THE KURD INDUSTRY:

UNDERSTANDING COSMOPOLITANISM IN THE

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Kurd Industry: Understanding Cosmopolitanism in the Twenty-First Century

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This dissertation is largely concerned with the tension between human rights principles and political realism. It examines the relationship between ethics, politics and power by discussing how Kurdish issues have been shaped by the political landscape of the twenty-first century. It opens up a dialogue on the contested meaning and shape of human rights, and enables a new avenue to think about foreign policy, ethically and politically. It bridges political theory with practice and reveals policy implications for the Middle East as a region. Using the approach of a qualitative, exploratory multiple-case study based on discourse analysis, several Kurdish issues are examined within the context of democratization, minority rights and the politics of exclusion. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, archival research and participant observation. Data analysis was carried out based on the theoretical framework of critical theory and discourse analysis. Further, a discourse-interpretive paradigm underpins this research based on open coding. Such a method allows this study to combine individual narratives within their particular socio-political, economic and historical setting. It helps in the framing of Kurdish experiences to explore the ideological dimensions of Kurdish problems and processes of the Kurdish struggle in Iraq, Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, human rights, ethics, political realism, Kurds, Middle East

To my mother

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LIST OF ACROYNMS

AKP: Justice and Development Party

AQI: Al-Qaeda in Iraq

CHP: Republican People's Party

CPA: Coalition Provisional Authority

DDKO: Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Centers

GABB: Association of the Southeastern Anatolian Region Municipalities

HDP: Peoples' Democratic Party

IHD: Human Rights Association

ILO: International Labor Office

IMK: Islamic Movement of Kurdistan

IRGC: Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution

IS: Islamic State

ISI: Islamic State of Iraq

ISIL (ISIS): Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)

ITF: Iraqi Turkoman Front

KCK: Kurdish Communities Union

KDP: Kurdistan Democratic Party

KDPI: Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan

KHRP: Kurdish Human Rights Project

KNC: Kurdish National Congress

Komala: Revolutionary Organization of Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan

KRG: Kurdish Regional Government

PJAK: Party for the Free Life of Kurdistan

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

PSC: Production-sharing Contract

PUK: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

PYD: Democratic Union Party

TAF: Turkish Armed Forces

TCK: Turkish Penal Code

TSK: Turkish Armed Forces

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1. KURDS, GLOBAL ETHICS, AND IMPERIAL POLITICS

1.1 Introduction

There are 28 million Kurds dispersed across five independent states, representing the world's largest stateless nation. They are marginalized geographically, politically and economically in each of their host countries.[1] The historical Kurdish demands for self-determination, in fact, date back to the end of World War I, when the European promises to deliver a state to the millions of Kurds went unfulfilled. The Kurdish predicament has existed within Turkey since the genesis of the Turkish Republic in 1923,[2] with Iraq since the Treaty of Sevres in 1920,[3] and with Iran since the Qajar Dynasty in the mid-nineteenth century.[4] While

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[1] "Look, from the Arabs to the Georgians/ The Kurds have become like towers./ The Turks and Persians are surrounded by them./ The Kurds are on all four corners./ Both sides have made the Kurdish people/ Targets for the arrows of fate./ They are said to be keys to the borders/ Each tribe forming a formidable bulwark./ Whenever the Ottoman Sea [Ottomans] and Tajik Sea [Persians]/ Flow out and agitate,/ The Kurds get soaked in blood/ Separating them [the Turks and Persians] like an isthmus." Written by Ahmad-i Khani (1650-1706) in 1695, this epic love story between Mem and Zin, expresses in more than 2,650 couplets the contemporary puzzle of the Kurdish struggle: a group of people, clearly identified as a nation, are ensnared by state oppression and forceful assimilation policies on account of their strategic location. The poem is considered by Kurdish nationalists to be the "Kurdish national epic" due to its direct references to the first instances of Kurdish nationalism. See Amir Hassanpour, *Nationalism and language in Kurdistan, 1918-1985* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), 53. Hakan Ozoglu argues, however, that Khani in his 17th century poetry generally complained about the Safavi or Ottoman rule and expressed his desire for a Kurdish king, therefore, there is no proof that this adds up to the origins of the Kurdish nationalist ideology. See Hakan Ozoglu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004), 32-33.

[2] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State* (New York, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 26.

[3] The Treaty of Sevres is particularly important because it led to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and left oil-rich Mosul and Kirkuk to the British Mandate. Gareth R. V. Stansfield, *Iraq: People, History, Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 67. What would happen to the Ottoman territories was already decided a few years earlier in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916.

[4] The first Kurdish rebellion in Iran took place under the leadership of Sheik Obdeidullah. The Pahlavi Dynasty successfully integrated the Kurds within the Persian social discourse and the Iranian Kurdistan with Tehran. However, when the Russians and the British invaded various parts of Iranian territories during World War II, it led to the the reawakening of Kurdish demands and subsequently the emergence of the first Kurdish political party, Komala Jiwaneyew Kurd (The Kurd Resurrection Group). See David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2007), 53-67.

the Sunni Arab world remained silent over the atrocities of Saddam Hussein– Iran at times offered shelter out of sheer self-interest– the Kurdish struggle for independence has been compromised by the tragedy of great power politics. American promises have fallen victim to realpolitik calculations, thousands of Kurds have immigrated to Europe,[5] and the ones who stayed have found themselves repressed at the hands of Arabs, Persians and Turks.

The Middle East's once "forgotten people" have gained full visibility in the international arena since The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) gained control of Iraq's second largest city Mosul and other northern provinces in June 2014 (Figure 8). The Sunni jihadist armed group, 15 times smaller than the Iraqi military forces, later captured the country's largest oil refinery that produces one-third of its oil production. Iraq is now disintegrating. The violence has killed more than 1,000 people, and displaced nearly 500,000 in the month of June alone.[6] The crisis might just be the thing that the Kurds have been waiting for to achieve their dream of independence. However, the question of Kurdistan is a deeply destabilizing one for the region. The post-2003 period has created new possibilities for the Kurds in Iraq,

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[5] According to McDowall, almost all Yazidis living in the Mardin-Midyat region of Turkey migrated to Germany to escape oppression. (Most Kurds are Sunni. Faylis are the Shia Kurds; they are mostly found in Iranian Kurdistan and Baghdad. Yazidis are the non-Muslim Zoroastrian Kurds. They live in northern Iraq). Due to severe conflicts within their respective home states, thousands of other Kurdish communities in Turkey, Iraq and Iran were also compelled to leave their homes. McDowall estimates that as high as 750,000 Kurds were displaced between 1980 and 2000 during what he calls "the refugee decades"– Iraq's Kurds fleeing to Britain, Turkey's Kurds to Germany and Iran's Kurds to France. See McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 11 & 457. The issues facing Yazidis and Faylis will be discussed later. For a detailed account on the Kurdish ethnic and religious diversity, see Martin van Bruinessen, Kurtluk, *Turkluk, Alevilik: Etnik ve Dinsel Kimlik Mucadeleleri [Kurdishness, Turkishness and Alevism: Struggles for Ethnic and Religious Identity]* (Istanbul: Iletisim Publications, 1999).

[6] The UN News Centre, June 24, 2014, accessed June 27, 2014, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48117#.U63HHPm-2G4

Iran, Turkey, and most recently in Syria. The latest discoveries of major gas fields in the Iraqi Kurdistan and the Kurds' increasing role in the revolution in Syria raise the importance of the Kurds as an indispensable social and economic factor in U.S. foreign policy. The PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) insurgency has legitimized Turkey's illegal cross-border raids in northern Iraq, placing greater strains on the relationship between Washington and Ankara. The rising levels of political turmoil in Syria, tribal provincialism, religious fundamentalism, ISIS's increased attacks, Maliki's one-man rule in Iraq, and Washington's lack of progress in defeating Sunni insurgency have vast implications not only for the Kurds, but also for American national security and regional stability. The United States, in collaboration with Turkey and Iran, as the major player in the destiny of the Kurds in Iraq, stands firmly with its policy against the establishment of an independent Kurdistan and seeks to increase the power of the Maliki government to serve its political objectives. Studying the Kurds is therefore more pressing than ever before. Understanding the possibilities and roadblocks in their struggle for self-determination and its potential consequences for the greater Middle East has significant implications for diplomatic relations between the East and the West.

