multiparty era in the Turkish Republic started in 1945 when the Democrat Party (DP) participated in and won the elections. After the suppression of the Dersim rebellion, Kurds were hurt and state control was strict. Although, Barkey and Fuller (1997) describe this period from 1945 until the late 1950s as a relaxation period due to the liberal attitude of the DP, they also state that in the end DP also "fell victim to their own authoritarian tendencies" (ibid., 65) and bring the strict controls back. Therefore, there was no significant Kurdish opposition until the end of 1950s (Çelik, 2012).

In 1960, the DP was deposed by a military coup. The leader and two ministers of the DP were hanged as they were found guilty due to their policies and putting laicism at risk. The military regime was also strict against the Kurds. For instance, military rulers accused the DP of attempting to establish a Kurdistan Government as well (Fırat, 2008). Also, they started "assimilationist language policies" (Cemiloğlu, 2009:35) against the use of Kurdish language, arrested prominent Kurdish people (Fırat, 2008), and began to replace the Kurdish town and village names with Turkish ones (Çelik, 2012; Barkey and Fuller, 1998). However, before the political elections for a civilian government, 1961 Constitution was issued. Contrary to the strict military rule, this constitution provided some freedoms in terms of Kurdish movement (Barkey and Fuller, 1997). This period beginning with the 1961 Constitution and lasting until the start of the armed conflict in 1984 will be covered in the next section.

Period Between the 1961 Constitution and Start of the Armed Conflict in 1984

The 1961 Constitution provided a "rather 'democratic' environment" (Çelik, 2012:246) in terms of civil liberties (van Bruinessen, 1984:8), and formation of trade unions and student associations (Barkey and Fuller, 1998). In this environment, Kurdish movement found some opportunity of organization and mobilization within the legal associations. The first of these associations was the Workers' Party of Turkey (Türkiye İşçi Partisi – TIP). Çelik mentions that TIP is a "milestone in the legal Kurdish mobilization" (2012:247). However, the discourse of the TIP was shaped around class struggle and economic inequality (Çelik, 2012; Tocci and Kaliber, 2008). Therefore, the Kurdish question was not addressed as an ethnic issue by the TIP until

1970, when it openly recognized the existence of an ethnic Kurdish question in Turkey as a result of the efforts of its Kurdish members (Barkey and Fuller, 1998). This declaration was used against the party in the aftermath of the military coup in 1971 and the TIP was closed (ibid.). 1971 was also marked with the re-emergence of strict control on the freedoms and many leftist parties and organizations were banned (Çelik, 2012).

Even before the 1971 military coup, Kurds had realized that "the Turkish left organizations did not respond to their needs" (ibid., 247) and had started to form Kurdish organizations such as the Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Hearths (DDKO) (Bruinessen, 1984; Barkey and Fuller, 1998). However, the restraining atmosphere of the 1970s did not let legal organizations to flourish. When the issues related to economic deprivation, forced migration and lack of rights all came together, illegal Kurdish organizations began to be founded (Çelik, 2012). Among them the most important was the Kurdistan Workers' Party (the PKK) which was founded in 1974. Tocci and Kaliber explain the aim of the PKK as "to establish a pan-Kurdish state based on Marxist-Leninist principles" (2008:4). The role of the PKK became more significant after the military coup in 1980.

The military coup in 1980 was a result of highly polarized political system and the ideologically polarized society (Çelik, 2012). The military regime in 1980 is considered as the most strict and oppressive rule ever, especially against the Kurdish community (Barkey and Fuller, 1997). It led to the arrest of thousands of people and 500 people were received death penalty. As a result of this coup, a new constitution, 1982 Constitution, was issued. This constitution brought harsh restrictions on political freedoms. Use of Kurdish language and formation of associations were banned (Çelik, 2012; Barkey and Fuller, 1998). Also, the enforced disappearances began. "Losing" people mostly when they were under custody had become a way of bullying against Kurdish mobilization. This phenomenon continued even after the foundation of a civil government, and approximately 1200 people disappeared since 1980 till 2005[11].

All these restrictions and oppressive policies resulted in an increase in the Kurdish nationalism and "contributed to the eventual appeal of the PKK" (Barkey and

[11] "Disappearances Under Custody". [online]. Available at: http://narphotos.net/Story/Thumbnail/disappearances-under-custody/23/ [Acessed: December 18, 2013].

Fuller, 1997:16). Eventually, the Kurdish question transformed into an armed conflict with the armed attack of the PKK on the Turkish security forces in 1984.

Armed Conflict Period

The period which started with the armed assaults in 1984 and lasted until the capture of the PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan, was the most violent and bloodiest era of the conflict. By the end of 1999, the result of the conflict was "more than 31.000 deaths, as many as 3000 villages destroyed, and some 3.000.000 people internally displaced" (Gunter, 2000:849). Regarding this period of armed conflict, Tocci and Kaliber (2008) points to the vicious circle created by the mutual increase in violence by both the state and the PKK.

One of the most significant consequence of the escalation of the conflict was the declaration of the emergency rule (Olağanüstü Hal – OHAL) in 1987. This emergency rule served to "restrict civil rights and freedoms" (ibid., 5). In 1991, another incident occurred which led to an increase in the tension in Turkey; the Gulf War. The violent suppression of the Kurdish uprisings by the Iraqi state during the Gulf War forced many Kurdish people escape to Turkey. Barkey and Fuller (1997) estimate the number of the refugees as more than half a million. The US solved the refugee problem in Turkey by creating a "quasi-autonomous Kurdish enclave in northern Iraq" (ibid., 67). This was perceived as a potential threat by the Turkish state. Accordingly, in April 1991, the state issued the Anti-Terrorism Law which legalized the fight against 'the PKK terrorism' (Tocci and Kaliber, 2008) and punished any 'separatist' demands or discourses. With this law, the aim of the state was to prevent any demand for autonomy like the one in the Northern Iraq and suppress the PKK activities. The name of the law also shows a news turning point in the state's perception of the Kurdish question. It is seen that the ignorance of the early years and the perception of the issue as a 'problem of backwardness' (Yeğen, 2007) was replaced with the idea of terrorism and Kurdish question as a security issue. This caused more and more strict reaction of the state as well as more violent assaults by the PKK towards the mid-1990s, which is defined as the peak of armed conflict (Çelik, 2012). The violent actions by both parties and

increase in human rights abuses, disappearances and torture continued until the capture of the Öcalan in 1999.

The Reform Period

With the capture of Öcalan, a new phase started in the conflict. The PKK declared ceasefire, which provided a break from years of violence. It seems that the support of the Kurdish public for an independent Kurdistan was also decreased after their captured leader Öcalan made a call for nonviolence (Müftüler-Baç, 1999). Another important factor that caused a transformation in the conflict towards nonviolence was the reform process in Turkey in parallel with its EU candidacy (Çelik and Rumelili, 2006; Ergin, 2014; Kirişçi, 2011; Tank, 2005). Within the scope of the EU reforms, some important constitutional, legal and social reforms, including the elimination of the state of the emergency (Tank, 2005). Çelik defines the rather calm atmosphere during this reform period as "negative peace" (2012:250) as Kurdish question was not directly addressed and solved. On the contrary, the continuing security-oriented discourse of the state was creating disappointment and discomfort among Kurds (ibid.). Eventually, in 2004, the PKK declared the end of the ceasefire and the tension in the country rose once again.

Re-escalation of the Conflict

Within the democratic and reformist atmosphere of early 2000s, a law "granting amnesty to PKK members (not in key positions)" (Tank, 2005:70). However, as a result of the state's doubtful willingness to implement this law and continuation of the state's security-oriented discourse, the PKK declared the end of the ceasefire. This time, the conflict was not limited to a struggle between the state, the PKK and the Kurdish community. Instead, Ergin mentions reporting of growing tension "between Turkish and Kurdish residents of cities in Western Turkey" (2014:323). Similarly, Çelik points to "the spread of violence to the cities of Western Turkey" (2012:251). On of the important factors that led to this spread of the conflict to the Western cities was the flag-burning incident where a group of Kurdish people burnt a Turkish flag. This

incident caused nationalist demonstrations by the Turkish people[12]. Other factors were the PKK attacks on the "urban, economic and tourist targets, particularly in the summer of 2005 and again in the summer and fall of 2007" (Tocci and Kaliber, 2008:30).

With regard the state, there were also international situations that caused concern in terms of security. One of them was the establishment of a federal Kurdistan in Northern Iraq in 2004 (Ergin, 2014). The foundation of this federal state increased the security concerns and fear of separatist Kurdish demands (Tank, 2005). The growing tension began in 2004 resulted in the Law for the Fight against Terrorism in 2006i similar to the one in 1991. Thus, both the PKK and the state took a step back from the progression that had made since the beginning of 2000s.

Resolution Attempts

In July 2009, after another period of armed conflict, the Justice and Development Party (the AKP) initiated the so-called "Kurdish opening" with an attempt to resolve the Kurdish issue through peaceful means. According to Kirişçi (2011), the reason of this attempt was to restore the Kurdish votes in the Southeastern region. Larrabee and Tol, on the other hand, argue that "[t]he strengthening of civilian control over the military in Turkey in recent years has made it easier for Ankara to change its approach to the Kurdish issue" (2011:144). At this point, it may be useful to mention the opening of TRT 6, a state channel broadcasting in Kurdish, in January 2009 and first private Kurdish courses in 2004 (Çelik, 2012) in order to show that "the Kurdish Initiative" had been historically built. Despite the end of the ceasefire and continuation of the armed conflict, there were political and legal endeavors for the resolution of the Kurdish question.

However, it is the Kurdish Initiative that created an atmosphere in which Kurdish question could be discussed publicly (Ensaroğlu, 2013:12). But, part of the Turkish public reacted to the opening with suspicion and perceived it as a security threat. This suspicious approach may be related to the timing of the initiative, which was in the middle of a period of growing tension. However, the surveys conducted just after the

[12] Dymond, J. "Flag-waving frenzy grips Turkey" on 24.04.2005. [online]. Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4379675.stm [Accessed: October 26, 2013].

start of the opening process in 2009, showed that the ratio of people who did not support the initiative was just 36.4% (Çelik,2013:45).

According to Ensaroğlu (2013) the underlying initiator of the opening process was the negotiations between the Turkish Intelligence Agency, and Abdullah Öcalan and the PKK. These negotiations are known as the Oslo Process. He states that the Oslo Process "eradicated the perception that direct talks between the state and the PKK were an extraordinary affair and provided an opportunity for both parties to get to know each other and their exact demands" (ibid., p.13). However, the course of the process was not smooth. Police operations were held against Kurdish politicians, known as the KCK case, and the "DTP was illegalized" (Villelas, 2011:7). Yet, upon a hunger strike in 2012 to protest Öcalan's conditions in İmralı prison and the failure of the state to provide the Kurdish people with their democratic rights, the İmralı process started in the beginning of 2013. Since then, some important steps were taken by both the state and the PKK. These include the acceptance of court defense in Kurdish language, withdrawal of the PKK out of Turkey and recently the allowance of education in Kurdish in private schools.

3.3 Conclusion

For years, the Turkish state ignored the presence of Kurdish community as a separate community and the Kurdish identity. It is possible to see this approach in the policies during the Ottoman Empire and the early years of the Turkish Republic. It is seen that even after rebellions between 1925 and 1935, the state reported the issue as a problem of backwardness and opposition to the new secular system, maybe mostly because these rebellions were led by religious leaders – sheikhs. We also observed how the ignorance of the state and the use of violent means in dealing with the conflict led to a greater Kurdish mobilization. Studies offer that when the conflict transformed into an armed one, the state still failed to "fac[e] the root causes of the conflict" and addressing the identity issues of the Kurds (Aydınlı and Özcan, 2011:441). What is worse, the state also failed to separate "the Kurdish problem from that of the PKK" (Galetti, 1999:126). As a consequent, it is assumed that it is the failure of the state to address the Kurdish

demands and the repressive policies of the state which led both to the strengthening of the PKK as one of the primary actors in the Kurdish conflict and to an increase in the nationalism among Kurds.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the research design that is used within the scope of the current study. Accordingly, the sections of this chapter include the setting and sampling procedure as well as a brief information about the data collection method employed in this study.

4.1 Setting of the Interview

4.1.1 Lüleburgaz as a Case

Lüleburgaz is a city located in the Thrace region of Turkey. As of 2011, It has a population of 136.783[13]. Its economy is mostly based on industrial sector, which has been growing continuously. Lüleburgaz is described as "one of the three industrial centers in the Thrace"[14]. The industrial development in the city is the result of the city's location on D-100 highway; its closeness to Istanbul and customs gates, Kapıkule and İpsala; and its water resources and flat terrain which make the city convenient for building factories. Also, it is half an hour away from the European Free Zone, a private industry area which is defined as "the center of the trade between Turkish exporters and Europe"[15].

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[13] İlçelere göre il/ilçe merkezi ve belde/köy nüfusu - 2011. Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi Veri Tabanı. [online report]. *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu.* Available at: http://rapor.tuik.gov.tr/reports/rwservlet?adnksdb2&ENVID=adnksdb2Env&report=wa_turkiye_ilce_koy_sehir.RDF&p_il1=39&p_kod=1&p_yil=2011&p_dil=1&desformat=html [Accessed: May 1, 2013].

