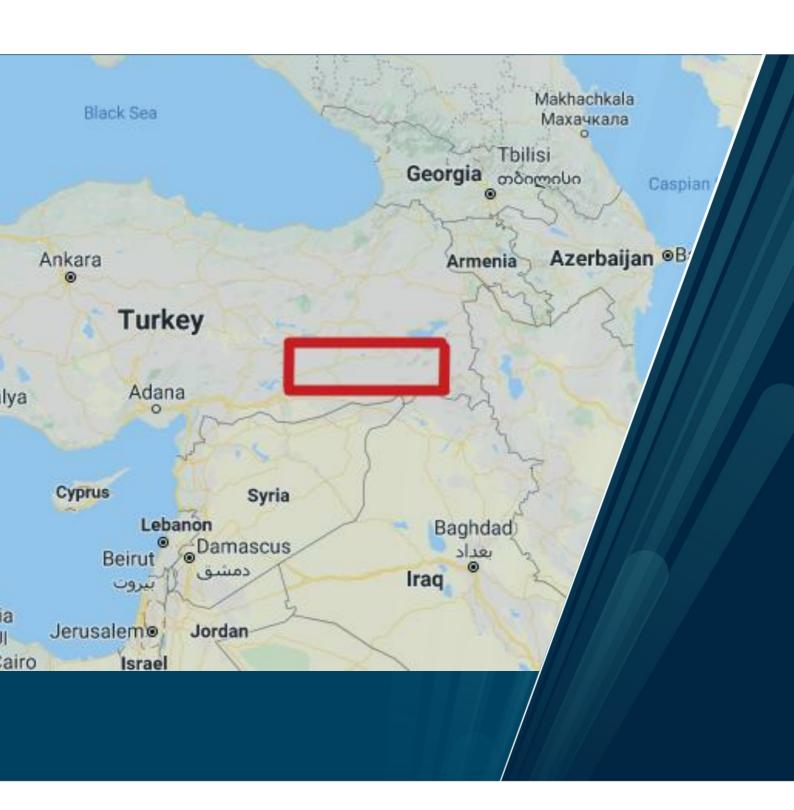![UiT The Arctic University of Norway]

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

The Causes Radicalising the Youth in South-Eastern Turkey
A Critical Approach
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Master's thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation…SVF-3901…May 2020

Contents

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List of Abbreviations

AFP – Agence France-Presse

AIVD – General Intelligence and Security Service for the Netherlands

AKP – Justice and Development Party

ANC – African National Congress

DW News – Deutsche Welle News

ECHR – European Court of Human Rights

EU – European Union

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HDP – the People's Democracy Party

HSYK – Supreme Council of the Judges and Prosecutors

ICJ – International Commission of Jurists

ICJ – International Court of Justice

ISIS – Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

KJA – Free Women's Congress

LGBTI – the Organization of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Individuals

MK – Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation)

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data

OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

PKK – Kurdistan Worker Party

PYD – Democratic Union Party

RCMP – Royal Canadian Mounted Police

RGDP – Real Gross Domestic Product

SACP – South African Communist Party

TTSRL – Transnational Terrorism, Security and the Rule of Law

U.K – the United Kingdom

UN – the United Nation

UNDP – the United Nation Development Program

ABSTRACT

There are various causal and contributing factors for radicalisation, depending on the unique perceptions of each individual, society, or region. This thesis seeks to find out causal factors radicalising the young population in south-eastern Turkey, through semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation. Radicalisation is being handled critically in this thesis. It is not always supposed to cause a problem. The European Union, international organizations, and the states finance a wide range of de-radicalisation policies that focus on preventing radicalisation. Indeed, radicalisation against arbitrary power, patriarchy, racism, xenophobia, homophobia and the exploitation of nature and labour might contribute to developments and other social improvements. Radicalisation might have such 'benign' aspects in transforming society and personal perspectives. A great majority of society perceives the young population in south-eastern Turkey who attend political protests and demonstrations as 'marginal', 'radical', 'divisive', or 'supporter of terrorist organizations'. However, even if these qualifications are all true in a real sense, there are still questions which need to be answered: 'Why does the youth radicalise?'; 'What are the conditions or motivations pushing the young population to the point of radicalisation?'; 'Do they radicalise or get radicalised by the circumstances?' Here it is the thesis undertakes to find out the answers to such questions. While doing so, five themes which are commonly related to causal factors pointed out by the informants have been discovered, namely: "lack of democracy," "state oppression and memories," "injustice," "family effect" and "economic conditions."

Keywords: Radicalisation, Benign Radicalisation, State Terrorism, Self Defence, Human Rights

1. Introduction

The development of communication technology and the emergence of social media platforms have enabled and enriched new channels to radicalisation, therefore, it is acknowledged that the meaning and patterns of radicalisation are not fixed, but rather dynamic (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 4), which makes defining radicalisation more difficult but at the same time various. It is recognised in this thesis that radicalisation is not an absolute concept but is rather the 'essentially relative nature of the term radical' (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 491) and 'context-dependent' in a given period of time (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). In the broadest sense, radicalisation might be defined as "rejecting the status quo" (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2) and "not necessarily in a violent way" (Borum, 2011, p. 8). Historical incidents that would have been considered radical in the past contributed to significant social advancements by challenging the status quo. The Renaissance, the enlightenment age, anti-slavery, and anti-colonialization movements were all radical in their contexts, and challenging the status quo in the time either in a violent or non-violent way.

There is already much research in which causal or contributing factors for radicalisation have been addressed. In particular the European Union finances many considerable research about the recruitment and de-radicalisation process (see Council of the European Union, 2014, 2019; European Commission, 2014; TTSRL, 2008). The EU, its member states, and other countries have focused on radicalisation in connection with home-grown terrorism for the last two decades in order to develop de-radicalisation policies in which causal or contributing factors for radicalisation are addressed. However, there is not a specific research in the existing literature about radicalisation in South-eastern Turkey where approximately 40,000 people died because of the war between Turkey and Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) since 1984 (Mandıracı, 2016), and where nearly 2,000 have been subject to forced disappearance since 1980 (Lauer, 2015).

In addition to a lack of research on radicalisation processes connected to the conflict in south-eastern Turkey, there is a lack of approaches available to understand radicalisation. This thesis explores radicalisation not as something that should be prevented, but rather managed and channelled toward a non-violent direction for the sake of national and world communities. A similar position is also indicated by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP, 2009) who states

that "radical thinking is not necessarily problematic" and "radicals can play highly positive role, both in their communities and in the larger political context" (p. 1). Radicalisation in LGBTI, feminism, ecology, and minority rights might have benign aspects for improvement, development, and emancipation. Radicalisation is clearly not 'always' benign and has had violent and negative societal outcomes. Politicians and governments might also take advantage of a negative perception of the concept of radicalisation by criminalising and marginalising dissent, which in turn, would prevent progressive views (Neumann, 2013, p. 877). In other words, radicalisation is not inherently negative, and a better understanding of what it is, and how it works, can potentially improve community and government approaches to identifying it channelling toward non-violent and/or transformative ends. The main aim of this thesis is to understand why and how the youth radicalise in south-eastern Turkey and can be understood "benign radicalisation".

1.1. Historical Background

The Turkish state had started negotiations in secret with PKK since 2006, and the efforts to resolve the conflict were intensified from 2013 to 2015. During those years, the parties sustained a ceasefire for the normalisation of the Kurdish politics and demobilisation of the PKK (Hoffman, 2019, p. 1). However, the peace process started stumbling, and the escalation between parties started increasing after the June 2015 elections (Rumelili & Çelik, 2017, p. 280) through which pro-Kurdish party, HDP increased its votes, and AKP - the ruling party-lost its parliamentary majority for the first time since it came to power in 2002, 'meaning it will need a coalition partner to form a government' (Letsch & Traynor, 2015). Moreover, the peace process was also affected by regional and domestic upheaval. The growing strength of the Kurds in Syria worried Turkey that Kurdish cantons in northern Syria and the autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq would unite, which would, in turn, trigger separatist intentions among the Kurds living in Turkey (Lindenstrauss, 2016, p. 100). As the Syrian regime withdrew from northern Syria where the majority of the population is Kurdish fighting for survival against cruel ISIS, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) – PKK's Syrian affiliate – started controlling three enclaves which are closed to the Turkish border. Although PYD leaders were hosted in Ankara to discuss about border issue, Turkey came on viewing PYD as a threat. In addition, HDP's charismatic young leader, Selahattin Demirtaş[1] started to be seen as an obstacle and a

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[1] He has been jailed since 2016, available at BBC. (2018). Turkey HDP: Court jails pro-Kurdish leader Demirtas. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45450622 Accessed on 21 April 2020

threat to Turkish Leader Erdogan's political ambitions. Because of all these regional and domestic political factors, Turkey abandoned the peace process and preferred opposing to the Kurdish political and military gains in both Turkey and Syria (Hoffman, 2019, pp. 1-2).

A spate of murders began in eastern Turkey: 32 left-wing students going for greeting the Kobane resistance against ISIS died in a bomb attack in Suruc, a district closed to the Syria border. PKK killed 5 security forces, and then Turkey launched airstrikes against PKK targets in northern Iraq and southern Turkey. In some part of Turkey, people tried to lynch Kurdish construction workers. Following this, widespread civil disorders took place, and further killings across south-eastern Turkey where Kurdish majority live (Barchard, 2015). Apart from calling the government to stop military operations, most Kurds in Turkey also protested the government's refusal to help Kurdish defenders in Kobani that was surrounded by ISIS. Young people in Cizre dug trenches to prevent police forces from entering neighbourhoods as the army did in the past in order to put down Kurdish protests (Blaser, 2015). Then what young did in Cizre inspired others in neighbour cities. 'Trench Warfare' spread to neighbourhoods and districts located in the south-eastern, namely Diyarbakır, Mardin, Batman, Muş, Şırnak, and Hakkari. Military operations to these districts started in July 2015 and lasted until December 2016, more than a year. "Turkish security forces have imposed 59 curfews in eighteen south-eastern towns and districts between August 2015 and mid-March 2016, to ensure full government control over areas," furthermore, the media access to curfew zones has been limited in order to prevent reporting on civilian deaths and conditions (International Crisis Group, 2016, pp. 3-4). During that period, electricity and the connection of cell towers were also cut off in some regions so that residents would not be able to contact with outside and send pictures through their phones. This measure came after some residents had sent pictures via phone, which later on spread out in social media platforms. Another measure taken by the government for protecting soldiers in those operations was a bill made into the law, providing a legal shield to the soldiers by requiring permission from the prime minister to launch any investigation in the case of abuse of power (Hürriyet Daily News, 2016).

As a result of military operations including airstrikes, tanks, and other heavy weaponry, a large section of the cities and towns were destroyed. It is estimated that over 350,000 civilians have been displaced, 4,844 people have been killed, 2,895 of them PKK militants, 1,231 state security force members, 492 civilians and lastly 226 individuals of unknown affiliation (Hoffman, 2019, pp. 4-5; International Crisis Group, 2016, p. 1; 2020). According to a report relating to south-eastern Turkey written by the United Nation (OHCHR, 2017), "numerous

cases of excessive use of force; killings; enforced disappearances; torture; destruction of housing and cultural heritage; incitement to hatred; prevention of access to emergency medical care, food, water and livelihoods; violence against women; and severe curtailment of the right to freedom of opinion and expression as well as political participation" were documented in the region. It is also indicated in the same report that the High Commissioner did not get any reply from Turkish authorities regarding to its request of accessing to the concerned area "in order to substantiate facts" (p. 2). The incidents documented by the UN High Commissioner were frequently referred to by the informants as well. Therefore detailed information will be shared by linking to causal factors later in Chapter 4.

1.2. Problem Statement and Aim of the Research

Turkey has a poor record with regards to the human rights. According to the annual report by the European Union Court of Human Rights, (ECHR, 2020) Turkey is located in second place for both total judgments pertaining to human rights violations (p.135) and pending cases (p.128) in 2019. The same report also shows that Turkey is in first place in violating human rights with 3,645 total judgments between 1959-2019 years (p.137). This data demonstrates that human rights violations which are one of the contributors to radicalisation (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 6) have been systematically and historically problematic in Turkey.

Turkey has been fighting with PKK since 1984. In addition to the youth in the present time, the emergence of PKK is also an example of how a student organization claiming political rights such as self-determination in the 70s (Joost & Akkaya, 2013, pp. 3-4) radicalised and later on embraced violent activities. PKK has now been on the EU list of persons, groups and entities involved in acts of terrorism (Council of the European Union, 2019), though some scholars characterise PKK as "a political organization, prompted to use violence in circumstances in which there was no alternative" (Joost & Akkaya, 2013, p. 4).

Radicalisation is a "context-dependent" notion that varies from one society to another with regard to what mainstream is (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). Therefore, a great majority of society perceives, in Turkey context, the youth from southern-east who attend political protests and demonstrations as 'marginal', 'radical', 'divisive', or 'supporters of a terrorist organization'. Such a mind-set does not only occur in society but some politicians even go further by labelling protestors as 'terrorist' and 'extremist' (Sherlock, 2013). Such discourses have been increasing the polarisation and hostility within the society. Also, even if those adjectives are all true in a

real sense, nevertheless there is still a question which should be asked: "why" do the people radicalise? Even though the youth might have legitimate reasons to radicalise, they might also get radicalised or shown to be radical in order to "clamp down on dissent" (Neumann, 2013, p. 877). As indicated before, radicalisation is accepted as 'rejecting the status quo' in the broadest sense in this thesis (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2).

The aim of any research might be complex and multi-faceted, coming in different versions and is likely to change over time. Therefore it is likely to have more than one purpose in any research, for instance, some research might even intend to be 'emancipatory' or 'participatory' in nature (Mason, 2002, p. 21). Therefore radicalisation is being handled through 'postmodern critical theory'. Given that it might be said from a wider perspective that this thesis aims to prevent the escalation, war and the death of people; clear off the violations of human rights; and contribute to peace, minority rights, and emancipation. Compared to that, more specifically, this thesis aims to understand radicalisation process among young people in the case of South-eastern Turkey, rather than in general. While doing so, the thesis avoids any generalization about any specific group of people, and causal factors found in the thesis do not indicate any generalization.

