Student Name: Christopher Beuter   **Supervisor:** Dr. Danie Stockmann

Student number: s1184067

Email: c.beuter@umail.leidenuniv.nl   **Words:** 16083

Thesis Seminar: Regime Change and Stability

Minority influence on foreign policy-making:

The Kurds in Turkey and the Arabs in Israel

Abstract:

Articles that investigate minority influence on foreign policy-making have mainly concentrated on minorities living in the United States. Research on national minorities outside the United States has been limited. This paper tries to compare two cases that are dissimilar to the United States, namely Turkey and Israel and this essay asks the question: to what extent do the Kurdish and Arabic minorities influence Turkish and Israeli foreign policy? There is a particular emphasis on foreign policy influence of Pro-Kurdish and Pro-Arabic political parties. The party websites of the Pro-Arabic, Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash) and Meretz are looked into. With regard to Turkey, the party website of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) is examined. The BDP has been established in 2008, which is considerably later compared to the pro-Arabic political parties in Israel. Unfortunately, it is impossible to investigate pro-Kurdish parties from before 2008, as these parties were banned by the Turkish Constitutional Court.

It is argued in this paper that no proof can be found of pro-Arabic and pro-Kurdish political parties influencing foreign policy. Since Israel and Turkey are truly dissimilar to the United States, other cases need to be examined in order to find out whether minorities in other countries influence foreign policy. Moreover, international organizations, such as the Council of Europe and the European Union, can play a role in accommodating minorities. More research is necessary to find out whether international organizations, as the Council of Europe and the EU, play a role in protecting minority rights.

List of Abbreviations:

AKP   Justice and Development Party (conservative Turkish party from 2002 – now).

Balad   National Democracy Assembly (Israeli Arab political party from 1995 – now).

BDP   Peace and Democracy Party (current pro-Kurdish Party, successor of DTP, from 2008 – now).

DEHAP   Democratic People's Party (former pro-Kurdish party, from 1997 – 2005).

DTP   Democratic Society Party (successor of DEHAP, from 2005 – 2009).

EU   European Union.

Hadash   The Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (since 1974, a socialist party in Israel: Specifically concerned with the Israeli Arab minority).

HADEP   People's Democracy Party (former pro-Kurdish party, from 1994 – 2003).

Hamas   Islamic Resistance Movement (Palestinian Islamist organization).

IAEA   International Atomic Energy Agency.

KRG   Kurdish Regional Government (in Northern Iraq).

MHP   National Movement Party (nationalistic political party in Turkey).

NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

PKK   Kurdistan Workers' Party (Kurdish organization since 1974, since 1984 in an armed struggle with the Turkish state).

US   United States.

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<u>Introduction:</u>

The influence of minorities on domestic politics has been studied at large. Yet when it comes to the influence of minorities on foreign policy-making, few authors can make a convincing claim that minorities can influence foreign decision-making. Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002) make a strong claim when they argue that the right-wing Cuban community was able to influence American foreign policy towards Cuba, even after the Cold War had ended (p. 160 & p. 161). Even when security concerns were no longer eminent, the Cuban minority in the United States pressured the Clinton government in tightening the embargo against Cuba (p. 161). Hence, Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002) claim that "pressure of the right-wing exile community" was the only clear explanation why the U.S. decided to isolate Cuba even further (p. 161).

With regard to the influence of minorities on foreign policy decision-making outside the United States, not many studies have assessed this influence empirically. Moore (2002) and Saideman (2002) are, just like Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002), authors who believe that minorities can have a larger impact on foreign policy-making than one would normally expect given the small size of minorities (Saideman, 2002, p. 93). Moore (2002) argues that ethnic minorities can even influence foreign policy when the ethnic majority opposes the minority (p. 77). Both authors then come up with the hypothesis that minorities can indeed influence foreign policy-making. However, Moore (2002) and Saideman (2002) do not empirically test this hypothesis in detail.

This paper then tries to investigate the influence of two minorities on foreign policy-making, namely the Kurds in Turkey and the Arabs in Israel. It is argued that these two countries are dissimilar to the United States but are quite similar to each other. The aim of this essay is to see whether proof can be found of Kurdish and Arab influence on foreign policy-making as could be seen in the U.S. The question of this paper then is: to what extent do the Kurdish minority in Turkey and the Arab minority in Israel influence foreign policy decision-making in these countries?

This essay shall especially investigate the aims of Kurdish and Arabic political parties in Turkish and Israeli foreign policy-making. But first of all previous publications concerning minorities shall be looked at, after which it is argued that the selected cases in this paper are dissimilar to the United States and are thus worthwhile investigating. It is then argued that multiple similarities exist between Israel and Turkey and that these similarities are the reason for choosing these cases. In the following sections, which look at domestic and foreign differences between the two countries, some differences can be found such as a difference in electoral system but also a difference in membership of international organizations. Some of these differences are then investigated in greater detail and a special focus will be on pro-Kurdish and pro-Arabic political parties and whether there are signs that these parties influence Turkish and Israeli foreign policy.

It shall be argued that little proof was found of these parties influencing Turkish and Israeli foreign policy. Yet more empirical research is needed to find out whether other factors, such as EU pressure and diaspora influence, play a role in strengthening the Kurdish and Arabic minority. Turkey is an official candidate for accession to the European Union and one of the key criteria for accession is minority accommodation. This could imply that the EU can pressure Turkey in accommodating

the Kurdish minority so that the Kurds can play a larger role in Turkish society. As Israel is not applying for EU accession, the Arabs do not have this opportunity that the Kurds have.

It is important to note that for this essay, the comparative method with a most-similar systems design is used as a methodology. Moreover, with regard to Israel the focus is on *Israel proper*. This is the description for Israel, excluding the territories that it acquired after the 1967 Six-Day War. The Palestinian population living in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights are thus not included in the analysis. The United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council have often been critical of Israeli settlements in these territories, starting already in the 1980s (Roberts, 1990, p. 85 & p. 86).

Previous Publications:

The influence of minorities on foreign policy-making is an aspect of political science that has hardly been empirically assessed. Already in 1992 Alexander DeConde proclaimed that the influence of ethnic minorities on American foreign policy is understudied (DeConde, 1992, ix). Where DeConde (1992) argues that Anglo-Americans retain dominance in American foreign policy over other groups (p. 199), Saideman (2002) believes that minorities in general, so not only in the United States, can have a larger influence on foreign policy than one would otherwise expect, given their size (p. 93). Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002) empirically assess the influence of Cuban immigrants in the United States and they also come to a similar conclusion that small minorities can have a major influence on foreign policy-making.

When minority influence on foreign policy has been investigated, it was primarily on the influence of minorities in the United States. Saideman (2002) argues that the Greek and Armenian minority in the US are able to influence US foreign policy on issues that these minorities find important. Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002) argue that Cuban immigrants played a key role in American foreign policy towards Cuba, even after the end of the Cold War. Last but not least, Mearsheimer and Walt (2007) state in their book *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* that the Israeli lobby in the United States, consisting of a loose group of organizations played a large role in American foreign policy towards Israel specifically and the Middle East in general (p. viii). The authors argue that individuals in the lobby not only played a role in American foreign policy, but even shaped foreign policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Israel's confrontations with Iran. Moreover, these policies were not in accordance with the American national interests and would, on the long run, also harm Israel (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, p. xiii).

Hence, lobby groups have the power to shape foreign policy-making, even when it is not in the interest of the state. These examples all come from the United States. Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002) have argued that access to political power in the United States is quite large (p. 163). Moreover, when minorities have substantial financial resources, such as the Cubans when they migrated to the United States, it is even easier to have political power (ibid, p. 158).

Just like Ögelman, Money and Martin (2002), Saideman (2002) makes a similar claim when it comes to the influence of ethnic minorities on foreign policy. He argues that they often have more influence than expected at first-sight (p. 93). Saideman (2002), however, does not empirically test his argument, instead he raises the more general question: "do ethnic minorities influence foreign policy, and if so,

how?" (2002, p. 96). Then he comes up with several reasons why minorities might have more influence than one would normally expect (Saideman, 2002, p. 93).

First of all, given that minorities are small, it could be easier for them to mobilize than for larger groups (p. 93). Moreover, Saideman (2002) argues that "smaller groups will tend to have a narrower focus" compared to larger groups (p. 98). Hence, minorities tend to concentrate on only a couple of issues that are of importance to them. Most importantly, according to Saideman (2002), minorities are concerned with the well-being of their own ethnic group in other countries (p. 95). Finally, when minorities are only interested in a couple of issues, they might receive the support of the majority if these issues are somewhat irrelevant for the majority (p. 99). Saideman (2002) continuously provides examples of the United States, in which several diaspora, such as the Greek and Armenian, have had more influence than at first expected.