[14] Unknown. (2012). Sanayi Üçlüsünün Kırklareli Merkezi Lüleburgaz | Trakya Kalkınma Ajansı. [online] Available at: http://www.trakyaka.org.tr/content-204-sanayi_uclusunun_kirklareli_merkezi_luleburgaz.html [Accessed: 1 May 2013].

[15] Unknown. (2012). *Location*. [online]. Available at: http://www.asb.com.tr/pages/EN/freezone-location.asp [Accessed: May 1, 2013].

All these economic advantages, as well as the developing cultural and social life, have made Lüleburgaz an attractive destination for the domestic migration from economically underdeveloped regions of Turkey. According to a TÜİK report, 8118 people living in Lüleburgaz are from Southeastern Anatolia and Eastern Anatolia regions[16] – the regions that are known for the intensity of Kurdish population[17]. Although this does not mean that all the people coming from these cities are Kurdish, it is still an important data to guess the intensity of the Kurdish population in Lüleburgaz.

For this study, the case of Lüleburgaz was selected for two reasons. First, both the current presence of the Kurdish migrants and the expected migrations in the future due to the growing industry and demand for labor force in the city, make the peaceful inter-ethnic relations and coexistence in the city important. As Kaldor and Luckham (2001) point out, it is necessary to develop "proposals for transforming the conditions giving rise to conflict" (p. 63). Therefore, researching inter-ethnic perceptions and relations in the city, may provide useful insights regarding the existing conditions and/or possible issues that may arise in line with the ethnic conflict in Turkey.

Second reason is the recent tension between the local people and the Kurdish migrants living in the Thrace region. This also supports the above mentioned necessity of solving the problems in the societal level for a stable peace. Two newspaper headlines about two incidents show the ongoing tension clearly[18],[19]. According to these news articles, local people in Kırklareli carried out racist attacks against the Kurdish residents.

Also, in a recent labor demonstration in Lüleburgaz, one of the slogans was "[t]hose who see Diyarbakır, should see Lüleburgaz as well"[20]. Due to the rapid

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16 İkamet edilen ilçeye göre nüfusa kayıtlı olunan il - 2012. Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi Veri Tabanı. [online report]. *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu.* Available at: http://rapor.tuik.gov.tr/reports/rwservlet?adnksdb2&ENVID=adnksdb2Env&report=wa_ikametedilen_ilce10sonrasi.RDF&p_kod=2&p_ikil1=39&p_ikilce1=1505&p_yil=2012&p_dil=1&desformat=html [Accessed: May 2, 2013].

17 The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (1992). *Kurdish Lands (location map)*. [image online] Available at: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kurdish_lands_92.jpg [Accessed: April 01, 2013].

18 "Irkçılık Malatya'dan Kırklareli'ne Taşındı", *Yurt*, 16 August 2012. Available at: http://www.yurtgazetesi.com.tr/gundem/irkcilik-malatyadan-kirklareline-sicradi-h17209.html [Accessed: May 03, 2013].

19 "Kırklareli'de Kürtlere Irkçı Saldırı", *Evrensel*, 15 August 2012, Available at: http://www.evrensel.net/news.php?id=34506 [Accessed: May 03, 2013].

20 "İşçinin Yanıtı", *Aydınlık*, 24 March 2013, Available at: http://www.aydinlikgazete.com/mansetler/20249-iscinin-yaniti.html [Accessed: May 03, 2013].

industrialization, the factory workers in the city face a lot of problems. They blame the AKP government for these difficulties by drawing attention to the AKP policies which endanger the work safety and cause lawlessness[21]. The reference to the resolution process in a labor demonstration shows that the workers see the emphasis of the government on the Kurdish question as an inequality due to its indifference to the problems of the workers. This brings us to the requirement to "address a range of dimensions (micro- to macro- issues, local to global levels, grassroots to elite actors, short-term to long-term timescales)" in the conflict transformation (Miall, 2004:17), because addressing the political problems without addressing the social and economic concerns of the people may cause opposition against the political actions.

Another reaction regarding the Kurdish question was a statement by Lüleburgaz Ülkü Ocakları Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı, a Turkish nationalist youth association: "[Our movement] will be the leading actor in calling [this process] to account. (…) [They] are trying to eliminate the Turkish race"[22]. This reaction again proves the importance of addressing the issues at the societal level and transforming the society by changing the perspectives of the people.

All these examples show that for a peaceful coexistence and inter-ethnic relationship in Lüleburgaz, it is useful to investigate the perceptions of these people about each other and living together.

4.1.2 Neighborhoods

Two neighborhoods in Lüleburgaz were selected as the research setting: *Durak* neighborhood and *8 Kasım* neighborhood. When selecting these neighborhoods, the main criteria was the existence of Kurdish population in the neighborhoods. Also, in order to see whether social contact has any influence on the perceptions of the people, 8

[21] "İşçiden 'artık yeter be ya'", *Cumhuriyet*, 24 March 2013, Available at: http://www.kristalis.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/cumhuriyet-trakya.jpg [Accessed: May 03, 2013].

[22] 'Hesap sormanın baş aktörü olacağız'. *Lüleburgaz Görünüm Gazetesi*, 26 March 2013, Available at: http://www.gorunumgazetesi.com.tr/haberler/-8216-hesap-sormanin-bas-aktoru-olacagiz-8217-.html [Accessed: May 03, 2013].

Kasım neighborhood with a mixed Turkish and Kurdish population (together with other migrants) was selected as opposed to the Durak neighborhood where the Kurdish population live in a residentially segregated area isolated from the Turkish population. In the neighborhoods, Turks and Kurds were treated as two sub-sample groups.

Durak Neighborhood: This neighborhood is approximately 3.3 km away from the city center (see the Appendix 1). Its total population is 2944, and its population over the age of 18 is 2182 as of 2013 (TUIK Report, 2013). The overall population of this neighborhood is composed mainly of farmers and factory workers, younger population falling in the latter group.

Between the city and the neighborhood, there are farms and agricultural fields. With this respect, it can be considered as the suburb of the city. The neighborhood is important in terms of transportation as the railway passing through it connects the city of Lüleburgaz with most of its villages. That is why it is also called as "İstasyon" (Train Station) by the people.

Durak neighborhood is the main settlement location for the Kurdish migrants arriving in Lüleburgaz. It is the neighborhood with the densest Kurdish population all over the city. Indeed, Kurdish population have recently begun to settle in other neighborhoods. For instance, during the preliminary research for this study, it was seen that many local Turkish people who were asked what they know about the Kurdish population in Lüleburgaz answered this question as: *"I know that they live in İstasyon, but I do not know if there are any Kurdish people living in the center"*. Also, the neighborhood is the main gathering area of the Kurdish population for the cultural and political events such as the celebration of Newroz[23],[24,25].

The first settlements in the neighborhood is predicted to have started after the opening of this train station in 1873 (Kösebay Erkan, 2011). Among the first residents of the neighborhood there were civil servants working in the train station and living in

[23] Celebration of the new year and the coming of spring on the 21 March.

[24] "Lüleburgaz'da Nevruz kutlaması için geniş güvenlik önlemi alındı," Zaman, March 21, 2012, Available at: http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_luleburgazda-nevruz-kutlamasi-icin-genis-guvenlik-onlemi-alindi_1262168.html] [Accessed: November 15, 2013].

[25] "BDP'den Lüleburgaz'da Nevruz Kutlaması (!)", March 21, 2012, Available at: http://www.trakyahaberleri.com/haber-7786-bdpden-luleburgazda-nevruz-kutlamasi-.html# [Accessed: November 15, 2013].

the lodging building there, as well as some farmers. Later, the population of the neighborhood has been started to become more diverse. First, some farmers from the neighboring villages and the city center have begun to settle there. Then, part of the Bulgarian Turks coming from Bulgaria after 1989 have begun to settle in the neighborhood as well. In the beginning of the 2000s, migrants coming from the Anatolia have also arrived. However, Kurdish migrants have settled in a segregated area on the Western side of the neighborhood (see the area in a black rectangle in the Appendix 2) while the Bulgarian Turks and the non-Kurdish Anatolian migrants live together with the local people in the rest of the neighborhood.

8 Kasım Neighborhood: 8 Kasım neighborhood is located on the South of Lüleburgaz. Its total population is 6859, and its population over the age of 18 is 5028 as of 2013 (TUIK Report, 2013). The overall population of the neighborhood is composed of middle-class workers, mainly factory workers or workers employed in the shops, construction works, etc.

In the 1990s, the neighborhood was composed of mainly two housing developments, Aydınkent and Maliye Lojmanları. Later, in parallel with the increase in the city's population, new houses have been built in the neighborhood, of which the most recent one is TOKİ Burgazkent (see the Appendix 3). Also, one of the most recent high schools in Lüleburgaz, (Düvenciler High School) and one of the most recent hospitals in the city (Özel Bir Nefes Göğüs Hastalıkları Hastanesi) were built in the neighborhood. More importantly, it is important to mention that this neighborhood has gained its individual neighborhood status in 2000s. Until then, part of it was within the territories of Kurtuluş neighborhood, while the other part was in the Hürriyet neighborhood. All these developments indicate the increasing settlement demand in the neighborhood.

As it is a recently created neighborhood, the population of 8 Kasım reflects the recent demographic changes in the city. Besides the local people, the neighborhood hosts migrants from all around the country coming to Lüleburgaz for various reasons. At this point, it is important to note that the neighborhood is becoming more and more popular among the migrants, because the housing in the city center has already belong to the local people and the migrants' housing needs have been met by the newly constructed housing developments in the neighborhood. Among these migrants, there

are both Kurdish and non-Kurdish migrants. According to the *muhtar* of the neighborhood, the migrants constitute 35% of the overall population in 8 Kasım. Unlike Durak neighborhood, the neighborhood has a mixed population. In other words, local people, non-Kurdish migrants and Kurdish migrants live together in the same buildings and/or on the same streets. There is no segregated area belonging to a specific ethnic group.

4.2 Sampling Procedure

To select the participants, in each neighborhood, only Kurdish and Turkish local residents were reached because the scope of this study is limited to the intergroup relations between Kurdish and local Turkish residents. Also, people at the voting age were selected as participants.

Snowball sampling procedure was used to decide the samples. Neuman (2006) describes snowball sampling as follows: "A nonrandom sample in which the researcher begins with one case, and then based on information about interrelationships from that case, identifies other cases, and repeats the process again and again" (p. 223). The primary reason for choosing this method was to eliminate the risk of contacting wrong respondents who are out of the limits of this study.

Gatekeepers were also of great help for reaching the correct respondents. There were four people who served as gatekeepers during the conduction of the interviews. They were all the residents of either Durak or 8 Kasım neighborhoods. One of them was a 38-year-old Kurdish resident living in the 8 Kasım neighborhood. The first contact with him occurred though my father. He helped me reach the Kurdish residents living in 8 Kasım. The other person who helped me in 8 Kasım neighborhood was a 29-year-old local Turkish resident living there. He is a friend of mine from high-school. As for the Durak neighborhood, I got help from a member of ODP (Freedom and Democracy Party) to reach the Kurdish residents living in the isolated area. He was a former resident of that neighborhood, but he was not living in the segregated part then as he is a local people of Lüleburgaz. At first, I had a Kurdish gatekeeper from another

neighborhood, Sevgi neighborhood. She was a former resident of Durak as well. However, she gave up helping me because she thought that it was too risky to go there and ask identity-related questions in a pre-election atmosphere. She also informed me that another woman had visited the Kurdish population in that segregated area about a year before. She had asked questions about the environment and Ergene River, i.e. nothing related to politics, etc. However, the people found out that she was a KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union)[26] and this caused fear around the neighborhood. Last but not least, my cousin lives in Durak, so he was my gatekeeper to reach the local Turkish residents.

The common features of the respondents is being from either 8 Kasım or Durak neighborhood, and being either from the local or Kurdish population. Also, their income levels are much or less the same to eliminate the difference that may arise as a result of class difference instead of ethnic difference. Other features such as age, gender, political view, etc. vary from respondent to respondent. Thus, the study does not risk repeating and limiting the data to the perceptions reflecting the same political view, age group, etc. In this respect, snowball sampling provided the interview with the opportunity to reach people from different backgrounds.

4.2.1 Sample Characteristics

Interviews are conducted with a total of 20 respondents. 10 of them are 8 Kasım residents and the other 10 are Durak residents. In accordance with the Turkish and Kurdish division, 5 of the respondents are Kurdish residents and 5 of them is local Turkish residents in each neighborhood. The ethnicity and nativity of the respondents was determined upon self-identification.

The initial target for the sampling size was 40 respondents in total. However, towards the end of the interview period, it was seen that people were getting nervous due to the upcoming local elections. Upon the candidacy of a Kurdish resident for

[26] Defined as “the the urban wing of the PKK" at http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/courts-refuses-to-release-kck-suspects.aspx?pageID=238&nID=63725&NewsCatID=341 [Accessed: November 15, 2013].

muhtarlık at Durak neighborhood, the atmosphere became tenser, so it was determined that continuing to conduct interviews were getting more difficult and insecure. In order to be sure about stopping the interviews, the data was checked in terms of saturation level. When it was observed that the samples are diverse enough to reflect the required points, the conduction of interview was stopped. A brief information is presented below regarding the characteristics of the samples per neighborhood.