1.2 Ethics, Politics and Power

The significant transformations in the Middle East's geostrategic map in the post-2003 era make the Kurdish situation one of the most difficult moral and political dilemmas facing a number of countries. The underlying paradox here is the interplay between ethics, politics and power. As events unfold in the region affecting the future

of the Kurdish minorities in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and now Syria, the Kurds have been objects of nationalist attachments and imperial goals. The internal tension between human rights principles and political realism has become particularly apparent.

The Kurdish struggle has opened up an evolving and open-ended dialogue about the possibility of pursuing a way for human rights to complement politics and state power. It has also played a crucial role in mobilizing and energizing a new avenue to think about foreign policy, in a meaningful way. There is a growing concern for understanding "the ethical" in world politics. At stake is whether matters of human rights can be determined not by relations of power or interests, but rather by universally applicable regulative principles applied in a consistent way. The Kurdish struggle also raises questions about whether attainable objectives can be reached in international politics via a moralistic approach. This reflects the inherent tension between principles and interests, idealism and political realism, the universal and the particular and the theory of "the ethical" and the political reality of traditional pragmatic concerns.

In modern human rights philosophy, the conceptions of human rights have their theoretical origins in John Locke's theory of natural law: the rights to life, liberty, health and property, natural rights that all men and women have in a state of nature before the introduction of a social contract within a society. However, until the end of World War II, most governments regarded human rights as trivial matters, inconsequential to their national security interests and their global politics. Throughout much of the post-war period, a global diffusion of human rights norms and instruments became an integral part of the political discourse. Their rapid

advancement to the forefront of world politics in the last century has been characterized by Kirsten Sellars as "the rise and rise of human rights."[7] Today, human rights has become a normative framework, a standard of international legitimacy, with treaties and institutions regulating international bodies and governing policies and practices. However, as Thomas Keenan explains, "We have politics because we have no grounds, no reliable standpoints— in other words, responsibility and rights, the answers and the claims we make as foundations disintegrate, are constitutive of politics."[8] Keenan's point highlights the impossibility of divorcing human rights theory from the workings of politics and reducing it to its philosophical text. It is merely difficult to have an abstract discussion on human rights; a discussion about what is ethical requires a multiplicity of conversations, including one on political realism.

The beginnings of political realism as a political thought can be found in Thucydides' descriptive historical methodology *History of the Peloponnesian War* (410 BC). Machiavelli's *Prince* and Hobbes' *Leviathan* contributed significantly to the development of this line of political thought. It was expanded by Baruch Spinoza,

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[7] Kirsten Sellars, *The Rise and Rise of Human Rights* (Stroud, UK: Sutton Publishing, 2002).
[8] Thomas Keenan, *Fables of Responsibility: Aberrations and Predicaments in Ethics and Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 3.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and even Shakespeare's *Richard III*.[9] These works individually contributed to how the concept of interest came to be defined in terms of power. Despite their relatively small differences, they share a view of international relations as a realm of "power and interest"[10] wherein the players struggle to exist in a constant environment of existential threats. Spinoza, in particular, gave a prominent place to the idea of pragmatic outcomes. He believed that political theory needed to be concerned with delivering social, political and/or economic results, rather than inaccessible ideals. Since the international system was characterized by the pursuit of power, national interests were to be employed in order to reach a desired end, he argued. Dependence on other states was not really an option.

David Forsythe explains, "as long as states must provide for their own security in the absence of responsible world government, realist principles will never be totally absent from foreign policy."[11] Human rights are bound by the workings of power, and their capabilities in international relations "depend upon a wide range of

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[9] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, ed. M. Finley and trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Books Limited, 1972); Thomas Hobbes and C. B. Macpherson., *Leviathan* (London: Penguin, 1988); Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. and ed. William J. Connell (Boston: Bedford⁄St. Martin's, 2005). For Spinoza's philosophy on political realism, see Benedictus de Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-politicus: A Theological and Political Treatise*, trans. Robert Willis (London: Williams and Norgate, 1868), Benedictus de Spinoza and R. H. M. Elwes, *A Theologico-Political Treatise, and a Political Treatise*, trans. R.H.M. Elwes (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2007) and Benedictus de Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. James Gutmann (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1949). Also see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On The Social Contract* (Cambridge, MA: Hackett Publication Company, 1988); and William Shakespeare, *Richard III* (New York: Signet Classics, 1998).

[10] Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7.

[11] David P. Forsythe, *Human Rights in International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 141.

specific cultural, social and political factors."[12] Even though the pursuit of human

rights is not feasible without any reference to political calculations, obsession with

power can neither be romanticized nor accepted as a norm. Using human rights to

advance state interests or power, or what Rousseau calls the "appearance of the

right,"[13] "is ultimately self-defeating."[14] The presence of the human right is false and

pre-calculated for ulterior motives; the idea of what is ethical and just rises from

selfish motives as a means of exploitation, he argues:

> Whoever, renouncing in good faith all the prejudices of human vanity,
> seriously reflects on all these things, will discover at length that all these
> ground works of society, of justice, of law, of mutual defense, of help for the
> weak, of philosophy, and of the progress of reason are only lures invented by
> clever politicians or by cowardly flatterers to impose themselves on the
> simple.[15]

There will always be a tension "between the right of the stronger and the right

of the first occupant,"[16] Rousseau believed, and a conflict inevitably arises from this

tension between rights, ethics and interests. Such tension requires us to move

political theory beyond the abstract arguments and enter it into the political realm.

John Rawls' "overlapping consensus" [17] offers the most recent attempt to commingle

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[12] Wendy Brown, "Rights and Identity in Late Modernity: Revisiting the "Jewish Question,"" in *Identities, Politics and Rights,* ed. A. Sarat and T. Kearns, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 85-130.

[13] For Rousseau's discussion on the "appearance on the right," see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses,* trans. R.D. Masters & J.R. Masters, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 34.

[14] Stephen Eric Bronner, "Human Rights and Political Power," *Logos: A Journal of Modern Society and Culture* 10 no. 3 (2011): 1.

[15]Arthur M. Melzer, "Rousseau's Moral Realism: Replacing Natural Law with the General Will," *The American Political Science Review 77* no. 3 (September 1983): 644. For a larger discussion of Rousseau's moral realism, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Oeuvres Completes [Collected Papers],* ed. B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond (Paris: Pleiade, 1959).

[16] Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses,* 157.

[17] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

theory with practical politics. The basic idea in Rawls' argument is that human rights should not be treated as a philosophical abstraction derived from a single source and authoritative for everyone, but rather as a practical matter within its specific political context. The tension between human rights principles and interests accounts for the United States' double standard in its human rights foreign policy. Interest politics still governs America's participation or non-participation in an international legal order that it promoted around the world.[18] America's involvement in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Somalia and Bosnia, and its non-involvement in Rwanda and the three-year old Syrian civil war are among the notable examples. America's failure to act in Syria is an unmistakably calculated move. This was clearly expressed in President Obama's May 2014 West Point Commencement Address. The situation in Syria, from Obama administration's perspective, is not a situation of humanitarian crisis, but a situation of counterterrorism.[19] The contradictory standard in America's position in its support for the Kurds in Iran and and non-support for the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey reflects a similar paradox. This reveals the reality of the politics of the Kurdish struggle in the twenty-first century.

1.3 What is the problem?

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[18] Maybe she was not speaking for America as a whole, but Eleanor Roosevelt served as a chair to the committee that drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Over many debates with numerous influential political figures at her Washington Square apartment in New York City, she helped form the basis of the contemporary world opinion on human rights.

[19] Barack H. Obama, "West Point Commencement Address," West Point, NY, May 28, 2014, *Fox News,* accessed June 2, 2014, http://foxnewsinsider.com/2014/05/28/transcript-video-obama-lays-out-foreign-policy-west-point-commencement-speech

With the crisis in Syria and Iraq emboldening the country's Kurdish population, the world's largest stateless nation has become an increasingly important aspect of Middle Eastern politics: their growing independence in the region is seen as an indication of intensifying conflict and greater regional instability, and the protection of their cultural rights has become an imperative precondition to ensure the democratization process moves forward in Iran, Iraq and Turkey.[20] Until the ISIS crisis in early 2014, the Obama administration supported the Maliki government in Iraq against any other option. After all, decentralization might push the Kurdish region a bit closer to independence. Authoritarian or not, a united Iraq is more preferable for the American foreign policy.