The author argues that the Greek minority in the US was able to organize itself and hence could pressure the American government in keeping the contact limited with Macedonia when Former Yugoslavia disintegrated in the 1990s. Due to Greek pressure in the United States, the newly developed state Macedonia had major economic difficulties when it was established (Saideman, 2002, p. 98-99). Thus, as the majority of the Americans were not concerned about Macedonia, the small but powerful Greek minority in the US was able to influence US foreign policy and push Washington in taking measures that were favorable to the Greek minority.

Another example that Saideman (2002) provides is the Armenian minority that was effective in limiting US contact with Azerbaijan after the Armenian-Azerbaijani War over Nagorno-Karabakh was fought during the first half of the 1990s. Once again the American majority was not greatly interested in the conflict, as was the case with

Macedonia. The small Armenian minority was then able to shape US foreign policy, as it was a coherent group, well organized and as the majority of Americans was disinterested in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (Saideman, 2002, p. 99-100).

Problems with the literature noted above is that Saideman (2002) makes assumptions that have not yet been assessed empirically. Ögelman et al. (2002) and Mearsheimer & Walt (2010) do examine the influence of minorities empirically. Yet their main focus is on minority groups living in the United States. The same can be said about deConde (1992) who was also only interested in minority influence in the United States.

This thesis then tries to examine the influence of ethnic minorities outside the United States and takes cases that are dissimilar to the United States. This essay concentrates on the Kurdish minority in Turkey and the Arab minority in Israel. But before investigating the influence of both minorities on Israeli and Turkish foreign policy, it is explained why these cases were selected.

Dissimilarity to the United States:

The cases analyzed in this thesis are rather different compared to the minorities that have influence in the United States. First of all, the Kurds in Turkey and the Arabs in Israel have a lower income compared to the national average (Sarigil, 2010 and Haberfeld & Cohen, 2007). Hence they do not have the same extent of financial resources that the Cubans or the Israelis have in the United States. Moreover, Israel and Turkey are unitary states, whereas the U.S. is a federal state. An additional reason why the Cubans play an important political role, according to Ögelman et al. (2002), is that the Cubans mainly live in swing-state Florida. Florida is often critical in the

outcome of presidential elections, the extremely close 2000 Presidential Election between George W. Bush and Al Gore often comes to mind. As a result, Cuban-American voters have become a true electoral power in the United States (p. 159). Since Turkey and Israel are unitary states, it is on forehand highly unlikely that the Arabs and Kurds have the same degree of electoral influence as the Cubans.

A third difference between Israel and Turkey on the one hand and the U.S on the other hand, is that conflicts have occurred in the former but not in the latter. In his 2005 book *Multiculturalism in Asia*, Will Kymlicka stresses the importance of minority protection. Once minority rights are accommodated by the state, minority issues are de-securitized. However, if these issues are not settled, states may feel insecure in geopolitical terms as their national minorities might feel a stronger bond with a neighboring enemy. The hosting state then fears that the national minority would collaborate with this neighbor (Kymlicka, 2005). One of the examples that Kymlicka provides is Italy prior to the Second World War. Italy namely feared that the German-speaking minority in South Tyrol would be more loyal to Austria or Germany than to the Italian state (Kymlicka, 2005, p. 34). Since Western European states no longer have neighboring enemies, minority rights are accommodated and hence de-securitized.

It is difficult to argue that the de-securitization hypothesis applies to Israel. Since not all neighboring countries have recognized Israel and consist of an Arab population, the Israeli state might still fear that the Arab minority is disloyal to Israel. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Avigdor Lieberman has even publicly questioned the Arab loyalty to the Israeli state. After the 2009 parliamentary elections the leader of Yisrael Beiteinu, gained 15 seats in the Knesset with the slogan "no loyalty, no

citizenship" (Lavi, 2010). Hence, it seems that minority issues in Israel are not de-securitized to the extent that they are in Western Europe or the United States.

The case of the Kurdish minority in Turkey is slightly different compared to Israel. Since Kymlicka (2005) concentrates on national minorities with a close relationship to a neighboring state, this does not apply to the Kurdish minority, as no Kurdish state exists so far. Yet Turkey is less accommodative towards its Kurdish minority compared to Israel towards the Arabs. Cohen (1999) argues that the Turkish state tries to assimilate the Kurdish minority and has displaced between half a million to two million Kurds in the struggle against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Security concerns are also present in Turkey. Turkey has fought the PKK domestically, which has led to approximately 30.000 deaths in the 1980s and 1990s alone (Cornell, 2001). Moreover, in 2012 alone, more than 700 deaths had to be counted in the Turkish-Kurdish conflict (Tocci, 2013, p. 5). To sum up, it seems that for both Turkey and Israel minority issues are not yet de-securitized to the extent that these issues are de-securitized in the United States.

Israel has fought several conflicts in its history along her borders. In the 21st Century, a conflict broke out with the Shiite Organization Hezbollah in 2006 in Southern Lebanon (Harel & Issacharoff, 2008). During this war approximately 4.000 rockets were launched towards Northern Israel from Lebanon and more than 300.000 Israelis had to be evacuated (Palmieri et al., 2008, p. 1208). Moreover, Israel fought twice a conflict in the Gaza Strip, primarily against the Islamic Resistance Movement[1] (Hamas). During these wars, large proportions of Israeli territory were attacked by Hezbollah and Hamas, especially through rocket shootings. Hence, a considerable proportion of the Israeli and Turkish population has been in a conflict situation

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[1] Official name of the organization

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(Cornell, 2001 & Rodman, 2013). The United States has also been in conflict situations, but these were located abroad, mainly in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result, the U.S. population in general, is not as familiar with conflict situations compared to the Turks and Israelis.

The fourth and final difference between the United States on the one hand and Turkey and Israel, on the other, is the type of diversity. When investigating minority influence in the United States, one is usually-speaking examining the influence of immigrants or as Will Kymlicka calls them, ethnic groups. Kymlicka (1995) argues that these groups want to integrate into society (p. 10 & p. 11). The Kurds in Turkey and the Arabs in Israel are of course not immigrants, but a national minority. National minorities are incorporated by the larger state and usually they wish to be seen as a distinct group next to the majority group (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 10). Often, national minorities demand a certain form of autonomy or self-government (p. 10). Hence, when it comes to demands, Kymlicka would argue that the Kurds and Arabs would have different demands compared to immigrant groups in the United States.

Turkey and Israel are thus both quite dissimilar to the United States. Since previous authors have shown that minorities have influenced American foreign policy, it is essential to find out to what extent minorities in Israel and Turkey can also influence foreign policy-making. Israel and Turkey namely have similar characteristics, which shall be explained below. But first the methodology for this essay is explained.

Methodology:

George and Bennett (2004) state that it can be useful to select cases that are similar to each other but are dissimilar to a third case (p. 83). This essay then compares two cases, Israel and Turkey, which are rather similar but which are dissimilar compared to the case that is studied the most, the United States. The comparative method is thus used, with a most-similar research design. The comparative method is defined as a "systematic analysis of small number of cases" (Collier, 1991, p. 9) and the method can be seen as "the first stage of research, in which hypotheses are carefully formulated" (Lijphart, 1971, p. 685). A statistical analysis should then test the hypotheses with a sample size, which should be as large as possible (Lijphart, 1971, p. 685). The comparative method has a better reputation in assessing hypotheses compared to the case study method, as one can systemically compare the chosen cases and assess the value of alternative explanations (Collier, 1991, p. 10). When taking into consideration scarcity of time and resources when doing research, the comparative method can be more useful than the statistical method, as one can investigate cases in greater depth (Lijphart, 1971, p. 685; Collier, 1991, p. 9).

Lijphart (1974) and Collier (1991) state that the comparative method is particularly useful in these cases where more empirical research is needed. Given that the influence of minorities on foreign-policy has hardly been tested empirically before, research in this field has only recently commenced and hence the comparative method is suitable. The main concern of the comparative method is the so-called 'many variables, few cases' problem (Lijphart, 1971, p. 685). As only a couple of cases are compared, the 'small number of cases' problem is typical for the

comparative method, whereas the 'many variables problem' occurs often in different types of research (Lijphart, 1971, p. 685).

Collier (1991) argues that one of the solutions to minimize the 'many variables, few cases' problem, is to concentrate on cases that are comparable to one another (p. 16). Such a most-similar systems design investigates cases that are truly similar, but where the dependent variable differs. The main advantage of this design is that it keeps irrelevant independent variables constant (Anckar, 2008, p. 389; Sartori, 1991, p. 250). Sartori (1991) claims that most comparativists use the most similar research design. Przeworski and Teune (1970) have advocated for the opposite design (p. 31). These authors criticize the most-similar research design as it often has problems with evaluating alternative hypotheses. Moreover, both authors claim that even though only a few differences exist amongst the selected cases in the most-similar research design, these differences are still likely to over-determine the results (Przeworski & Teune, p. 34).

This main problem for the most-similar research design is not truly serious for this essay, as alternative hypotheses are hardly available. Moreover, as most comparativists use this design, it shall also be used for this thesis. In the following chapter some background information is given. In the chapter thereafter, multiple similarities between Israel and Turkey are highlighted in the case selection chapter. These similarities are the reason why both countries are studied in-depth for this paper.