4.2.1.1.Local Residents of Durak Neighborhood

Nickname of the Sample	**Age**	**Education**	**Occupation**
Ali	27	High-school graduate	Blue collar worker
Orhan	50	Primary school graduate	Retired blue collar worker
Gizem	44	High-school graduate	Blue collar worker
Gonca	57	College degree	Retired white collar worker
Umut	62	College degree	Retired white collar worker

Table 3.1 *Local Residents of Durak Neighborhood*

All of the interviews were conducted in the houses of the respondents. Among these respondents, Gizem's family migrated to Turkey from Bulgaria during the Balkan Wars. She does not identify herself as "Bulgarian Turk" though. All of these people live in detached houses with gardens. Orhan thinks that intergroup conflict is more likely to occur in apartment buildings as they have to enter/exit their apartments by

using a common building door. He believes that detached houses help people leave the problems with other people outside of their houses.

4.2.1.2 Local Residents of 8 Kasım Neighborhood

Nickname of the Sample	Age	Education	Occupation
Kemal	30	High-school graduate	Blue collar worker
Mert	28	College degree	Self-employed
Nesrin	54	High-school graduate	Housewife
Olcay	28	Associate degree	Blue collar worker
Sonay	25	High-school graduate	Housewife

Table 3.2 *Local Residents of 8 Kasım Neighborhood*

Three of the interviews were conducted at home while the interviews with Sonay and Kemal were conducted at a cafe.

Olcay served as a ranger in the army as part of his compulsory military service. I will not mention his place of duty due to privacy concerns, but he stated that he had involved in armed conflict during his service. He says that in the Eastern regions, Turkish people are excluded by the Kurdish local people living there, just like Kurds are excluded by the Turkish local people in the West. Therefore, he believes that the resolution process of Kurdish question should definitely involve the citizens. According to him, true and sustainable peace is possible when "Turks are not seen as enemies when wandering around the Kurdish cities in the East". However, as it is seen in the

analysis chapter, he thinks that Kurds should conform to the lifestyle of the West if they want to live there.

4.2.1.3 Kurdish Residents of Durak Neighborhood

Nickname of the Sample	**Age**	**Education**	**Occupation**	**Lives in Lüleburgaz since...**
Ayla	18	High-school graduate	Housewife	Birth
Berkin	31	High-school graduate	Blue collar worker	1990
Emel	22	High-school graduate	Housewife	2011
Ethem	56	Primary school graduate	Self-employed	1975
Gülten	45	Never been to school	Housewife	1994

Table 3.3 *Kurdish Residents of Durak Neighborhood*

All of the interviews conducted at home. Gülten and Emel migrated to Lüleburgaz after they got married. Their husband were in Lüleburgaz back then, they had come to Lüleburgaz before their wives. Berkin migrated to Lüleburgaz with his family when he was 7. He states that his family had wanted to protect them from the terror.

Ethem is an ex-blue collar worker. He migrated to Lüleburgaz when he was a farmer in Iğdır. He worked as a construction worker. Later, he saved enough money to build a home for his family and start his own business.

In addition, all of these Kurdish residents are from Iğdır. In fact, majority of the Kurdish population in this segregated area is from Iğdır and they are somehow related to one another with complex relative ties. I tried to reach to residents from other cities such as Malatya, Adıyaman, etc. but they did not accept to participate in this study. I observed that Iğdırlı people have a control over the neighborhood and the other residents hesitate to speak because of them.

4.2.1.4 Kurdish Residents of 8 Kasım Neighborhood

Nickname of the Sample	**Age**	**Education**	**Occupation**	**Lives in Lüleburgaz since...**
Ahmet	31	High-school graduate	Blue collar worker	1986
Bahar	38	Primary school graduate	Housewife	2003
Gülsüm	40	Primary school graduate	Housewife	2006
Rıza	56	College degree	White collar worker	1994
Pelin	25	High-school graduate	Housewife	2007

Table 3.1 *Kurdish Residents of 8 Kasım Neighborhood*

Ahmet is from Mardin. First, his father came to Lüleburgaz in the beginning of 1980s and then he moved his whole family into Lüleburgaz. At first, they settled in Durak neighborhood but moved away from there after they had enough money to buy a house in 8 Kasım.

Similarly, Bahar and her husband settled in Durak neighborhood when they first arrived in Lüleburgaz. Bahar's and her husband's families are from Ağrı but she was born in Istanbul. She has not seen Ağrı so far. They migrated to Lüleburgaz to escape from the family issues in Istanbul.

Pelin is from Ağrı as well. She came to Lüleburgaz when she was married for 1 year. They settled in 8 Kasım as soon as they arrived. She states that they did not want to live in Durak as a newly married couple because there are many elderly relatives there.

The other male respondent, Rıza is from Dersim. During the interview, he used the name "Tunceli" though. I realized this weeks after the interview and contacted him again just to ask the reason for his preference. His response was:

"I went through lots of things as a person from the 78 generation. I has to migrate to Germany. Then, I came here. I hardly remember my hometown as I have never been there since I left for Germany. Now, I have a great family. I have two smart children. Finally I have found peace. I do not want to risk it by taking a wrong step. You know, Dersim sounds very political"

Another noteworthy thing about Rıza is that he places his Alawite identity in front of his Kurdish identity. He says that Alawism is a culture, a lifestyle as a belief system but that Kurdishness does not have the same function.

4.3 Data Collection

This study employs the use of less structured, in-depth interview methodology in gathering information about the intergroup relations and perceptions in the selected neighborhoods.

Interview method was chosen because it provides the opportunity to draw out extensive information through open ended questions. Open-ended questions also

provide the respondents with “freedom to answer the questions using their own words” (Guion et. al., 2011:1); hence, offering a more in-depth understanding of their perceptions.

The form of interview used in this paper is semi-structured. This means although a set of questions is pre-planned for guidance purposes, the interview is conversational in general allowing follow-up questions and "flowing from previous responses when possible" (ibid., 1).

All of the interviews, except for Kemal (8 Kasım) and Sonay (8 Kasım) was conducted at home. Kemal preferred to meet me at a cafe, as I was sick and he has a little child. As his house is stove-heated, it was impossible to conduct the interview in another room. Also, I met Sonay at a cafe because she was not staying at her own home at that time. She had recently gave birth to a baby. Thus, she was staying with her family to get help from her mother. The average duration of the interviews is 20-30 minutes.

4.3.1 Interview Questions

The main aim of the interview questions (see Appendix 4 and 5 for the lists of interview questions) was to explore the nature of the intergroup relationships between the Turkish local residents and Kurdish residents and to see whether social contact has any effect on the perceptions of these groups about each other. With this aim, the first thing that I tried to understand was the self-categorization of the people. Accordingly, the first questions I asked to both local and Kurdish residents was “Could you please introduce yourself?”, “How would you define your identity?”. Because local people repeatedly defined themselves as Lüleburgazlı, I also asked them the question "Who can be considered/accepted as Lüleburgazlı?”

The second set of questions was related to their perceptions about Lüleburgaz in general. I asked them what they think about life in Lüleburgaz. When this question was directed to the local people, the aim was to explore whether they would mention the increasing number of migrants and related issues. And when it was asked to the

Kurdish residents, the aim was to explore whether they would mention the difficulties they had as Kurds. I used this question and the related probe questions to open a conversation about migration-related issues upon their responses instead of directing them to the issue by myself.

To the Kurdish migrants, my third question was “Why did you choose this city/neighborhood to live in?” to understand their stories as well as the factors that bring them together in Durak/lead them live in 8 Kasım. Also, they were asked about their hometown and the reason for migration.

On the other hand, the third question directed at the local people was "Who lives in this neighborhood?". With this question, I wanted to see whether they are aware of the other groups living in their neighborhood. Nesrin from 8 Kasım, for example, was not aware of the Kurdish population in her neighborhood. She shares her opinions about the Kurdish migrants in Lüleburgaz in general, but answered the question about the intergroup relationships in the neighborhood with regards to her opinions about the migrants from the Black Sea region. Remembering about the ‘imagined contact’ mentioned in the literature review of this study, I transformed my question for her as follows:

“Imagine that you encounter a Kurdish person living in this neighborhood...”

“How would you feel if you had a Kurdish family living next door?”

She answered these question based on her imagination, but she also shared her interaction experiences at the school of her children (with the parents of Kurdish students), at the supermarket (Kurdish speaking people that she has encountered).

The next question for the local respondents was “What do you think/how do you feel about the migrations to Lüleburgaz?” At this stage, I did not mention the Kurdish migrants in order to avoid from a guided interview. Instead, I wait for their answer and it provides me with data about their perceptions with regards to other groups – Bulgarian Turks, Roma people, migrants from the Black Sea region and migrants from

the nearby villages – as well. That way, I could figure out the social hierarchy that they have constructed in relation with the social categories in the city.

Their mention of the migrants from the nearby villages was another additional benefit of asking open-ended questions in the interview. Before starting the interviews, I was thinking that they would limit the outgroups to the migrants coming from outside the Thrace region. Exclusion of rural migrants from the *Lüleburgazlı* ingroup was something I did not expect.

As for the Kurdish respondents, the next question was “Have you ever faced difficulties in Lüleburgaz because of your identity as a Kurdish person?”. If their response to this question is affirmative, then I asked them the following question: “In your opinion, what are the root causes of these difficulties/problems?”.

The questions regarding the intergroup relationships were almost the same for both groups. The first question in this sense was a more general question: “How do evaluate the intergroup relationship between the migrants and the local people?" When I was asking this question to the local people, I avoided from referring to the Kurdish migrants at the first place. I wanted to see if they thought about other groups as well or immediately started to talk about Kurdish migrants and their influence in the city. I referred to the Kurdish migrants only after they mentioned Kurds and their perceptions about them. The other question about the intergroup relationships was related to their perceptions about the relationship in a narrower setting, i.e. their neighborhood.

The last part of questions aimed at discovering the presence/absence of intergroup contact and the effects of contact on their perceptions. While doing this, I did not focus merely on the direct contact. In accordance with the literature review presented in this study, I asked questions oriented towards examining the effects of indirect contact as well. For example, I asked the local respondents whether TV series, movies about the life in the Eastern regions had any influence on their perceptions. In addition, I asked them about how they feel/what they think about their friends or family members who have Kurdish friends. For two cases, Mert from 8 Kasım and Nesrin from 8 Kasım, I asked questions that were constructed to understand the effects of imagined contact. Also, I asked both local and Kurdish respondents whether their perception had changed after the contact situation.

During the interviews, I took care of conforming to the discourse of the respondent. For example, if the respondent referred to Kurds as "the Easterners", I kept using "the Easterners" as well in order no to cause discomfort. However, I also tried to understand why they avoid from using the word “Kurdish” and asked relevant questions.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

The main aim of this chapter is to summarize the thoughts and concerns of the people with excerpts from the interviews and to analyze their perceptions about ingroup and outgroup relations.

The chapter is composed of two sections in line with the two themes of the thesis (social categorizations and intergroup relations) researched through the interview questions. The reason for categorizing the data into sections is to provide a more organized view on the perceptions of the interviewees. However, these sections are further divided into subsections to present the views of locals and the Kurdish population separately. In this sense, each section includes two parts; one containing the reflections of local people regarding the theme, and the other the reflections of the Kurdish residents.

5.1 Social Categorizations and Perceptions

5.1.1 Local Residents

5.1.1.1 Self-Identification

To begin with, local residents of both Durak and 8 Kasım neighborhoods highlight "being Lüleburgazlı" as a group identity throughout the interviews. They continuously compare *Lüleburgazlı* people as a group with the migrants from Anatolia

or nearby villages. For these residents, being *Lüleburgazlı* means being educated, urbanite, secular in terms of religion and having a high-income. They make a distinction between themselves and people coming from nearby villages based on their urbanite characteristics. They also place themselves in a different category than "the Anatolians", the term they use to refer to both the Kurdish and non-Kurdish migrants from Anatolia. According to them, they differ from the Anatolians in terms of having high education levels as well as religious freedom they enjoy.

The stereotypes they attain to Lüleburgazlı people represent their reflections about their ingroup more clearly:

"Lüleburgazlı people are good. They are kind-hearted and friendly" (Ali, 27 – Durak)

"Lüleburgaz is a modern city. There are educated people here." (Gonca, 57 – Durak)

"They are free and easy-going" (Gizem, 44 – Durak)

"We are more free, I guess. We are more friendly. We like to include the people around us like a family." (Sonay, 25 – 8 Kasım)

"We live here in a more civilized way (...) We have high income" (Nesrin, 54 – 8 Kasım)

"(...) they [migrants from Anatolia] believe that girls should not have education or go out, girls should cover their head and they do not have right to speak... However, it is not like that for us; everyone of us is independent and can express our ideas freely..." (Olcay, 28 – 8 Kasım)

The key expressions in these excerpts, which are *"good, modern, educated, free, civilized, high income, independent"*- summarize the stereotypical characteristics attributed to *Lüleburgazlı* people. Moreover, they tell us around which factors

Lüleburgazlı identity takes shape. First of all, it is apparent that Lüleburgaz as a place is an important part of their self-identification as they name their identity after the city. Dixon and Durrheim already explain this as: "questions of `who we are' are often intimately related to questions of `where we are" (2000:27). On the other hand, it is also apparent that the meaning they attribute to *Lüleburgazlı* identity goes far beyond being a place identity, it also serves to exclude non-urban people with lower income and education from their ingroup. In other words, *Lüleburgazlı* identity represents an identity with high levels of urbanity, education and income levels as well as Turkish ethnicity.