The idea of an independent Kurdish state creates a conflict between the right to self-determination as an entitlement of international law and the national interests of their host states, specifically, in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. Unquestionably, there is a tremendous degree of complexity underlying the exercise of this right. Aside from the political strength of concerns about the territorial dismemberment of these existing states, the Kurdish populations in these territories have their own set of political, economic and moral obstacles. However, the greater problem, and the puzzle this research is primarily interested in solving is that the tension between rights and principles is used to provide a normative framework through which Kurdish rights are discussed in Middle Eastern politics.

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[20] George S. Harris, "Ethnic Conflict and the Kurds," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 433, no. 1 (September 1977): 112-124; Ahmet Icduygu, David Romano and Ibrahim Sirkeci, "The Ethnic Question in an Environment of Insecurity: The Kurds in Turkey," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no 6 (1999): 991-1010.

The early experiences of Iraqi Kurds share a similar history, characterized by two decades of repression and violence from Saddam Hussein's regime. Towards the end of the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), Baghdad was determined to stop brutally the revolts led by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) (both sided with Iran), and finally "solve the Kurdish problem and slaughter the saboteurs."[21] The infamous 1988 Al-Anfal campaign killed an estimated 180,000 people,[22] displaced 1.5 million people and destroyed 3,000 villages.[23] 70,000-80,000 Kurds never returned to their villages.[24] The term genocide has started to be used to describe the destruction perpetrated against the Kurdish peoples in Iraq in 1987-1988.[25] The Anfal campaign can be characterized under one of the categories of genocide of the UN Genocide Convention, which requires the physical destruction of the targeted group.[26] This research argues that Anfal was just an episode of a larger process – a coordinated process of state violence, oppression and the ethnic discrimination Kurds have experienced since the end of World War I.

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[21] Dave Johns, "The Crimes of Saddam Hussein: The Anfal Campaign, 1988" *Pbs.org*, January 24, 2006, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/iraq501/events_anfal.html

[22] According to BBC, there were around 100,000 casulties. BBC News, "1988: Thousands Die in Halabja Gas Attack," last modified February 25, 2013, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/16/newsid_4304000/4304853.stm

[23] Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2008*, 26 & Dave Johns, *The Anfal Campaign,* no page number.

[24] Joost Hiltermann, "Two Decades Later, Partial Justice for the Kurds," *The Boston Globe*, June 29, 2007, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/egypt-syria-lebanon/op-eds/two-decades-later-partial-justice-for-the-kurds.aspx

[25] Mohammad H. Tofiq, *A Brief on: Anfal as Kurdish Genocide and Its Similarity to the Holocaust,* (Erbil: Margaret Center, 2014) & Ali Mahmud Mhamad, *The Iraqi Recognition of Anfal Campaigns as Genocide,* (Erbil: Kurdocide Watch, 2012). A copy of these books were obtained from the authors at the International Association of Genocide Scholars Conference, July 16-19, 2014 in Winnipeg, Canada.

[26] See Article 2, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1948, accessed July 24, 2014, https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf

It contextualizes Anfal as a part of almost a century old state assimilation policies in Iraq and Turkey. What do the Kurdish experiences tell us about the other forms of group destruction? But who are the Kurds? But maybe a better question is – how are they socially and politically seen? How are these groups constructed?

In the post-2000 period, amidst the rising global demands for national security, governments tended to consider all movements using political violence as terrorist organizations. Due to its continuing armed struggle, the Kurdish movement has faced difficulties. The Kurdish position is that they have an inalienable right to self-determination and deserve basic political, economic, and cultural rights in their separated countries: Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Those countries' governments have framed these demands as a security issue, and as terrorism. In this vein, host states, namely Iran and Turkey, are burdened by a permanent security threat from the violent wing of the Kurdish insurgency (PJAK [Party for Free Life of Kurdistan] in Iran and the PKK [Kurdish Workers' Party] in Turkey). In a shared effort to eliminate the possibility of a viable Kurdish state, Turkish and Iranian cross-border bombardments into northern Iraq continue to kill and displace innocent civilians.[27] In 2009, an estimated 2,000 Turkish troops were permanently deployed in northern Iraq. The Iraqi villages located in the northeast of Erbil (the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan) near the Iran border have been subjected to sporadic Iranian shelling.[28] Kurds are perceived

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[27] Sebnem Arsu, "Turkey Attacks Kurdish Targets in Northern Iraq After Ambush," *New York Times,* August 18, 2011, accessed February 20, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/19/world/europe/19turkey.html. Also see, Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2009,* accessed November 2, 2012, http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/doc_details/263-impact-report-2009.html

[28] Impact Report 2009, 23.

to pose a separatist threat against the state and nationality unity in Iran and Turkey. Kurdish activists are met with systematic harassment, intimidation and sometimes prosecution.[29] According to the 2009 Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) report, in Iran and Turkey, Kurds are detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association owing to national security concerns.[30] While the current Turkish constitution (1982) does not recognize its 17 million Kurdish population as a minority (while including other ethnic, cultural and religious minorities),[31] Kurds face double discrimination in Iran as they follow the Sunni branch of Islam.

The framing of the Kurdish demands as a security issue and as terrorism by the states has greater implications. The targeting of Kurdish guerilla movements, whether it is the PKK or PJAK, takes away the liberty of assessing the excessive state violence against Kurdish populations. In this discourse of terrorism/counter-terrorism, where any demand for Kurdish identity and rights is presented as a separatist threat in Iran and Turkey, there can never be genuine or lasting peace in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, or in the greater Middle East. Continuing turbulence would have long-feared repercussions for U.S. foreign policy and U.S. counterterrorism strategy in the region.

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[29] ibid., 20-26.

[30] ibid., 21.

[31] It must be noted that as a result of the negotiation talks between Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK leader, and Hakan Fidan, the national spy chief, the Turkish parliament set up the Commission for Constitutional Agreement in October 2011 to draft a new civilian constitution which would replace the current constitution with a "fully democratic" one that addresses the Kurdish issues. For further information on the new Turkish constitution, see Zehra Cacan, "Presidential dreaming: How a peace deal with the Kurds could pave the way for a new Turkish constitution," *The Economist*, March 16, 2013, accessed May 2, 2014, http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21573554-how-peace-deal-kurds-could-pave-way-new-turkish-constitution-presidential

The greater puzzle here is what I call the "Kurd Industry:" the cultural and sociopolitical discrimination against Kurds as a group curtained in normative terms, norms, and meanings that emphasize the security, stability and territorial and political integrity of the states, the stability of the region was a part of an ideological canon. As in any given industry, the Kurd Industry has its manufacturers, myths and polemics, responsible for producing a distorted knowledge of the other, with reductive images and false descriptions of the Kurdish situation in the Middle East. It is constructed by outsiders to define the status of the Kurds for their own purposes. The Kurd Industry is a framework through which such distortion can be understood.

I observe that there is a fundamental problem with the literature on the Kurds – it has been entangled with ideological challenges from interested parties and actors. Plenty of research has been conducted on the Kurds, particularly on the triangular interaction between the Kurds in Iraq, Kurds in Turkey and U.S. foreign policy (M.A. Aziz 2011, A.K. Ozcan 2006, G.R.V. Stansfield 2007, K. Yildiz 2004, K. Katzman 2009, F. Koohi-Kamali 2003).[32] Most of the published work is journalistic. The few scholarly works analyze the issues from a security perspective to back "the ideological position of a particular group or political movement."[33] The Kurds are framed as a "problem," a "question," a "dilemma" or as an "imbroglio" (M. Gunter 2008, H. Yavuz 1998, C. Dundar 2009, H. Barkey & G. Fuller 1998, G.R.V.

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[32] See. M. A. Aziz, *The Kurds of Iraq: Ethnonationalism and National Identity in Iraqi Kurdistan* (London: I.B.Tairus, 2011); A.K. Ozcan, *Turkey's Kurds: A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006); Gareth R. V. Stansfield, *Iraq: People, History, Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007); K. Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: Past, Present and Future* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2004); K. Katzman, "The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq," *Congressional Research Service,* Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, 2009; and F. Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[33] Nader Entessar, *The Kurdish Politics,* vii.

Stansfield 2003, J. Brown 1995).[34] The argument is generally similar: The Kurdish situation is a cause of national and regional conflict, and creating an independent Kurdistan would threaten the territorial integrity of the pre-existing states.