<u>Background:</u>

The Kurds primarily live geographically concentrated in five different countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia. Approximately half of the Kurds reside in Turkey and since the creation of the Turkish state they defy assimilation (Heraclides, 1991, p. 131). Heraclides argues (1991) that even though a majority of the Kurds live compactly together in the mountainous region of Eastern Turkey, Northern Iraq and Northwestern Iran, many differences exist among the Kurds and no single language has come to the fore (p. 129-131).

After the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of the First World War, the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 promised the Kurds autonomy and the prospective of an independent state in the future (Heraclides, 1991, p. 131). However, when the Turkish War of Independence came to an end in the beginning of the 1920s and Kemal Atatürk became the first President of the Republic of Turkey, the Treaty of Sèvres was not implemented. Instead, in the new treaty, the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, not a single minority was mentioned and as a result no provisions of self-rule were provided to the Kurds (Heraclides, 1991, p. 131). At first, during the beginning of the 1920s, the Kurds still received some relative freedom but already a bit later they were designated "'Mountain Turks' who had 'forgotten their mother tongue'" (Heraclides, 1991, p. 132). The identification of 'Mountain Turks' was the official Turkish designation for Kurds until 1991 and hence the Kurds were denied any own identity.

Heraclides (1991) argues that since there are many differences amongst the Kurds, the group does not have the aim of a pan-Kurdish state (p. 132). The Turkish

and Iraqi government, however, have used the fear of a pan-Kurdistan in order to assimilate the Kurdish minority. Criss and Çetiner (2000) have a different opinion and argue that the PKK has pan-Kurdish claims. Hence, their opinions are diverging on the possibility of pan-Kurdism, but similar to Heraclides (1991) Criss and Çetiner (2000) believe that Turkey has been oversensitive to minority issues since the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920.

During the 1930s the Turkish government believed that by mixing the Kurdish minority with the Turkish population, it could assimilate the Kurds (Çağaptay, 2002, p. 73). Çağaptay (2002) argues that the Kurds belonged to the least respected group during the 1930s and were forbidden to receive naturalization papers during these years (p. 75). Even though the Kurdish minority severely opposed assimilation, after the suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in 1938, the Kurds in Turkey remained relatively peaceful for a couple of decennia. Most rebellions took place in either Iran or Iraq. Heraclides (1991) argues that especially during the 1960s the Iraqi Kurds were supported the most by the Syrian government and then especially materially (p. 144). When the largest Kurdish organization in Turkey, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), was established in the mid-1970s and decided to create an armed faction within the political organization in 1984, the headquarters of the organization were located in the Syrian capital Damascus (Cornell, 2001). From 1984 until the end of the 20th Century more than 30.000 people have lost their lives due to attacks from the armed faction of the PKK. Even though other Kurdish organizations exist in Turkey, the PKK is the most important one (Cornell, 2001).

In contrast to the Kurds in Turkey, the Arabs in Israel have not been as violent. Israel has fought several conflicts with its Arab neighbors in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 and intense animosity between Israel and the Palestinians has occurred during

the First *Intifada* starting in 1987 and the Second *Intifada* starting in 2000, but internal violence between Israeli Arabs and the Israeli state has been limited. Frisch (2011) argues that even though there is resentment amongst the Arab minority, most Arabs express this resentment by participating in elections and by empowering local NGOs (p. 162). Hence, they participate in Israeli society through the official system.

A resemblance between the Arabs in Israel and the Kurds in Turkey is that both minorities primarily live along the borders with other states. As mentioned, the Israeli Arabs, mainly live along the Syrian and Lebanese border, the Kurds largely live in Eastern Turkey along the borders with Iraq, Iran and Syria. A significant difference between the two minorities for the different countries, however, is that Israel has multiple Arab states surrounding it and some states such as, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi-Arabia, have not recognized Israel. On the other hand, there is no Kurdish country bordering Turkey. The Kurds have received a significant degree of autonomy within Northern Iraq but no such Kurdish state exists. Moreover, all border-states have recognized Turkey. Hence, it would seem that Turkey's borders are better secured than Israel's but still many PKK attacks have been orchestrated from Northern Iraq (Cornell, 2001).

Even when all surrounding states have recognized Turkey, this does not imply that the Turkish state has had amicable relations with its neighbors in the past. The PKK has often been the cause of friction between Turkey and the neighboring states. Another example, next to the case of Iraq described above, is Syria under Hafez al-Assad, the former President of the country. Under his rule, the PKK and their leader Abdullah Öcalan had a safe basis in Syria from the beginning of the 1980s to 1998. Damascus has even been the headquarters of the Kurdish organization. When the

PKK commenced armed attacks in 1984 against Turkish targets, Syrian-Turkish relations were significantly affected (Cornell, 2001).

With regard to Turkish foreign policy, Murinson (2006) argues that since the end of the Cold War Turkey's foreign policy has become an extension of domestic politics (p. 945). Considering that Turkey has continuously tried to assimilate the Kurdish population since the 1930's, it should come as no surprise that during the winter of 2003, when the U.S. attack on Iraq became eminent, Ankara tried its utmost to prevent a Kurdish state from arising in Northern Iraq. Such a potential Kurdish state could then also stimulate separatism among the Turkish Kurds (Murinson, 2006, p. 954). Sözen (2010), however, argues that there is a wing amongst the Turkish elite that favors normalization with and a rapprochement to the Kurds (p. 108). Considering that there is a different camp within the Turkish elite that strictly opposes such a rapprochement, significant tension occurs within the Turkish elite (Sözen, 2010, p. 108).

Where Smooha (2002) believes that Turkey "does not meet the minimal requirements of democracy" (p. 42), as it is maltreating the Kurdish minority, Sözen (2010) argues that this treatment vis-à-vis the Kurds is more nuanced now. On the one hand, the Turkish government continues its armed struggle against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), on the other hand more individual freedoms are provided for the Kurds since 9/11 (Sözen, 2010, p. 115). Hence, important changes are occurring at the moment in Turkey both in domestic policy as well as foreign affairs.

According to Smooha (2002), Israel does not pursue an assimilationist policy towards its Arab minority (p. 426) and so far Israel has proven to be stable (p. 429). Yet, since Israel is considered to be a Jewish and democratic state Palestinian refugees are not allowed to repatriate to Israel (p. 429). Smooha (2002) argues that Turkey

during the largest part of the 20th Century has tried to assimilate the Kurds. As Moore (2002) has argued that minorities can influence foreign policy even when they are oppressed (p. 77), it is essential to investigate whether Moore's hypothesis holds with regard to the Kurdish population in Turkey. The case of Israel, however, is also a special one, since Israel is a Jewish state and according to Smooha (1990), the welfare of all Jews worldwide is an important part of Israeli foreign policy. Thus, when it comes to the Arab minority one can question whether they have any influence in Israel's foreign policy.

An additional problem for the Arabs in Israel is that it is highly unlikely that the Jewish majority will comply with the demands of the Arab minority. Saideman (2002) argued that minorities can play a larger role than expected in foreign policy, as the demands of the minority might be irrelevant for the majority and in such a scenario the minority can have a larger influence than expected in foreign policy-making. This scenario of minority influence is unlikely in Israel. One of the key minority demands namely is the right of previous Arab residents to return to Israel. This demand for repatriation, however, is highly problematic for the Israeli state because if this demand would be fulfilled, Arabs would outnumber the Jewish population. Hence, any Israeli government so far has opposed the request of the Arabs and on the contrary demands an end on all such claims (Quigley, 2008, p. 273 – 274).

One problem for the Kurdish minority would be that according to Saideman, there still is a large chance that minorities cannot influence foreign policy when they are repressed or when other limitations exist (2002, p. 97). Given that the Turkish government throughout its history has often repressed the Kurds, by trying to assimilate them, one would then expect that the Kurds do not influence Turkish foreign policy. Saideman (2002) then continues by arguing that ethnic groups, who

are a minority in every state, hardly have any foreign policy influence in any state (p. 97). He provides the example of the Roma, but the same can as well be said about the Kurds.

Before finding out whether there are any signs of Kurdish and Arab influence in foreign policy decision-making, the similarities between Turkey and Israel are mentioned and explained, as these similarities are the reason why both cases were selected in the first place

Case Selection:

Similarities between the Cases:

As was argued before, Turkey and Israel are dissimilar compared to the United States. The state systems in Israel and Turkey are unitary and not federal as in the U.S. Moreover, the population in both states has had conflict experiences whereas this is less the case in the United States. In addition, the examined minorities in the U.S. often have a middle-income, whereas the minorities in the selected cases are rather disenfranchised. Finally, the Kurds and the Arabs can be considered national minorities, whereas immigrant influence has often been examined in the U.S. Since Israel and Turkey are quite dissimilar to the U.S. the claims made concerning minority influence in the United States may be rather different in the Turkish and Israeli cases.