1.3. Outline

In the second chapter, information related to the methodological framework is covered. Methodology is a significant part of any research in reaching out to knowledge and information. The present thesis is a case study about South-eastern Turkey which has been either directly or indirectly affected by military conflicts with the PKK started since 1984. Qualitative research strategy has been implemented throughout the research as it provides a flexible and fluid ways "in research design, in choice of method, in units of analysis, in data analysis, in sampling, and in research practice" (Mason, 2006, p. 21). The given steps and why the thesis preferred certain methods, analysis, design, etc. are covered in chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, as a contestable notion, in the sense radicalisation does not have a universal definition, radicalisation is handled in detail along within history, culture, economy, and domestic/international law. Radicalisation is not a notion that scholars agree upon the definition. Therefore this thesis dwells on a wide range of articles, books, and legal documents to show diverse perceptions. This chapter might be assertive and arguable to some as

radicalisation is handled in a critical way in contrast to the mainstream that have a negative perception over radicalisation.

In Chapter 4, data will be analysed. The main part of this chapter is to determine causal factors in radicalisation. As the process of radicalisation is diverse and various, interviewees referred to a wide range of causal factors some of whose focal point is either the same or related. Therefore, the causal factors will be analysed under the following themes: "lack of democracy", "state oppression and memories", "injustice", "family effect", and lastly "economic conditions", which were commonly discovered from the interviews. Causal factors addressed in this chapter are not absolute, meaning that even if a cause demonstrates a general trend, it does not always result in radicalisation. The consequences of those factors might be different among individuals due to dissimilar perceptions. That is also why the level of analysis is individuals in this thesis.

Lastly, the research is concluded in Chapter 5 by summing up important points and main findings of the thesis. Moreover, future research proposals will be shared along with the deficiencies of the thesis.

2. Methodological Framework

In this chapter, the reader will be mainly informed about the research's strategy, design, and methods. There were difficulties and deficiencies during the fieldwork. Therefore this chapter will give information about how and why a certain strategy, design, and methods were preferred. Moreover this chapter not only gives some information about those but also includes information about reflexivity, informants, data analysis, and why the study area in question has been chosen.

2.1. Reflexivity and the Role of the Researcher

Jennifer Mason believes that the neutrality, objectivity or detachment in/from the knowledge and evidence being generated is not possible. Instead, researchers should understand and take into account their roles in the research process (Mason, 2002, p. 7). Reflexivity was an important part not only for the sake of research but also to reach other informants and gain their trust. Initially, I considered myself to be 'insider' before going to the fieldwork as I was born in eastern Turkey where the majority of the population is Kurdish, and I would attend political activities and protests for labour and minority rights during my bachelor studies in western Turkey where the Turkish population is the majority. However, when I went to the fieldwork I realised that informants did not perceive me as an insider. Because I do not know my mother tongue -the Kurdish language- which my family did not teach me in case I got into trouble socially with friends hearing my 'broken' Turkish which is associated with Kurdish population as they learn the Turkish language in school, not at home. Moreover, I have not been to eastern Turkey since I left there for my high school and university education. Naturally, studying in the western Turkey where the majority of the population is Turkish, being far away from family did not only prevent me from learning my mother tongue but also changed the way of dressing, eating, culture etc. However these changes also helped me understand discrimination against Kurdish population when I was studying in the west. Because people and my classmates in the west perceived me as Turkish so that they used to openly humiliate and swear at the Kurdish and Armenian nationality in front of me. So when someone from the eastern Turkey sees me in the study area, s/he definitely realises I am not from there. Therefore most of the informants perceived me as an outsider. But as we spent more time together and realised that we have some

common friends, I believe that I gained their trusts. Especially, my sleeping over at some of the interviewees' house must have made them trust me because it culturally means that I also trust and not underestimate them if I go and stay over.

As I was born in eastern Turkey; as a child of a Kurdish family who was forced to migrate from their villages in the 1990s by the government decision; and as a young who have witnessed discrimination and humiliation while studying in the west of Turkey, this thesis does not guarantee objectivity. However it does not mean that Kurdish people are privileged either. As a researcher, I am also aware that for instance, the role of Ottoman Kurds in the Armenian Genocide in 1915. That is to say, my family's identity does not prevent me from criticising the Kurds as well. Moreover, I personally do not have a sense of belongings to any national and religious identity. But, of course, it also depends on how people perceive us rather than how we identify ourselves. As indicated, the youth in the region perceived me as an outsider for the stated reasons above. Shortly, it might be said that the thesis does not privilege or prioritize any conflicting parties but rather human rights, international law, and peace are prioritized and taken into considerations regarding to the conflict.

2.2. Qualitative Research Strategy

There have been efforts by scholars to define qualitative research and demonstrate how it should be. However there is no consensus neither in defining nor demonstrating a certain guide. That is because qualitative research has been affected by a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions, and it is not "a unified set of techniques or philosophies" (Mason, 2002, p. 2). Qualitative research is a strategy that focuses on words and meanings rather than numbers and mostly generates theory out of research, which means it is correlated with inductive theory (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). It does not mean some form of quantification cannot be used in qualitative research though, statistical forms of analysis might be used as well, without taking a central part (Mason, 2002, p. 4). Furthermore, qualitative research provides a flexible and fluid way "in research design, in choice of method, in units of analysis, in data analysis, in sampling, and research practice". The aim of qualitative research is to understand its subjects' experiences and interpretations rather than seeing those experiences "as a nuisance or in need of standardization" (Mason, 2006, pp. 21-22). As the thesis aims to understand causal factors radicalising people without perceiving radicalisation as a 'nuisance' issue, the qualitative

research strategy seems relevant for the topic. The thesis will be arguable to some, along with explanatory. However that is what qualitative research should produce: "explanations and arguments" (Mason, 2002, p. 7).

2.2.1. Epistemological and Ontological Position

Interpretivism in epistemological orientation and constructivism in ontological orientation seem relevant for the thesis as the research is qualitative in nature. The interpretivist approach emphasizes on understanding the social world through the interpretation of its participants and the ontological approach recognises that "social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals" (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). These two approaches were preferred for two essential reasons regarding to the topic. First, the unit of analysis is individuals that construct and give meanings to a social phenomenon, and the thesis seeks to understand radicalisation through individuals. Secondly, radicalisation is a reaction in the sense "nobody is born radical" but it is a process (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010, p. 181), and reactions, in the social world, result from the interaction between individuals in a certain social context. The people, as the objects of social science, have the ability to attribute meaning to their life, therefore 'the social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied' (Bryman, 2012, p. 399), which qualitative research strategy provides such a perspective.

2.2.2. Level of Analysis

The idea before going to the fieldwork was to look at radicalisation and causal factors from different levels of analysis, namely governmental, non-governmental or civil society, and individual level. However, all my attempts to contact with NGOs such as the International Amnesty Istanbul Office, Association of Human Rights in Diyarbakır, Turkish Lawyers' Bar Association failed. Their positions are important to see their perception over radicalisation and experiences they got from their cases. In addition, I could not find any document concerning radicalisation written by the government. Apart from these failures, having governmental, and non-governmental of analysis would increase the amount of data to analyse. Moreover, "individual motivations to radicalise are abundant and unique" (TTSRL, 2008, p. 33), meaning that there would be a variety of causal factors that might not be clearly understood with governmental and institutional level of analysis but individual level. It is also suggested by

scholars that the relevant level of analysis, especially for violent radicalisation, is individual level (Yeste, 2014, p. 8). Moreover, even if causal factors might be classified external such as political, economic, cultural, they indeed "shape and constrain the individual's environment" (TTSRL, 2008, p. 9). Because of all these reasons and concerns, individual level of analysis was preferred.

2.2.3. Methods

Interviewing in qualitative research is based on relevant topics and issues that interviewer and interviewee communicate over (May, 2002, p. 2). As radicalisation is a unique and context-dependent process (Michel & Schyns, 2016; Neumann, 2013, p. 876) the main method, in this thesis, is semi-structured interviewing which is flexible in the sense of giving an opportunity to address more specific issues (Bryman, 2012, p. 472). Given that, the interviewees would be asked some other questions by taking account of conversation and interviewee's different experiences in order to explore more deeply into their unique perspectives in the context of radicalisation. Furthermore, those unique and specific experiences are best generated through qualitative interviewing (Mason, 2002, p. 64). Open-ended questions are more common in qualitative research than quantitative though it can generate an overwhelming amount of data (Bryman, 2012, p. 85). However, such a problem might be easily overcome through a relevant data analysis.

Qualitative interviews might pose a risk about "how well (or badly) interviewees do what they say they do" (May, 2002, p. 2). But, since my interview questions are mostly related to what interviewees have observed rather than what they have done, the amplification on their statements is seen as a low probability. Furthermore, the incidents and events to which the respondents referred were double-checked and confirmed through other sources such as news. Also interviewees were informed that their names and locations will not be shared, and the research will be published outside of Turkey, providing a sense of safety that was needed to share their ideas and experiences freely.

In addition to semi-structured interviewing, non-participant observation might be added in the research method as well, since I stayed in the interviewees' houses and spent time with the informants before or after interviews. So that, I had chances to see their daily life and talk about daily politics. Apart from that, I also observed how the relation is between state officials and the people. The main source of data is interviews and field notes while the researcher observes

but does not participate in group's activities in non-participant observation (Bryman, 2012, p. 444).

2.2.4. Informant Selection

As a form of purposive sampling, snowball sampling was employed to reach other informants. Snowball sampling was helpful to access 'networks of individuals' who are politically active. Moreover radicalisation is a sensitive topic that might make the probability of sampling difficult but snowball sampling made accessing informants possible (Bryman, 2012, p. 424), and decreased the trust issue between interviewees and the interviewer as the researcher was already mentioned and recommended by their own friends.

2.2.5. Informants

Interviews were carried out with 13 interviewees in total, from five different cities located in south-eastern Turkey. All interviewees were male aged among 18-30, which is one of the drawbacks of the thesis. The thesis seeks to find out why the young population becomes radicalised and if possible, interpret the transformation of personalities. Kurdish women's movement is quite strong in Turkey. Women are taking part in various types of activities political parties, civil society organizations, unions, academia, media, and assemblies. Women founded their own congress called the Free Women's Congress (KJA) in which women from different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds are included, moreover, all assemblies and institutions, from the smallest to the largest, are obliged to have equal representation and co-presidency (Fadaee & Brancolini, 2019, pp. 867-868). Given that, having no woman among informants is a drawback or deficiency of the thesis.

Apart from two interviewees, the others have been either still university students or graduated from university. All of them witnessed violent actions and behaviours. Ten interviewees had been exposed to police violence before. Seven interviewees had resorted to violence in the name of "self-defence". Ten interviewees either felt discriminated or were discriminated in the society. Interviewees were extremely hospitable although I sometimes felt that a few of them were concerned in case they would be in trouble if my research is captured by the police officers. Everyone would ask me first if I was hungry and had a place to stay over. Two interviewees had a trust problem as if I am a spy which has been a common issue in the region historically. They asked me questions related to the region and political situation to make sure if I am aware of what has been going on in the region, and see how I react or comment on it. In Batman –a south-eastern city-, one informant was quite sceptical, he asked questions about Norway and the place I live. Then I showed some of my pictures in Norway not only for meeting

his curiosity but also gaining his trust. The interviewees were informed that participation in the interview was strictly voluntary and that they should not take part if they have concerns.

2.2.6. Data analysis

Qualitative content analysis is used in analysing the data in the thesis. It is a strategy of searching themes in which coding approaches are implemented (Bryman, 2012, p. 559). It is used for finding out common themes in the interviews (Bryman, 2012, p. 557) 'by assigning successive parts of the material to the categories of a coding frame' (Schreier, 2013, p. 2). As 'radicalisation process is unique to each individual' (Michel & Schyns, 2016), causal or contributing factors are quite diverse from one to another, which creates a big amount of data. Moreover, the qualitative interview also causes too much data collection due to open-ended questions (Bryman, 2012, p. 85). Qualitative content analysis is a helpful tool for reducing such a big amount of material (Schreier, 2013, p. 2). Hence causal factors will be analysed under the following themes: "lack of democracy", "state oppression and memories", "injustice", "family effect", and lastly "economic conditions". However, it is important to note that some causes might be distributed to these themes more than one as a causal factor might be multidimensional and interacting among the other themes.

2.3. The Interview Questions

The first question of the interview -What is your understanding of the term, radicalisation? - is better absorbed with constructivist approach in understanding how social actors accomplish meanings. This is also coherent with postmodernism which is partly used in understanding radicalisation in Chapter 3 since 'knowledge is viewed as indeterminate' (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). The perception about radicalisation that interviewees have in their minds might be different than what radicalisation is defined in this thesis. Also 'the thought objects constructed by social scientists, in order to grasp a social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of human beings, living their daily life within the social world' (Schutz cited in Bryman, 2012, p. 30). Second and third questions of the interview –Have you ever observed any violent and non-violent activity? And have you ever attended any violent or non-violent radical activity? If yes, Why? - were asked to find out what/which kind of activities interviewee qualifies as radical. The third question might lead to the ethical concerns. However the names of interviewees are anonymized and nothing identifying a person will be shared, not even age will be shared as indicated in NSD form. Moreover, interviewees were informed that they can stop and leave the interview any moment they want. For the fourth question of the interview -Why do young people become radicalised?-, 'the aim is to gain access

to people's common-sense thinking' (Bryman, 2012, p. 30), and find out if there are any similar drivers which might be related to the same or similar structural, historical, cultural, and personal experience.

However, as the thesis used the semi-structured interviewing, the informants were asked other questions in conjunction with the flow of the conversations in order to deeply reach individual and unique experiences. That is to say, the questions above were not the only ones that were asked.
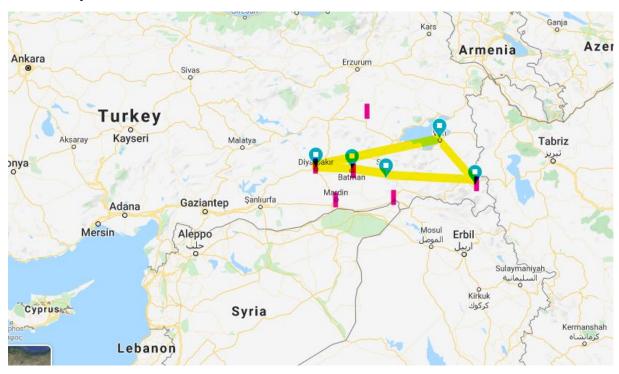
2.4. Study Area

Yellow line (Triangle): shows the trip among the cities the interviews were carried out

Red column: the cities military operation took place

Interviews related to radicalisation were carried out with the young population in five different cities located in South-eastern Turkey, namely Eruh, Batman, Diyarbakır, Van, and Yüksekova. After the peace process collapsed in 2016, military operations were taken place in these cities except Eruh and Van which have been indirectly affected through migration from neighbour cities. Apart from high fatality numbers, it is estimated that over 350,000 people have been displaced during the trench warfare (International Crisis Group, 2016, p. 1). Enforced

disappearances; torture; destruction of housing and cultural heritage; incitement to hatred; prevention of access to emergency medical care, food, water and livelihoods; violence against women in the military operations are documented by the United Nations Human Rights Office for the High Commissioner (2017, p. 5). As the violations of human rights are seen as one of the contributing factors to radicalisation (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 6), the region was found quite relevant to study. Furthermore many young people from the region joined military groups in Syria. I have personally observed many times prejudice and discrimination against Kurdish population, and political movements, both violent and non-violent, are also quite common in the region.