Of course, Kurdish independence would have practical implications for the region as a whole; however, demands for an independent Kurdistan should not be quickly dismissed for the sake of regional stability. The recent past is full of examples of the international community's support for various nations' right to self-determination: South Sudan, Kosovo, Montenegro, Eritrea and Palestine are among the many. Human rights are indeed twisted around the contestability of politics, but maintaining a cohesive rhetoric in the international system, across time and space, without discrimination due to any singularity, entails a genuine cosmopolitan commitment to human rights. Hence, solving the Kurdish issue entails a cosmopolitan commitment to grant the Kurds formal recognition of their ethnic heritage, with cultural, social and political rights. What is at stake is whether human rights and cosmopolitan responsibility should be understood as universal rights entitled to all human beings without discrimination or whether they should be understood as arbitrary rights whose application should remain arbitrary based on practical political implications.

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[34] Michael M. Gunter, *Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008); Hakan Yavuz, "A Preamble to the Kurdish Question: The Politics of Kurdish Identity," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998); Can Dundar, "The Kurdish Question: The Reasons and Fortunes of the 'Opening'," *Insight Turkey* 11, no. 4 (2009); Henry Barkey & Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998). G. Stansfield, "The Kurdish Dilemma: The Golden Era Threatened," in *Iraqi Kurdistan: Political Development and Emergent Democracy,* ed. T. Dodge and S. Simon (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 131-148. James Brown, "The Turkish Imbroglio: Its Kurds," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 541 no. 1 (September 1995): 116-129, http://ann.sagepub.com/content/541/1/116#cited-by

1.4 Research Plan

This dissertation is largely concerned with the politics of cosmopolitanism –
the conceptual contours, the long-standing realpolitik trends and disproportionality
in human rights policies. In particular, it is concerned with the tension between
human rights principles and political realism vis-à-vis the Kurdish case. It examines
the relationship between ethics, politics and power by discussing how Kurdish issues
have been shaped by the political landscape of the twenty-first century. These issues
are studied within the context of democratization, minority rights and politics of
exclusion. In this vein, it is critical to understand five issues: (1) the origins of the
Kurdish predicament, which, based on the literature, can be traced back to the 1839-
1923 period; (2) the tension between human rights and political realism; (3) the
framing of the Kurdish issue in the Middle East post-2000; (4) the political interests
of Iraq, Turkey and Iran; and (5) the political interests of U.S. foreign policy.
Analyzing and examining these issues raise inherent theoretical and practical
questions. From a theoretical perspective, what do the Kurdish narratives tell us
about the status (social, political and economic) of Kurds in Iraq and Turkey? What
do the differences and commonalities of Iraqi and Turkish policies toward their
domestic Kurdish communities suggest about Kurdish politics in the Middle East?
What can Kurdish politics teach us about link among nationalism, state violence and
genocide? If such a link exists, how is it connected to the normative processes of
nation-state building in the contemporary political era in the Middle East? From a
practical perspective, what is the relationship between ethics, politics and power that
characterize the Kurdish case in the twenty-first century? What lessons can we draw

from the Kurdish experience to maintain a cohesive universal human rights agenda in global politics that exceeds economic, political and militaristic calculations?

The central theme of this dissertation is to generate theoretical and practical inferences around the fundamental argument that the Kurdish issue in the Middle East cannot be dismissed merely as a security or terrorism problem. It should be reconfigured as a form of struggle in its own right and an issue of human rights, democratization and cosmopolitanism. This research assesses Kurdish politics in Iraq and Turkey from a variety of national, regional and international angles. It provides some new normative perspectives for reassessing the complexity of the idealistic pursuit of human rights in international relations.

1.4.1 Approaches and Data

This study employed an explanatory, multiple-case study based on two cases. A qualitative mode of explanatory research seemed appropriate to develop explanations of Kurdish politics in the Middle East. Iraq and Turkey were chosen as the research sites to investigate the Kurdish experiences post-2000. The case study aimed at understanding the social, political and economic challenges of Kurdish-populated areas in these sites individually, and explaining, as a whole, how the differences and commonalities of Iraq and Turkish policies towards Kurds inform us about the processes of nation-state building in the contemporary political era and the causal links among nationalism, genocide and the role of the state in each case.

The qualitative data collection process included interviews, archival research and participant observation, which contributed to the triangulation of data. John W.

Creswell (1994) claims that research triangulated by drawing upon multiple data sources strengthens the robustness of the research and increases its internal validity.[35] Robert K. Yin (2011) explains the advantages of seeking at least three methods of data verification for strengthening the validity of a study.[36] Using these standards, data triangulation in this research confirms the validity of findings. The primary data collected for this research was from interviews, conducted with 20 key individuals from three groups of actors: Kurdish academics, government representatives and members of civil society organizations in Iraq and Turkey. Erbil in Iraq and Diyarbakir in Turkey were chosen as the research sites because they are considered to be the "Kurdish capitals" in their respective countries. The snowballing sampling method was used to recruit individuals to participate in the study. The interviews conducted were semi-structured and open-ended based on the following questions:

1. Can Kurds freely speak Kurdish at schools, businesses, government buildings, and public and private institutions?
2. Can Kurds freely practice their religion and customs?
3. Do Kurds face any social discrimination in the public?
4. Do the Kurdish regions face any deliberate economic discrimination?
5. When it comes to the Kurdish issues, how do you evaluate the situation in post-2000?
6. What is the future of the Kurds and how does that affect the Kurds in the region?
7. If there is a solution, what would you recommend to resolve the Kurdish problems?

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[35] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Sage Publications, 1994), 145.
[36] Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York: The Gilford Press, 2011), 81.

The reason for these many interviews is twofold: one, the empirical, statistical and survey data on the study of Kurds is incomplete. There is still no official data on the number of Kurds inhabiting the territories of Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Due to restrictive state policies and unforgiving repercussions, conducting impartial and independent research about the Kurds is arduous. Secondly, the respondents' experiences, knowledge and analyses are essential in understanding the challenges of democracy, minority rights and politics of exclusion. Michael M. Gunther conducted a similar study in 1992 and interviewed government officials to evaluate the Kurdish condition in Iraq.[37] The International Crisis Group recently interviewed government officials and members of civil society organizations in Diyarbakir, Turkey to assess the Kurdish situation there.[38] These interviews are vital contributions to the limited scholarship on the Kurds, and provide insightful guidance on their present-day challenges. Accommodating and addressing Kurdish demands is critical to the democratization process in Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria. The stability of the region is critical to international security and American foreign policy.

Archival research constituted the second data collection method employed in this study. It included both online and hard copies of collected books, issuances from the European Court of Human Rights, Kurdish state surveys, reports, censuses, election data, diplomatic correspondence with foreign representatives, and

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[37] See Michael M. Gunther, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992).

[38] International Crisis Group, "Turkey's Kurdish Impasses: The View from Diyarbakir," *Europe Report 222*, November 20, 2012.

pamphlets, journals, newspapers and magazines published by the Kurdish parties, civil society organizations and student organizations in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Europe and North America. Since 1991, Arabic and English have been widely used by the Kurdish administrations in Iraq. Many of these are in English, with some Turkish sources being translated and used as well. Most of the primary sources were gathered in Turkish archives such as the National Library in Ankara, the Parliamentary Library in Ankara, the Human Rights Association in Diyarbakir and Sarmasik (Association for the Alleviation of Poverty and Sustainable Development) in Diyarbakir. The collection of these archival sources required two field trips to Diyarbakir and Ankara in 2012 and 2013. I also relied on the reports provided by the Kurdish Human Rights Project in London, the Kurdish Institute of Paris, the Kurdish Institute of London and the Washington Kurdish Institute. In addition, I collected 300 newspaper articles from the Iraqi *Al-Rafidayn* between the dates of May 16, 2013 and January 17, 2010. This newspaper was selected because it is mainstream and state-owned. Only articles that contained the word "Kurd," "Kurdish" and "Kurdistan" were recorded (see Table 2). I also attended a number of events, forums and protests in Diyarbakir, Turkey to obtain additional information through observation (see Table 2). Further, I attended a total of 15 events in Diyarbakir to obtain additional information through observation.