For a most-similar research design, cases are selected that are "as similar as possible" (Anckar, 2008, p. 389). In this chapter, it is argued that numerous similarities exist between Turkey and Israel and that these similarities are the reason why both countries are examined in this paper. Several indicators are used for the

comparison: population percentage and demographic development, religion, geographic location and concentration, income discrepancy, and political similarities.

First of all, the Kurds in Turkey and the Arabs in Israel both consist of a little more than 20% of the total population. The Israeli Bureau of Statistics estimated in April 2013 that the Israeli Arab population comprised of 20.7% of the country's total population and that the population is likely to continue to grow further since the Arab population has a growth rate of 2.4% compared to 1.8% for the Jewish population (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013).

The exact proportion of the Kurdish population is unknown. The Turkish government estimates that 15.7% of the entire population is Kurdish. Kurdish organizations place this percentage at more than 25%. Cohen's (1999) estimate of the Kurdish population lies closer to the Arab proportion in Israel. More recently, Loizides (2010) has stated that the Kurds consist of 23% of the Turkish population. Similar to the Arabs in Israel, this percentage is likely to grow further in the future as the reproductive rate amongst the Kurdish population is considerably higher than the Turkish average (Loizides, 2010, p. 514). An additional similarity between both minorities is that the vast majority adheres to Sunni Islam. Approximately 75% of the Kurds are Sunni (Loizides, 2010, p. 514). 83% of the Arab population in Israel is Muslim (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007), of which a large majority also adheres to Sunni Islam.

One important side-note needs to be made concerning religion. The majority of Kurds adhere to the same religion as most Turks, namely to Sunni Islam. In Israel, the majority of the population is Jewish, which is of course not the case for the Israeli Arabs. Yet even though Israel embraces Judaism as its state religion, the Arab minority is not discouraged to practice their religion.

An additional similarity between the Kurdish and the Arab minority is that both minorities are concentrated in one region. Most Kurds live in the Eastern regions of Turkey. The proportion of Kurds is especially high in the Eastern regions of Central Eastern Anatolia (79.1%) and Southeastern Anatolia (64.1%). Next to the Kurds living in Eastern Turkey, a couple of million Turks have migrated over the last couple of decades to the Western Turkish cities of Istanbul and Izmir. Nevertheless the majority of Kurds still lives in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia. Approximately 10 million Kurds live in these two regions compared to two million in Istanbul.

Comparable to the Kurds, a majority of the Arabs live in one region, namely the northern part of Israel. According to the Israeli Bureau of Statistics, 60% of the approximately 1.65 million Arabs live in Northern Israel (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007). The Northern District is the sole district where the Arabs have a majority. Next to the North, a substantial proportion of the Arab population lives in Jerusalem. Approximately one-fifth of the total Arab population in Israel lives in Jerusalem (Jewish Virtual Library, 2013)[2]. It is hereby important to note that the population of East Jerusalem is also included. Thus, a majority of the Kurds and Arabs live in one region, yet it is important to remember that there is a minority that lives in the largest city of the country. Both minorities are mainly geographically concentrated in one area and are not dispersed throughout the entire country.

An additional similarity between both minorities is that they are socially and economically disenfranchised compared to the national average. Southeast Turkey where most Kurds live is the least developed part of the country (Sarigil, 2010, p. 538). Icduygu, Romano & Sirkeci (1999) estimate that approximately 65% of all Turkish Kurds live in Southeast Turkey (p. 1002). In the late 1990s the Kurds were

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[2] Information from the website is based on the Israeli Bureau of Statistics website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/reader/newhodaot/hodaa_template_eng.html?hodaa=201311097.

also materially worse off compared to the national average (p. 1006). This is still the case now, but according to Yildirim and Öcal (2006) income disparities between the regions have been decreasing during the 1990s (p. 564), but a large discrepancy still exists between the richer Western regions and the poorer Eastern regions (p. 560).

In Israel, the Arabs are the worst performing social group, in society. They have the lowest average income in Israel behind the two main Jewish groups: Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews. A minor difference with the Kurds and the Arabs is that in Israel inequalities have been growing (Haberfeld & Cohen, 2007 p. 668), whereas income disparities between the regions in Turkey have been decreasing (Yildirim & Öcal, 2006, p. 564). Haberfeld and Cohen (2007) investigate income disparities since the mid-1970s. They argue that since the 1990s income differences have grown amongst the several social groups in Israel, with the Arabs being even worse off compared to the national average than before (Haberfeld & Cohen, 2007 p. 664). Arabs had a 20% higher income in 2001 compared to 1992. Mizrahi and Ashkenazi men respectively increased their income by 40% and 30% in 2002 (p. 664).

There is thus a difference with regards to income disparities between Israel and Turkey. Where the discrepancy has been declining in Turkey (Yildirim and Öcal, 2006, p. 564), income inequalities have increased in Israel (Haberfeld & Cohen, 2007 p. 664). Yet, when looking at the current income inequalities through the Gini Coefficient, Israel and Turkey are very much alike.

Moreover, with regard to life expectancy, Arab men had a four-year shorter life expectancy in 2012 than Jewish men and life expectancy for Arab women was three years lower than for their Jewish counterparts (Jewish Virtual Library, 2013). Furthermore, As'ad Ghanem (1998) argues that the Israeli state cannot be perceived as a democracy, but rather as an ethnic state, with Jews being preferred (p. 428).

Moreover, the state discriminates against the Arab population and tries to exclude it in public life. Even though the Arabs have the chance to participate in society, they are not offered equality (idem, p. 428). The same can be said as well about the Kurds of course, as Turkey has for a long time tried to assimilate the Kurdish minority (Çağaptay, 2002) and simply called them 'Mountain Turks' (Heraclides, 1991). Hence, both the Arabs and the Kurds are disenfranchised and both minorities have suffered from state discrimination.

From a political and state structure perspective, Israel and Turkey are also quite alike. Both countries are unitary states. Hence, the central government in Ankara and Jerusalem is supreme and has "indivisible sovereignty" over regional units (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005, p. 135). Federal countries can have an advantage over unitary states, as the federal system provides more opportunities for minorities to be represented in society (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005, p. 136). Federal systems are more favorable in accommodating minorities, as it is more difficult for the majority to dominate the minority. Moreover, federal states can empower minorities, as minorities can rule themselves and this tactic often reduces the temptation for minorities to defect from the state. These advantages are not present in unitary states and thus also not present in Israel and Turkey.

An additional similarity between Israel and Turkey is that they are the sole established democracies within the region. After 1997, when the Turkish military required the ousting of Prime-Minister Erbakan, the military no longer directly interfered in Turkish politics (Aydinli, 2009, p. 585). Israel has a longer democratic tradition. In order to compare both countries equally it is important to remember that this essay investigates the impact of minorities on foreign policy-making in the first 21st Century.

Turkey and Israel have also has had very amicable relations since the 1990s until recently (Oğuzlu, 2010, p. 273). Moreover, both states are located in a highly volatile region. The reason here is that one should not select cases simply because they are located in the same region but instead one should select cases based on their similarities (Collier, 1991, p. 17). The selected cases here, Israel and Turkey, have the double advantage that multiple similarities exist between the two and that they are located in the same region.

There are several reasons for investigating the Kurdish and the Arab minority for this essay. First of all, both minorities comprise of approximately 20% of the total population in Turkey and Israel. In addition, a majority of the Arab and Kurdish minorities live concentrated in one area and are socially and economically disenfranchised compared to the national average. Given that Turkey and Israel are both democratic states with elections occurring at least once every four years, one would expect that both minorities would have an equal chance of influencing politics. Yet the electoral system between both countries is not entirely similar as shall be explained below.

Foreign Differences between Israel and Turkey:

When it comes to finding differences between Turkey and Israel a distinction is made between foreign differences and domestic differences. The main difference concerning the Arab and the Kurdish minority in Israel and Turkey is that no Kurdish state exists in the world whereas several Arab states do exist. Moore (2002) argues that the chance of conflict increases when an ethnic minority has a tie with the majority or an advantaged minority in a bordering state (p. 79). He thus claims that ethnic ties tend to lead to longer inter-state crises (p. 83). This seems to be the case for

Israel, since Syria has still not recognized Israel and the Palestinian Authority has only decided to recognize Israel in 1993 during the Oslo Accords. Moore (2002) even claims that the Palestinians and the Syrians made a claim on Israel's territory (p. 81).

Since Palestinian Arabs and Arabs have a vast majority within Syria and Palestine, one could expect that conflict has occurred between Israel on the one hand and Syria and the Palestinian Authority on the other, which has occurred on multiple occasions. Moreover, during and after the Second Palestinian *Intifada* (uprising) in 2000, tensions between Israel and the Palestinians increased again (Brym & Araj, 2006). When it comes to the Arab minority within Israel, however, the extent of conflict with the Israeli state is surely not as high as is the case with Syria and the Palestinians. Hence, it seems on first sight that even though there is a tie between the Arab Israeli minority, on the one hand, and Syria and the Palestinian Authority on the other, intra-state conflict in Israel is limited to non-existent. This can be considered problematic for Moore's argument that conflict increases when minorities have a tie with majorities in neighboring states.