3. Conceptualizing Radicalisation

3.1. Theoretical Framework

Postmodern critical theory will be employed throughout the thesis. Arguments about the relationship between postmodernism and critical theory have been alive for decades. While 'postmodernism is now often treated as an expression of critical theory' according to Eric Bronner (2017, p. 6), Baudrillard distinguishes postmodernism from critical theory as it has a different subject perception than critical theory. 'An un-alienated human subject is an illusion because subjects are also products of an era' according to him. (Baudrillard in How, 2003, pp. 145-146). The relevancies in choosing postmodern critical theory for the thesis are in the following paragraph.

The meaning of things is not fixed in postmodernity (How, 2003, p. 144), which is relevant to the part of the definition of radicalisation in the sense there is no a universal definition. The definition of radicalisation might be handled along with 'alienation': Are radicals the ones alienated or indeed un-alienated being reflected as 'alien' like Nelson Mandela was once reflected as a "terrorist" (Waxman, 2018). Because, as Baudrillard said 'we now live in an era where the mass media simulate reality'. (How, 2003, p. 147). Therefore radicalisation might indeed have some 'benign' aspects in transforming society and personality, which might be reflected by the mass media as a bad way. Crucial roles of critical theory is to bring self-liberating practice and change society (Leonard, 1990, pp. 3-4) like radicals desire. Critical theory 'assaults on the exploitation, repression and alienation embedded in western civilization' (Bronner, 2017, p. 1) which are enabling causes for radicalisation.

3.2. Concepts and Considerations

Though radicalisation is the main concept of the thesis, 'self-defence' was the most referred reason in resorting to violence when interviewees answered the fourth question. De-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation are also being slightly mentioned along with the actions taken by the government of Turkey in order to see if they really address the root causes of radicalisation. If they are implemented in a wrong way, the outcome might be worse. Therefore, it is quite significant that the Council of European Union indicates that human rights and international law should not be undermined while countering radicalisation (Council of the

European Union, 2014, p. 5). However, human rights and international law are also referred to by radical groups. For instance, seven interviewees who attended violent activities referred to the right of self-defence and indicated that 'their actions were reactionary to police violence'. Moreover this pattern is seen not only in Turkey but abroad. A research-concerning home-grown terrorism- which was conducted in the U.K, Canada, Denmark, France, and the Netherlands (Bartlett & Miller, 2012) indicates that "one radical interviewed in Denmark intellectually grounded his opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, drawing on international law and political self-defence principles, without making reference to religion at all" (p. 7). That is to say, human rights themselves might be one of the motivational factors as the people realise their rights are violated. The right of self-defence is being based on Article 12 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the following:

> *Article 12*
>
> *No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.* (UN General Assembly, 1948)

However discussing or interpreting the extent of the right of self-defence is beyond this thesis. The point here is that that discourse is what the young population believe and perceive since more than the half of the interviewees have pointed out self-defence paradigm. Now the question is that who should be de-radicalised in the case of human rights violations by the states? Self-defence is also recognised as "a moral principle" that might be used against highly repressive and genocidal states as a last resort (Jackson, Jarvis, Gunning, & Smyth, 2011, p. 179). Rudolph J. Rummel names governments' mass murder as "*democide*" in his book which is called Death by Government, and he indicates that "the more power a government has, the more it can act arbitrarily" (Rummel, 2009, p. 1). As McCauley & Moskalenko (2008) criticise that the concept of radicalisation has revolved around non-state groups that represent a threat to the state (p. 416). However, those fighting against radicalisation and terrorism are also subject to the same mechanism that operates the people toward radicalisation (p. 430). For instance, some states have terrible human rights violation records. Turkey is one of them. According to the annual report 2019 by the European Court of Human Rights, Turkey is the second country in violating the human rights the most, with 113 cases in 2019. Four of the cases are the violation of the right to life, twelve of inhuman/degrading treatment, fourteen of

protection of property, and sixteen of right to liberty and security (ECHR, 2020, p. 135). The report also shows that Turkey is taking the first place in violating human rights with 3,645 total judgments between 1959-2019 years (p.137). Most of the violations are directly related to Article 12 in Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At this point, should the states be de-radicalised instead of people, then? For instance, Israeli 'occupation' over Palestine in 1967 is internationally recognised by UN (the Security Council, 1980) moreover, the construction of the wall was accepted as a violation of international law and human rights, and Israel was called upon complying international obligations by ICJ (Intenational Court of Justice, 2004, pp. 137-138). Nevertheless, the occupation and the wall are both present. When the states do not conform to the law, how are the people expected to?

Some scholars have articulated that the states might have 'terroristic aspects' as well because of carrying out repression, human rights abuses, genocide and state crime, which cause more destructive forms of political violence than non-state organizations (Jackson et al., 2011, pp. 174-175). Therefore, a few scholars who have been criticising terrorism and radicalisation studies for focusing on only non-state organizations and individuals, brought up a definition of "state terrorism" which will be useful to remember when the incidents in Turkey are addressed in Chapter 4. Scholars define state terrorism as the following:

> *"State terrorism is a method of rule whereby some groups of people are victimized with great brutality, and more or less arbitrarily by the state, or state-supported actors, so that others who have reason to identify with those murdered, will despair, obey or comply. Its main instruments are summary arrest and incarceration without trial, torture, political murder, disappearances, and concentration camps"* (Bushnell cited in Jackson et al., 2011, p. 178)

Another concept I refer to is "benign radicalisation" which might be a way to describe the struggle of the oppressed against the state terrorism, arbitrary power, oppression, exploitation, patriarchy, and discrimination. I conceptualize benign radicalisation as a politicisation process in feminism, ecology, human rights, LGBTI, labour rights etc. in the framework of human rights, international law, and universal values, which might end up either violent or non-violent, depending on the circumstances and opportunities provided by the arbitrary powers.

3.3. Understanding Radicalisation

There are different theories and approaches in conceptualizing radicalisation, which has in turn caused various and diverse perceptions of radicalisation. Furthermore, the term has been used in three different contexts whose agendas are different from each other: the security context, the foreign policy context, and the integration context (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 479). Thus, various kinds of definitions have been developed up due to different perceptions over how the term radical is understood. After 9/11, it was commonplace that the policy landscape and the media presented radicalisation "as inevitably leading to political violence, particularly inspired by terrorist groups" (Turina, 2019, p. 251). The use of radicalisation reached its peak between 2005 and 2007 in relation to home-grown terrorism in Europe, after the Madrid bombing in 2004 and London bombing in 2005 (Schmid, 2013, p. 1; Sedgwick, 2010, p. 480). However violence or terrorism is one possible outcome of radicalisation process, not the only one, and most people do not engage in terrorism although they have radical beliefs and ideas (Borum, 2011, p. 8; TTSRL, 2008, p. 5).

Some scholars define radicalisation as a collective intergroup process, meaning that people do not radicalise on their own but as part of a group (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010, p. 181). Stekelenburg and Klandermans approach radicalisation through politicisation and polarisation, 'two different but interrelated' group processes (p.181). According to them, politicisation is based on shared grievances in which an external enemy is found responsible for the hatred then the group would directly or indirectly target the public or authorities in order to compensate (Simon and Klandermans cited in Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010, p. 182). In the process of polarisation, in-group and out-group basically breed each other. 'Both groups assert that what we stand for is threatened by them,' therefore, us-versus-them discourses evolve (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010, p. 182). The deficiency of this approach is that they conceptualize radicalisation 'as a collective intergroup process' so individually radicalisation is not possible. However recent studies show that individuals might radicalise on their own without any group affiliation (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 11; Turina, 2019, p. 253). In addition, politicisation is not necessarily based on 'grievance'. One might be politicised in feminism or environmentalism with or without grievance. In this sense radicalisation does not necessarily produce problems (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). Individuals might be aware that there is something unjust, however, the liability for unjustness might be well hidden so that people would not know about whom they should have grievances for, or there might be many dimensions to blame for injustice.

Moghaddam's 'staircase metaphor' (Moghaddam, 2005) is also worth mentioning when writing about radicalisation. The staircase is conceived in a building consisting of a ground floor and five higher floors. Every behaviour on each floor is characterized with a particular psychological process (p. 161). The ground floor is dominated by 'perceptions of fairness and feelings of relative deprivation'. Some individuals climb to the first floor to look for solutions. On the first floor, they would try to improve their situations and gain greater justice but if they do not see ways to influence the decision-making process, they will continue climbing up the stairs. On the second floor, the perception of injustice is present, and individuals feel anger and frustration, but they are easily influenced by leaders who point out an enemy as the source of injustice. Those who are likely or prone to express their aggression physically onto enemies climb further. The third floor in which the most important transformation takes place according to Moghaddam, is the place that terrorism is seen as a justified strategy but there is no action, yet. So radicalisation is still cognitive, meaning that they start having radical ideas without taking an action. Then recruitment takes place on the fourth floor and 'us versus them' discourses are learnt. On the last floor terrorist act is carried out (p. 162). Even though, Moghaddam mentions about terrorism in his metaphor, the process is still relevant and similar to radicalisation. Moreover, every terrorist has experienced a radicalisation process, and terrorism is the worst possible outcome of radicalisation process (TTSRL, 2008, p. 5). An important point in staircase metaphor is that the climbing keeps going on as long as individuals do not see possibilities for individual mobility, and influencing the decision-making process (Moghaddam, 2005, p. 161). Therefore, this staircase process suggests that terrorism can be prevented by reforming the conditions that urge people to climb from the ground floor to the top (Moghaddam, 2005, p. 167). This position is further supported by research which found that the increased political engagement and political mobilisation are effective factors in preventing radicalisation including violent one (David, Charles, & Ebrahim, 2016, p. 2). Similar to Stekelenburg and Klandermans, radicalisation process in Moghaddam's staircase metaphor includes shared grievances and 'us versus them' discourses as well.

McCauley and Moskalenko define radicalisation as "changes in beliefs, feelings, and behaviours in directions that increasingly justify intergroup violence and demand sacrifice in defence of the in-group" (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 416). They are handling radicalisation from three different levels: individual, group and mass level of radicalisation. Motivations and causes are different in each level (p. 418). They additionally identify twelve mechanisms explaining radicalisation, though they still accept that those mechanisms might not

be enough to explain for a single individual. That is to say, they point out "there are multiple and diverse pathways leading individuals and groups to radicalisation" (p. 429).

Another important definition which has been popularly referred to by many scholars is the one brought up by the General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD). It is accepted that radicalisation has various types therefore AIVD came up with a definition as the following:

> *"the active pursuit of and/or support for far reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to the continuity of democratic legal order (aim), possibly by using undemocratic methods (means) which may harm the functioning of that order (effect). By extension, then, radicalisation is the process of increasing readiness to pursue such changes – possibly by undemocratic means – and/or to encourage other to do so"* (AIVD, 2007, p. 10).

In the broadest sense, radicalisation might be defined as 'rejecting the status quo'(Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2). In other words, status quo might be replaced with the mainstream since it is sustained or defended by the mainstream itself. However what mainstream is varies from one society to another in a given period of time, therefore, radicalisation is a "context-dependent" notion (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). It is important to understand the significance of context to understanding radicalisation, because what is radical in one context is not necessarily radical in another. For instance, 'calling for atheist thought' is counted as terrorism in Saudi Arabia (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Or we can travel in time: It was the first time in 1619 when African slaves were brought to Virginia, U.S which was the part of the British Colony in the time (Shah & Adolphe, 2019). Slavery was an ordinary part of daily life accepted and taken normally by even slaves themselves. Let's imagine a slave asking for today's basic rights such as freedom of movement and speech etc. in seventeen century, 'radical' would be even underwhelmed in qualifying such 'a demanding slave'. Response would probably be a deadly punishment for the sake of 'status quo'. More historical periods such as the Renaissance starting in the 15th century, the Reformation Movement in the 16th century, and the age of Enlightenment starting in the 17th century were all radical movements challenging the status quo in the time. However, they led improvements, developments and progresses. Radicals might be even found appealing in some nations like U.S since the founders of the country had fought for the rights of freedoms, so that they were condemned as dangerous radicals by their contemporaries. American history books remind that those radicals are essential part of their national history

(Neumann, 2013, pp. 876-877). In this sense, radicalisation might be perceived as positive and necessary step for progress, development, and emancipation.

Lastly, Veldhuis and Staun from the Netherlands Institute of International Relations sketch out radicalisation as the following:

> *'Definitions of radicalisation most often centre around two different foci: 1) on violent radicalisation, where emphasis is put on the active pursuit or acceptance of the use of violence to attain the stated goal; 2) on a broader sense of radicalisation, where emphasis is placed on the active pursuit or acceptance of far-reaching changes in society, which may or may not constitute a danger to democracy and may or may not involve the threat of or use of violence to attain the stated goals'* (Tinka & Jørgen, 2009, p. 4)

3.3.1. The difference between violent and non-violent radicalisation

The scholarly debate on radicalisation has evolved around the ambiguity radicalisation has. As well as violent and non-violent classification, radicalisation are classified as 'cognitive' radicalisation whose objective is extremist "beliefs," and 'behavioural' radicalisation whose objective is extremist "behaviours" (Neumann, 2013, p. 873). In this sense, non-violent radicalisation might be associated with cognitive radicalisation and violent radicalisation might be associated with behavioural radicalisation. Bartlett and Miller define violent and non-violent radicalisation as the following:

> *'Radicalisation that leads to violence (violent radicalisation) is a process by which individuals come to undertake or directly aid or abet terrorist activity. Radicalisation that does not lead to violence (non-violent radicalisation) refers to the process by which individuals come to hold radical views in relation to the status quo but do not undertake, aid, or abet terrorist activity'* (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2).