Data analysis was carried out based on the theoretical framework of critical theory. Specifically, building on a theoretical discussion on Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of the culture industry as my organizing framework, with their particular contributions to the maintenance of the Kurd Industry – how the Kurds are

thought of and talked about and how they are constructed in the social and political discourse. The culture industry explains how the idea of Kurds operates in the global political discourse and the process of myth in the political persuasion. Three Kurdish myths are identified, analyzed and discussed. I also draw upon Immanuel Kant's insights into cosmopolitan rights and responsibilities to highlight the tension between human rights and political realism. Such tension is used to discuss the Kurdish issues and each myth is framed around this tension.

Further, a discourse-interpretive paradigm underpinned this research based on open coding. In examining the interview transcripts, discourse analysis was chosen as the primary method of analysis. It allowed this study to combine the individual narratives within their particular socio-political, economic and historical setting. It situated the participants' singular experiences within a larger context, in relation to Kurdish history, forms of cultural repression, the state role, nationalism and violence. It helped in the framing of Kurdish experiences to explore the ideological dimensions of Kurdish problems and the processes of the Kurdish struggle in Iraq and Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East.

1.4.2 Goals of This Study

The scope of this study is intended to cover Kurdish rights and their struggle to repossess their history, identity and politics. It focuses on what has happened to the Kurdish populations in the region in light of the tension between ethics and politics. Ethnic, economic and sociopolitical discrimination continue to feed the Kurdish condition in Turkey, Iran, Syria, and to a lesser degree in Iraq, contributing

to violence and serving as a major stumbling block to the region's relations with the West. Hence, my primary concerns in preparing this dissertation are for the well-being and the stability of the region as the key asset for American national security and foreign policy, and for the host countries' ability to resolve the Kurdish predicament in their respective territories. This is not, however, a study on Kurdish history, culture or society, nor is it a descriptive report on human rights violations in the Middle East. My objective is not to write a history of the Kurdish people. There is plenty of that in the literature: David McDowall's *A Modern History of the Kurds* (2004), Gerard Chaliand, Michael Pallis and David McDowall's *A People Without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan* (1993), Kevin McKiernan's *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland* (2006) and Michael M. Gunter's *The A to Z of the Kurds* (2009) and *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds* (2010).

The purpose of this research is to examine the concept of the Kurd Industry through the values, ideas and beliefs of a system that dominates the discourse on how the Kurds are socially and political seen in the twenty-first century. How are the Kurds constructed in Iraq and Turkey and how are they seen from the perspective of American foreign policy? Given the tension between human rights and political realism, the goal here is not simply to deconstruct and reconstruct the Kurdish discourse, but rather to genuinely engage critical theory with the practical concerns of politics, offer a new perspective and create a new space within which the Kurdish issues can be discussed. Using the Kurdish experience in the Middle East, this research also critiques the calculating American policies towards the Kurds. It calls for a cosmopolitan foreign policy – a foreign policy that remains faithful to the

republican democratic ideals and trustful of the belief in the universality of human rights; using American power to respect the dignity of the other as an end. My main thesis is that the problem with contemporary policies of human rights, including those of the United States, is that they are unevenly applied; human rights principles are universal. They must be analyzed and understood by everyone in the same terms. In other words, human rights should be recognized as universal rights to which all human beings are entitled without discrimination. They cannot be fathomed as rights whose application shall remain arbitrary based on practical political implications. Hence, ethically and historically, the Kurdish struggle illustrates the complexity of understanding cosmopolitanism in the twenty-first century.

1.5 Summary of Chapters

Following the introduction chapter, Chapter 2 provides background information, and it is important for analyzing the respondents' experiences. It begins with an overview of Kurds, their identity, history and politics, including the social, political, and economic challenges they face in Iran, Iraq and Turkey. It examines the processes of nation building and analyzes the origins and dynamics of state violence and assimilation practices, in terms of perpetrators and victims. It also draws attention to the key terms and concepts used by the state in understanding what happened to the Kurdish populations throughout the twentieth century. Building upon a depth of historical context, the chapter seeks to identify the differences and commonalities of Iraqi, Turkish, Iranian and Syrian policies toward Kurdish

populations in their domestic territories.[39] Can we identify a parallel across borders? If so, what does it tell us about broader theories of nation building processes in the Middle East, the link between nationalism and state violence and imperial politics for the last hundred years?

Chapter 3 addresses the methodology of this study, including research questions, research design and methodological concerns. The methodology of this research is predicated upon a qualitative analysis adopting a multiple-case study approach. The research questions are examined based on the triangulation of data, including observations, interviews and archival research. The chapter concludes with a discussion on ethical implications, issues of rigor and trustworthiness and the strengths and limitations of the research.

Chapter 4 presents the theoretical framework of this research. First, it uses the politics and ideological challenges of human rights. Then it includes a theoretical discussion on the concept of "culture industry," and demonstrates how Kurdish issues are situated within the critical theory research. Building upon Adorno and Horkheimer's ideas, it elaborates on the ideological marketing of Kurdish politics. It demonstrates the domains of interconnections between Kurdish issues, neoconservatism and Marxism, and illustrates the complexity of formulating ethical principles that can be applied universally.

Chapter 5 explains how the idea of the Kurds operates in the global political discourse: How are the Kurds culturally and politically seen? It combines the

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[39] Although my primary data set only pertains to Iraq and Turkey, I also included sections on Iran and Syria so that the read can identify parallels among the individual cases as a whole.

narratives collected during interviews in Iraq and Turkey with Edward Said and Frantz Fanon's contributions to understanding power, knowledge and violence. It analyzes the normative claims of the Kurd Industry: the cultural and sociopolitical discrimination against Kurds as a group curtained in normative terms, norms and meanings. The second part of the chapter examines the constructs and representations in the scholarship and reporting on Kurdish issues. It focuses on analyzing three Kurdish myths and links them to the theoretical orientations of the culture industry. It questions the ethical dimensions of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and America's realpolitik interests in the Kurdish struggle.

Chapter 6 provides the analytical core of this research obtained from the content analysis of the interviews. These results have helped identify the socio-political and economic challenges and the state assimilation policies used against the Kurdish populations in Iraq and Turkey in the post-2000 period. This chapter raises two significant questions: What do the Kurdish experiences tell us about the other forms of group destruction? How relevant is the idea of genocide in framing the Kurdish experience in Iraq and Turkey? How is this discussion related to the interlocutors of the Kurd Industry and its myths? This research hypothesizes that Anfal corresponds to episode of a larger process of destruction – a coordinated measures of state violence, oppression and the ethnic discrimination Kurds have experienced since the end of World War I. It contextualizes Anfal as a part of almost a century old state assimilation policies in Iraq and Turkey.

This dissertation concludes with an assessment of the interplay between cosmopolitan politics and ethical choice as a foreign policy strategy. It offers

suggestions for how the Kurdish predicament can be resolved, with key findings and policy implications obtained from the present research. It calls on policy makers to demonstrate a genuine cosmopolitan commitment to human rights: to maintain a consistent foreign policy agenda in the international system, across time and space, without discrimination due to any singular factors. Practically, this research calls for a solution within current borders. The resolution for the Kurdish predicament and ending the long-dormant suffering of Kurdish populations could serve as an engine and an anchor for the democratic development of the Middle East, where the state does not mistreat its citizens and citizens do not struggle with each other. Kurdish independence is hampered by serious practical challenges, but ensuring the Kurds' well-being within their host states can define a new relationship, reconfigure the state-society dichotomy in Muslim politics and pave the way for legally recognized minority rights.

1.6 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

This research opens a dialogue on the contested meaning and shape of human rights and enables a new avenue to think about foreign policy — ethically and politically. It concerns an analysis of human rights and cosmopolitanism by discussing how the Kurdish issues are shaped by the political landscape of the twenty-first century.[40] These issues are studied within the context of democratization,

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[40] "The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. Therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory." This quotation formed the basis of Edward Said's personal motivation to conduct a study to illuminate the social and political culture Orientalism created in the Near East. During my graduate studies, the

minority rights and a global hierarchy of power in the name of security. An integral part of developing a strong democratic foundation in the Middle East is the promotion of rights for ethnic, religious and other minorities. The role of minority rights in democratic transitions is indicative of the many social, economic and political challenges for the Kurds. Bridging the theory of democratic ethos and the practice of establishing a functioning democracy requires going beyond the artificial calculation that equals democracy to the concept of a multiparty electoral system. It entails a political system characterized not only by free and open elections but also by human rights, equality and liberalism.