One of the main international differences between Turkey and Israel however is that Israel has had multiple conflicts with its neighbors in the 21st Century, Turkey though did not have so far in this century. The last time that Turkey was involved in an inter-state conflict was during the 1974 Invasion of Cyprus. Since then Turkey has had fought against the PKK and has also conducted several attacks against the PKK on Iraqi soil (Cornell, 2001). Nonetheless the Turkish state was not involved in the same level of inter-state conflict as Israel.

The non-recognition of Israel by neighboring Arab states, such as Lebanon, Syria and Saudi-Arabia is a problem for Israel that does not exist for Turkey as all regional states recognize the Turkish state. Syria is the sole state that is both a

neighbor of Israel and Turkey at the same time and both the Kurdish minority in Turkey and the Arab minority in Israel are located in relative proximity to the Syrian border. Since both minorities primarily live close to the Syrian border and have kinship ties with the two largest ethnic groups in Syria, they should primarily have an interest in the relations vis-à-vis Syria.

These kinship ties exist as the two largest ethnic groups in Syria are Arabs and Kurds. The Arabs comprise of the vast majority in Syria and the Kurds are the largest minority, with approximately 9% of the total Syrian population. When it comes to Israeli-Syrian and Turkish-Syrian relations, these relationships are often constrained. Israel, of course does not even have any official relations due to Syria's non-recognition of Israel.

With regard to Turkish-Syrian relations official relations exist. Relations between Turkey and Syria have also been tense in the past as Syria provided the PKK with a safe basis in Damascus during the 1990s. Moreover, both countries also had a conflict concerning water distribution of the Euphrates and Tigris river (Olson, 1997). The fact that Ankara had close relations with Israel also played a role in Turkey's troubled relationship with Syria in the 1990s (ibid, p. 178). Kanat (2012) states that Turkey and Syria were at the brink of war in October 1998 after a PKK attack in Turkey (p. 238). After this escalation, Syria decided to expel the PKK from Damascus and shortly after in 1999 PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was arrested in Kenya (Kanat, 2012). After the capture of Öcalan, Turkish-Syrian relations improved markedly during the first decade of the 21st Century.

Yet, since the Syrian Civil War commenced in 2011, the bilateral relationship between Ankara and Damascus deteriorated once again and relations are adversarial since then (Kanat, 2012, p. 246). As the Syrian Civil War has only recently

commenced and as the outcome of the civil war is still uncertain, it would go beyond this essay to analyze the impact of the Civil War in-depth.

An additional foreign impact on Turkey would be that the country is trying to become a member of the European Union (EU) and by now it is an official candidate for EU accession. Turkey applied for EU accession, already in 1987. The country was granted candidate status in 1999 but only in 2005 official negotiations started for EU accession (European Commission, 2012). Officially, the protection of minorities and respect for human rights are key political criteria for accession to the European Union (European Commission, 2012). Sasse (2008), however, has criticized the need for minority accommodation when states want to join the European Union. She argues that in Estonia and Latvia, where approximately one-quarter of the total population is Russian-speaking, language laws are rather restrictive and a considerable proportion of the Russophone minority is officially a non-citizen and hence has less rights compared to Estonian and Latvian citizens (Sasse, 2008, p. 850 & p. 851).

An additional problem for minorities next to the question whether states abide by the EU right for minority protection, is that no EU requirements exist that minorities should influence foreign policy. Though one would expect that the EU could pressure Ankara so that the Turkish government is more respectful for its Kurdish minority and that measures are taken to increase the representation of Kurds in Turkish society. Sasse (2008) has come up though with a counter-argument against EU conditionality in the cases of Estonia and Latvia. The question then remains whether EU pressure leads to an increased accommodation of the Kurds in Turkey and whether in the long run the Kurdish voice would be increasingly heard by the Turkish government.

Israel, of course, is no official candidate for joining the European Union and has also never applied for EU accession. Israel and the EU uphold positive economic relations, but when it comes to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, the European Union has often condemned Israel (Mueller, 2013, p. 25). Hence, on the political level, bilateral relations are more constrained. Since Israel has a problematic relation with the Palestinians and since political decisions in the EU need to be taken by unanimity, it is unlikely that all 27 member states have the same approach vis-à-vis Israel and that political relations between the EU and Israel can progress. Or as Mueller (2013) has proclaimed, where Germany and The Netherlands have often been supportive of Israel in the past, France and Italy had a closer affiliation with Palestinian demands.

Difficulties are also apparent between the EU and Turkey in Turkey's accession process (European Commission, 2013). Yet the main point here is that Turkey is an official candidate member for accession to the EU and Israel is not. What follows is that every Progress Report of the European Commission examines the political criteria for Turkey's accession, of which minority treatment is a factor, whereas such an EU report does not exist concerning Israel.

When continuing about membership of organizations, there is an additional difference between Turkey and Israel in that Turkey is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Israel is not. NATO is the main inter-governmental security organization in the world. More importantly, Turkey is a member of the Council of Europe and already ratified its human rights treaties during the 1980s, whereas Israel is not a member of the Council of Europe. Kurban (2013) argues that the European Court of Human Rights, a division of the Council of Europe, has played a key role in the past as to the Kurdish Question.

To sum up this part, the main foreign difference between the Arab and Kurdish minority is that the Kurds cannot count on the support of a Kurdish state abroad, whereas such a potential foreign support could be present for the Arabs in Israel. With regard to the recognition of Turkey and Israel, Israel is not recognized by three of its neighbors, whereas Turkey is recognized by all surrounding states. Furthermore, Israel has fought conflicts with neighboring states and organizations in the past and in the 21st Century, whereas Turkey did not play a key role in a large inter-state conflict over the last decade. In addition, where Israel never had official relations with Syria, Turkey has often had an adverse relationship with the country, even when relations improved after the PKK was expelled from Damascus. Finally, Turkey is a member of NATO, the European Union and the, whereas Israel is not. This paper shall look into the role of the EU and the Council of Europe, when it comes to Turkey's treatment of the Kurds. The next step though is to look into the influence of diaspora groups in general and then the domestic differences between Turkey and Israel are examined.

Diaspora Influence:

Diaspora living in a host country can influence that country's foreign policy toward their country of origin (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 146). One critical factor that determines whether immigrant groups influence foreign policy-making is the group's cohesion (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 146). Ögelman et al. (2002) argue that the cohesive right-wing Cuban diaspora in Florida was able to influence US foreign policy vis-à-vis Cuba, as the group was close-knit. The Turks in Germany, on the other hand, have diverging interests and as a result, they have great difficulties in influencing German foreign policy towards Turkey (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 156). There is a divide amongst Turkish immigrants between anti- and pro-

Kemalist believers. Some immigrants oppose Turkey's secular character whereas others try to support it (p. 149).

There is an additional fragmentation amongst the immigrants between pro-Kurdish organizations and Turkish nationalist organizations (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 149 & p. 150). Ultranationalist movements try to influence German foreign policy vis-à-vis Turkey and hope that Germany will follow a favorable foreign policy towards Ankara. According to Ögelman et al. (2002), nationalistic political parties in Turkey, such as the National Movement Party (MHP), support Turkish nationalist movements in Germany and try to counter organizations that go against the Turkish state.

One of the main organizations, opposing nationalistic organizations in Germany, is the Federation of Kurdish Workers Associations. Already in 1995, there were 500.000 self-proclaimed Kurds living in Germany (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002) and they have organized themselves into several pro-Kurdish organizations in Germany, with the Federation of Kurdish Workers Associations being one of the primary organizations. The aim of this organization is that the Kurds in Turkey shall be granted cultural autonomy and the right to self-determination (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 149). The Federation of Kurdish Workers Associations tries to pursue these goals through peaceful means.

Yet there are also Kurdish organization in Germany and Europe that are related to the PKK and have used violence as a tactic to influence foreign policy (Ögelman, Money & Martin, 2002, p. 150). Yet these more extreme organizations mainly try to influence their host country's foreign policy (ibid, p. 150). So far, the influence of minority diaspora on the foreign policy-making of their country of origin has been understudied. To give an example: The influence of Kurds living in

Germany on Turkish foreign policy is still unknown and needs to be investigated further. An important question to rise though is: why should Kurdish diaspora have an influence on Turkish foreign policy-making? This question needs to be investigated in more detail in future research, as it would go beyond the scope of this paper. The aim of mentioning diaspora influence here is simply to show that diaspora have influence their host country's foreign policy decision-making, but so far little is known of diaspora influencing the foreign policy of their country of origin.