There are two essential facts which might be concluded from the definition above. First, although it is not clear in the definition that if individuals come to undertake or aid terrorist activity all of a sudden without having radical views, the authors clarify in later on that individuals hold radical views in both violent and non-violent radicalisation (p. 3). Second, the indicator distinguishing the two notions is whether there is an action supporting "terrorist activity" or not. However, what terrorism or terrorist activity is, can be arguably relative from

one perspective to another. For instance, twenty-two students have been accused of 'terror propaganda' in Turkey because of attending an anti-war protest regarding Turkey's military action in Syria, and they were classified as "terrorists" by the President of Turkey, Erdogan (AFP, 2018). Another example is "Academics for Peace petition" through which academics in Turkey called for a negotiated solution to the military conflict in South-eastern Turkey, and objected to the violence against to the Kurdish population. As a result, over 2,000 academicians who signed the peace petition in 2016 have been convicted of 'terrorism' (Butler & Ertür, 2017). Furthermore, it is unclear how '*directly aid*' should be understood in the definition? In the case of academics signing a petition or students protesting (both of which are considered human rights), in what ways can it be demonstrated that these actions are directly terrorism? It can be acknowledged that some non-violent actions such as transferring money to terrorist organizations are in fact crimes and do lead to direct aid of terrorism. Therefore the thesis suggests replacing the adjective, *'terrorist'* in the definition with 'violent' activity.

Bartlett and Miller argue that four elements are often overlooked in explaining violent radicalisation (Bartlett & Miller, 2012). They suggest that radicalisation, "especially in the case of home-grown young men", are not always based on religious, intellectual or rational decisions but rather there are other elements such as emotional pull, excitement, peer pressure and status that play a role (p. 17). Emotional pull comprises the process in which decisions are not made rationally (p. 13). Some youth might find violent actions adventurous and exciting without any political or religious reasons, just to be "cool" (p. 14). Status-seeking and peer pressure might be another two elements which are neglected in explaining violent radicalisation (pp. 15-16). There are some specific and unique moments in people's lives that can trigger a violent action when a unique line is crossed. Those moments pushing people to take a violent action are called "tipping point" or "end point" which might include traumatic events such as the death of loved ones, or being a victim of physical violence (Neumann, 2013, pp. 874-875; TTSRL, 2008, p. 34; UNDP, 2017, p. 4).

Apart from being a group process, radicalisation might be realised through personal readings or by particular scholars that radicals follow (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 11; Turina, 2019, p. 253). This supports the idea that 'lone-wolf' radicalisation is also possible (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2), in contrast to some scholars who claim that 'people do not radicalise on their own but as part of a group' (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010, p. 182). Individuals can learn "violent-related thoughts" in various ways such as violence-legitimizing discourses, social learning and individual relations (Yeste, 2014, p. 21). However, this transformation, through

personal readings or the followed particular scholars, is not necessarily supposed to end up violent.

According to Neumann, radicalisation does not necessarily produce a problem that needs to be studied or solved (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). In a similar way, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police do not view radical thinking as "problematic." On the contrary, "most progress has been an outcome of some form of radicalisation" (RCMP, 2009, p. 1). Especially non-violent radicalisation might pioneer in the progress of equality, prosperity, women rights, labour rights, and environmental rights. Even violent-including conflicts such as national liberation or wars of independence might paradoxically bring less violence and fragile peace in the future (Webel, 2007, pp. 8-9). Most people do not engage in terrorism although they can have radical ideas (Borum, 2011, p. 8). Non-violent radicalisation encompasses such people. But it should not be forgotten that what is meant by radical is quite relative and context-dependent. For example, a desire to install a caliphate is identified as an indicator for radicalisation according to research carried out in Europe and Canada, largely due to the fact that the notion of a caliphate dissents from prevailing norms in these Western liberal democratic countries (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 3). On the other hand, a caliphate can be perceived as quite normal in other countries. Those who come to hold radical ideas but do not take violent actions at the end of the radicalisation process, they might be referred to as non-violent radicals. This distinction will be better understood through a historical perspective in which two important figures present either violent or non-violent radicalisation.

3.3.2. "Old" Radicals: A Historical Perspective

The radicalisation of two important figures in world history, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, will be shared in order to show the distinction between violent and non-violent radicalisation, and the potential for a concept of benign radicalisation. These two figures provide excellent examples of processes of radicalisation. To begin with, both of them rejected the status quo in their time. Secondly, the gradual process in which they engaged is quite obvious, in the sense they reacted to their personal experiences over time, not all of a sudden, as it will be seen in next pages. Lastly, they both carried out some actions that were against the norms of the majority of the population, though both of them had significant ideological support by the public. Otherwise, they are useful and important examples to not only understand the distinction between violent and non-violent radicalisation but also to see different levels of radicalisation. As it will be seen, while Mandela "got radicalised" in a group that he had been

a part since early age, Gandhi "got radicalised" individually. Passive voices were used in the previous sentence on purpose. Yes, they "got radicalised" by and due to cruel state power, and the colonial era which is historically accepted as a wave of "state terrorism" (Jackson et al., 2011, p. 188). Mandela is presented as an example of violent radicalisation and Gandhi as an example of non-violent. In the section that follows, the important turning points in their lives related to radicalisation process will be in focus.

Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela was the first commander-in-chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe[2] (MK) when its foundation was publicly announced on 16 December 1961 with a series of bomb explosions. (Ellis, 2016, p. 1). It was not a sudden decision to bomb the buildings but rather it was an outcome of a historical "process".

The African National Congress (ANC) was founded in 1912 in order to address the political and economic inequalities of the oppressed black population of South Africa. However, the ANC had been under the influence of the black African petty bourgeoisie and traditional chiefs who were prioritizing their class interests. Therefore, the ANC was not capable to meet the demands of the average people in the 1950s, especially for 'the rapidly growing black working class movement and impoverished peasantry'. The younger generation in the ANC, including Mandela, formed the ANC Youth League that embraced direct forms of mass-oriented struggles such as strikes, service boycotts and civil disobediences (McKinley, 2018, pp. 28-29). Although these actions were not violent and they reflected measures that are considered basic rights in most democratic countries, the Apartheid regime did not tolerate such developments. Hence, working class leaders in the labour movement were arrested along with leadership of the Congress Alliance (McKinley, 2018, p. 29). In addition to the experience of the oppressions shoving people toward violent options, the international developments such as: Ghana becoming the first African country received independence, Algerian nationalists fighting against France, Egypt following anticolonial policy under the leadership of Nasser, and finally guerrillas under the leadership of Fidel Castro overthrowing the Batista government in Cuba, inspired the people in South Africa (Ellis, 2013, pp. 9-10).

The ANC and its Congress allies continued with non-violent resistances against the oppression of the apartheid regime. However, a massacre that took place against anti-apartheid regime demonstrators on March 21, 1960, in Sharpeville, led to countrywide protests. Thereafter,

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[2] Meaning Spear of the Nation

apartheid regime's banning of the ANC made clear that "a new strategic direction was required" (McKinley, 2018, p. 30). Mandela had long been interested in Marxist-Leninist ideology and contemplated the benefits or role of arm struggle well before Sharpeville Massacre. He believed, after the massacre, that 'the moment to take up arms had now arrived' (Ellis, 2013, p. 7; 2016, pp. 7-8). The Sharpeville Massacre was the "tipping point", and not only for Mandela. Some revolts, for instance, in Pondolond in the Eastern Cape, violence was already implemented by the people (McKinley, 2018, p. 29). That is to say, the people were already radicalised by the oppression of the apartheid, and Mandela was not alone in reaching the conclusion that armed struggle was necessary The South African Communist Party (SACP) declared its own embrace of the armed struggle, nine months after the massacre, in its December 1960 national congress (Ellis, 2016, p. 10). MK was officially recognised as the military wing of the ANC at the Lobatse Conference in October 1962. Between 1961 and 1963, MK carried out approximately 400 sabotages acts with homemade bombs (Ellis, 2013, p. 30; McKinley, 2018, p. 31). Nelson Mandela, as MK Commander in-Chief, was arrested in August 1962 and had been jailed until February 1990, for almost 28 years (McKinley, 2018, p. 32).

Mandela told the court at one of his trials that:

> *"I do not deny that I planned sabotages, I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love of violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had arisen after years of tyranny, exploitation and oppression of my people by whites." (Elliott, 2019)*

Three years after his release, as a well-known fact, Nelson Mandela received Nobel Peace Award in 1993. He was nevertheless on the U.S Terrorist Watch List until 2008 (Waxman, 2018). Mandela was once labelled as 'radical' or even a 'terrorist' by some, but in the process of time, those characterisations have faded away as race equality has been increasingly recognised as a right. This example shows how the concept of "radical" is a dynamic notion. Now, those who still believe in racial superiority are counted as radical, not the ones who are against it.

Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi is a well-known political figure symbolizing non-violence all over the world. He had been to London for his studies in the law. He stayed there for three years, between 1888 and 1891 (Sharma, 2013, p. 29). He arrived to London in a white suit that British officials used to wear in colonized India. When he realised that gentlemen do not wear such a suit in London he

even spent his money and time to seem as an 'English gentleman'. He was impressed of Queen Victoria's 1858 declaration "pledging fair treatment and non-discrimination to her Indian subjects" (Hyslop, 2011, p. 33). In this period, Gandhi is seen as a 'normal' national subject who neither questions nor challenges the British Emperor. After he finished his studies he went to back to India where his lawyer career started with failure due to stage fright. Then he was offered a job at a merchant firm's Africa branch which he accepted (Hyslop, 2011, p. 34).

It was in South Africa where he stayed more than two decades and developed his philosophical and political spirit. Johannesburg, which was a politically and culturally dynamic city, had been a significant part of his life (Hyslop, 2011, pp. 30-31). In this sense, his stay in the South Africa might be counted as the beginning of "a conversion experience" (Sharma, 2013, p. 54). In Africa, he was thrown out of a court session by a magistrate as he was wearing a turban, a policeman threw him out of a train, and he was refused to stay in a hotel. These were such humiliations and racial violence that he had not experienced in India (Hyslop, 2011, p. 35). Such experiences might sound terrible to us nowadays but it was a normal daily life adopted by the "majority" and the "mainstream". So whoever had challenged those humiliations and racial violence would have been qualified as radical.

Although his job was over with success in the South Africa, a bill depriving Indians of their right to elect members to the Natal Assembly made him stay and fight against it (Sharma, 2013, p. 61). He started a campaign which was spread out across the countryside through volunteers, and received supports from Britain and India as Gandhi had already sent reports to the newspaper there. After the campaign, Gandhi was a well-known person who established an education group which gave free legal advices to the workers (Hyslop, 2011, pp. 36-37). He was also aware of the power of the media through his experiences in London. Therefore, he also used a newspaper in Africa called 'Indian Opinion' to propagate his views (Hyslop, 2011, p. 42).

Nevertheless, Gandhi's "imperial loyalist viewpoint" lasted until 1906 and then he shifted his position to the point of asking for a home rule within the Empire instead of independence (Hyslop, 2011, p. 33). He engaged in another non-violent effort which was to write a manifesto called 'Hind Swaraj'. As well as condemning western civilization, its legal system, industrialism, and militarism, he proposed the Indian civilization based on decentralization, small-scale productions and rural virtues (Hyslop, 2011, p. 46).

Gandhi arrived back to India in 1915. It was the time of the First World War, and Gandhi was still loyal to the British Raj. He even promoted recruitment for the British Army. When the British Army massacred unarmed civilians in Amritsar, Punjab in 1919, only then his confidence in the British was shaken. Nevertheless he did not give up non-violent protests against the British Raj. After 11 years, on January 26, 1930, he finally called for complete independence from the United Kingdom (Sharma, 2013, pp. 72-73). Gandhi started a war against the British on 12th of March with 79 male and female companions whose weapons were their feet rather than conventional arms. They walked 24 days until they arrived to Dandi where "all salt was subject to tax and could not be obtained freely" (Sharma, 2013, p. 75). In addition to walking resistance, he undertook a fast to death later on, against separate electorates by which he was afraid that the Hindus would be divided (Sharma, 2013, p. 89).

Gandhi theorized his approach as 'satyagraha' which might be understood as 'passive resistance'. Satyagraha cannot turn to violence as it is the principle of 'ahimsa' which is the principle of doing no harm to any living being (Hyslop, 2011, p. 44; Sharma, 2013, p. 59). Gandhian non-violent actions are not only a political tactic but also a way of life based on understanding the inherent worth and dignity of life. He perceived non-violence as the way of serving God which he equated to the truth, and the truth is tied to non-violence (Terchek, 2011, p. 117). Gandhi's non-violent challenges were more than actions, he aimed a voluntary change through dialogue (Terchek, 2011, p. 122). However many commentators have also claimed that there are some exceptions made by Gandhi to the use of non-violence. Others argue that his theory is not useful to implement against cruel regimes like Nazi Germany (Terchek, 2011, p. 129). Regardless of such discussions, the important point to highlight in Gandhi's experience are the gradual process he went towards radicalisation, and non-violent actions he carried out in his challenging the United Kingdom.

3.4. Summing up Chapter 3

Radicalisation has been identified with violence and terrorist groups in the post-9/11 atmosphere however there is not a single explanation for radicalisation (TTSRL, 2008, p. 5). The content of radicalisation "varies depending on what is seen as mainstream in any given society, section of society or period of time," therefore, the meaning of radicalisation will always be contested and unsatisfying (Neumann, 2013, pp. 876-878). There is no straightforward pathways and mechanisms toward radicalisation. Having radical ideas does not

mean that those will engage in terrorism (Borum, 2011, p. 8). Moreover, radicalisation is not inherent to only non-state actors, meaning that the states and its officials might also radicalise (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 430). Furthermore, some scholars correlate brutal state acts such as torture, kidnapping, targeted killings, support for private militias, and widespread human rights abuses with state terrorism (Jackson et al., 2011, p. 186).