This study's ability to bridge political theory with practice and reveal those policy implications supports its significance. The hopes of building a democratic order in Iraq cost the lives of more than 5,000 American and coalition soldiers. America is also paying a high price in the Arab public opinion.[41] In terms of its favorability in the Middle East, the U.S. is now behind China and Iran. Policy makers and scholars can learn the lessons from the Kurdish case and apply them to the newly emerged democracies in North Africa and elsewhere in the Middle East.

One of the strengths of this research is its use of multiple methods of data collection – semi-structured interviews, extensive archival research and, to a limited degree, participant observation. The difficult research setting is one of the most

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same quotation also encouraged me to reevaluate the policies imposed on the Kurdish populations of the Middle East. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1979), 25-26.

[41] This is based on a public opinion survey conducted in Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt and UAE by the Arab America Institute Foundation in 2011. According to the survey data, the U.S. was viewed less favorably than Iran and China in five of these countries. For the complete survey, see Arab America Institute Foundation, "Arab Attitudes," *Opinion Polls*, 2011, accessed May 5, 2014 http://b.3cdn.net/aai/3c5edf53ed2f56e799_5qm6ba4r9.pdf

important limtations. The security issues prevented me from being able to conduct interviews in Iran; hence, my interview data only pertains to Iraq and Turkey. My methodology also has clear limitations deriving from my lack of access to the sources in Persian and Arabic. However, my fluency in Turkish assisted me in conducting research at the National Library and Parliamentary Library in Turkey and in accessing resources that were translated from Arabic and Persian to Turkish but not available in English. Due to the British administration in Iraq until 1932, some Iraqi records are available in the British documents in English. Secondary sources are used to supplement the necessary data to bridge this information gap. In conclusion, findings obtained from qualitative credentials offer a picture of the "feeling on the street" among the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq. They provide evidence that analyses of forms of social, political and cultural repression are indispensable in framing the Kurdish experience in the Middle East.

The tension between ethics and politics is a one-dimensional problem impacting multi-dimensional geo-spaces in the world. Many nations today cannot have their own independent countries because their right to self-determination is stuck somewhere in between political calculations and interests. Palestinians have been engaged in a long protracted conflict with Israel since 1948. The Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pakistan are divided based on a border drawn artificially by England. This dissertation is limited to the investigation of the Kurdish case with a specific focus on answering the research questions. The successful transformation of the Kurdish experience is essential not only for the meaningful democratization

processes of the host countries, but also to the region and international society as a whole.

2. THE STATE AND VIOLENCE:

KURDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

2.1 Introduction

The Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the world without their own nation-state. With an estimated 30-38 million people, they are dispersed among different countries, living in the areas around the borders of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria (See Figure 1). Several factors contributed to the failure of an independent Kurdistan. Kurdish ambitions to rule their own territories were never realized. In the aftermath of World War I, the Kurds found themselves subjects of different states and endured brutal violence, genocide and assimilative and discriminative policies which shaped their lives for the next hundred years.

Kurdish history dates back a number of millennia and is characterized by power, politics and national interests. A brief overview of the history of the Kurds, their quest for independence or autonomy and the Kurdish ethnic conflict helps us understand the realities and struggles of the Middle East. David McDowall argues that it is a reductionist fallacy to conceptualize the Kurdish struggle as a liberation movement from the oppressive policies of their host states. "The truth is a good deal more complex."[42] The territory of Kurdistan[43] existed for hundreds of years and the Kurdish people lived side by side within the same political context as Persians, Arabs and Turks. In order to understand the factors molding Kurdish history and provoking

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[42] David McDowall, *The Kurds: A Nation Denied* (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1992), 4.
[43] Kurdistan refers to the land of Kurds. The use of the term remains controversial on grounds that it presupposes support for ideologically backing an independent Kurdish nation-state. (The Turkish government banned the usage of the term in the 1920s). For the purposes of this dissertation, I use the term "Kurdistan" simply to refer to the geographical location of the Kurds. It does not contain any political or ideological connotations.

violence, we must examine the nation-state building processes in the histories of Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Such examination provides a necessary understanding of the Middle East, clarifying its potential future and the U.S.'s role therein. Studying the Kurds is important because it is one of the most significant ethno-national conflicts in the Middle East after Israel-Palestine. Affecting the lives of millions of people, Kurdish aspirations for statehood undermines the region's security and economic well-being, and has significant implications for American foreign policy and national security. The Kurdish case also offers unique lessons about intricacies of nation-state building for minority groups, ethnic conflict, the politics of state power and human rights and the link between diversity and democracy in the Middle East.

It is the purpose of this chapter to define and elaborate on relevant Kurdish issues. It explores a connection between nationalism and violence, and between state assimilation practices and national security doctrine in describing the situation in the post-2000 period. In addressing these issues, the chapter also considers similarities and differences. Can we identify any patterns in Iran, Iraq and Turkey? The argument here is that the political or ideological desire to forcefully assimilate Kurds through a systematic process of social engineering was not apparent in Iran, Iraq or Turkey until the start of the modernization period. In all three cases, episodes of violence were spawned by nation-state building processes in the twentieth century, following the imperial vacuum created by the end of the Ottoman Empire and the partitioning of its land by England. The structural conditions were shaped by the specific attitudes, policies and practices of the imperial powers (Britain and France) and the modern state, and were driven primarily by security concerns.

2.2 Who are the Kurds?

Studies of the Kurdish language and civilization were conducted as early as the 18th century by two Italian Catholic missionaries: Maurizio Garzoni and Giuseppe Campanile.[44] There are many theories on the exact origins of the name "Kurd," although for the most part, it remains unclear.[45] Wadie Jwaideh believes that the term Kurd is related to the word "strong" or "warlike."[46] For David McDowall and Vladimir Minorsky, the word "Kurd" has a socio-economic meaning; it was used to refer to the ancient Persian nomads living in the Western parts of Iran.[47] Even though the origins of the Kurds are debatable, many historians trace the term "Kurd," as an ethnonym, to the Indo-European tribes of Persia in the second millennium BCE.[48] Some argue that Kurds are descendants of Old Iranian language speakers.[49] Others debate that they migrated to Kurdistan 4,000 years ago.[50] The formation of Kurdish ethnic identity is ascribed to a variety of different tribes, including Medes,

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[44] Ferdinand Hennerbichler, "The Origins of Kurds," *Advances in Anthropology* 2 no. 2 (May 2012): 64.

[45] Many sources date the origins of the Kurds through Sumerian inscriptions in 2,000 B.C., which indicate the existence of the people named "Kurti" living around Lake Van (eastern Turkey). It is assumed that Kurtis are the ancestors of the modern day Kurds. W.G. Elphinston, "The Kurdish Question," *International Affairs* 22, no. 1 (January 1946): 92.

[46] Wadie Jwaideh, *The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 12. In the ancient writings, it is observed that the name "Kurd" was associated with negative terms. For Al-Hamadani, Kurd meant "robber" and for Marco Polo, it meant "an evil generation, whose delight it is to plunder merchants." G.R. Driver, "Studies in Kurdish History," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 2, no. 3 (1922): 498.

[47] McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 9 & Vladimir Minorsky, "The Tribes of Western Iran," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 75, no. ½ (1945): 76.

[48] McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 8-9. Barthold Georg Neibuhr (1776-1831) famously argued that Kurds and Persians "are related." See Maria Brosius, *The Persians: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 78.

[49] Barthold Georg Neibuhr (1776-1831) and Vladimir Redorovich Minorsky (1877-1966) are the most notable ones.

[50] Matthew J. Gibney and Randall A. Hansen, ed., *Immigration and Asylum: From 1900 to the Present* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc, 2005), 368.

Hittites, Carduchi, Adianbene, Zila, Alans and Kassites.[51] Hence, it is difficult to talk about the Kurdish identity as a homogenous entity. Modern Kurds speak different languages and dialects, believe in different religions, and differ in their tribal culture.