Actually, local respondents also refer to *Lüleburgazlı* culture as an identifier of their identity. Here, Lüleburgaz culture refers to a lifestyle with high level of urbanity, individualization, secularism, income as well as being less traditional lifestyle. This is reflected in the expressions of some of the local people as well. Gonca (57 – Durak), for example, complains that she has few friends in the neighborhood although she tries a lot to approach the rural migrants (from the nearby villages). She explains the difficulty she has experienced in becoming friends with the rural migrants with the following:

"I try to have a conversation with them. I visit them, I try to talk to them. However, what can I share with them? There is a cultural difference between me and those neighbors from the village. They are less educated, conservative... We are not culturally compatible with each other."

Some other respondents also have the same perception with Gonca. According to them, Lüleburgaz culture represents a class with higher status and they assume that they are culturally different from even the nearby cities such as Babaeski and even the province Kırklareli. For example, Gizem (44 – Durak) defines the culture of nearby villages and cities as "wholly another culture". Ali (27 – Durak) clarifies this difference with the following words: *"They have a rural culture because they are not as industrialized as Lüleburgaz and they still have some old, rural customs*[27]*."*

[27] "Köylü âdetleri"

Last but not least, Lüleburgazlı identity has a more impermeable dimension as well. Some of the local people argue that Turkishness also matters in relation with their identity. We see that clearly in their expressions with regards to Roma population in the city. Roma people also form a native population group in Lüleburgaz, i.e. they are part of the urban population. Yet, expressions of some of the local people show that they are excluded from Lüleburgazlı ingroup. Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım), for instance, highlights the status of Roma population by sharing her opinions about their involvement in the city activities. Her expressions reflect the exclusion of Roma people from local group of people:

"Roma people here (...) think that they are very important. They believe that we should conform to them. They act first[28] *in everything. Therefore, the local people of Lüleburgaz cannot participate in anything. For example, when there is a concert, you see Roma people there. Few Turkish people, local people can go there. You cannot feel comfortable here because of them."*

Similarly, Olcay's (28 – 8 Kasım) mention of Roma people offers the same exclusion. He responds the question about his opinion about the status of Roma people in Lüleburgaz with the following:

"They have their own neighborhoods. (...) Of course, give a dog a bad name and hang him[29]*. They committed theft back in the days. (...) Those people have been excluded since before now. (...) They have been labeled as 'burglars'. And they have given up mingling with the local people."*

In this example, Olcay does not only accept the social discrimination against the Roma people, but also by his expression "mingling with the local people", he shows that he does not see them as "local people".

To sum up, *Lüleburgazlı* identity is a multi-dimensional identity based on place, class and ethnicity. It includes being urban, Turkish, native of Lüleburgaz as well as in

[28] "Her şeyde ilk onlar davranıyorlar"
[29] "Tabii bir insanın adı dokuza çıktıysa sekize inmez diye var ya…"

an economically good position. It is interesting to see how the construction of this identity on the basis of these dimensions is in parallel with theories of social identity. At the end of the day, these dimensions and the Lüleburgazlı stereotypes attained accordingly by these local people serve to achieve a positive distinctiveness from the other groups.

What is more, local people also strive for maintaining this positive social identity and high status through showing ingroup favoritism. They show it through their tendency to excuse the behavior of their ingroup members, which they evaluate as a negative characteristic when performed by outgroup members. To put it more clearly, they criticize migrants who favor other migrants at workplaces; yet, they complain that *Lüleburgazlı* people do not favor one another sufficiently. For example, Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) complains that "the people coming from the East" favor each other especially in the work places. However, when he is asked about his opinion about the *kahvehanes*[30] where men tend to form groups based on their home village or based on local versus migrant distinctions, he replies that it is normal for people to prefer the *kahvehanes* owned by local people adding that "they may want their own people earn money". In this case, ingroup favoritism is seen acceptable for local people although they perceive it as a sign of exclusion and/or "withdrawing into their shell" (Olcay, 28 – 8 Kasım) when performed by the Kurdish people.

Similarly, Ali (27 – Durak) criticizes the Easterner employers for favoring the Easterner workers, but complains that *Lüleburgazlı* people do not favor each other like that. In another words, what is seen as a sign of "isolation", "grouping" and "withdrawing into one's shell" when it comes to the Kurdish residents, is declared as a kind of "cooperation" when it is about *Lüleburgazlı* people.

So far, I have tried to understand the self-categorization of local people as well as the basis of the identity that they have constructed. The research shows that there is no difference between Durak or 8 Kasım neighborhoods on how they see being *Lüleburgazlı*. In this regard, it is possible to talk about a mostly accepted common identity as none of the respondents differs in terms of self-definition, stereotypes that he/she attains to his/her ingroup and his/her concern about the positive social identity.

[30] Coffeehouses specific to men.

Altogether, one difference between the locals of two neighborhoods in question should be noted with regards to the salience of the aforementioned identity dimensions. It is seen that there is a difference in terms of reference to ethnic dimension – Turkishness. Local residents of Durak refer to Turkishness as their primary identities at the earlier stages of the interview, i.e. as a direct response to the questions of how they define themselves. However, only one out of five respondents in 8 Kasım mentions Turkishness at first. This respondent, Kemal (30 – 8 Kasım), accepts Turkishness as a supra-identity which covers all the ethnic identities in Turkey as well as the ethnic Turkish people living in the Middle Asia. For all the other respondents, Turkishness as a dimension of ingroup identity comes to surface as a result of comparison of ingroup with the Kurdish group rather than as a direct response to identity question. For example, Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım) mentions Turkishness for the first time when talking about an incident when Kurds burnt a Turkish flag in Durak neighborhood. She refers to this incident as an "attack to her values". Similarly, Mert (28 – 8 Kasım) mentions Turkishness after he is asked whether he prefers any other identity to define himself following his statements regarding being *Lüleburgazlı* and Thracian:

Interviewer: Could you please introduce yourself? How do you define your identity?
Mert: I am 28 years old. I live in Lüleburgaz. I am a Lüleburgazlı....
Interviewer: In your opinion, who can be regarded as Lüleburgazlı?
Mert: People who are born and live in this city.
Interviewer: Are there certain characteristics that define a Lüleburgazlı?
Mert: Thracian culture, Balkan culture...
(...)
Interviewer: Are there any other elements that you use to define yourself except for Lüleburgaz, job, age, etc. I mean this may be a national identity, ethnic identity...
Mert: Just Turkish.

Stets and Burke's explanation of salience hierarchy helps us interpret this difference between two neighborhoods: "A salient identity is an identity that is likely to be played out (activated) frequently across different situations" (2003:135). Indeed, the main difference between two neighborhoods, is that the residential segregation in Durak may be considered as an activating factor for ethnic identity. According to Lederach, "(...) people seek *security* by identifying with something close to their experience" (1997:13). Likewise, Hornsey (2008) points out that the accessibility of a category is important in terms self-definition. In the case of Durak, one can assume that

the geographical segregation results in a spontaneous "Kurds vs. Turks" differentiation. Hence, ethnicity becomes more accessible and a part of everyday experience. To put it in a different way, residential segregation may create ethnically marked zones and social contexts in which people comprehend their identity relative to others in terms of ethnicity more easily. Still, a more comprehensive study, such as a questionnaire including questions about other possible factors like ideology, which would be applied to a larger population, might provide a more accurate answer regarding this difference.

5.1.1.2 Outgroup Perceptions

Local residents put the emphasis on cultural differences, stereotypes and accommodation to local setting when talking about outgroups. Their perceptions and attitudes seem to change in accordance with these factors and this creates a social hierarchy in the city. When we have a holistic view of this hierarchy, we see that the basis of their stance is social and ethnic identity, indeed. The place of each outgroup is seen to be determined in accordance with the preferences of local people which are shaped as per social and ethnic similarity. In that way, local people do not only justify their dominant position in the society, they also determine the positions of the relevant outgroups.

First of all, migrants from nearby villages and other cities of Thracian region are at the top of the hierarchy. As all of the respondents distinguish between the Thrace and the East, this migrant group is considered closer to the ingroup. Kemal (30 – 8 Kasım) expresses this regional differentiation as follows: *"For us, beyond Istanbul is the East. The difference between the West and the East is not taught to us, we define it this way by ourselves."*

Although this statement seems to make merely a geographical distinction, other respondents' discourses regarding 'the East' show that there is a connection between the regional differentiation they make and their ethnic perspectives. This assumption is confirmed by Mert (28 – 8 Kasım) who reveals the association of regional and ethnic differences in his mind:

"Ethnic identity is something regional. In Turkey, regions are different from each other in terms of race. For example, people in the Black Sea region are Laz, the Easterners are Kurdish..."

At this point, it would be helpful to remember the history of the Kurdish question in Turkey in order to interpret the reference to 'the East' as a region and to 'the Easterners' as an outgroup identity correctly. For years, the state discourse in Turkey regarding the Kurdish question had centered on the avoidance from using the word "Kurdish". Instead, the conflict was seen as the problem of 'the East', i.e. underdevelopment and lack of investment in the region (Yeğen, 2007). In this way, the Turkish state avoided from recognizing Kurds as an ethnic minority and addressing the conflict accordingly. We see a mere reflection of this discourse in the words of the local people of Lüleburgaz. Umut (62 – Durak), for example, argues the following:

"People talk about the 'Kurdish question'. The Southeastern region has problems in general, and not all the people living in the Southeastern and Eastern regions are Kurdish. Dadaş people[31] *do not stand out and say that "there is a Dadaş question" but Kurds do, because they want to have control over the region".*

Similarly, Orhan (50 – Durak) and Mert (28 – 8 Kasım) think that ethnic identity is a recently emerging topic. Both of them believe that highlighting the ethnic identities has a political purpose and they do not approve it as it is understood from the following:

"This is all about political purposes. If the politicians did not bring ethnic identity into question, the citizens would not think about it. (...) They should not bring the issue into question as the 'Kurdish question'. They should bring social services to the East. (...) Now, they talk about the Kurdish-Turkish brotherhood, peace... Which peace? Bring service to Kurds, to the East... So that they do not migrate here from the East. They do not use weapon anymore, once they have good living standards. There is no conflict

[31] A term referring to the local people of Erzurum.

between Kurds and Turks, but the politicians try to make it seem as such.(...) This political attitude has ignited the tension between people." (Orhan, 50 – Durak)

"People have recently begun to talk about ethnic identities. Before, people in Lüleburgaz did not ask one another about their ethnic identities and ethnic identities were not known. The politicians have caused this segregation. They have segregated people into ethnic groups. They invented something called 'sub-identity and supra-identity" (Mert, 28 – 8 Kasım)

During the interviews, there were also some occasions where I observed that people became uncomfortable with the usage of the term "Kurdish". I conducted the interviews with Kemal (30 – 8 Kasım) and Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım) in a cafe. In the case of Kemal, I asked him to whom he referred by the term 'the Easterner'. Instead of giving a direct answer to my question, he mentioned the geographical distinction between the Thrace and the East. Than, he referred to Kurdish identity as a sub-identity but every time he uttered the word "Kurdish", he lowered his voice. Likewise, Sonay got uncomfortable when I deliberately used the word "Kurds" during the interview to see her reaction. She immediately looked around to make that nobody around had heard me. Later, she admitted that she did not want the people around us think that we were talking about something related to *"the terrorists"*. Other interviews were carried out at home, so people were relatively more relaxed with hearing the word "Kurds". However, they still did not prefer to use it. Gonca (57 – Durak) and Ali (27 – Durak) said that the use of "Kurds" made the issue *"too political"*[32]. The reactions and reflections of these respondents tell us that they avoid referring to Kurdishness not only to avoid recognizing Kurdish identity and rights, but also because of the link they perceive to exist between the PKK and Kurds.

Turning back to the top position of rural migrants from Thracian cities and villages in the social hierarchy constructed by the locals, we see that there are two factors determining this position. One of them is the feeling of security local people perceive in comparison to the ethnically different migrants. Sonay's (25 – 8 Kasım) comparison between her childhood and present time is just an example which reflects

[32] "Konuyu çok siyasi yapıyor"

the difference perceived between the migrations from the nearby villages and the East in terms of security:

"In that neighborhood [where she grew up], there are mostly people from the nearby villages. My childhood passed there. (...) We grew up on the streets. However, such thing [playing in the streets] is not possible today. Could I let my child go out and play on the streets now? I cannot trust [let my child go out on his/her own] even in that neighborhood (...) This is related to the excessive migration. As the employment opportunities are limited in the East, I guess people have come here..."

When we consider this reflection together with Sonay's aforementioned concern about the use of the word "Kurdish", it becomes clear that the link she perceives between the PKK and Kurds leads to a feeling of threat. Therefore, Kurds are less preferable as neighbors than the other migrant groups for Sonay.

The other factor is cultural similarity. According to Gizem (44 – Durak), the migrants from other Thracian cities and villages are very different from Lüleburgazlı people as they have rural tastes[33] and styles but it is easier to get along with them as they are more similar to them in terms of traditions[34].

From the perspective of the local people, Bulgarian immigrants are the second in terms of cultural and social closeness. For example, Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) answers a question about whether he has the same opinion for both the Easterners and the Bulgarian immigrants as follows:

"No, I do not. With the migration from Bulgaria, maybe Turkey has improved a little more. Those people have a European perspective. When they first came here, people opposed them. For example, women had not worked at the factories before they came. (...) They have changed this view. I mean they did a good thing."