There is only one fact that radicalisation experts agree on is that "radicalisation is a process" (Schmid, 2013, p. 1). Radicalisation is a gradual process that might be either fast or slow depending on context (TTSRL, 2008, p. 11). Nobody becomes radical all of a sudden, rather it results from unique processes for every individual. Radicalisation is not necessarily supposed be a collective group process, meaning that individuals might radicalise on their own like Gandhi. There are many pathways into and through radicalisation, and a variety of factors have effects over each pathway (Borum, 2011, p. 15). Radicalisation does not necessarily lead to violence. A person might nevertheless be viewed as 'radical' in spite of having "non-violent behaviour without terrorist intent" (TTSRL, 2008, p. 5).

Apart from violent/non-violent distinction, radicalisation might be divided into cognitive and behavioural radicalisation as well. Although some scholars identify violent and non-violent radicalisation according to whether a terrorist activity is undertaken or supported (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2), this thesis suggests that the focus should be on whether the action itself is violent or not. Because terrorist activity is a subjective matter depending on one's political position. In addition, terrorist activity might be supported through non-violent actions such as money transferring. In such a case, action itself (transferring money) is not violent, but a crime. In other words, the person transferring money is still counted as radical as s/he holds radical views. However, since the action itself is not violent, s/he cannot be counted as an output of violent radicalisation. Basically, what distinguishes violent radicalisation from non-violent one is whether violence is being used by the subject himself or herself, for a certain radical view. By saying this, the thesis does tot claim that non-violent radicalisation does not mean the absence of the actions. As seen in Gandhi's and Mandela's earlier struggles, boycotting, marching, walking to the salt lake, going on hunger strikes, and civil disobediences are types of the actions in non-violent radicalisation.

This thesis counts on the broadest sense of radicalisation that Bartlett & Miller (2012) basically defines as "rejecting status quo" (p. 2). Sedgwick (2010) does not perceive radicalisation as an absolute concept but relative nature of the term 'radical' (p. 479). According to Neumann, what radical is varies from one to another in a given period of time, "depending on what is seen as

mainstream" therefore radical is a "context-dependent" and dynamic notion. For instance, the idea of same-sex marriage used to be seen as radical however it is those who oppose it are seen as radicals nowadays, not its supporters (Neumann, 2013, p. 876).

4. Analysing the Data

In this chapter, the data will be analysed through qualitative content analysis. It would be beneficial to remember the features of informants again: Interviews were carried out with 13 young men aged between 18 and 30 years old who have been politically active. Some of them have been member of political parties and youth organizations. Apart from two of them, the others have been either still university student or graduated from university. All participants have witnessed at least once violent activity. Except three informants everybody else has attended either violent or non-violent demonstrations. Ten interviewees had been exposed to police violence before. Seven interviewees had resorted to violence in the name of "self-defence". Ten interviewees either felt discriminated or got discriminated due to their identity. Eight informants have lost either a friend or a relative in the conflict between Turkey and the PKK since 1984. During the interviews, some informants referred to incidents in order to strengthen their arguments, and their statements reminded me some other cases related to certain categories. The news and information related to those incidents were confirmed through other sources and cited.

4.1. Causal Factors

As mentioned before, radicalisation is a unique process for each individual (Michel & Schyns, 2016). While something might be enough for some people to turn to become radicalised the same factor might not be enough for others. Therefore, causal factors are various due to diverse perceptions. Even if some factors do not directly lead to radicalisation, they might be still used for supporting radical narratives and appealing people (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 6). When informants were asked about "why does the youth radicalise in south-eastern Turkey?" they addressed different but interrelated causes which will be analysed under the following themes: "the lack of democracy", "state oppression and memories", "injustice", "family effect", "economic conditions," and lastly "other causes" in which the factors which were not fit for the themes are addressed. These themes were acquired by counting the similar frequencies that were referred to by informants. Then the relevant ones were gathered under a general theme. Also it is important to note that some causal factors pointed out by the interviewees might be distributed to these themes more than once. For instance, freedom restrictions, unmet demands, intolerance, discrimination and inequality might be counted in

both the lack of democracy, and state oppression. Because these factors are also interrelated and multidimensional. While unmet demands and freedom restrictions are indicators showing undemocratic ruling, they might be also indicators for state oppression and discrimination to a certain group of people. This interrelation between the causal factors also points out that there should be interrelated and multidimensional solutions for such problems instead of focusing only one certain category.

All causal factors which the informants mentioned during the interview are addressed within the relevant theme, from the much-referred to the less-referred. At this point, it is really crucial to emphasize that this thesis does not claim that the less-referred causal factors are not as important as much-referred ones. On the contrary, each factor is important as "there is no hierarchy of factors that automatically results in violence" (Michel & Schyns, 2016). One's perception is different than one another, meaning that while one casual factor might be perceived as normal by some it is not guaranteed that it would be perceived in the same way by others, thus they would or would not become radicalised.

One of the drawback of this thesis is the absence of a psychological approach to causal factors. There is much research trying to find out psychological profile through profession, income and employment (Victoroff, 2005, p. 8). However psychological approaches that try to find out a common profile rather than trying to understand are quite problematic. Such efforts might increase hatred and anger to certain groups of people, and cause to labelling the people who share the same kind of profile as 'terrorist', 'radical' or 'criminal'. Such approaches are criticised by scholars as "overwhelmingly subjective and speculative" (Victoroff, 2005, p. 33). It does not mean that the psychological effect in radicalisation is underestimated, on the contrary, the thesis acknowledges the importance of psychological understanding in radicalisation process. But such approach is beyond the thesis therefore it is left for the experts within that field.

4.1.1. The Lack of Democracy

First of all, what democracy is and which kind of democracy is better are arguable matters. Therefore, it is better indicate at the beginning that these questions are beyond this thesis. Informants were not asked 'what they understand from democracy' but rather most of them shared examples indicating more or less how they perceive democracy. Undemocratic conditions or the lack of democracy is the most-referred causal factor by the informants. Eight interviewees pointed out this issue.

The European Court of Human Rights' (2020) annual report also illustrates that Turkey is by far taking the first line in violating human rights with 3,645 total judgments among 1959-2019 periods. It is ahead of the second country [Russia Federation] with more than a thousand judgments (p. 137). The violation of freedom of expression between 1959 and 2019 is 356 in total (p. 137). %10 of it was violated only in 2019 with 35 violations which is the highest violated case in 2019 (p. 135). These data are official indicators showing undemocratic routines in Turkey since 1959.

When informants were talking about undemocratic manner, they mostly addressed the absence of the basic democratic rights such as education in mother tongue, right to protest, respect to the votes. According to Turkey's current constitution, article 3 indicates as the following:

> *"The Government of Turkey is, with its territory and nation, an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish…"* [3][My Translation]

Speaking Kurdish in public was outlawed between 1983 and 1991. People were even arrested because of having a Kurdish-music cassette in the time. Although the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) gradually loosened the restrictions over the Kurdish language, the government started shutting down associations, language schools, the Kurdish media organizations (Letsch, 2017) after the peace process with Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) collapsed. Based on this, one interviewee said that *"as well as Kurdish concerts, panels and theatres I even qualify speaking Kurdish as 'radical' act in the present time"* [Interviewee 5, 8th of June], and his position is appropriate to Neumann (2013) who finds the word 'radical' as relative and "context-dependent in any given society, section of society or period of time" (p. 876). Hundreds of prisoners went on mass hunger strikes in 2019, with the demands of the Kurdish language education, and permission to the imprisoned PKK leader to meet with his lawyers (Amnesty International, 2019).

Another undemocratic issue which informants referred to was the police intervention to the demonstrations though it is a given right by article 34 in the constitution as the following:

> *"Everyone, without prior permission, has the right to organize unarmed and assault-free meetings and demonstrations…"* [4] [My Translation]

One informant indicated that *"I have participated to a non-violent protest before. We walked to stop the 'trench wars,' however, police intervened. Some were arrested and punched"* and when I asked if he responded back to the police intervention, he said *"No, I just run!"* [Interviewee 3, 8th of June]. However, not everyone did just run: Seven informants responded back to both the intervention of police, and the assault of right-wing students in the name of self-defence.

Other causal factors which informants mentioned were the unmet demands and occupation. Demands such as independence, education in mother tongue, and recently autonomy have not been met. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1923, the government of the Republic of Turkey implemented 'a radical program of nation-building' in which ethnic diversity and languages other than Turkish were perceived as dangerous to the integrity of the state (Fadaee & Brancolini, 2019, p. 859). According to Johanna K. Birnir, language, culture, and ethnic identities are difficult to regulate as they are passed through families. On the contrary, authoritarian regimes would cause a more developed form of a group loyalty (Birnir, 2001, p. 200). In addition to unmet demands, two informants specifically indicated that the occupation is one of the factors radicalising people [Interviewee 4 & 5, 8th of June]. They perceive the presence of the Turkish ruling in the region as 'occupation' since the south-eastern has been home to the Kurds for centuries. But it does not only mean a physical occupation or having no territory, but also for instances, so-called "democratic" elections are not working. 32 elected Kurdish mayors were removed from the office by the Ministry of Interior in 2019 despite the election was carried out in the same year on 31st of March, and the ministry substituted government-appointed provincial mayors (Human Rights Watch, 2019a; TurkeyPurge, 2020). It was observed that such interventions from the central government have caused the Kurdish minority to lose their faith in democracy, politics, and elections. Furthermore, some might look for alternative ways rather than elections to change undemocratic situations like in Moghaddam's 'staircase metaphor' (2005, p. 161-162).

Democracy might be sketchily defined as a type of the system in which the will of the people is taken into account in decision-making process. It, of course, depends on which type of democracy is being dreamt of. However, these discussions are beyond this thesis as indicated before. The point, here, is that eight informants explicitly complained about the lack of democracy and its components as the followings:

> *"Turkey is not a country that has completed its democratization. In contrast, the country has gone back with the current government"* [Interview 9, 6th of July].

"When your objection is not gotten result, the people tend to different paths. Some keep fighting politically, others keep fighting through arms" [Interview 4, 8th of June]

A study about Muslim Americans found out that the increased political engagement and political mobilisation are effective factors in preventing radicalisation including violent one (David et al., 2016, p. 2). This might be read like this as well: radicalisation is likely to liven up in the absence of political engagement and political mobilisation which are significant features of democracy.

4.1.2. State Oppression and Memories

Max Weber defines the state as a unity that has "the monopoly over the legitimated use of coercive power," however he also indicates that "the temptations of violence" are inherently subject to those who exercise the power (Waters, 2015, p. 11). That is to say, this monopoly is open to be abused by those who exercise the power in order to silence opponents for the sake of protection. Therefore, national and international legal frameworks circumscribe the state's right to use violence by forbidding genocide, ethnic cleansing, torture, and enforced disappearance (Jackson et al., 2011, pp. 178-179). Charles Tilly qualifies state's provision of protection as racketeering in the sense "a racketeer creates a threat and then charges for its reduction," and people who challenge or complain about the price of protection are called as "anarchists", "subversives" (Tilly, 1985, p. 171) or in our cases 'radical'. However, as well as creating order, state protection might create disorder. Violence which is used in the name of security or status quo might also cause fear (Kelly & Shah, 2006, p. 256). And then the fear created by state oppression causes hatred against the state itself, along generations through memorial and historical discourses.

Seven interviewees indicated state oppression as one of the causal factors in radicalising the youth. Turkey historically has a bad record in the state oppression, which might be seen in European Court of Human Rights' annual report (2020, p. 137) showing violations between 1959 and 2019, as already referred to a couple of times in the present thesis. Or the memory can be even gone until the birth of the new republic after Ottoman Empire. However, as indicated before, the study era was chosen due to military operations which took place after the peace process between Turkey and the PKK collapsed in 2015 (International Crisis Group, 2016, p. 1). Therefore, memories will be mainly confined to, except a few cases, the period military operations started in 2015.

According to a report written by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2017), the High Commissioner requested full and unhindered access to the region in May 2016 for a team of OHCHR in order to ascertain human rights concerns related to the military operations. However, the High Commissioner had not received any formal responses from Turkish authorities (p. 2). Therefore, the report is based on information received by the OHCHR remote team. They had gathered information through interviews with multiple victims, witnesses and relatives of victims; satellite images, official records and international non-governmental organizations (p. 3). "In total some 2,000 people were reportedly killed between July 2015 and August 2016, including local residents, amongst whom women and children, as well as close to 800 members of security forces". 355,000 residents, mainly Kurdish origin, were displaced as their homes were destructed of heavy weapons, tanks and air-dropped munitions (p. 5).

"*Apart from unlawful deaths and the excessive use of force (such as shelling densely populated areas with heavy artillery and tanks), OHCHR has also documented numerous cases of enforced disappearances; torture; destruction of housing and cultural heritage; incitement to hatred; prevention of access to emergency medical care, food, water and livelihoods; violence against women; and severe curtailment of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression as well as interference with the right to participate in public life*" (p. 5).

As indicated before, I have never gone and travelled to those cities in south-eastern Turkey although I was born in one of the eastern cities. The first difference during my trip was that the amount of security points was much more than the ones in west. One interviewee suggested, when we met, that we'd better leave my backpack – a big one for hiking- to his friend's place in case police officers would want to check it. I could observe their fear of being stopped by an officer, therefore, it was commonly observed that the people in the region generally avoid eye contact with police officers.

When I asked informants "Why do you think the young population radicalise?" I sometimes got backlashes such as the followings:

> "*Why would not they? A socialist young in Turkey spends some period of his/her life in prison under custody, then they face security clearance[5] after they graduate… A Kurd is not able to live freely in the west due to fascist mind-set…*" [Interview 8, 6th of July]

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[5] The Government of Turkey made security clearence legal in January 2017, after the military coup attempt in July 2016, for those who apply for a job in civil service. When they recieve rejection, no reason is given. Several

Another informant shared a personal experience about one of his roommates whose house was raided by the military while they were watching the television together. A presenter in a popular TV channel accompanied soldiers in the military in order to record the operations, and the informant indicated in this regard as the following:

> *"...We knew that that house was empty[6] because that house belonged to one of my roommates sitting next to me and watching TV with me. His house was wrecked in front of his eyes. Why? It was claimed that the PKK terrorists were in that house... My friend could not talk to us for a week. It was a fabricated news. How can he like the state now? ..."* [Interview 10, 7th of July]

When another informant was asked if he observed any violent activities, he answered sarcastically then arrayed:

> *"Maybe you should ask if there is a moment we do not see or face violence. They* (Officers) *are cursing and punching people. The media also knows it. It is evident from the fact that the people were burnt in basements during 'trench wars'. A mother kept her daughter's dead body for nine days in the fridge inside the own house. Mother Taybet's dead body stayed on the streets for a week".* [Interview 12, 7th of July]

The given incidents happened in Cizre, a district in south-eastern Turkey where conflicts took place rigidly. People had used basements as a shelter because the clashes were quite violent. However around 100 people who were at three different basements were killed (Bowen, 2016). The president of Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, Ph.D. Şebnem Korur Fincancı, who is also a forensic scientist expert explained, after the operations were over, that they found bounds of children in the basements, and she accused the state as no one else than a state could have heavy weapons destroying buildings like that (Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, 2016). A mother had to keep her 10 years old daughter, who got shot dead, in the fridge due to curfew (Lowen, 2015). Taybet Inan, now accepted as 'the mother Taybet' among the Kurds, got shot with 10 bullets. She was a 57 years old mother of eleven children. Her dead body had stayed on the street for seven days. Due to the presence of sniper, her children could not approach where she had fallen (Hacıoğlu, 2019).