For thousands of years, Kurds have inhabited the area that currently comprises southeastern Turkey, northern Iraq, northwestern Iran and northern Syria. Kurdistan roughly stretches from the northwestern Zagros and eastern Taurus mountain ranges throughout the Mesopotamian plains over 600 miles in length. Although the current statistical data on the number of the Kurds is contested by conflicting government and nongovernment sources, it is estimated that approximately 45% of the Kurdish population worldwide currently live in Turkey, concentrated in the southeastern part of the country.[52] The Kurds make up 18% of the Turkish population (14 million),[53] 15-20% of the Iraqi population (4.6-6.2 million),[54] 10% of the Iranian population (8 million),[55] and 15-20% of Syria's population (3.5-4.5 million).[56] There are also some estimated 850,000 Kurds

[51] Marianna Charountaki, *The Kurds and the U.S. Foreign Policy: International Relations in the Middle East since 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 33.

[52] Gibney and Randall, *Immigration and Asylum,* 368.

[53] Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook,* last updated February 20, 2013, accessed March 1, 2013 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html

[54] Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, last updated February 12, 2013, accessed March 1, 2013 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html

[55] Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook,* last updated February 5, 2013, accessed March 1, 2013 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html

[56] The estimates of some sources go as low as 1.5 million. Others roughly estimate the Kurdish population to be around 2 million. Radwan Ziadeh, "The Kurds in Syria: Fueling Separatist Moments in the Region?" *The United States Institute of Peace,* Special Report 220, April 2009, accessed May 29, 2014, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/kurdsinsyria.pdf; Erika Solomon, "Special Report: Amid Syria's Violence, Kurds Carve out Autonomy," *Reuters,* January 22, 2014, accessed May 29, 2014 http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/22/us-syria-kurdistan-specialreport-idUSBREA0L17320140122 & Michael Weiss, "Syrian Kurd Leader: Revolution Won't Succeed Without Minorities," *The Atlantic,* January 20, 2012, accessed March 1, 2013 http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/01/syrian-kurd-leader-revolution-wont-succeed-without-minorities/251660/

currently living in Western Europe,[57] 52,000 in Armenia and 26,000 in Georgia (see Figure 2 and 3).[58] Two factors that reveal the diversity in Kurdish ethnic identity are their language and religion. The language spoken by the Kurds can be grouped into four dialects: Kurmanji and Sorani, from the southwestern group of Iranian dialects, and Gurani and Zaza, belonging to the northwestern group of Iranian dialects.[59] As for religion, even though approximately 75 percent of Kurds follow the Shafi'i school of Sunni Islam, there are various religious peculiarities that distinguish their practices from one another.[60] Shia Kurds are known as Faylis. They are mostly found in Iranian Kurdistan and Baghdad. Yazidis are the non-Muslim Zoroastrian Kurds. They live in northern Iraq and in Iran.[61] Many have distinct religious orders such as the Alevis[62] in Turkey and Ahl al-Haqq (People of the Truth) followers in Azerbaijan and Iraq.[63] The diversity and the lack of unity in the Kurdish ethnic identity is a

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[57] Bahar Baser, "Kurdish Diaspora Political Activism in Europe with a Particular Focus on Great Britain," *Berghof Peace Support and Centre for Just Peace and Democracy*, 2011, accessed March 1, 2013 http://www.berghof-peacesupport.org/publications/SL_Diaspora_Papers_Baser.pdf

[58] Garnik Asatrian, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Kurds," *Iran and the Caucasus* 13 (2009): 3.

[59] Kurmanji and Sorani are the primary dialects. Kurmanji is generally spoken in the northern parts of Kurdistan whereas Sorani is spoken in the south. Gurani and Zaza are also commonly spoken. Gurani is spoken in southern Kurdistan; Zaza is common among Sunni and Alevi Kurds, and particularly Alevi Turks in Turkey. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 9-10 & Mahir A. Aziz, *The Kurds of Iraq: Ethnonationalism and National Identity in Iraqi Kurdistan* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 50-52.

[60] For instance, at Sufi *tariqas*, there are practices of self-mutilation. Tariqa is a school of Islam, particularly among the Sufi branches of Islam, oriented around mystical beliefs and spirituality.

[61] The majority of the Yazidis migrated to Soviet areas (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) in the nineteenth century. Under Stalin, many of them were deported to Central Asia. There are currently some Kurdish populations living in these places. Ismet C. Vanly, "The Kurds in the Soviet Union," in *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview*, ed. Philip G. Kreyenbroek and Stefan Sperl (London: Routledge, 1992), 193-218.

[62] Alevis should not be confused with the Alawites of Syria. The Alawite faith can be found in Syria. It is an offshoot of Shi'i Islam. It is a highly secretive sect that is only open to men. Alevis are the Muslim Turks who are not Sunnis or Shia. Alevism is open to both men and women.

[63] McDowall points out to the fascinating detail that the religion and language complement one another as a unique characteristic of the Kurdish ethnic identity. When analyzed, one can see that each religious group uses a particular language as its sacred language: Alevis speak Zaza, Yazidis speak Kurmanji and Ahl-i Aqq followers speak Gurani. See David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 10-13. For more information on Kurdish culture and society, see Lokman I. Meho and Kelly

product of their political history and extended geographical spread. Their demands for a unified nation-state are hampered by such diversity. In addition to the cultural plurality within the Kurdish culture, the land of Kurdistan was never entirely Kurdish; other ethnic groups, such as Armenians and Turkomans, also inhabited the land. Even though the Kurds, as a distinct nation, shared the same land for 4,000 years, their tribally structured societies acted autonomously and independently from one another and limited contact with outside groups. The Kurdish quest for statehood was further complicated in the twentieth century by European penetration into the Ottoman Empire and the rise of regional nationalism as a political ideology.[64] The separation of the Kurdish territories as entities of different nation-states, following the end of World War I, hurt their ability to unite around a common identity and cooperate for collective demands.

2.3 The Tribe and the State: Origins of Kurdish Nationalism

The origins of the Kurdish problems in modern-day Iran, Iraq and Turkey date back to the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century. The land of Kurdistan was never unified nor limited to exclusive Kurdish rule. Although various Kurdish dynasties ruled over some areas, no Kurdish tribe was able to achieve full domination over the entire territories of Kurdistan.[65] In the early sixteenth century, a considerable

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Maglaughlin, *Kurdish Culture and Society: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001).

[64] Marianna Charountaki, *The Kurds,* 34 & Nader Entessar, *The Kurdish Politics in the Middle East* (Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.), 1-14.

[65] These dynasties included Hassanawaih (959-979), the Marwanids (940-1096), and the Ayyubids (Saladin was probably the most powerful and well-known Kurdish ruler in history. Many sources indicate that Saladin is not beloved among Kurds because he did not emphasize his ethnic identity, only his religion). See Elphinston, *The Kurdish Question*, 93.

portion of Kurdistan came under Ottoman rule. In 1639, Sultan Murad IV and Shah

Abbas II negotiated a boundary that left the majority of the Kurds, including present

day Iraq and Syria, under the Ottoman authority until 1913. During the empire's

struggle with the Safavid Dynasty, the Kurds pledged their allegiances to the

Ottomans at the Battle of Chaldiran (1514). As a return for their cooperation, a

Kurdo-Ottoman pact was signed, granting the Kurds a degree of self-rule,

recognizing sixteen principalities and fifty Kurdish sanjaks (emirates). The pact

determined a political arrangement between the Kurdish tribes and the state and

defined the structures of a semi-independent Kurdistan for the next three hundred

years.[66] Despite its centralizing policies, the Kurdish principalities remained

autonomous under the Ottomans. During this period, the state-tribe relationship

achieved a degree of success and efficiency. On the other hand, under the Safavid

rule, the state's relationship with the Kurds was not as successful. The Shi'i Empire

was distrustful of the Sunni Kurds and thus largely driven to defend its frontiers

against them. There, Kurds failed to achieve any form of autonomy.[67]

In order to explain the reasons behind their successful relationship with the

Ottomans and why the Kurds were motivated to side with the state against their own

interests, we need to highlight the notion of what van Bruinessen refers to as "the

primordial loyalties": tribal loyalties among different Kurdish tribes that transcended

their feelings of national attachment.[68] These allegiances served as a powerful bond

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[66] Gerard Chaliand and Abdul R. Ghassemlou, *A People Without A Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan* (London: Zed Press, 1993), 11-23.
[67] David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 65.
[68] Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State,* 11 & 140-150.

among nomadic Kurds who were controlled by aghas (tribal chiefs). The state then relied upon these chiefs to control the Kurdish tribes around the empire's eastern borders.[69] Crawford Young rationalizes this pattern and argues, "Most individuals… have more than one cultural identity. Which has relevance will depend upon the situational context. So also will context determine the saliency and intensity of identities."[70] The Kurds lived autonomously under the Ottoman rule and Kurdistan was recognized as an official Ottoman province. The semi-sovereign structure of the tribes offered sufficient incentives for the tribal chiefs to side with the state.