[33] "Köylü zevki"

[34] Indeed, this response also supports the above mentioned interpretation of cultural dimension of Lüleburgazlı identity. Once again, it is seen that the locals' mention of culture serves to highlight their urban characteristics and superiority in terms of education and income. It does not refer to traditions, customs, etc.

He further elaborates his views by mentioning the cultural proximity of Bulgarian immigrants (Just like Gizem (44 – Durak), Olcay's mention of culture is not the same as the meaning the attribute to *Lüleburgazlı* culture. Here, they point out to traditions whereas the cultural dimension of Lüleburgazlı identity represents their characteristics as an urban class. He legitimizes the superiority of Bulgarian Turk residents over the Anatolian immigrants:

"In terms of getting along, we are close to Bulgarian immigrants in all respects. We are close in terms of views, style, and we adapt to each other quickly. But it takes time or never happens with a person from the East. We cannot become friends in a short time".

Another differentiation is made between people coming from the Black Sea region and the Kurdish people. It is seen that local people's stance towards the people from Black Sea region is more positive than towards Kurds on average. Gonca (57 – Durak) says that *"people coming from the Black Sea region can adapt themselves to here more quickly, they are not aggressive"* like the Kurdish migrants. Similarly, we see the mention of aggressiveness in Gizem's (44 – Durak) interview as well; she thinks that *"the Easterners are hot-tempered compared to the people coming from the Black Sea region".*

According to Redmond (n.d.), dominant groups form social hierarchies and then produce discourses to justify the relevant positions of groups in that hierarchy. In this respect, the repeated emphasis on the aggressiveness of Kurdish people serves as a legitimizing myth to derogate Kurds as an outgroup.

Redmond (ibid.) also points out that people apply different factors when positioning outgroups in the hierarchy. When we look at the social hierarchy constructed by the local people of Lüleburgaz from this point of view, we see that it reflects an order of outgroups based on cultural proximity, class and ethnicity.

First of all, they make a distinction between Turkish and non-Turkish groups. Then, they make a distinction among the upper three levels which includes Turkish groups. Migrants from the nearby villages and cities are placed in a higher position than the other two groups as they are the closest group to the local people in terms of cultural proximity. The second group is the Bulgarian Turks who are culturally more distant than the migrants from nearby villages. However, they are seen more urbanite than the migrants from the Black Sea region, hence placed higher than them. Migrants from the Black Sea region are seen as "rural" as argued by Gonca (57 – Durak), Nesrin (54 – 8 Kasım) and Gizem (44 – Durak) due to their conservative lifestyle and dressing. At the bottom of the hierarchy, we see Roma people and Kurds, i.e. non-Turkish outgroups. At this stage, Roma people are placed higher than Kurds, because they are seen more favorable. For example, Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) states the following: *"They are not like the migrants coming from the East. They can mingle with the people, work, have conversation with the local people and they are clean"*

Also, they may be seen culturally closer to the local people as they are the natives of the same region. However, Kurds are seen culturally distant even though they were born in Lüleburgaz:

"Kurds cannot speak like Lüleburgazlı people do, cannot behave like Lüleburgazlı people do and cannot dress like Lüleburgazlı people do... Even if they are born in Lüleburgaz. They try to maintain their attitudes, behaviors and customs here in Lüleburgaz." (Ali, 27 – Durak)

However, he acknowledges that Roma people who have education and proper jobs can easily adapt to social life as they are already from that region. In the end, we see that within the major categorization as Turks versus non-Turks, categorization according to the above mentioned three factors is repeated in each level of minor levels. So, Roma people is placed higher than Kurds as they are considered to closer in terms of region and the social life there. In order to demonstrate this social hierarchy the effective factors in a more clear and simple way, a table is presented below.

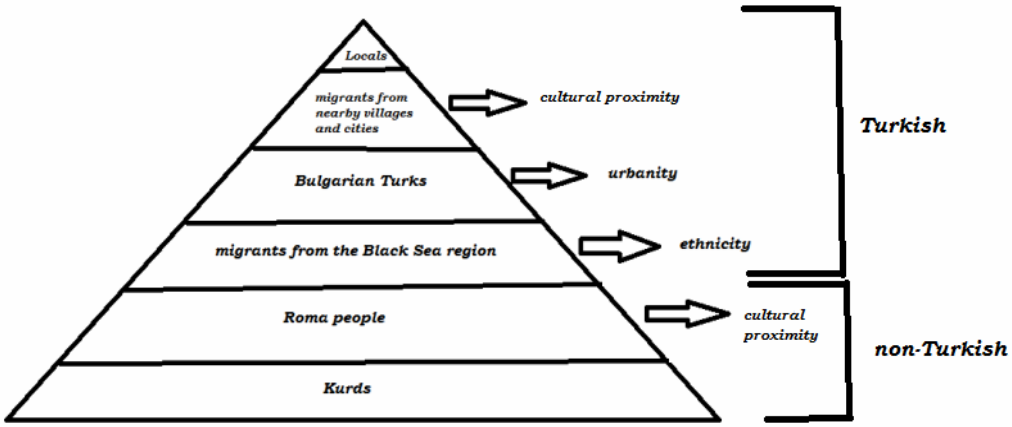

Table 5.1 *Social hierarchy in Lüleburgaz.*

5.1.1.1.1 Perceptions about the Kurdish Population

The most emphasized characteristics that are attained to Kurdish migrants are the ones that relate Kurds with tribal and conservative lifestyle. In general, Kurds are described as people who perform kin marriage and dowry practices. They are also pictured as conservative people, thus, are culturally very different from the local people. The below excerpts, for instance, show the opinions of the local people with regards to the cultural differences between themselves and Kurds:

"(...) *their way of thinking, their lifestyles do not conform to us. Their actions are unfavorable for us. (...) And our life here – for example, when two boys take a walk with two girls – seems unfavorable to them; they interpret this directly in a different way, like "look, they are doing different [bad] things!"(Olcay, 28 – 8 Kasım)*

Interviewer: What do you think about the migrants?
Mert: They increase the cultural diversity. They cannot adapt to here.
Interviewer: You are talking about cultural diversity as a negative or a positive thing?
Mert: Diversity as a negative thing. They cannot adapt themselves here, they mostly keep their own traditions. They cannot accommodate themselves to us.

Interviewer: Why do you think they cannot adapt?
Mert: Family structure, religion... Things like that."
Interviewer: In what respects are these different from the structure, religion in Lüleburgaz?
Mert: In Lüleburgaz, families care about education, they raise individuals. But the people migrating from there [the East] grow up in a culture of submissiveness."
(Mert, 28 – 8 Kasım)

"Those people [from the East] are weird people. For example, their women... When they see a man, they throw themselves into the house in order not to be seen. They do this even though they know that they will break their arm" (Ali, 27 – Durak)

So, it is seen that the local people think that their lifestyle is judged by the conservative migrants and found 'unfavorable'. Also, Mert's and Ali's statements include derogative stereotypes – expressed through the words "submissiveness" and "weird" -which help them maintain their positive distinctiveness from Kurds.

In addition, Kurds are seen as less modern and sometimes even less civilized than the local people. With that comparison, local people draw a more desirable picture of culture and life in Lüleburgaz:

"Here, we live in a more civilized manner. We have more opportunities and investments here compared to the East. They [migrants] are already aware of this. This is why we do not go there [to the East], they come here." (Nesrin, 54 – 8 Kasım)

"A person from the East and a person who grew up in the West are not the same in terms of mentality. (...) Also, the [local] people do not talk like them, they talk modern Turkish. Of course, they may have difficulties in understanding each other" (Sonay, 25 – 8 Kasım)

It is seen that the stereotypes that are associated with Kurds are based on the contrasts between "the Civilized and the Barbarians" (Van Dijk, 2003:362). These contrasts help local people ensure a positive distinctiveness between their ingroup and

the Kurdish residents. The differences that they mention derogate the outgroup while maintaining positive ingroup identity.

Apart from these, there are three more stereotypes which may serve directly for a social polarization. These include relating the Kurds with the PKK, endogamy and blaming them for living in a segregated area because of their bad intentions. For instance, Orhan (50 – Durak) talks about how any negative experience with the Kurdish residents are associated with the PKK by the local residents:

"Isolated settlement of the Kurdish population causes restlessness[35] *[because] it is a Kurdish settlement. Any event is associated with the PKK. Even though people fight with each other [for personal reasons], the name of the PKK comes to the forefront".*

In general, these sentences reflect the perceptions of the other local Durak residents as well. Any negative daily interaction quickly turns into a discussion over ethnic issues. In the case of Orhan's statement above, it is seen that local people are already ready to blame Kurds with connection to the PKK due to any negative interaction. Nevertheless, Kurds are also ready to perceive any negative ordinary interaction as a sign of racism:

"I saw him [Kurdish boy from the segregated zone] in our garden picking up peaches from our tree. I told him that it was inappropriate to enter our garden without permission. His response to me was: "This is not your garden. This is our land. Our grandfathers fought in the War of Independence to save these lands. Do not be a racist". Gonca (57 – Durak)

The second stereotype attained is endogamy. Almost all the local people mention the kin marriage, dowry and bride exchange practices when talking about the Kurdish culture. They state that these practices are "unacceptable by the local people" (Olcay, 28 – 8 Kasım). With regards to intermarriage, Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım) thinks that the

[35] "Tedirginlik oluyor"

Easterner people prefer kin marriages because they are "selfish"[36] and do not accept outsiders into their families.

Similar reactions are also seen regarding the collective settlement of Kurds in Durak neighborhood. Local people perceive isolated settlement as a wish to exercise control over the neighborhood. Umut (62 – Durak) explains this in a clear way:

"They do not want to live separately in anywhere. They call one another. They may be afraid of failing to exercise control if they live as individual families. If they move into the city center they will get lost; not in terms of their customs, but in terms of child raising style. Also, they cannot stand out and say "I am Kurdish", if they live as 1 or 2 families. They live collectively in order not to be oppressed. They do not want the name of their race to vanish"

Orhan (50 – Durak) associates this collective settlement to the tribal culture of Kurdish people and believes that they would not accept local people into their segregated area since *"they are the majority"* in that side. In addition, Mert (28 – 8 Kasım) thinks that Kurds live collectively because they see themselves as a separate community. In his opinion, other people do not need such a feeling of unity as they are the people who form the nation, but Kurds do not feel themselves as part of the Turkish nation. Regardless of the slight differences in their expressions related to the segregated settlement of Kurds, they all perceive this as a threat. They feel as if Kurds have built their autonomous region in that area and they feel uncomfortable considering the difficulty of controlling this group of Kurds in a segregated area. Ali (27 – Durak) states that it is wrong to let them live collectively by giving reference to Atatürk:

"Atatürk said that Kurds should not be permitted to live side by side and should be [geographically] distributed"

Unlike the religious and conservative stereotypes, these ones go beyond highlighting differences and blame Kurds for staying away from the people of the

[36] "Benciller biraz"

nation and practicing "deviant traditions." Van Dijk (2003:362) explains that this kind of blaming stereotypes fuels social conflict because "[s]ocial conflict is (...) cognitively represented and enhanced by polarization, and discursively sustained and reproduced by (...) demonizing".

5.1.1.3 Semantic shifts

Throughout the interviews, it is observed that the local people tend to utter phrases like, "I do not have any problems with Kurds but...." when they are expressing their feelings and opinions about Kurds living in the city. Van Dijk (2003:261) calls this switch in the discourse as "semantic moves". They start their sentences with phrases like:

"Migrants enrich the culture..." (Gizem, 44 – Durak)

"Personally they have no harm to me..." (Umut, 62 – Durak)

then, with a little semantic move using "but", they end like:

"...but they have to accommodate themselves to where they go" (Gizem, 44 – Durak)

"...but it bothers us that they behave so freely here" (Umut, 62 – Durak)

Sometimes, this shift does not occur at the sentence level but can be observed at the discourse level. For example, in the below example, I give two examples from Kemal's (30 – 8 Kasım) and Ali's (27 – Durak) interviews. At the earlier stages of the interview, they use a milder discourse, i.e. they do not regard ethnicity, cultural

differences, etc. as important or they do not see Kurds as a threat. However, as the interview goes on, they start to reflect more negative perceptions and their expectation that Kurds should conform to their lifestyle. For example, Kemal says that different languages and colors are the creations of the God, so they are not disturbing for him. But later, he states that it is disturbing to encounter people from different regions or cultures when walking out in the city. Here are his statements at the earlier and later stages of the interview:

BEFORE: "I believe that it is the God who creates the languages and colors, so I do not feel any attachment to any identity"

LATER: "Think about this: you go to a workplace and a person who is not from you overranks you (...) and do not give you what you deserve. Or when you go out you encounter people who are not from your region, from your own culture and you have problems because of this". (Kemal, 30 – 8 Kasım)

Similarly, Ali admits that Kurds are not harmful to the local people but then points out to the harm they may cause to their values:

BEFORE: "They have no harm to the local people"

LATER: "First of all, they have to accept where they are. If they live in Lüleburgaz, they have to apply the traditions of Lüleburgaz. (...) They have to change their minds at the first place. Endogamy, refusing TC (acronym for Turkish Republic) and the flag; they should not act like this if they are here" (Ali, 27 – Durak)

At first, these semantic moves and perception shifts seem as a discursive inconsistency. In fact, they are strategies to reveal one's opinions and/or feelings without drawing much reaction with the negative expressions. First they utter a positive opinion and then they "correct" (Van Dijk, 1984:115) this opinion by building a negative sentence subsequently. Same as for negative stereotypes, these shifts serve to persuade the listener about the positive social identity of one's ingroup. In other words, the positive expressions maintain the positive identity of the ingroup because they

disclaim the responsibility of local people in lack of communication, unpleasant experiences, etc.