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believe that they got denied as they engaged in political protests and commented on social media. See more at Karlıdag, C. (2019). Is Turkey's government taking jobs from students who protests? Retrieved from https://ahvalnews.com/turkey/turkeys-government-taking-jobs-students-who-protest Accessed on 23 April 2020

[6] His family had already moved out of the house as the informant indicated later on.

A family whose daughter died in Cizre in 2016 was invited by the public prosecutor to collect their daughter's 'remain'. What they got was "three small pieces of charred flesh, identified by DNA match". Furthermore, the victim's sister was charged with 'terrorist offences' only because she attempted to pursue a legal process for those who are responsible for her sister's death (OHCHR, 2017, p. 8). Cizre is a town where the most destructive clashes took place. Fundamental rights such as the right to life, the right to education, the right to have access to healthcare services, and the right to travel were the basic rights violated during the curfew which lasted over 78 days. The consequences of these violations have been deaths, traumas, homelessness, unemployment, and integral migration (Mazlumder Conflict Investigation and Resolution Group, 2016, p. 46) whose effects will last for years and pass through generations.

4.1.3. Injustice

The existence of the rule of law is based on the purpose subordinating arbitrary power and the will of public officials for the communities' good as a whole (Silkenat, Hickey Jr, & Barenboim, 2014, p. 4). In this sense, the state oppression is theoretically limited by the rule of law in order to protect individuals from an arbitrary power. However, as already indicated before, Turkey has not had a good record. Right to fair trial (Article 6, in European Convention on Human Rights) is the most violated human right by Turkey, with 932 cases in last 60 years. Furthermore, Turkey is a leading country in violating Article 6 (ECHR, 2020, p. 137). Therefore, injustice was unsurprisingly the second most referred causal factor along with the state oppression and memories. Seven informants referred to injustice and unlawfulness during the interviews.

Since the failed coup in 2016, the situation for legal profession in Turkey has worsened. According to Universal Periodic Review of Turkey, "approximately 599 lawyers have been arrested and detained … approximately 4,260 judges and prosecutors have been dismissed … approximately 500 administrative personnel of the Supreme Court, Council of State, Court of Accounts, and Council of Judges and Prosecutors have also been dismissed … and the Parliamentary enactment of 32 emergency decree laws issued under the state of emergency, have given the Turkish Government unprecedented control over the judiciary and prosecutorial authorities" (Universal Periodic Review of Turkey cited in Law Society of England and Wales, 2019). Under such circumstances, it would be close to impossible for the judiciary system to work independently. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) indicates that the judiciary in Turkey has lost its control mechanism over the executive power due to the increasing

government control, and that the independence of the governing body of the judiciary (HSYK) "is now substantially diminished" (International Commission of Jurists, 2016, p. 22). A recent example showing situation of the judiciary in Turkey is 'Osman Kavala', a human rights activist that the European Court of Human Rights called for his immediate release (Human Rights Watch, 2019b). However, he was re-arrested over the failed coup attempt, just hours after he was acquitted of terrorism-related charges about Gezi Protest in 2013 (McKernan, 2020). The interesting thing is that he was re-arrested after some government officials criticised Gezi Protests of being "betrayal" thereafter his acquittal (Kucukgocmen, 2020).

An incident that an informant had experienced appears to prove the numbers above. He shared his experience as the following:

> *"Lately, I was called to go to counter-terrorism department in the police headquarter due to political demonstrations I attended during my university education. I could not even find a lawyer to come with me to headquarter. Because they* (lawyers) *are also afraid. Therefore, I went alone. They* (judiciary authorities in general and polices) *are just making life harder. Such things are the factors radicalising people."* [Interview 13, 7th of July]

However, when I commented on this like the following, 'such charge (being accused of terrorism) might have also scared people and decreased political involvement among young people. Was there any decrease in the political engagement among your friends?' He accepted that most of his friends had stopped coming together and engaging in political activities. The interesting point here is that the duality state oppression and injustice have. That is to say, these factors might both trigger or blow out radicalisation. While such factors are qualified as 'causal' or 'contributing' in this thesis, they might be qualified as 'preventive' factors for radicalisation by the state officials. However, even if the states and the governments implementing arbitrary power can prevent or slow down radicalisation in a short period of time, it is not guaranteed in a long term that radicalisation is faded away. In addition, not involving political activities cannot be a true indicator as the process of radicalisation is not necessarily a part of group process, rather an individual might also radicalise by oneself (Malthaner, 2017, p. 370; Michel & Schyns, 2016; TTSRL, 2008, p. 11). As much as "lone wolf" terrorism is possible, so is lone wolf radicalisation. It should not be forgotten that "terrorism is not the only and inevitable result of radicalisation, but one of the worst possible outcomes of radicalisation" (Borum, 2011, p. 8; TTSRL, 2008, p. 12). Furthermore, " a lone wolf terrorist may be more deadly than a terrorist organization" (Phillips, 2011, p. 1). Therefore, if state officials think that radicalisation will

decrease through such a policy the informant experienced, they might be wrong. On the contrary, such policies might worsen the situation as one informant indicates:

> *"... If there is no justice, people start playing the game according to injustice rules. You cannot express and become yourself. More you lose your belief in justice more you become radical..."* (Interview 6, 9th of June).

An interesting thing I realised during the interviews is that when informants were referring to injustice, they did not only mean injustice coming from the state institutions but also injustice in daily life, universities, and work places. When I was walking alone on a street in Eruh, I heard a warning from a police car's loud hailer to a minibus: *"That's not a bus stop! Keep going, do not stop!"* However the minibus driver had already stopped to drop off a passenger. Then police officers drove suddenly in front of the minibus, and stopped. A police officer got off the car and started yelling because the minibus driver did not stop at a bus stop. The officer's reaction was quite shocking for me. Because I have never seen any "minibuses" follow such a rule neither in west nor east of Turkey. However, no police officer gives such a reaction to a bus driver doing exactly the same mistake in the west of the country. One informant, for example, shared a bad experience which caused his disqualification from university:

> *"A nationalist student in the university pulled out a knife on a Kurd friend and then the university administration launched an investigation against our friend not over the nationalist guy who was to attack. Eight students including me were disqualified from university as we intervened in the incident."* [Interview 12,7th of July]

Another informant referred to the intolerance against mother tongue as injustice. The Kurdish language has been a historical problem for the nation-builders of the new republic, as addressed under the title of 'Lack of Democracy'. However, the intolerance that the informant is referring to does not occur only in the state level but also in community level as seen from such experiences above.

Despite a few scholars consider the amendment or suspension of human rights as "both necessary and long overdue" (Baran, 2005, p. 77), the importance of the rule of law is even emphasized in the documents written for combating radicalisation. It is indicated in "EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism" (Council of the European Union, 2014) that "full respect for human rights, and our fundamental freedoms are one of the foundations for our work to counter radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism. All actions must be taken with full respect for these fundamental rights and freedoms … we will ensure at all

times that respect for fundamental rights, international law, and the rule of law are not undermined" (p. 5). European Union and its branches acknowledge that human rights violations can cause grievances and enable conducive conditions for radicalisation (p. 6).

4.1.4. Family Effect

Families are one of the smallest units in the society, that no child can decide her/his family members. There is no doubt that family affects childhood, which will lead the character of the adults in the future. It is the family where children normalise some attitudes which might be abnormal in a different family or society. A report by UNDP (UNDP, 2017) indicates that "the lack of parental involvement in the child's life" played a significant role among those who joint violent extremist groups in Africa (pp. 4-5). Lloyd DeMause even claims overconfidently that "the roots of terrorism lie not in this or that American foreign policy error, but in the extremely abusive families of the terrorists" (DeMause, 2002, p. 340). Although he mostly focus on terrorism, the quote is still relevant in the sense of pointing out the importance of families' role. His examples are mostly related to the abuse over girls like genital mutilation (p. 341) or being blamed of rape, and wife-beating (p. 342). However the question, why don't the girls turn to be terrorists more than boys although girls are more exposed to abusive attitudes, was not answered by him. Moreover, such traumas might cause perpetual fear that anyone who was exposed to abusive attitudes would not even dare to commit violence at all. This thesis acknowledges the importance of family effect, however, it should be also noted that family effect should not be used for hiding or getting rid of the states' and governments' responsibilities in radicalisation process like DeMause accuses only families not the states or the policies.

In south-eastern Turkey case, the family effect which the informants addressed during the interviews evolved around experiences such as the loss of loved ones that their family or inner circle faced in the past. It is a common attitude that families who lost a relative due to political engagement try to discourage the survivors from political involvement in order not to lose another loved one. Although it is impossible to know exact casualties due to different statements by politicians and military representatives, it is estimated that approximately 40,000 people died because of the war between Turkey and the PKK since 1984 (Mandıracı, 2016). Moreover, nearly 2,000 have been subject to the forced disappearance since 1980 (Lauer, 2015), and "no-one in the Turkish state was held accountable for human rights violations -related to forced disappearances- committed by the military and security services" (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

Therefore the exact number for casualties is not possible to find out easily. Nevertheless, the given numbers are quite high to easily run across the people who lost their loved ones in the region.

Six informants referred to the importance of family effect, and eight informants have lost either a friend or a relative in the conflict between Turkey and the PKK. An informant shared the effect of losing a relative over himself and his grandmother as the following:

> *"My grandmother is missing one of her son who joint armed groups in 90s. He died and we don't know where his body was buried. She has been looking for a grave. Two of her sons are jailed due to political activities which are basic rights to us but crime according to state ... She dramatically decreased social relations with other people and isolated herself from the community…"*

The imprisoned people are also informant's uncles. When I asked which kind of effects such incidents constituted over him, he continued as the following:

> *"I was neither interested nor keen on politics. After the oppression and destruction of houses[7], I became more engaged. For instance, I now read more and mostly political books. In this sense, it is a positive outcome for me. I can now get cause and effect relations… However I cannot trust people anymore. The society has changed. I only have fixed friends around whom I can trust"* [Interview 10, 7th of July]

Victims are not only the ones who died, but also family members and friends who have to cope with traumatic events (TTSRL, 2008, p. 34). Even though elder people are not likely to join any violent activities, they might still play a significant role in affecting the young population through the sadness and melancholy they have. Apart from that, it is quite common to see elder people in political protests who lost their loved ones, especially women. A popular example is "Saturday Mothers" inspired by the "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo" in Argentina whose loved ones disappeared during the dictatorial administration. Saturday Mothers have been gathering every Saturday in front of Galatasaray High School in Istanbul, with the pictures of their loved ones (Arifcan, 1997, p. 265). Their 700th weekly vigil on August 25, 2018, was prohibited, and dozens were detained (DW news, 2018). Another informant reflected his disapproval on this matter, and how he felt offended because of police violence against Saturday Mothers [Interview 11, 7th of July]. This is not the first case that young people embrace the oppressed

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[7] Informant refers to the trench wars mentioned in preavious pages.

ones although they are not relative. 'Mother Taybet' case was mentioned within the State Oppression title, she has been also embraced by referring to her as "mother". Such oppressions increase group or ethnic solidarity even if the people are not relative indeed.

It is a common attitude in south-eastern Turkey that families are trying to keep their children away from politics due to the fear that their children will be arrested, prisoned or exposed to violence. "Do not join any political incidents, mind with your studies!" might have been the most-referred advice to a new college student from her/his family as far as I know through the friends I made during my bachelor. Such an advice might cause either obedience or curiosity. At the end of the latter path, children or the youth are not necessarily driven in the same direction of families' political or religious position. An informant shared his experience in this regard as the following:

> *"My family is conservative. They used to exercise influence over me in order to make me true believer. My father used to take me to the mosque… One day, I took my father on and said 'you only tell me what to do but never tell why?'… They ignored me and started to force me to perform the five times prayer…and now I do not believe in God at all!"* [Interview 13, 7th of July].

As seen, the interviewee's transformation toward the opposite direction than his family's position was triggered by his family's conservative oppression. In a country where a certain type of religion is taught in the schools, and imposed by the society, even being an atheist is to challenge the status quo. In a similar way, strong feminist movements among the Kurdish women in a patriarchal society (see Fadaee & Brancolini, 2019, pp. 867-868) might be read as radicalisation against their family, patriarchal society and politics. They have been challenging to status quo in the given society even though the families discourage them from political involvement. Therefore, radicalisation might come true despite or against family as well as it might occur in the same direction of families' position. In this sense, it can be said that the family effect, let alone personnel experiences, in south-eastern Turkey is limited in radicalisation.

Another one also indicated the limited effect of his family when he was asked if his family has effect on him:

> *"Yes, but there are also many cases I have different ideas regardless of my family's effect as I started discovering by my own especially after university"* [Interview 2, 7th of June].

What conclusions might be found out from the examples above are that families definitely have impacts over young people however the effect might not be the same direction of families' positions. Family effect might be counted as an internal or micro factor that informants mostly meant personal experiences such as the loss and arrest of loved ones. Strong feminist movements, despite the discouragements of families, among the Kurdish women in a patriarchal society proves the limited effect of families in radicalisation. Furthermore, family effect might be used for covering external or macro level factors that the states are responsible for, thus, the effects of the states in radicalising would be overlooked. In this sense, the family effect is abuse-liable by politicians. Families are also subject to be affected by society, government policies, and country they inhabit.