When it comes to Kurdish diaspora trying to influence Turkey's domestic politics, Kurban (2013) claims that in the past the Kurdish diaspora has played a role in bringing cases to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasburg and that as a result multiple cases were held against Turkey's treatment of Kurdish civilians. All Council of Europe members are also members of the European Court of Human Rights, which explains why Kurds and Kurdish diaspora can bring cases to the court. Israeli Arab diaspora would not be able to start a case at the European Court of Human Rights as Israel is not a member of the organization. Hence it can be argued that since Turkey seeks EU membership and since Turkey is a member of the Council of Europe, it is easier for Kurdish diaspora to expose its cause internationally, whereas it is more difficult for Israeli Arabs.

Domestic Differences:

There are several key differences between Israel and Turkey that are analyzed in-depth here, namely a difference in the countries' history, the electoral system and the treatment of minority parties by the national Constitutional Court. In the latter cases, there are more opportunities for Arabs to be represented compared to Kurds.

An essential distinction between the Turkish and Israeli state is that both countries have had an entirely different history. Where the Turkish predecessor, the Ottoman Empire controlled a significant part of the Middle East from the 16th Century until the end of the First World War, the Israeli state was only created in 1948 as a distinct Jewish state. Moreover, there was a belief at first in Israel that the Arab minority that remained in northern Israel, would also flee the state, hence no serious effort was made in incorporating the minority into society. In contrast, Turkey was established in 1923 as a secular state but also here the state was unwilling to recognize the Kurdish minority and instead attempted to assimilate all minorities. Since Turkey was established as a secular state and Israel was instead created as a Jewish safe haven, it is essential to keep this into account when investigating the influence of both minorities on politics and foreign policy-making in particular.

In relation to the electoral systems, there is an electoral threshold in Israel of 2%, whereas this threshold is much higher in Turkey, namely 10%. Hence, it should be easier for Israeli Arab parties compared to Kurdish parties to be represented in parliament. In Turkey, no Kurdish party has managed to break the 10% threshold during General Elections in the 21st Century. As a result, the minority is underrepresented in Parliament. In Israel, Arab political parties have always been represented in the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, in the 21st Century. Together the three main parties, National Democracy Assembly (Balad), United Arab List and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash), have gained approximately 10% of the 120 seats in the Knesset.

Since the 1995 General Elections in Turkey the main Kurdish political party, the People's Democracy Party (HADEP), or its successors, the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP), the Democratic Society Party (DTP) and the current Peace and

Democracy Party (BDP), were not able to surmount the 10% threshold. Due to this high threshold, the number of political parties in the Grand National Assembly is often limited. During the 2002 General Elections only two parties managed to gain more votes than required and managed to obtain a seat in the Assembly (Toros, 2011). Yet the Kurdish parties have also managed to grasp a few seats in the Grand National Assembly. Even though Turkey has a proportional representation system, independent candidates can become a member of the 550-seat parliament (Önis, 2009, p. 25). As there are 81 electoral areas, an independent candidate can run in an electoral area and if he or she gains most votes in such an area, the independent candidate will become a member of the Grand National Assembly (Toros, 2011, p. 1252). Of course the 10% threshold does not apply for independent candidates (ibid, p. 1252).

During the General Elections of 2007 and 2011 independent candidates managed to obtain 26 and 35 seats in the Assembly. Out of the 26 Independents in 2007, 22 were affiliated with the pro-Kurdish DTP. In 2011, all elected Independents were followers of the successor of the DTP, namely the BDP. Hence, the main pro-Kurdish party managed to increase their share in Parliament from 22 to 35 members. The rise in seats is even larger compared to the 2002 General Elections, as only 9 independent politicians were elected into the Grand National Assembly in that year.

There is, however, another difficulty for some pro-Kurdish parties. HADEP and DTP were forbidden by the Turkish Constitutional Court (Ekmekci, 2011, p. 1610 & 1615). HADEP was forbidden in March 2003 on the conviction that the party supported the PKK and that as a result it put the unity and the territorial integrity of the country at stake (Moghadam, 2007, p. 86). The same happened with the DTP in December 2009. The party was disbanded on the grounds that it threatened the indivisible integrity of the Turkish state (Casier, 2010, p. 396). The Peace and

Democracy Party (BDP), which is the main pro-Kurdish political party at the moment, is the successor the DTP and has not yet been disbanded.

These problems for the main Kurdish parties with the Constitutional Court are not present in Israel. Balad and Hadash were officially banned by the Central Elections Committee from participating in the 2003 legislative elections, eventually the Israeli Supreme Court decided to overturn this measure and thus both parties were able to participate in the elections.

Next to the 10% threshold, there is an additional reason why HADEP, DEHAP and DTP did not manage to acquire a seat. Sarigil (2010) and Loizides (2010) claim that most Kurdish political parties can be considered left-wing and as a result, the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) of Taccip Erdogan has received a considerable amount of votes from more right-wing Kurdish voters. In concordance with this statement, Gunter and Yavuz (2007) argue that the AKP "is the only Turkish party that appeals to voters in Kurdish regions" (p. 296). What follows is that the principal Kurdish parties have quite some difficulty in obtaining a seat in the Grand National Assembly.

In Israel, the electoral threshold stands at only 2%, making it easier for Arab parties to gain a seat in the Knesset compared to the Kurds in Turkey. During the 2009 Israeli legislative elections, three main Arab political parties managed to break the 2% threshold. The more Islamic oriented United Arab List-Ta'al party and the Arab socialist Hadash party both gained four seats in Parliament. The more secular party, Balad gained three seats. Next to these three Arab parties, Meretz is a fourth party that is fighting for minority rights, especially through affirmative action. This party also gained three seats. Hence, political parties that are concerned with the Arab minority gained 14 seats out of the 120 member Knesset. With a bit over 10% of the

number of seats, these parties have less support than expected, given that Arabs constitute more than 20% of the total population but the percentage is of course considerably higher than for Kurdish political parties in Turkey.

In other elections held in the 21st Century, the Arab political parties and Meretz never gained more than seventeen seats in total. Hereby it should also be mentioned that Meretz also obtains her votes from Jewish constituents, as it is not an Arab political party per se. Comparing Kurdish and Arab representation in Parliament, it becomes clear that the electoral threshold does play a role when it comes to the representation of minorities. If the 10% threshold would also exist in Israel, not a single Israeli Arab party would be able to overcome the threshold. It should then come as no surprise that HADEP, DEHAP, DTP and BDP did not break the 10% Turkish threshold. Unsurprisingly, Ekmekci (2011) recommends the lowering of the 10% threshold, as this threshold "prevents fair representation of the Kurdish electorate in the Parliament" (p. 1614).

There is an additional difference between the Kurds and the Arabs, concerning the use of the mother tongue. In Israel, language facilities are provided for the Arab minority, whereas this is not the case for the Kurds. Arabic is the second official language in Israel after Hebrew. In Turkey, however, the use of Kurdish has for a long-time been prohibited and only recently has Turkey allowed the Kurds to speak their mother tongue (European Commission, 2013). Hence, there are differences between the treatment of the Kurdish minority and the Arab minority, but in both cases there are signs that the majority opposes the minority. Given that Moore (2002) argues that minorities can still influence foreign policy-making even when they are opposed by the majority, it is clear by the examination above that both the Kurdish and Arab minority have at times been opposed by the state.

Data:

When investigating the role of pro-Arabic political parties, the website of the political parties are looked into. The aims and the achievements of the parties are studied. Unfortunately, there is no English-speaking session for the political parties, United Arab List and Balad, which represent the Arab minority in Israel specifically. Since this author does not understand neither Hebrew nor Arabic, the foreign policy goals of two other parties, Hadash and Meretz, are examined. It is important to remember that Meretz is not representing the Arabs specifically. Instead it calls itself a party, which is striving for peace and is concentrating on human rights in Israel (Meretz, 2013). Hadash is explicitly more concerned with the interest of Israeli-Arabs.

One of the main problems with examining the website of the political parties is that these websites are most likely not truly objective. On the websites, the political parties clearly state their viewpoints but there is a larger chance that they are overstating than understating their achievements. Thus when foreign policy achievements are mentioned on the website, it shall be tried to verify the achievement either via a secondary source or through the official website of the Knesset[3] or the website of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey[4].

An additional difficulty when analyzing the party websites is that not all of the information on the website is provided in English. For Meretz and Hadash there is more information provided in Hebrew and Arabic than in English. The main problem of analyzing the international party website of the Kurdish Peace and Democracy

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[3] http://knesset.gov.il/main/eng/home.asp.
[4] http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/.

Party[5] (BDP) is that a majority of the links contain an error and as a result the reports and publications of the BDP cannot be accessed via the English-speaking website. Hence, this website is of little use for this thesis. As an alternative, the Turkish website of the BDP[6] is looked into and the party program is translated to find out whether a remark is made on Turkish foreign policy and whether the Kurdish minority should have an influence on it.

An additional problem of analyzing the websites of the main Kurdish political parties is that all predecessors of the BDP have been prohibited and that the websites of these parties are inaccessible. As a result, only the BDP program can be investigated in the case of Turkey. The BDP exists since 2008; consequently the influence of pro-Kurdish parties cannot be examined for the entire 21st Century. As a result, when investigating the website of the main political parties, the focus shall be on the period from 2008 to 2013.