5.1.2 Kurdish Residents

5.1.2.1 Self-Identification

Kurdish residents from both neighborhoods identify themselves as Kurdish. In the case of the local residents, it was difficult for some people to understand the question about identity. Sometimes, the concept of identity was explained to them in more detail to help them understand what identity means. However, Kurdish residents did not need further explanation about the identity, except for one case where the woman was hardly speaking Turkish. My Kurdish gatekeeper (Enver, 38 – 8 Kasım) explains this as the following:

"We always live aware of our identity because we face discrimination. Our identity has been politicized; even the political parties fight over it. So, even our children know what 'identity' means"

Indeed, Kurdish people experience a more active group membership due to social and political reasons. Both their minority status in the city and the challenges they may experience in relation to this status, and their long-term political struggle with regards to their identity rights seem to reinforce their ingroup awareness. Therefore, they are generally ready for identity-related questions and presenting their identity.

Despite their strong self-definition as Kurdish, some of them have a sense of belongingness to Lüleburgaz, as well. Here are some excerpts from the interviews of Kurdish residents who express belongingness or connection to Lüleburgaz:

"I have been living in Lüleburgaz since 1986. I have spent almost 26-27 years in the Thrace. Now, we can be considered as Thracians, as natives..." (Ahmet, 31 – 8 Kasım)

"As I get used to [the city] in the course of time, I see Lüleburgaz as my hometown. (...) I feel as if I was born here" (Berkin, 31 – Durak)

Interviewer: Do you feel that you belong to Lüleburgaz?

Ayla (18, Durak): Of course! (...) I miss this city when I am in Istanbul.

(...)

Interviewer: You have grown up in Lüleburgaz, but you also visit Iğdır. How do you feel about Iğdır?

Ayla: I do not like that city at all. Once I have been to the village there, it was very weird. There were trees everywhere... I could not stay there. I stayed one night and then returned. I could not stand... Once you get used to here, you cannot go there.

"Now, I consider Lüleburgaz as a part of me. I cannot leave these people. (...) I have identified with this city [his wife confirms: We feel as strangers in Iğdır]." (Ethem, 56 – Durak)

"I cannot say I am "Lüleburgazlı", but there is at least a feeling of connection to here. I feel it". (Bahar's son, 19 – 8 Kasım)

On the other hand, half of the respondents express no attachment to Lüleburgaz. Although they say that they are happy there, they do not have a sense of belonging. Therefore, the question is what may cause the difference between the feelings of these two groups. It is obvious that the feeling of attachment does not differ according to the neighborhood, age or gender. Among those with the feeling of attachment, there are residents from both Durak and 8 Kasım neighborhood. Also, they vary a lot in terms of age and date of arrival in Lüleburgaz.

The variation in sense of attachment may be associated with the level and quality of intergroup contact. It is seen that all the Kurdish residents who express attachment to

Lüleburgaz have a higher level of social interaction with the local residents; they all mention good relationship with their local neighbors. All of the above mentioned residents with feeling of attachment have regular contacts with the local people at school, in the workplaces, etc. Ayla (18), for example, went to school in Lüleburgaz. Similarly, Bahar's son (19) goes to school in Lüleburgaz and he has 'local' friends. Other Kurdish residents who have a sense of attachment are all men working in the city center. However, those who express no connection to the city are all housewives. One exception, Rıza (56 – 8 Kasım) states that he does not feel any connection to anywhere as he has changed a lot of places so far.

Also, it is seen that positive contact experience has an important influence on the feeling of attachment. Gülten (45 – Durak), for instance, experienced a negative contact in the past. She says that a seller in the marker rejected to sell her the things she wanted to buy yelling at her as "go, learn Turkish first!" Consequently, she responds the question about attachment to the city as "Never!" On the contrary, Ayla (18 – Durak) who has a high level of attachment explains her experience as such:

"There was one boy in our class in the middle school. Once, he said bad things about Kurds, but other Turkish friends did not support him. Instead, they excluded him from our friend group".

This issue regarding the social contact will be detailed further in the section related to the effects of social contact. For now, we can conclude by stating that identity awareness as Kurdish is very high among this group of respondents, but they differ in terms of sense of attachment to the city. Yet, even the lack of this sense is not in directly related to the outgroup perceptions which are presented in the following section.

5.1.2.2 Perceptions about the Local Residents

To begin with, all of the Durak residents are content with living in an isolated area, because this enables them to maintain their traditions. They like that the segregated area looks like their home region with detached houses, chickens and cows, etc. None of them prefers living in the city center, as this may prevent them from exercising their own customs. What is more, they regard the Kurdish people who move away from that segregated area into mixed neighborhoods as alienated people. For example, one of the Kurdish residents expresses her resentment against the mother of a girl who has moved away to 8 Kasım neighborhood with her family:

"Say hi to your mom! And tell her that she has forgotten about us. She has moved away into the Thracians, she does not appreciate us anymore. Is she ashamed of us?" (Zila, 50 – Durak)

Some of them express the pleasure they get out of living in the segregated are as follows:

"[With regard to living in the isolated area in Durak neighborhood] All of them are Kurds. All of them are from our region. (...) This is very good." (Gülten, 45 – Durak)

"I have not felt as a stranger here [isolated area] because this area looks very much like our region. (...) There are mostly our relatives living here" (Emel, 22 – Durak)

It is seen that Kurds living in this isolated Kurdish enclaves have developed a sense of place identity, just like the *Lüleburgazlı* people did with regards to the city itself. They have created an area suitable for the lifestyle they are accustomed to. At first, one may wonder if it is the security need that makes them live in such a collective manner without spreading all over the city. However, their perceptions about the *Lüleburgazlı* people reveal no such sense of insecurity. On the contrary, there are many positive stereotypes they attain to *Lüleburgazlı* people:

"We are content with the natives here. (...) 70% of the local people have no harm to anybody[37], aren't they? They say "if nobody touches me, I will not touch anybody". Therefore, we do not have any problems" (Ethem, 56 – Durak)

"In my opinion, people living in Lüleburgaz are more forward thinking people. They are good-natured people. They accept the migrants quickly" (Ahmet, 31 – 8 Kasım)

"What I like most about the Lüleburgazlı people is that they appreciate you when you work hard. (...) They give you a chance, they do not look at you with an evil eye. They embrace you. They are comfortable with that" (Berkin, 31 – Durak)

"People behave very well, they are very sincere people. (...) People in our home town stare at you, they focus when they see a foreigner. People are not like that here, everybody is on his/her own. Nobody turns and stares at you saying "look, this is a foreigner". (Emel, 22 – Durak)

Another Kurdish resident, Ahmet (31) from 8 Kasım shares his experiences with the local people of Babaeski and Hayrabolu and states that they do not accept Kurdish people like *Lüleburgazlı* people do. Pelin (25 – 8 Kasım) states the same opinions about Babaeski people pointing out that they do not let Kurdish workers rent houses in the city. Emel (22 – Durak) makes the same comparison with the local people of Vize. She says that people of Vize did not welcome them when they were living there like *Lüleburgazlı* people did.

After observing the negative stereotypes attained to Kurds by some of the local respondents and the threat perceived by the locals, it is interesting to see that Kurds perceive a positive attitude towards themselves and feel accepted. Personally, I question whether they really share their true perceptions and feelings with me. As I am also a local people of Lüleburgaz, they could have avoided from sharing their negative perceptions about the local residents with me. In their study, Shelton et al. (2003) point out that the expectation of prejudice may influence the intergroup interactions. In this case, it is possible that they try to have a positive influence on me to prevent me from

[37] "Buranın milletinden %70'i suya sabuna dokunmayan bir millettir."

having negative opinions about them. Their expressions like *"I do not say this because you are here"*[38] (Ethem, 56 – Durak), *"I do not say this because you are doing interview with me, I always express this: I am happy to live here"* (Bahar, 38 – 8 Kasım) show that they need to confirm that my existence as a local people does not influence their expressions.

5.2. Intergroup Relationship and the Effects of Social Contact

5.2.1 Intergroup Relationships

First of all, it should be noted that neither local residents nor Kurdish residents feel realistic threat from one another. Accordingly, the factors that shape intergroup relationship between these groups are basically perceived threats, preserving social status and maintaining a positive social identity.

5.2.1.1 Integrated Threat Perceptions

To begin with, local people perceive threat from Kurds on three aspects of the life in the city: fear of unemployment, lifestyle and values. Most of the local respondents believe that the existence of Kurds in the city endangers employment opportunities. For instance, Orhan (50 – Durak) and Ali (27 – Durak) argue that the majority of the employers are from the East and that they favor the Kurdish applicants during employment processes. Furthermore, Kemal (30 – 8 Kasım) implies that economic concerns are more dangerous in terms of intergroup relationship between local people and Kurdish residents compared to identity issues by claiming that:

[38] "Sen buradasın diye demiyorum bak…"

"At the moment, there is no tension in the society because there are jobs for everyone in this industrial society. However, the fight may start if these opportunities no longer exist. (...) As the unemployment increases, unemployed parties will blame each other. They will want to eliminate the other in order to survive. (...) Even though the conflict outbreaks as an identity conflict, the root cause will be economical".

This claim is important because there is no current unemployment risk in Lüleburgaz. Yet, local residents have already concerns about unemployment due to migration. What separates a realistic threat from perceived threat is believing in the existence of a threat as a result of personal assumptions rather than solid evidences or signs. In fact, perceived threats reflect the prejudices of the people instead of addressing to a conflict.

As for the freedom, local respondents perceive threat on their lifestyles. They think that the Kurdish people are so religious and conservative that they judge the local people and make them feel uncomfortable. Gonca (57 – Durak), for instance, complains about the conservative dressing of the Kurdish residents in Durak neighborhood and states that this restricts their life. She is also worried about the religious groups, such as "Süleymancılar and Fetullahçılar[39]" that some Kurdish residents belong to, claiming that this causes discrimination in terms of beliefs. Similarly, Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) states that the Kurdish residents' lifestyle and opinions do not conform to the local residents by adding that "they have to conform to the local lifestyle as long as they live in this city". Orhan (50) from Durak and Mert (28) from 8 Kasım are the other local residents who think that the Kurdish population rejects adapting to local culture and constitutes a threat to the local lifestyle.

The most common and intense threat perception is related to values and culture, though. Local residents from both neighborhoods point out to the cultural differences between the *Lüleburgazlı* people and the Kurdish residents. They criticize Kurds for practices such as endogamy and express their opposition regarding the practice of this kind of traditions in Lüleburgaz. That's why they do not approve intermarriage with Kurds. Also, as Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) mentions, they think that it is more difficult to

[39] Gülen movement and Süleymancı community are two religious movements/organizations which have their own followers. For years, they have been associated with sharia by the state and the mainstream media.

become friends with Kurds compared to other migrant groups. This shows that stereotypes have a great impact on intergroup relationships.

Moreover, some of the local residents also express the threat they perceive on their national values. At this point, these residents shift to their national identity and their discourses change accordingly. They talk about “Kurdish-Turkish fight” (Orhan, 50 – Durak) and the “importance of Turkish flag” (Sonay, 25 – 8 Kasım). In fact, Orhan (50 – Durak) believes that there is no conflict at the societal level and the problem is the lack of state attention towards the needs of Kurds. He even supports education in Kurdish language, stating that Turkish people should also need to learn Kurdish as it is a language of this country. However, he feels uncomfortable about the Kurdish people who “have a tendency to bring the PKK and the PKK flag in the forefront”. Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım) also mentions an incident when some Kurdish people burnt the Turkish flag and states that she never accepts a harm to her values. She even says that she may prevent the people around her from becoming friends with the Kurdish people in case those Kurds are from the “bad ones”. The attitude of Sonay (25 – 8 Kasım) and concerns of Orhan (50 – Durak) show that integrated threat may give great harm to inter-group relationships by preventing people trust each other; it causes them to feel intergroup anxiety, hence prevents people from communicating without having concerns about whether the other person is a "bad Kurd" or a "good Kurd".

Kurdish residents, on the other hand, do not express any current threat perceptions regardless of the neighborhood they live in. However, most experienced realistic threats in the past. For example, Bahar (38 – 8 Kasım) talks about some cases where the local people criticized her for speaking Kurdish, but she does not generalize them to all local people. Also, Ethem (56 – Durak), states that there were times when people made fun of the dress of his mother and opposed to their speaking Kurdish in public, but says that these were in the past. According to him, Lüleburgaz is a more metropolitan city now and people have learned to live together with the Kurdish population. However, it may the case that they may not share their true feelings with me due to the same reasons I mentioned above with regards to their outgroup perceptions.

5.2.1.2 Social Status

Another factor that impacts intergroup relationships is social status. Residents who identify themselves as *Lüleburgazlı* believe that they have a superior position in the social hierarchy. Accordingly, they refer to a legitimizing discourse to ensure their position, which emphasizes the 'majority' and 'native' characteristics of the *Lüleburgazlı* people. The below statement by Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) is a good example for such discourse:

"There are not so many [migrants] here. They are mostly in Çerkezköy, Çorlu... Kırklareli, Lüleburgaz, Edirne, Hayrabolu, etc. are liberated areas for us. But Çorlu and Saray are in their hands. (...) A man comes here from Ağrı, builds a factory and brings people from the East instead of employing Thracian people. They favor people from their home region[40]. And my Thracian people have to migrate."