4.1.5. Economic Conditions

Turkey started implementing neo-liberal economy policies in the 1980s, and the country, in turn, faced financial and economic instabilities from time to time (Subaşat, 2019, p. 32). After the election of the Islamist-oriented Justice and Development Party in 2002, Turkey has experienced relatively a good period in terms of economic progress associated with capital inflows. The Turkish economy has been considered as a successful model for developing countries due to its threefold increased Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and export level. In addition, inflation was under control and public deficit had decreased (Subaşat, 2014, p. 137). However, the determinant factor was the depreciation of the US dollar during that period, and Turkey was not the only one who experienced similar growth patterns. Furthermore, the average Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP)[8] was modest when it is compared to pre-AKP period (Subaşat, 2019, p. 33). That is to say, the main determinants of economic growth in Turkey were external sources which are hard to keep sustainable in the long term (Subaşat, 2014, p. 138). Hence, a series of economic troubles starting from 2013 occurred as the following: high unemployment rates, high inflation, high interest rates, high external debt, and high budget deficit (Subaşat, 2019, p. 34). It is a well-known and unsurprising fact that the basic consequences of such economic conditions are economic instability and poverty.

Relation between poverty and terrorism, extremism and radicalisation has been a common reference in much research. Discussions, related to whether there is an interrelation between economic conditions and radicalisation, have been taking place in the articles, government

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[8] RGDP shows the pure growth by getting inflation effect on puffed GDP out of the way

documents, and public policies. This interrelation has been getting more complicated as radicalisation is regarded as a unique process since it depends on the perception of individuals. Scholars might be basically categorized in this discussion as the ones approving and the others disapproving the interrelation between economic conditions and radicalisation. A research which was carried out in England shows that sympathy for violent protests and terrorist acts is more common among high earners than low earners (Bhui, Warfa, & Jones, 2014, p. 1). Another research looking at specifically the relationship between economic conditions and terrorism in the south-eastern Turkey did not find any evidence showing a causal relationship (Derin-Güre, 2011, p. 405).

On the other hand, a report conducted by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) shows that individuals who joined violent extremist groups in Africa were deprived of prosperity, thereby, the importance of economic factors are 'unequivocally' emphasized in recruitment (UNDP, 2017, p. 5). In addition to UNDP, according to a project financed by the European Commission (TTSRL, 2008), a causal relationship between poverty and radicalisation is recognised as indirect, depending on individual factors even though most of the scholars do not agree there is a casual relation (p. 21). Hence, the latter do not wholly turn its back on the effect of economy in radicalisation process, instead it leaves the door open for the possibility. But the UNDP report indicates confidently that one of the major sources in recruitment is economic factors. The report is really significant not only for valuable information it has, but also for helping us see how a causal factor might be valid in some part of the world while it is not in another part. This position is also consistent with the unique process of radicalisation.

In this thesis, six informants, almost half of the informants, addressed to the bad economic conditions as one of the factors in radicalisation process. One informant especially qualified economic conditions as the most effective causal factor in radicalisation. When I asked how he would explain the existence of many cases in which those from the middle-class attended radical activities. He pointed out as the following:

> *That is because of historical issues. Some must have lost relatives. Because many people were disappeared and assassinated during 1980s-90s* [Interview 3, 8th of June].

In the absence of economic effect, he indicated some other causes such as state oppression, and family effect linked to the loss of loved ones. Similar emphasis to this conversation is also highlighted in TTSRL (2008). "If poverty has a direct effect on radicalisation, how can we

explain why many poor people never radicalise? The answer lies in the fact that social contexts, including factors that refer to the individual in relation to others, influence human behaviour" (p. 17).

Other informants addressed economic conditions by associating with the problems that economic conditions cause.

> *"…We can also add economic conditions to the reasons of radicalisation. Poverty which most of the young in Turkey fight against is quite common. People are suiciding. Because there is nothing to do. All the paths are blocked…"* [Interview 8, 6th of July].

The interviewee is referring to a series of suicide cases of the unassigned teachers as they cannot find a job easily. Teachers in Turkey are taking the second place in the list of unemployed graduates, and there are over 400,000 unemployed teachers. Forty-five teachers already suicided (Sol International, 2018) till this news was reported in 2018. In November, 2019, Turkey experienced some other suicide cases that the country has not seen before. Four siblings collectively ended their lives with cyanide poisoning in Fatih district, Istanbul due to economic problems. They attached a note on the door, saying that *'beware! There's cyanide inside. Call the police. Don't enter.'* It was the first case. And then other collective suicides which were correlated with poverty occurred in Antalya and Bakırkoy district, Istanbul. The common method in all these cases was cyanide poisoning. And the government found the solution by 'banning cyanide'. "The suicide rate is at eight people a day, and dozens more attempt it" (Daragahi, 2019; Shafak, 2019). Decision of suicide by siblings, leaving note on the door, and having cyanide at home demonstrate that they did not suddenly decide to suicide but rather it is an outcome of a process.

Suicide is a really sensitive issue. It is the point where people do not have something to lose but their lives. Even though in the cases above none intended to harm the others except themselves suicide itself is a 'radical' act in a Muslim-majority country since it has been counted as one of the greatest sin. If economic conditions in a country cause people claiming own lives, the same conditions might also lead such radical acts and behaviours against the system or the ones perceived responsible for. Therefore, this thesis also leaves the door open for the possible effect of economic conditions over radicalisation as almost half of the informants referred to it.

4.1.6. Other Causes

Radicalisation consists of unique combinations of causal factors that change attitudes and behaviours (TTSRL, 2008, p. 11). There are various causes radicalising people, however, the

important point is to understand those variations rather than only general trends (Borum, 2011, p. 8). Therefore causal factors that were not relevant to the common themes above, and that were referred to less are addressed under this title. Being referred less does not mean that these causes are not as much important as the causes above. In contrast, as radicalisation is a subjective and unique process, the causes, here, might trigger or speed up the process of radicalisation for some people. Therefore, no cause should be underestimated. For instance, there have been much research carried out in mostly Europe found out that there is no correlation between radicalisation and poverty (Bhui et al., 2014, p. 1; see Victoroff, 2005, p. 8). However, the UNDP's report found out that economic factors have been determinant in joining extremist groups in Africa (UNDP, 2017, p. 5). That is to say, the effect of a causal factor might be valid here while not being so in another part of the world. Therefore, these causes are just as important as the ones above.

Four interviewees pointed out the role of the media in radicalisation. Especially one informant specifically criticised the way the media reflects the news, and the anger on his face was quite obvious while he was talking. When he was asked what made him so angry about media, he answered as the following:

> *"Because they are not reflecting the truth and I am really sorry for the young people believing them. Under such conditions, the youth might be radicalised negatively. I mean Turkish people in the west… In this case, people in the west following the mainstream media are getting radicalised, on the other hand, other people being aware of fake news are getting radicalised as well due to unreal reflection by the media"* (Interview 11, 7th of July).

The effect of media in radicalisation and recruitment, notably social media has been acknowledged as a valid tool by the governments and scholars (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 4; RCMP, 2009, p. 10; Wilkinson, 2011, p. 152). The important thing that the interviewee points out is that the media does not only affect one side of the groups, but rather it does affect the opposing groups with the same news. To give an example from one of the interviews, one informant expressed his discomfort about the security forces who killed a women guerrilla and took her clothes off,[9] and the media reflected such news as heroism [Interview 5, 8th of June]. In this example, relatives of the guerrilla or the people politically supporting her organization are affected of such pictures by feeling anger or embracing more

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[9] Ekin Wan was killed on 10 August, 2015. As the pictures are bothersome no link is shared.

radical pathways. On the other hand, nationalists or right wings are also affected by normalising such violence against the people who oppose to the state. Thus, the people from different groups are being polarised and radicalised through the same news.

Another causal factor which was pointed out by four interviewees is politicians and their discourses. Language is an effective and powerful tool which might urge people to act differently (Mehan, 1997, p. 250). Therefore politicians' statements are quite significant in the sense of how they will be perceived. When one interviewee was sharing his experiences about one protest, he arrayed his reasons as the following:

> *"I observed Kobane resistance[10]... the Kurds did not stay silent against the barbarity of ISIS... The anger was two kinds. First, it was anger against the massacre of our brothers and sisters. Second, it was anger against countries who support ISIS... The discourses were fuelling. The President Erdogan said 'Kobane is about to fall'. This discourse was not peaceful and impartial but injuring and offending..."* [Interview 9, 6th of July].

Apart from discourses, it can be concluded from the most of the interviews that the majority of young population do not trust politicians except member of pro-Kurdish party, the People's Democracy Party (HDP). One interviewee accused politicians of polarisation in the society. Because he thinks that present politicians are thinking and prioritizing their own interest rather than the people's [Interview 10, 7th of July].

Rational choice might be another causal factor in radicalisation process in southern-east Turkey. The rational choice theories were adapted from the expected utility model in economics to psychological and criminological researches, and extended its focus on "subjective expected utility". According to this, decisions are taken "by assessing the subjective importance of the possible benefits and drawbacks of engaging in" a radical behaviour (Dhami & Murray, 2016, p. 2). Rationality itself is a subjective and relative matter differs from one to another. As one interviewee indicated, the desire to become a leader might attract the youth [Interview 4, 8th of June]. In a similar way, the seeking of status, honourable position in the society might make the young population head towards radical behaviours (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 15). So young might rationally radicalise as well.

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[10] Kobane is a territory in northern Syria which was surrounded by ISIS. However Kurds resisted ISIS and did not let them in. That struggle is called 'Kobane Resistance'. During that period, there were many protests in Turkey as well in order to support and greet the resistance.

One of the drawback of this thesis is the absence of psychological approach to causal factors. Although the thesis slightly addressed to some scholars and factors relevant to psychology, they were not detailed. It does not mean that psychological effect in radicalisation is neglected. On the contrary, the thesis acknowledges the importance of psychology even in the macro level causal factors such as economic conditions or the lack of democracy, because, even if causal factors might be classified external or macro level factors such as political, economic, cultural, they indeed "shape and constrain the individual's environment" (TTSRL, 2008, p. 9). The effect of such factors vary at the individual level and that is where psychology steps in. Victoroff (2005) overviews many psychological approaches that look for common terrorist profile about whether terrorists are educated, coming from middle-class and aged a certain range (pp. 8-12). However, as he indicated, psychological approaches are "overwhelmingly subjective and speculative" (p.33). Furthermore, looking for a certain profile for radicals would be contradictory with the nature of this thesis's research strategy as qualitative research analyse the data to understand rather than standardize (Mason, 2006, p. 22). Moreover, the efforts to find out a psychological profiles of terrorists or radicals pose risks such as increasing hatred and anger to a certain group of people and labelling the people who share the same kind of profile as 'terrorist', 'radical' or 'criminal'. For instance, according to an ethnographic research carried out in England and Wales, early 20s and being black heighten police officers' suspicions during police stop and search practices (Quinton, 2011, p. 364). That is to say, the efforts to find out a profile of radicals might cause similar outcome like in England and Wales. Furthermore, such researches might negatively affect policy makers about immigration policy which in turn might trigger radical behaviours.

4.2. Main Findings

First of all, it should be borne in mind that the main findings here do not indicate any generalization. It cannot be said that under X condition there will be definitely radicalisation taking place. Especially, while causal factors are quite subjective, relative and diverse from one to another, the actuality of such statements would be doubtful and unreal.

Although informants do not have the same perception and understanding over radicalisation, as neither scholars do, there are still some interesting common points some of them referred to. Every informants referred to 'us vs. them' discourse in their experience. The subjects referred by interviewees within 'us versus them paradigm' were quite diverse from occupied, victim,

leftist, ruled, protesters, individual to occupant, state, rightist, ruler, officers, family. And this position is consistent with Stekelenburg & Klandermans (2010) who view radicalisation as 'an intergroup process' (p. 182). Five interviewees defined radicalisation within the frame of positive vs. negative distinction of radicalisation. An interviewee views the struggle of Kurds and Palestinians against 'occupation' as a positive example of radicalisation [Interviewee 5, 8th of June], which recalls Craig Calhoun (2007) who remark "the importance of self-determination for democratic politics" but at the same time find "reactionary versions of nationalism as anti-democratic" (p. 37). Another interviewee indicated a heavier version of what Calhoun indicates the latter: 'radicalisation based on a nation is a fascism' [Interviewee 8, 6th of July]. However, despite five interviewees acknowledged positive vs. negative radicalisation paradigm, only two informants identified themselves as radical. That is because of the perception that they accept self-defence as a fundamental right, and their actions were reactionary without their intent. Those two informants identified themselves as radical not because of their actions but rather their ideas which they find dissent from the majority of Turkey. Another interesting point was the use of 'self-defence' paradigm in defining radicalisation and justifying the use of violence. Seven interviewees referred to self-defence paradigm. Seven of them explicitly indicated that they had taken part in violent activities such as 'throwing a piece', resisting against police violence in a violent way [Interviewee 2, 10 & 11, June].

Undemocratic conditions or the lack of democracy was the most referred causal factor by informants. ECHR' annual report (2020) illustrates that Turkey is, by far, taking the first place in violating human rights with 3,645 total judgments between 1959 and 2019 (p.137). The data in the report appears to prove that Turkey has been accustomed to the violations of human rights which can increase grievances and cause the spread of radicalisation (Council of the European Union, 2014, p. 6). When informants were talking about undemocratic manner, they mostly mean political and cultural rights such as education in mother tongue, right to protest, respect to the votes, accountability for officers and politicians. It is found out that disproportionate use of force, dismissal of local governors elected by the people, and the arrest of MPs from pro-Kurdish parties lead the youth to lose their faith in democracy, politics, elections, and peaceful demonstrations. Furthermore, some might look for alternative ways rather than elections to challenge undemocratic situations and state terrorism. As a study about Muslim Americans found that the increased political engagement and political mobilisation are effective factors in preventing radicalisation, including violent one (David et al., 2016, p. 2). This might be read

like this as well: radicalisation is likely to liven up in the absence of political engagement and political mobilisation which are significant features of democracy.