Next to investigating the websites of political parties, the most recent Progress Report of the European Commission is looked into and it is seen whether any mention of the Kurdish minority is made. A main problem with examining influences on foreign policy is that it is difficult to find proof of the influence or whether the timing is simply accidental. Everts and Isernia (2001) call this problem in relation to analyzing foreign policy issues, "their low level of visibility" (p. 3). Since the foreign policy domain is still highly secretive it is hard to assess which factors have played a role in foreign policy decision-making and which factors were less important or non-existent.

Claims that minorities play a role in foreign policy-making are double-checked via the website of the Knesset and the Grand National Assembly. This is

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[5] http://international.bdp.org.tr/.
[6] http://www.bdp.org.tr/devam/17-bdp-program.aspx.

done in order to find out whether the political parties really are an influence in foreign policy-making. It could namely also be the case that these parties do not play a role and that other non-examined factors were the cause of the policy change.

Examining Websites of the Relevant Political Parties in Israel:

As stated above, the websites of Hadash and Meretz are investigated in this session. On the official website Hadash considers herself to be a broad left-wing party with socialist roots (Hadash, 2013). When it comes to foreign policy demands, Hadash is aiming for a "demilitarization of Israel and the whole Middle East and the abolition of nuclear and chemical weapons" (Hadash, 2013). At the moment, Israel and the Middle East have not demilitarized. Israel and Hamas have only recently fought a war, violence has increased in Iraq (Markey, 2013) and Syria finds herself entangled in a severe civil war (Carpenter, 2013). The latter demand concerning the abolition of nuclear and chemical weapons is also facing a grim prospect. Officially, Israel does not make any comments whether or not it has nuclear weapons. Yet it is believed that Israel possesses approximately 200 nuclear warheads (Makovsky, 2012). Moreover, Israel is not a signatory of the non-proliferation treaty (Pexton, 2012).

In addition, concerning the Iranian nuclear program, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) proclaimed that Iran has not halted its uranium enrichment program. Finally, the American, British and French governments believe that chemical weapons are being used on a limited scale in Syria (Lynch & Warrick, 2013). To shortly summarize, the foreign policy demands of Hadash, concerning the demilitarization of Israel and the Middle East and the abolition of chemical and nuclear weapons, do not seem to be met.

Other Hadash demands include achieving a Just Peace with the Palestinians and the support of a two-state solution, one state for Israel but also one for the Palestinians. The two-state solution has been proposed and agreed upon during the Oslo Accords of 1993. One positive development has occurred in the 21st Century, when former Prime-Minister Sharon decided to dismantle all Jewish colonized villages in the Gaza Strip (David, 2012, p. 518). However, other signs have been less promising.

During the 21st Century more Jewish settlers have moved to the West Bank. It was estimated that in July 2012 there were more than 350.000 Jewish settlers living in the West Bank (Jewish Virtual Library, 2013). Moreover, with the wall crossing through West Bank territory, the two-state solution does not seem to be achievable in the short run. What is more, the Peace Process between Israel and the Palestinians has not seen any major development since the 2000 Camp David Accords and the 2003 Road map to peace (Agbaria & Mustafa, 2010, p. 718). Since peace negotiations have been scarce since 2003, a two-state solution becomes increasingly difficult. One further difficulty for the two-state solution is the fact that the Palestinians themselves are divided. Where Fatah is controlling the West Bank at the moment and recognizes Israel, Hamas is controlling the Gaza Strip and has until 2006 called for the destruction of the Israeli state (McGreal, 2006). Thus, the signs for a viable two-state solution and for a Just Peace are hardly visible. Over the last decade it should be clear that the demands of Hadash for a Just Peace and a two-state solution with the Palestinians have not been met.

In concordance with the above that there are no signs that the pro-Arabic political party Hadash has influenced Israel's foreign policy, Hadash herself does not mention any foreign policy issues when mentioning achievements of the party. Most of these achievements were on environmental or sociological issues, such as

countering discrimination against women. Yet no foreign policy achievements are explicitly mentioned (Hadash, 2013).

Just like Hadash, Meretz is a left-wing party concerned with human rights in Israel (Meretz, 2013). On the official website, the party states that it is mainly concerned with social issues (Meretz, 2013). Moreover, just like Hadash, the party is fighting discrimination. Unlike Hadash, however, the demands of the Arab minority are not mentioned on the website of Meretz. When investigating the foreign policy demands of Meretz, the party is also striving for an Israeli-Palestinian peace but as was stated above the prospects for such a peace are grim. Conform to the claims made above Meretz realizes that the Peace Process with the Palestinians is stuck in a stalemate, that Jewish settlements are growing in the West-Bank and that the prospect of a two-state solution is declining. Moreover, the party claims that Israel's both wars against Hamas have led to an unprecedented international isolation of Israel (Meretz, 2013).

In order to achieve a two-state solution, Meretz is calling for the revival of the Peace Process "between the Israeli and the Palestinian Governments" (Meretz, 2013). Moreover, Israel should immediately *de facto* recognize the Palestinian State. The third point of the plan is that a Regional Quartet should be installed to strengthen the Peace Process. Interestingly, Saudi-Arabia should be one of the four members of the Regional Quartet, even though the state does not recognize Israel. The final point of Meretz's Four Point Plan calls for a solution to the broader Israeli-Arab conflict so that a Regional Peace can be created (Meretz, 2013). So far, only Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) have recognized Israel in the Middle Eastern region.

Some questions, however, remain with Meretz's Four Point Plan. First of all, concerning the point of *de* facto recognizing the Palestinian State, how can Israel recognize a Palestinian State when the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are divided into two different entities with Fatah leading the West Bank and Hamas Gaza? With the Palestinian territories being controlled by two different organizations, Meretz does not explicitly proclaim whether Israel should recognize both governments or should strive for one Palestinian State.

An additional question that remains is that Meretz does not specify with whom Israel should talk when the Peace Process is revived. On the one hand, Hamas won the last Legislative Elections held in January 2006, on the other hand, Israel has fought two wars with Hamas and the latter does not recognize the Israeli state. It would then seem easier for Israel to talk to Fatah, which is in control of the West Bank. The problem, however, with this option is that it would most likely not lead to a durable peace, since Fatah does not control the Gaza Strip and it is along the Gaza Strip where Israel's last two conflicts have occurred (Rodman, 2013).

One essential difference that Meretz openly proclaims and Hadash remains silent about, is that Regional Peace is needed. As was mentioned before, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi-Arabia all do not recognize Israel. In order to create Regional Peace, it would be essential for Israel to talk to these countries and to establish official relations on the long-run. Due to the Syrian Civil War, a peace agreement between Syria and Israel is highly unlikely. It is first necessary that one organization controls all of Syria before equal talks between Syria and Israel can start. An immediate Peace Process between Lebanon and Israel will most likely also face major problems. One of the fears is that the conflict in Syria will also affect Lebanon (Shashank, 2012). An additional problem is that some political parties in Lebanon, such as Hezbollah, still

have a military wing. These armed forces need to be disarmed in order to create a sustainable peace between Israel and Lebanon. As Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese government at the moment, peace between Israel and Hezbollah is rather unlikely.

A majority of Israeli Arabs lives close to the Syrian and Lebanese border yet Meretz does not mention the Arab minority and whether it should have a voice in the Regional Peace Process. This is the more striking, since the Israeli-Arabs constitute a majority in Israel's Northern District, which is the sole District bordering Lebanon and Syria. Hence, there are no signs that the Arab minority in Israel should play a role in the Four Point Plan of Meretz. Neither does Meretz state that the Arabs should have a say in the Regional Peace Plan with Syria, Lebanon and Saudi-Arabia.

When it comes to accomplishments, Meretz does not mention any foreign policy achievements on her website. This is comparable to Hadash. Meretz, just like Hadash, primarily mentions achievements on social issues. After investigating the websites of Hadash and Meretz there are no signs that the parties have influenced foreign policy or that the Arab minority should play a role in the Peace Process with the neighboring states.

There is an additional problem for the parties that represent the Arab minority. All three political parties, Hadash, United Arab List and Balad, have never made it into government. Meretz has been a coalition partner multiple times in the 1990s but the last time it joined a government was under Prime-Minister Ehud Barak's Labor Party in 1999 and Meretz already left the government after a year in June 2000 (Knesset, 2013). Since this study is merely investigating the 21st Century and since Meretz has not been in government for more than a decade, it becomes clear that Meretz has played a very limited role in government during the 21st Century. The

three main Israeli-Arab parties did not play any role at all in government, as they have never been a coalition member in government.