In this statement, the expression "liberated area" and the claim that "Thracian people have to migrate" create a mental representation in which the Thracian cities are invaded – hence, need to be liberated – and local people have to evacuate the cities.

Similarly, Ali (27 – Durak) states that the Easterners buy stores from the Burgaz people and then exclude them. The word "exclusion" in this sentence does not only carry a blaming, but it also shows that the threat perceived with regards to employment opportunities is in line with the concern for social value distribution within the city. We see a similar approach in an anecdote told by Umut (62 – Durak) regarding the candidacy of a Kurdish resident in Durak for *muhtarlık*.

"For the local elections they have nominated a candidate for muhtarlık. Even though they know that he will not be elected, they have nominated him. We want a member[41] from them in order not to exclude them, but that man gave up the following day. The Kurdish people in the neighborhood did not let him and told him that he could not be

[40] "Memleketçilik oynuyorlar yani"

[41] Muhtar azası.

the member of a Turkish muhtar. (...) That Kurdish candidate has a poster hanged [around the neighborhood]. On the other hand, we have four candidates and none of them have posters".

When we look at the discourse employed in the above example as well as the above statement of Ali, we see that *Lüleburgazlı* residents compare and contrast their position with the Kurds' frequently. As the native and majority population of the city, they do not accept Kurdish residents' owning shops in the city center or claiming an official post in the city. Umut (62 –Durak) acknowledges that by saying: *"They have no personal harm to me, but we are disturbed by seeing them behaving so freely"*.

On the other hand, a Kurdish resident from the segregated area of Durak, Ethem (56), poses a totally new approach towards the share of opportunities and positions in the city. He states that he worked in the construction of the Istanbul streets and that they [Kurdish workers] have a great contribution to the city. A local resident Umut (62 – Durak) also accepts the efforts of Kurdish residents by saying the following:

"But they are hard-working. I see that all the people on the 6 a.m. minibus service are Kurds who are going to work. They accept any job. They come as a construction worker, and then become a building contractor. So, instead of saying that the Easterners have come and got the jobs, we should criticize our laziness."

Likewise, Orhan (50 – Durak) supports that it is normal for Kurds to come and own land or house in their region, but still maintains his view that the cultural differences constitute a threat on the local lifestyle. In other words, they appreciate their works, but they hesitate to recognize this due to the threat perceptions and social status concerns that are summarized above.

5.2.2 Effects of Social Contact

The conclusion we can draw from the interviews conducted by local and Kurdish residents in mixed and segregated neighborhoods is that social contact has no affect on the group level, nor does it have any generalizing influence on the local or Kurdish residents.

It is a fact that segregated settlement of Kurds in Durak has a strengthening effect on the prejudices towards Kurds. For example, some of the local residents from Durak evaluate this segregated settlement as a sign of effort to create an area where Kurds are the majority and exercise control over the territories of that area as seen in the following examples:

"They do not want to live separately in anywhere. They call one another. They may be afraid of failing to exercise control if they live as individual families. If they move into the city center they will get lost; not in terms of their customs, but in terms of child raising style. Also, they cannot stand out and say "I am Kurdish", if they live as one or two families. They live collectively in order not to be oppressed. They do not want the name of their race become extinct" (Umut, 62 – Durak).

However, contact does not eliminate these threat perceptions. Even if Umut has positive contact with his Kurdish neighbors who live next door, it does not change his mind about his aforementioned perceptions. The main reason for this inefficacy is that positive social contact is seen as an exception. Moreover, it leads to categorization of Kurdish people as the good ones and the bad ones. As an example, we can look at the following reflections of Umut who compares Kurds living in mixed neighborhoods with the ones living in the isolated area:

"The good ones stay away from them [Kurds living in the isolated side]. In fact, they [the good ones] have not come here directly from the East, they have come to Burgaz from Ankara or Istanbul. So, they cannot live in that neighborhood where Easterners live, they move into the city center after a while. (...) They are willing to be accepted by us." (Umut, 62)

Nevertheless, this comparison between the good Kurds and bad Kurds also serves to justify their prejudices about the Kurdish people living in the isolated area, instead of leading to a generalization of good stereotypes:

"They could not get along together in the Kurdish side because people living there do not want to accept anything from around. Those who can accommodate themselves to the city cannot live there, so move into our side." (Gonca, 57 – Durak)

Another example is Gizem (44 – Durak). She talks about her two positive contact situations that she has experienced, one of which is with her Kurdish neighbors. The other one is an indirect contact through the experience of her daughter-in-law:

"At first, we were worried; they have come from their hometown, several families are living in one house... Also, a different culture... However, as the time went by, we saw that they are good people, they are harmless."

"My daughter-in-law works in a supermarket. At first, her mother was afraid because Kurdish customers go to that supermarket, too. However, she is very happy with her job now. She says that Kurdish customers are very kind. Instead, she says that it is local people who behave her rudely. They always boss around her."

However, none of these experiences has changed her perception about the Kurdish migrants as a whole. She still thinks that Kurds are "hot-tempered" and "should learn to adapt to Lüleburgaz culture".

Another interesting finding with regards to social contact is that unlike the positive contact, outcomes of negative contact are generalized even though the contact takes place in an indirect setting such a movie or TV series. For instance, the stereotypes Sonay (25) attains to Kurds, such as endogamy, comes from the TV series about the life in the East. In addition, Olcay (28 – 8 Kasım) states the following:

"People see the fight between a soldier and a terrorist [in the TV series], for example, the terrorist attacks a village in a movie. And people make comments among each other by saying "look, that's how they are".

On the other hand, the Kurdish respondents value social contact highly. Throughout the interviews, all of them emphasize that the local people "get used to them" and "get to know them". In addition, Berkin (31 – Durak) states that people were more prejudiced towards Kurds in the past as such:

"Previously, people were getting suspicious of me when I told them "I am from Kars. (...) Kurds were being labeled as terrorists. (...) However, in due course, we have gotten used to each other. They [Lüleburgazlı people] have become aware that the truth is not as they used to think"

Ethem (56 – Durak) also confirms Berkin's statement by saying that the society in Lüleburgaz was like a "closed-book"[42] in the 1990s. At this point, we can open a parenthesis for the effect of the environmental factors on the quality of the contact. In the armed conflict environment in the 1990s, it is obvious that the people were either avoiding contact or having negative experiences.

It is obvious that contact outcomes observed in the expressions of local residents are not in line with the experiences of Kurdish residents. It is obvious that local respondents maintain the negative stereotypes that they attain to Kurds even in the case of positive social contact. They see the positive contact as an exception, but tend to generalize the outcome of negative contact. On the other hand, Kurds believe that throughout the years, local people have gotten used to them and their relationship has become more positive as they get to know each other. At this point, I should also note that I asked some of the Kurdish residents, including Ahmet (31 – 8 Kasım), Berkin (31 – Durak) and Ethem (56 – Durak), *"Do you think that there may be some local people who have negative perceptions about you? What do you think about them?"* All of them answered this question by saying *"Of course there may be such people, but they are in minority. The majority of the locals have accepted us."*

[42] "Kapalı kutu gibiydi"

In order to understand why the outcomes change for these two groups, we may look at the contact situation as suggested by Allport (1954). First of all, it may be the case that local residents contact with Kurdish people at the interpersonal level, hence the outcomes do not have an influence on the intergroup perceptions. Also, Kurdish residents express more negative contact situations in 1990s. Therefore, they accept the relatively peaceful environment as a progress in intergroup relationships. In any case, a more comprehensive study is required in order to understand the factors which causes a difference between the perceptions of Kurdish and local residents regarding the contact outcomes.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

The aim of this study has been to explore the nature of intergroup relations and the effect of intergroup contact on the perceptions of group members within the context of local and Kurdish residents of Lüleburgaz city. The interview findings show that the intergroup relations in Lüleburgaz take shape around a social hierarchy determined by the local people. As the majority of the population, local people are the determiners of the boundaries between the categories within that social hierarchy. Accordingly, the outgroup perceptions of the local people are in line with the relevant positions of the social groups in the hierarchy. In other words, the outgroup which is placed as the lowest group in the social hierarchy is also perceived as more negatively than the other groups. As for the intergroup perceptions and the outcome of the contact between local and Kurdish residents, an asymmetry is observed. It is seen that Kurdish residents' reflections about the locals are positive and they are more likely to generalize positive interactions with the local people. On the other hand, local residents' reflections about the Kurdish residents are negative in general and they do not tend to generalize the positive interactions with Kurdish residents to their perceptions about Kurds. The following section will attempt to discuss these findings with a theoretical perspective.

6.1 Social Hierarchy in Lüleburgaz

Local respondents do not only position themselves as *Lüleburgazlı* people at a higher level, they also make distinction among different ethnic and social groups. Their expressions reveal six social categories. These are *Lüleburgazlı* people (self-definition of local people), migrants from nearby (Thracian) villages and cities, Bulgarian immigrants, migrants from the Black Sea region, Roma people and Kurds.

The category distinction in Lüleburgaz is made through two main identifiers: the level of urbanity and ethnicity. According to Hornsey (2008), these identifiers serve to maximize intergroup differences and to minimize intragroup differences. In this regard, it is seen that local respondents do not only content themselves with making distinction ('maximizing the difference') between the Turkish and non-Turkish (Roma people and Kurds) categories. They also limit their category ('minimizing the intragroup differences') with the characteristics such as *individualization, secularism, high income, less traditional lifestyle*.

The urbanity characteristics do not only minimize the intragroup differences, they also serve to create a positive *Lüleburgazlı* identity. As it is stated by Tajfel and Turner (1979), group members tend to establish a positive social identity through relational and comparative processes. Accordingly, local respondents in this study refer to urban characteristics when they compare themselves with the other groups. In this way, they make a positive distinction between themselves and the migrant groups and Roma people. In other words, positive ingroup stereotyping serves to establish a positive *Lüleburgazlı* identity, which eventually leads to ingroup satisfaction.

6.2 Asymmetrical Perceptions and Asymmetrical Contact Outcomes

In general, all the Kurdish and local respondents included in this study have experienced contact with the members of the other group. However, the outcome of the intergroup contact is observed to be different for each group.

To begin with, it is seen that positive social contact with a Kurdish person does not change the perceptions of the local respondents about the Kurdish outgroup as a whole. They think that the person contacted is an exception. In this context, they refer to differentiation between "good Kurds" and "bad Kurds". They evaluate the Kurdish person with whom they have a positive contact as a "good Kurd" but the idea that "bad Kurds exist as well" persists. On the other hand, they all tend to generalize the negative contact to the whole Kurdish population, even though it is an indirect contact such as a scene from a TV series. On the contrary, Kurdish respondents do not generalize the

negative contact they have with the local people. Instead, they think that it is the negative contact situation which forms an exception in terms of their relationship with the local people. Instead, Kurdish people tend to generalize the positive contact that they experience with the local residents. The reason of this asymmetry in perceptions and contact outcomes can be evaluated under three themes: historical background of intergroup relationships, differences related to the majority/minority status of the group, group members and the limited effect of the disconfirming group members and contact conditions.

Historical background of intergroup relationships

The first theme is the effect of intergroup conflict on intergroup outcomes (Çelik et. al, n.d.,). Protracted conflicts, like the Kurdish question in Turkey, may generate rigid stereotypes which may be hard to challenge. In such long standing conflicts, the perceptions of the people are systematically shaped by certain mechanisms such as the state discourse (Yeğen, 2007), education system (İnce, 2012) and the media images (Romano, 2002). The support of political system, educational system and the media with regards to the establishment of stereotypes results in firm prejudices and an acute feeling of intergroup anxiety and mistrust. Çelik (2013) evaluates this acute feeling of intergroup anxiety as a psychological barrier in front of the peace building processes.

In the case of Lüleburgaz, it is clear that the long standing conflict and the official discourse regarding the Kurdish question have established so strong negative perceptions about Kurdish people that positive interpersonal contact can hardly challenge the locals' perceptions about the overall group. Even the reactions to the segregated Kurdish settlement reflect the state discourse of "separatism" in relation with the Kurdish movement. Local residents feel uncomfortable due to the segregated area and questions why some of the Kurdish people prefer to live there. In general, they evaluate the residential segregation as an attempt to dominate over that area. This perception is closely in line with the anxiety experienced due to the Kurdish demand for autonomy at the country level. The absence of questioning or negative perceptions about the segregated settlement of Roma people in Altıyol region proves this claim. Local respondents are generally indifferent to the residential segregation of Roma

people. Some of them even assess the existence of such an area positively. According to the group threat theorists, the reactions of the local respondents to the segregated settlement of Roma people are more predictable because these theorists assume that "(...) proximity represents real threat" (*as in* Gilliam et. al, 2002:756). Therefore, the only explanation regarding why the local people oppose the segregated settlement of Kurds and appreciate the Kurds moving to the mixed neighborhoods is the influence of the state discourse which has imposed the fear of Kurdish autonomy for years. The demand of local people that the Kurdish residents should move into the mixed neighborhoods, leave their customs and adapt themselves to the local culture reminds the forced migrations of Kurds to the Western cities (Çelik, 2012) and shows the influence of the state practices on the local people's perceptions.