As well as referring to historical incidents occurred even before the military operations in 2016, the interviewees referred to many incidents happened after 2016. It was clear from most of the interviewees' statements that violence over people, the loss of loved, and forced migration have not been forgotten. After the military operations started in the region, the UN requested access for a research team in order to ascertain human rights concerns, however, Turkish authorities did not give any formal response (OHCHR, 2017, p. 2). Cruel incidents have already been addressed in the previous pages. They are well documented by international organizations and NGOs. It is acknowledged that state oppression causing the loss of loved ones prompts some young to take violent actions or join extreme groups (UNDP, 2017, p. 5), and narratives, discourses, and memories are ongoing among the people. I could observe during the time I spent with interviewees that the people were afraid of police officers so that they avoid even eye contact with them. State oppression cause not only fear but also hatred against the state along generations through memorial and historical discourses even if the oppression might save the day in a short term from perspective of the state and politicians. More than the half of the participants indicated state oppression as one of the causal factor in radicalising young people in the region. However, it is found out that state oppression is not always a casual factor. In some cases it causes an opposite effect such as disengagement from political activities. However, it is risky that the youth might go toward 'long wolf' radicalisation whose consequences might be greater than political involvement or organization (Phillips, 2011, p. 1).

The right to fair trial (Article 6, in European Convention on Human Rights) is the most violated human right by Turkey, with 932 cases in last 60 years (ECHR, 2020, p. 137). Since the failed coup in 2016 the situation for legal profession in turkey has worsened. According to Universal Periodic Review of Turkey, "approximately 599 lawyers have been arrested and detained … approximately 4,260 judges and prosecutors have been dismissed (Law Society of England and Wales, 2019). Under these circumstances, an independent judiciary system does not seem likely to work freely. Moreover, it is found out that radicalisation, notably cognitive one, is likely to increase due to injustice even though political engagement decreases among the youth. However, while some might give up politics at all, radicalisation might keep going on individually for others. The interesting point here is that the duality state oppression and injustice have. That is to say, these factors might either increase or decrease radicalisation. While such factors are qualified as 'causal' by this thesis, they might be qualified as

'preventive' factors by officials. However, even if states and governments implementing arbitrary power can prevent or slow down radicalisation in a short period of time, it is not guaranteed in a long term that radicalisation would be faded away.

Families definitely have impacts over the youth, however, the effect might not be the same direction of families' political or religious positions. Family effect is an internal factor that informants mostly meant in a manner of personal experiences such as the loss or arrest of loved ones. So family effect in radicalisation was referred to by six interviewees in that manner. The loss of loved ones causes traumas and sufferings that survivors have to deal with. Elder people, for instance, are not likely to join any violent activities however they might still play a significant role in affecting the youth due to the sadness and melancholy they have. Furthermore there are some scholars overrating and pointing out only the family effect like DeMouse (2002, p.340), in this thesis, it is found out that the youth have various, comprehensive, and different factors for radicalisation. This thesis acknowledges the importance of family but it should not be allowed to refer to the family effect in the case that it would be used for covering other factors that the states are responsible for. Thus, the effects of the states in radicalising the young population would be taken into account. Moreover, families are also subject to be affected by society, government policies, and country they inhabit. In this sense family effect is a limited, and dependent variable in the case of south-eastern Turkey.

Relation between poverty and terrorism, extremism, and radicalisation has been a common reference in much research. Discussions, related to whether there is an interrelation between economic conditions and radicalisation, have been taking place in articles, government documents, and public policies. There have been much academic research claiming that there is no correlation between poverty and terrorist acts as the most terrorists come from the middle class (Bhui et al., 2014, p. 1; Derin-Güre, 2011, p. 405; see Victoroff, 2005, p. 8). Radicalisation, unlike terrorism, is not supposed to intend to harm other people or include any acts at all. Economic conditions or the lack of prosperity were referred to as a causal factor by seven interviewees. As indicated in the previous pages, the increased suicide ratio verify correlation between poverty and 'radicalisation'. Moreover UNDP shows that individuals who joined violent extremist groups in Africa were deprived of prosperity thereby the importance of economic factors are 'unequivocally' emphasized in recruitment (UNDP, 2017, p. 5). However, the reader can still ask the following question that "If poverty has a direct effect on radicalisation, how can we explain why many poor people never radicalise? The answer lies in

the fact that social contexts, including factors that refer to the individual in relation to others, influence human behaviour" (TTSRL, 2008, p. 17).

5. Conclusion

5.1. Is Benign Radicalisation Possible?

Scholars do not agree upon a single definition of radicalisation. There is only one fact that radicalisation experts agree on is that "radicalisation is a process" (Schmid, 2013, p. 1). There are different theories and approaches in conceptualizing radicalisation, which has caused various and diverse perceptions. After 9/11, it was commonplace that policy landscape and the media have started to perceive radicalisation "as inevitably leading to political violence, particularly inspired by terrorist groups" (Turina, 2019, p. 251). However, while violence or terrorism is one possible outcome of the radicalisation process, it is not the only one. Indeed, most people do not engage in terrorism although they have radical beliefs and ideas (Borum, 2011, p. 8; TTSRL, 2008, p. 5). According to Neumann, radicalisation does not necessarily produce a problem that needs to be studied or solved (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). In a similar way, Royal Canadian Mounted Police does not view radical thinking as "problematic," on the contrary, "most progress has been an outcome of some form of radicalisation" (RCMP, 2009, p. 1). Especially non-violent radicalisation might pioneer in the progress of equality, prosperity, women rights, labour rights, and environmental rights if the youth is given opportunities to take part or influence decision-making process.

In this thesis, radicalisation is accepted in the broadest sense which might be basically defined as 'rejecting the status quo'(Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2). However, what radical is varies from one perspective to another in a given period of time, "depending on what is seen as mainstream," therefore, radical is a "context-dependent" and dynamic notion rather than absolute. For instance, the idea of same-sex marriage used to be seen as radical however it is those who oppose it are seen as radicals nowadays, not its supporters (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). In this sense, historical periods such as the Renaissance starting in the 15th century, the Reformation Movement in the 16th century, and the age of Enlightenment starting in the 17th century, anti-slavery and anti-colonialization movements were all radical movements challenging the status quo in the time, however they contributed developments. In this thesis, being atheist, and strong feminist movements among Kurdish women are qualified as 'radical' because they are out of the mainstream in a religious and patriarchal society, and challenging the status quo. As a result of such radical attitudes, co-presidency, for instance, was brought into Turkey's political agenda as all Kurdish political organizations put co-presidency into

practice from the smallest local communes to all assemblies (Fadaee & Brancolini, 2019, p. 868). Moreover, as pro-Kurdish parties have started protecting the rights of all the oppressed, exploited, and underprivileged people such as LGBTI individuals, women, communities of faith, migrants, people with disabilities, and workers etc. since 2003 (Çetin, 2016, pp. 27-28), the great majority of Kurdish youth has recognised, normalised, and embraced other marginalised groups of people. Some scholars count Turkey in a group of countries that implement "state-directed terror aimed at regime opponents or particular ethnic groups" (Jackson et al., 2011). Therefore, radicalisation in particular areas is capable of contributing the democratization of Turkey, and removing the state oppression.

Discussion regarding to the distinction between violent and non-violent radicalisation is mostly associated with whether "individuals come to undertake or aid terrorist activity" (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 2). However terrorist activity is quite relative and abuse-liable by politicians who would like to clamp down on dissent (Neumann, 2013, p. 877). Therefore this thesis suggests shifting the discussion around whether the action taken by individuals is violent or not. In order to show the distinction between violent and non-violent radicalisation, and possible benign aspects of radicalisation, the experiences of two important figures in world history, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, were shared in Chapter 3. Both of them challenged the status quo in their time and carried out actions which the majority of the population did not. What distinguishes violent radicalisation from non-violent, is whether violence is being used by the subject himself or herself, for a certain radical point of view. By saying this, the thesis does not claim non-violent radicalisation as the absence of actions. As seen in Mandela's earlier struggles, and Gandhi's all life, boycotting, marching, walking to the salt lake, going on hunger strike, and civil disobedience are types of actions in non-violent radicalisation.

5.2. Why does the Youth radicalise?

Radicalisation comes into existence through unique combinations of causal factors (TTSRL, 2008). So there is no only one factor that can explain the process. In a similar way, all interviewees indicated more than one causal factors that were distributed to the following themes: "lack of democracy", "state oppression and memories", "injustice", "family effect", and lastly "economic conditions," along with "other causes." Each factor is important as "there is no hierarchy of factors that automatically results in violence" (Michel & Schyns, 2016). As

perceptions differ, one casual factor might be perceived as normal by some while it is not guaranteed that it would be perceived the same way by others.

The lack of democracy was the most referred causal factor which eight interviewees pointed out. It is found out that disproportionate use of force, dismissal of local governors elected by the people, and the arrest of MPs from pro-Kurdish parties lead young people to lose their faith in democracy, politics, elections, and peaceful demonstrations. A research found out that increased political engagement and political mobilisation are effective factors in preventing radicalisation including violent one (David et al., 2016, p. 2). Therefore, radicalisation is likely to liven up in the absence of political engagement and political mobilisation which are significant features of democracy.

Enforced disappearances; torture; destruction of housing and cultural heritage; incitement to hatred; prevention of access to emergency medical care, food, water and livelihoods; violence against women are the human rights violations documented by OHCHR (2017, p. 5). Mentioned violations are fit the definition of state terrorism, and it is acknowledged by some scholars that Turkey has used state terrorism "as a method of state rule and consolidation" before (Jackson et al., 2011, p. 184). State oppression causing the loss of loved ones prompts some young people to take part in violent actions or join extreme groups (UNDP, 2017, p. 5). Similarly to state oppression, injustice and the loss of faith in judiciary system in Turkey whose dependency to the government was expressed by International Commission of Jurists (2016, p. 22), are likely to increase radicalisation, that of cognitive in particular. However it is found out in the case of South-eastern Turkey that state oppression and injustice are not always causal factors. In some cases, they also cause an opposite effect such as disengagement from political activities. However, the disengagement still does not guarantee that radicalisation will decrease because the youth might radicalise individually as well. The interesting point here is the duality state oppression and injustice have. That is to say, these factors might either increase or decrease radicalisation. While such factors are qualified as 'causal' in this thesis, they might be qualified as 'preventive' factors by officials. However, even if governments that implement arbitrary power can prevent or slow down radicalisation in a short period of time, it is not guaranteed in a long term that radicalisation would be faded away. Indeed, it is harder to disrupt "lone wolves" as no one can know her/his plans (Lenz & Potok, 2015, p. 4)

Family effect is an internal factor that informants mostly meant in a manner of personal experiences such as the loss and arrest of loved ones which are more related to the state oppression. It is a common attitude that families who lost a relative due to political engagement

try to discourage the survivors from political involvement in order not to lose another loved one. However, the effect might not be the same direction as families' positions. Strong feminist movements among the Kurdish women in a patriarchal society (see Fadaee & Brancolini, 2019, pp. 867-868) might be read as radicalisation against their family, patriarchal society and politics because they have been challenging status quo in the given society even though the families discourage them from political involvement. Although some scholars blame only families (DeMause, 2002, p. 340), it is found out in this thesis that the family effect, let alone the personal experiences, is limited in radicalisation in south-eastern Turkey. Moreover, families are also subject to be affected by society, government policies, and country they inhabit. Therefore it should not be allowed to refer to family effect in the case that it would be used for covering other factors that the states are responsible for.

There have been many academic researches claiming that there is no correlation between poverty and terrorist acts as most terrorists come from middle class (Bhui et al., 2014, p. 1; Derin-Güre, 2011, p. 405; see Victoroff, 2005, p. 8). Radicalisation, unlike terrorism, is not supposed to intend to harm other people or include any acts at all. Moreover, the UNDP shows that individuals who joined violent extremist groups in Africa were deprived of prosperity thereby the importance of economic factors is 'unequivocally' emphasized in recruitment (UNDP, 2017, p. 5). Economic conditions or the lack of prosperity were referred to as a causal factor by seven interviewees. As indicated above, the increased suicide ratio which is an indicator of radical behaviour in a Muslim-majority country verify correlation between poverty and 'radicalisation'.

The media effect was referred to by four interviewees. It was especially interesting that one informant claimed that the nationalist and statist attitude of media radicalises and polarises both sides at the same time. While young in the west get radicalised through fake news, the young population in the east get radicalised because of being aware of fake news. Apart from the media, it was observed that the majority of the interviewees do not trust politicians except member of the pro-Kurdish parties. Politicians' statements were referred to many times during the interviews by expressing discomfort.

There is no official de-radicalisation policies by the Turkish government but it can be concluded from the experiences above that the efforts of the government have not been peaceful. It would be quite optimistic for the government if it is thought that military interventions or the restrictions over civil society, NGOs, academia, and political engagement would decrease radicalisation. Human rights violations in Turkey are internationally documented as seen above,

and under such circumstances, the people do have reasonable and legitimate excuses to radicalise. Some scholars criticise such government policies and responses to radicalisation for being 'driven from the top down' that lacks the actual problems on the ground, and then this wrong approach is likely to intensify causal factors (Jones, 2019, p. 30). Given that, de-radicalisation might be linked to conflict transformation which suggests a comprehensive and inclusionary approach within society (Miall, 2004, p. 4). Furthermore, military-based solutions or policies are also part of the top down approach. However, the states and those reacting to radicals also radicalise (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 430). Therefore, radicalisation studies should focus on not only individuals and groups but also states which must be the focus. The inclusive decision-making processes and individual mobility, respect for the human rights and universal law would be good steps for encouraging non-violent alternatives among the youth. Hereby, the state has a significant responsibility to provide such steps.

5.3. Deficiencies of the Thesis and Further Research Proposals

One of the drawbacks of this thesis is the absence of a psychological approach to causal factors. Although, the thesis slightly addressed to some factors relevant to psychology, they were not detailed. It does not mean that psychological effect in radicalisation is underestimated. On the contrary, I acknowledge the importance of psychological understanding in radicalisation process. However, psychological approaches that try to find out a common profile rather than trying to understand are quite problematic. Such efforts might increase hatred and anger to certain groups of people, and cause to labelling the people sharing the same kind of profile as 'terrorist', 'radical' or 'criminal'. Another drawback is the absence of women interviewees as I reached the informants through snowball sampling. It is a big deficiency that the research does not have the perspectives of women, especially in a patriarchal society. However radicalisation of the Kurdish women and their achievements might be an interesting topic for future research. In addition, studies over radicalisation and de-radicalisation policies focus mostly on individuals and groups. However, under authoritarian rule, it might be the state itself which should be de-radicalised, not the people or groups. How does a state radicalise? What are the mechanisms to de-radicalise it? Are international laws binding enough to prevent a state from radicalise? Or what kind of correlation might conflict transformation and de-radicalisation have? Future research related to such questions would definitely help us better understand the complexity of radicalisation and enrich how to deal with it.

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