Examining Websites of the Relevant Political Parties in Turkey:

When investigating the program of the pro-Kurdish BDP, it is important to recall that this information was translated from Turkish to English, in order to compare the website with Hadash and Meretz. The BDP calls for a peaceful solution with the Kurds through strengthening democracy in Turkey. Moreover, the parry asks for collective rights and aims at the adherence of human rights in Turkey (BDP, 2013). This demand for collective rights is similar to the demand of the pro-Arabic political parties in Israel. Jamal (2011) namely argues that the Israeli-Arab parties also want collective rights for the Arab minority in Israel (Jamal, 2011, p. 40).

Going back to the BDP, the pro-Kurdish party demands that Kurdish shall be used as a language in education. An additional demand of the BDP is that civil society is needed in Turkey as a whole and in the regions of Turkey in particular. Yet no statements are made on how Turkey should handle the Kurds living abroad. The BDP concentrates on collective rights for the Kurds living in Turkey and it argues that economic inequality should be reduced so that people living in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, where most Kurds live, can increase their income (BDP, 2013).

With regard to foreign policy-making, the BDP claims a framework is needed based on equality with other states and the adherence to human rights. Moreover, inter-state problems need to be solved peacefully through dialogue. In addition, the BDP demands that Turkey complies with international organizations, such as the

European Union, the United Nations and the Council of Europe so that democratic rights are strengthened. Hence, the BDP puts pressure on the Turkish government to comply with international law and that Turkey needs to be democratized. The BDP argues that international organizations, such as those mentioned above, can be an influence on Turkey's compliance with international law.

It should come as no surprise that the BDP wants the Turkish government to comply with international organizations, such as the EU and the Council of Europe, As both organizations and especially the European Court of Human Rights, which is the legal part of the Council of Europe have previously supported the Kurds in their legal struggle against the Turkish state (Kurban, 2013).

Since the BDP wants Turkey to adhere to the democratic demands of the EU, it is logical that the BDP is a proponent of Turkey joining the EU (BDP, 2013). In order to accelerate Turkey's accession to the European Union, the BDP calls for the unification of Cyprus in which the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots should live brotherly together in one state. As Turkey is the only state that recognizes the independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the BDP call for a unification of Cyprus is likely not to be heard from the governing AKP in Ankara. Even though the conflict in Cyprus ended in 1974, steps toward reconciliation between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots are limited. Hence the BDP demand for one state in Cyprus based on equality is unlikely to occur soon.

With regard to the Middle East, the BDP demands regional integration of the countries in the Middle East in order to democratize the region. In concordance with the statement above, relations between the Middle Eastern states need to be peaceful and wars need to be avoided at any time. In the region, the BDP is calling for the establishment of regional associations with Middle Eastern states. The party is calling

for increased cooperation amongst the Kurdistan Federal Region, which includes the Kurds in Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Concerning regional cooperation, Turkey and Iraq have intensified their economic relations over the last decade. In 2011, Iraq became the 2nd largest export market for Turkey, with a total worth of more than \$8 billion (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, 2012). Tocci (2013) argues that most of Turkey's trade is with Northern Iraq, where the Kurds are in government. Since 2007 Turkey has accepted the autonomy of the Kurds in Iraq and has also established official ties with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) (Tocci, 2013). Turkey has even become the main economic partner of the KRG. Hence, regional cooperation, what the BDP is demanding for, seems to be increasing.

Tocci (2013), however, also argues that the BDP demand for group rights is not receiving support from the European Union. She argues that in the past when the Kurds were still calling for individual rights, EU support was considerably larger than now (p. 7). She even comes with a strong statement that the EU now has hardly any impact on Turkey's political reforms.

European Commission Progress Report:

Now that the websites of the political parties are examined, the latest Progress Report of the European Commission is looked into and it is seen whether there is any mention of the Kurds influencing foreign policy. Yet little notice about the Kurdish minority is made in the latest Progress Report of the European Union. Some statements are made concerning the use of the Kurdish language in prison. The Commission reports that restrictions exist on the use of the Kurdish language in

prison. Moreover, there are limitations to the freedom of expression for Kurdish writers and journalists (European Commission, 2012). With regard to the terrorist attacks by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the European Commission strongly denounces these attacks and once again stresses that the PKK is listed as a terrorist organization in the EU. Overall, no mention is made concerning the role of the Kurds in Turkish foreign policy. Regarding the progress on the Kurdish question, the report states that no improvement has been achieved (European Commission, 2012, p. 34).

Conclusion and Implications:

The aim of this essay was to find out to what extent Kurds and Arabs influence Turkish and Israeli foreign policy. There was particular interest in the pro-Kurdish BDP party and the Arab-Israeli oriented parties, Hadash and Meretz. One of the key demands of Hadash was the demilitarization of Israel and the Middle East. In addition, the party is in favor of a two-state solution with the Palestinians. During the last decade there are no signs that these demands are attainable in the short-term and hence, the influence of Hadash on Israeli foreign policy is negligible to non-existent.

Meretz admits that the Peace Process between Israel and the Palestinians is stuck and the party calls for a Four Point Plan to break the current stalemate. The party, however, does not specify with which Palestinian party Israel should negotiate. This is problematic as Fatah is in power in the West Bank and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. In addition, it has been argued that one of the aims of Meretz, the quest for a Regional Peace, seems unattainable at the moment due to the Syrian Civil War and Hezbollah being part of the government in Lebanon. More importantly, on the official English-speaking website of Meretz, the party does not mention that the Arab

minority in Israel should play a role in the Regional Peace Process. Thus it has been argued here that there are no signs of Hadash and Meretz influencing Israel's foreign policy or that the parties want the Arab minority to play a role in Israel's foreign affairs.

The pro-Kurdish BDP is less concrete in its foreign policy demands compared to Meretz and Hadash. The party is in favor though of the unification of Cyprus. Yet comparable to the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, steps towards reconciliation in Cyprus have hardly been made during the 21st Century. Hence, the BDP demand of Cyprus its unification does not seem to be attainable anytime soon.

Regarding the Middle East, the BDP is calling for increased cooperation among states based on democratic values. The main problem here of course is that most countries in the Middle East cannot be considered democratic at all. Nevertheless, economic cooperation is increasing. Turkey's trade with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in Northern Iraq has increased considerably since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. Turkey even recognizes KRG autonomy in Northern Iraq. Hence regional cooperation, what the BDP is demanding, seems to be increasing. Yet no signs could be found that the BDP played a role in Turkey's decision to increase her ties with the KRG. Thus, all in all, no proof could be found of the BDP influencing Turkey's foreign policy.

In this paper it was due to scarcity of time not possible to investigate in-depth Kurdish and Arab diaspora influence as an Independent Variable on Turkish and Israeli foreign policy. The more general question is maybe even more important to analyze: why should diaspora influence foreign policy-making of their country of origin? This latter question needs to be tackled in future research and cases should be selected where diaspora influence is most likely.

Additional research can also investigate in detail the role of the EU and the Council of Europe in supporting the Kurdish quest for minority accommodation. The Progress Report of the European Commission should then be analyzed on a yearly basis from 1998 onwards. Moreover, judgments at the European Court of Human Rights could have played a factor for the Turkish government, as the latter has increasingly accommodated the Kurdish minority. Future research could try and find out whether a correlation or even causation exists between judgments at the European Court of Human Rights and Kurdish minority accommodation.

Implications:

The first implication of this research is that Moore's hypothesis cannot be defended. Moore (2002) namely argued that minorities can influence foreign policy even when they are opposed by the majority. As has been shown in this thesis, the Kurds and Arabs are disenfranchised compared to the national average, but according to Moore (2002) they could still play a role in foreign policy-making. As no signs were found of Kurdish and Arab influence, Moore's hypothesis can no longer be sustained.

Previous research has shown that minorities have influenced American foreign policy, but the two cases here were dissimilar compared to the United States. As has been stated before, minority issues do not yet seem de-securitized in Turkey and Israel, as they are in Western Europe or the United States. For future research it would be essential to investigate whether national minorities in Europe do influence foreign policy-making. An example could be the Catalans in Spain. Just like the Kurds they cannot count on the backing of a state, as no Catalan state exists until now. The Catalan case would not be as dissimilar to the US as the Kurdish case, as the quest for Catalan autonomy is non-violent. Moreover, the average income in Catalonia is higher

than the Spanish average, which was not the case for the Kurds in Turkey. A close examination of Catalan influence on Spanish foreign policy should make it easier to find out whether the findings in the United States, where minorities did play a role in foreign policy decision-making, can be generalized to more countries.

A potential case, similar to the Israeli-Arabs, would be the Hungarian minority living in Romania. Also here frictions seem to occur between the majority and the minority. Two differences between Romania and Israel would be that the former is an EU member state, whereas Israel is no member. Hence, Romania should have accommodated its minorities before joining the Union. Yet, the EU member state does not grant the Hungarian minority official language status. In Israel though, Arabic is the second official language after Hebrew. Granting minorities with an official language status then is the second difference between Romania and Israel. Concluding, additional research is essential to find out whether national minorities in other countries, besides the selected cases for this study, can influence foreign policy-making. In this paper there were no signs that Kurds and Arabs influenced foreign policy-making.

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