As for the media images, some of the local people express how the TV series effect their feelings and opinions about the Kurds and Kurdish movement. Local respondents' knowledge about the Kurds and Kurdish culture is limited with the "terrorist" images and customs such as dowry and intermarriage that they observe in the TV series. As suggested by Mazziotta et al. (2011), they take these images as models of outgroup members and their culture. In this regard, it is seen that the media plays a stereotype reinforcing role in the perceptions of the local residents.

Shortly, the influence of the long standing conflicts and the mechanisms shaping the perceptions of the group members sheds light onto the need for considering the current interaction results in a broader context. As suggested by Tropp, when we take "accrued histories of social experiences" (2003:144) of Turks with regards to the Kurdish question and evaluate their perceptions in relation with the state and media discourse they have been exposed for years, we see that long standing mistrust and strongly established stereotypes limit the ability of the local residents to challenge their perceptions about Kurds and to generalize their positive experiences.

Differences related to the majority/minority status of the group

Another theme to explain the perceptual asymmetry in the contact outcomes is the differences related to the majority/minority status of the group. According to Shelton, "majority and minority group members both have interpersonal concerns that may

differentially shape the dynamics of the interaction" (2003:179). For example, Çelik et. al (n.d.) state that one of the primary concerns of the minority groups is stigmatization, i.e. becoming the target of prejudice. Accordingly, they both develop "self-protection motives" (ibid., 4) and value any intergroup interaction with the hope of being accepted by the majority group.

In the case of Lüleburgaz, these concern of acceptance is very obvious in the Kurdish respondents. Kurdish residents continuously state that "the locals have accepted them". "Knowing half of the city", "being greeted by the shop-owners when walking down the street", "participation of the local neighbors in the wedding ceremonies of Kurds", etc. are evaluated as signs of acceptance by the Kurdish respondents. Kurdish people do not want to devalue these positive interactions by shifting the focus to the negative experiences they have lived with the local people. This may be also considered as an attempt to "restore the broken relations" (ibid., p. 22). From their expressions during the interviews, it is understood that the Kurdish respondents are pleased with the recent resolution attempts. For all of them, peace means a more comfortable life in Lüleburgaz and greater acceptance by the local people. Therefore, even the smallest positive interaction with the local people is a hope and relief for them.

Çelik et. al also point out to the "interdependence of the city life" (ibid., p. 3) when evaluating the asymmetrical results of intergroup contact. Even they live in physically segregated areas such as Durak neighborhood, Kurdish residents depend mostly on local people for employment. In addition, the municipality officers from whom they demand service are mostly local people of Lüleburgaz. As a result, acceptance by the local people or at least building a positive image in the eyes of the local residents are important for Kurds in terms of employment and access to services.

On the contrary, local residents as the majority group, are not concerned about the prejudice from the other groups. Accordingly, during their interactions with Kurdish people, they do not need to reflect on the status of their group or on how they are perceived as a group (Tropp and Pettigrew, 2005). Therefore, the interaction is most likely to remain at the interpersonal level as in the case of local residents of Lüleburgaz.

Limited effect of disconfirming group members and contact conditions

As it is already stated, local people perceive the Kurdish residents with whom they experience a positive interaction as "good Kurds" and hence, as an exception to the Kurds in general. In fact, encounter with an outgroup member who does not fit into the established stereotypes may challenge and weaken these stereotypes. However, Wolsko et al. (2003) suggest that this outcome depends on specific conditions. According to them, generalization of positive contact outcome is possible only if the "disconfirmers are judged typical of the group and this will possible more likely to occur when the group stereotype is already weak" (ibid., p. 107). In the case of Lüleburgaz, the historical background of the intergroup relationship between Kurds and Turks has obviously established strong stereotypes that is difficult to weaken.

Another suggestion to achieve positive contact outcomes is the four conditions offered by Allport (1954): equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law, or custom (*in* Pettigrew, 1998:66). Allport (ibid.) considers these conditions as facilitators to obtain positive contact outcomes, i.e. an overall change in the perceptions of the group members. In the interviews conducted for this study, Kurdish respondents put a significant emphasis on the common goals and support of law as the factors which they assume have changed the intergroup relations in Lüleburgaz. They mention how their work in Lüleburgaz as construction workers, etc. have contributed to the life in the city. For the Kurdish respondents, the welfare in Lüleburgaz is a common goal of both the locals and the migrants. They also express that the recent resolution attempts have contributed to the peace in Lüleburgaz. When they evaluate their relations with the locals, they always make distinction between their relations before the resolution attempts and their relations after the resolution attempts.

However, we see that this change assumed by Kurds is not reflected in the expressions of the local respondents. On the contrary, they still express negative perceptions and do not tend to generalize their positive interactions with Kurdish people. At this point, it is understood that we should make a distinction between the perceptions and attitudes. In fact, the change expressed by the Kurdish respondents has occurred in the attitudes of the local people, not in the perceptions. In other words, the legal and political steps taken as part of the resolution process have provided a more secure environment for the Kurdish residents to speak their native language and to

express their ethnic identity by limiting any negative attitude from the local residents. Also, most of the local respondents express that Kurdish residents contribute to the economy of the city and that both groups have a common goal of having an economically and socially comfortable life. Yet, these legal regulations and awareness of the common goals are obviously not enough for a change in perceptions. Therefore, we can talk about an attitudinal change in the case of Lüleburgaz instead of a perceptual change. Ans this attitudinal change is not related to the intergroup contact, because the findings show that it is the result of legislative regulations and economic concerns.

As Bilewicz (2007) points out, categories are constructed historically. Negative perceptions about another group are shaped over years with the help of three important systems: state, education and the media. Moreover, existence of a protracted violent conflict and majority/minority relations (i.e. status concerns) reinforce these negative thoughts and feelings. The findings of this study do not only support the relation between these factors and negative perceptions; they also show how these established perceptions may be difficult to challenge preventing the generalization of positive results of interpersonal interactions to an intergroup level.

To sum up, the most important finding of this research is that positive social contact does not always result in change in outgroup perceptions, at least that is the case in Lüleburgaz. In relation with this finding, it is seen that even some optimal contact situations fail to create the required positive contact outcome. Although social contact is observed to have a positive effect on interpersonal relations, its influence on the perceptions of the people about the outgroup as whole is limited. That is because, even though social contact is effective on the affective ties between two people, it has difficulty to challenge the cognitive aspects of perceptions which are constructed through strict stereotyping and categorization processes. At this point, it is understood that in some cases, especially during officially conducted peace processes, a more structured intergroup contact may be required to obtain the desired results in an accelerated way (Zitomer, 2010). By ‘structured intergroup contact’, I mean a carefully designed contact environment, from the physical conditions to the timing and the content of the contact, in which group members will interact as ‘group members’ instead of individuals. This way, parties may found the opportunity to express their collective fears and opinions as well as to overcome their anxiety. Especially in

Lüleburgaz, dialogue studies, for example, may also be helpful to help the local people overcome their threat perceptions. Last but not least, having seen the effect of vicarious contact on the perceptions of the people, it is of great importance to change the state discourse and the media representations of Kurds and Kurdish culture.

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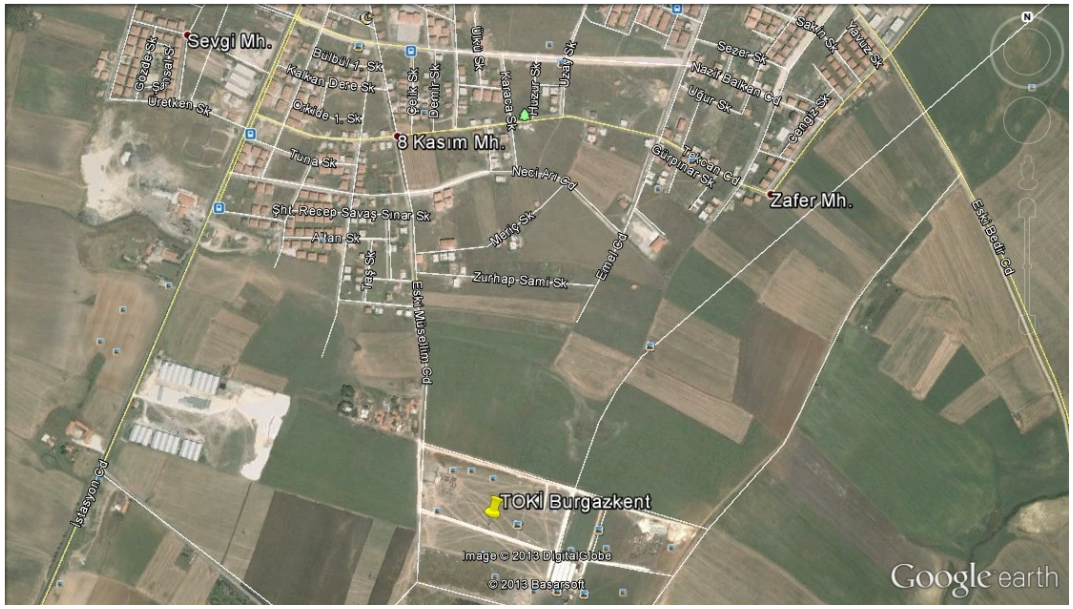
APPENDIX 1: MAP OF LÜLEBURGAZ

APPENDIX 2: SATELLITE IMAGE OF DURAK NEIGHBORHOOD

APPENDIX 3: SATELLITE IMAGE OF 8 KASIM NEIGHBORHOOD



APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE LOCAL RESIDENTS

1) Öncelikle biraz kendinizi tanıtır mısınız?

2) Kendinizi ne kadar Lüleburgazlı olarak hissediyorsunuz?

- Sizce Lüleburgazlı kime denir?

3) Lüleburgaz'da yaşamak nasıl sizce? İyi ya da kötü tarafları var mı?

4) Bildiğiniz gibi insanlar çeşitli nedenlerle yaşamak için başka şehirlere göç ediyorlar. Lüleburgaz'da göç alan bir şehir. Bu konudaki düşünceleriniz neler?

- Göçmenlerin şehir üzerinde bir etkisi var mı sizce? Nasıl bir etki bu?

5) Peki mahallenizden memnun musunuz? Ne düşünüyorsunuz mahallenizle ilgili?

- Bu mahallede kimler yaşar?

6) Bu mahallede kendinizi nasıl hissediyorsunuz? Sorunlar oluyor mu? Neden?

- Kürt göçmenlerden bahsetmişse: Bu yaşananlar sizin bu grupla/genel olarak Kürtlerle (özellikle belirtmişse) olan ilişkinizi, düşüncelerinizi nasıl etkiledi?

7) Mahallede kimlerle arkadaşlık yaparsınız, kimlerle görüşürsünüz daha çok?

- Neden?

Yerlileri özellikle belirtiyorsa:

- Peki arkadaşalrınızdan veya ailenizden birinin yerli nüfus dışından insanlarla arkadaşlık yapmasına nasıl bakarsınız?

- Yerli nüfus dışındaki tüm insanalr için mi aynı tepkiyi gösterirsiniz yoksa tercih ettiğiniz ya da etmediğiniz belirli gruplar var mı?

Yerlileri vurgulamadıysa:

- Göçmenlerle ilişkileriniz nasıl? Yerli nüfus dışında biriyle arkadaşlık yaptığınızda, tanıştığınızda o grupla ilgili fikriniz de değişiklik oldu mu? Daha önce fark etmediğiniz ya da bilmediğinizi anladığınız şeyler oldu mu?

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE KURDISH RESIDENTS

Interview Questions for the Kurdish Residents

1) Öncelikle biraz kendinizi tanıtır mısınız?

- Doğduğunuz, büyüdüğünüz yer neresi?

- Etnik kimliğinizi ne olarak tanımlarsınız?

- Ne kadar zamandır Lüleburgaz'da yaşıyorsunuz?

- Lüleburgaz'a göç etme nedeniniz neydi?

- Lüleburgaz'ı seçme nedeniniz neydi?

- Kendinizi ne kadar buraya ait hissediyorsunuz?

2) Peki Lüleburgaz hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Burada yaşamak nasıl sizce?

- Zorluklardan bahsetmişse: Sizce bu zorluklar neden kaynaklanıyor?

- Zorluklardan bahsetmemişse: Lüleburgaz'da yaşamanın zorlukları var mı? Sorusundan sonra yukarıdaki soru.

4) Neden bu mahallede yaşamayı seçtiniz? Bu mahallenin özelliği ne sizce?

- Bu mahallede kimler yaşar?

5) Bu mahallede kendizi nasıl hissediyosunuz? Yaşadığınız sıkıntılar oluyor mu?

6) Arkadaş çevrenizden bahseder misiniz biraz? Kimlerle arkadaşlık yaparsınız?

- Mahalleden bahsetmemişse: Bu mahalleden, özellikle yerli nüfustan arkadaşlarınız da var mı? Burada kendinizi yakın hissettiğiniz insanlar kimler?

Varsa:

- Mahalledeki arkadaşlığınızı nasıl değerlendirirsiniz?

- Bu arkadaşlıklarınız bu mahallede/Lüleburgaz'da yaşamaya, Lüleburgazlılara ya da genel olarak Türklere olan bakışınızı etkiledi mi?

Yoksa:

- Neden?

- Ailenizden/arkadaşlarınızdan biri mahallediklerle görüşüyorsa/görüşse ne düşünürsünüz?

- (Eğer gerginlik nedeniyle görüşme yoksa) Mahallede yaşadığınız bu gerginlik/tatsızlık sizin mahallede dışında da Lüleburgazlılara karşı duygu ve düşüncelerinizi etkiliyor mu?