In the Persian Empire, the tribe-state relationship was built within a very different context. Following the negotiation of the state's borders in 1639, the Persian government was concerned with preventing its Kurdish principalities from attaining any concessions or asserting a sovereign identity. To avert probable rebellions, the government deliberately promoted factionalism. Pursuing a policy of "divide and conquer," the government manipulated tribal hostilities and introduced instability into Kurdistan. By 1865, nearly all Kurdish principalities were under the state control.[71]

However, tribal semi-sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire eroded during the nineteenth century. With the emergence of Industrial Revolution, capitalist relations of production penetrated into the European society. As a result, the Ottoman state experienced several economic and political setbacks and rapidly lost its centralized

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[69] In other words, the disorder experienced during this period was mainly due to the hierarchies that existed between and among tribes, rather than rigid state control.

[70] Crawford Young, "Patterns of Social Conflict: State, Class and Ethnicity," *Daedalus* 111, no.2 (Spring 1982): 91.

[71] Entessar, *Kurdish Politics,* 15-16.

power.[72] Amidst the loss of authority, the Kurdish provinces were mostly left to rule themselves. In this political vacuum, Kurdistan became what Jonathan Randal calls a "mountainous irrelevancy."[73] As a hasty remedy and a frantic effort to combat its slow decline, the state launched the *Tanzimat* reforms in 1839 and 1856. Its goal was to reinstall authority, modernize society and reform taxation and military conscription. Nonetheless, the setbacks that plagued the empire resulted in further economic decline and eventual disintegration. Worsening social, political and economic conditions produced circumstances conducive for rebellion.[74] As in any multi-ethnic empire, ethnic segmentation posed serious challenges to the Ottoman state and society.

The peoples of the Balkans profited first from this disorder and took the opportunity to launch national liberation movements. 1878 became "the longest year of the [Ottoman] Empire."[75] First, Serbia became a fully independent state. This was followed by the independence of Wallachia and Moldavia in the same year, Bulgaria in 1908 and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro in 1912. [76] Closer to home,

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[72] Comparison to Europe's prosperity, Ottoman Empire experienced a number of economic and political setbacks due to internal and external pressures. Internally, the empire's political success was hampered by the decline of the administrative system, corrupt officials, weak rulers and vezirs' imposition of too much power. (Vezirs were the high-ranking government officers. They served as a chief minister or a political advisor to the Ottoman sultans). Externally, the empire's economic success was hampered by the losses due to the lack of industrialization and foreign trade, trade imbalances, long term budget deficits.

[73] Jonathan Randal, *Kurdistan: After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness* (Oxford: Westview, 1999), 18.

[74] According to Halil Inalcik, all levels of the society in the Empire were in some way negatively impacted by the dominating conditions. The reactions given to the initiatives to reform the state with Tanzimat are a proof of such sentiments, he argues. See Halil Inalcik, "Application of the Tanzimat and Its Social Effects," *Archivum Ottomanicum 5* (1973): 98.

[75] Ilber Ortayli, *Imparatorlugun En Uzun Yili [The Longest Year of the Empire]* (Istanbul: Hil Publications, 1987).

[76] Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanli Tarihi [The Ottoman History]: Nizam-i Cedid ve Tanzimat Devirleri [The New Order and Tanzimat Era]* (Ankara: TTK, 1970); Resat Sagay, *19. ve 20. Yuzyillarda Buyuk*

rebellions in 1829-1830 led to the creation of modern Greece. The fragmentation of the empire carried serious implications for tribe-state relations and the future of Kurds: the state's political decline created a power void. Influenced by the rise of regional nationalism in the Balkans, Kurdish tribes started challenging the authority of the Ottoman Empire. Sultan Mahmud II's antagonization of the Kurdish feudal chiefs, under the pretense of modernization, particularly agitated the state-Kurdish relationship, causing Kurdish tribes to abandon their loyalty to the state. Such a dynamic motivated a wave of Kurdish unrest, in the form of four rebellions,[77] and dominated Kurdo-Ottoman relations throughout the nineteenth century.

A number of prominent scholars have placed the development of Kurdish rebellions within this historical context, emphasizing the centrality of the rise of nationalism in Europe. As Nader Entessar puts it, "the politicization of Kurdish ethnicity coincided with the formation of the modern nation-state system in the Middle East."[78] Abbas Vali argues that Kurdish nationalism developed as a byproduct of the state policies of repression and assimilation.[79] Hakan Yavuz maintains that the framing of Kurdish contention against such policies around their ethnic identity was a reaction to the Ottoman modernization efforts.[80] Even though

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Devletlerin Yayilma Siyasetleri ve Milletlerarasi Onemli Meseleler [The Imperial Politics of the Great Powers and Important International Issues in the 19th and 20th Century] (Istanbul: Is Bankasi Publications, 1972).

[77] These uprisings included the following: Baban Uprising (1806-1808); Prince Mohamed Soran Uprising (1833); Bedr Khan Uprising (1843); and Yezdan Sher Uprising (1855).

[78] Entessar, *Kurdish Politics,* 2.

[79] Abbas Vali, "Genealogies of the Kurds: Constructions of Nation and National Identity in Kurdish Historical Writing," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Abbas Vali (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 58-100.

[80] Hakan Yavuz, "Five Stages of Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey," *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics* 7 no. 3 (2001): 1-25. For further details on Kurdish nationalism and nationalist movement, see David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

nineteenth century nationalist sentiments constituted a defining moment for the development of Kurdish nationalism and rebellions, Martin van Bruinessen contends, it was the nation building processes in the host states that provided the Kurds a sense of ethnic consciousness.[81] The literature on Kurdish nationalism is plentiful; rather than summarizing it, this section focuses on two central questions. First, how useful is nationalism in understanding what happened to the Kurdish populations? Second, what can the nation building processes in the twentieth century tell us about the relationship between nationalism and violence and the role of the state?

Many scholars answer the first question by demonstrating a connection between nationalism and state assimilation: what ensued from the rise of the Westphalian state (1500-1900) was the change in the territorial ethnic composition. Edward H. Spicer and Rosamond B. Spicer call attention to the phenomenon of modern nation-states in the twentieth century. They argue that European colonial expansion created a system of ideologies, concepts and a new way of thinking about peoples who inhabited the same land side by side for centuries and the territories in which they lived.[82] The idea of nationality became associated with a territorial space. In this vein, the state acquired a distinctively unified nationality. This new system ignored the multiplicity of people; the state sought cultural uniformity in its territories. The main goal was to create a homogenous nation and a culture that would

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[81] Martin van Bruinessen, "Shifting National and Ethnic Identities: The Kurds in Turkey and the European Diaspora," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998): 39-52.

[82] Edward H. Spicer and Rosamond B. Spicer, "The Nations of a State," *Boundary 2* 19, no 3 (Fall 1992): 26-48.

identify itself with the governing state. Such a nation-state in its character, however, "do[es] not exist to promote diversity; on the contrary, its role is to streamline, make homogenous, organize people to uniform in some sense, in order that their societies may compete, survive and develop within the system."[83] By ignoring the diverse make-up of its peoples, this new system created what the Spicers call "hidden nations."[84]

> Dominant peoples of the nation-states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries governed peoples whom they believed were like themselves already, peoples who could be made into images of themselves, or peoples who were hopelessly inferior and could not be changed. They did not seek to learn about the peoples whom they had subordinated in the various forms of the state. The dominant peoples wove cocoons of official policy and bureaucratic words around other peoples and hid them from view. They induced blindness in themselves about the real nature of the subordinated peoples.[85]

The peoples were quietly assimilated into the ones that dominated the state apparatus. During this process, they endured state-sponsored violence and ethnic conflict. Many scholars, including Charles Tilly (1975, 1990), recognize homogenization as a deliberate strategy of state building practices. But for Heather Rae, this practice of "pathological homogenization" was not driven by the rise of nationalism, but by the politicization of nationalism. In her view, nationalism was a vehicle used by the elites to construct a new type of political community in the modern era and rationalize the expulsion of outside groups.[86] People begin to

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[83] Mark Levene, "The Limits of Tolerance: Nation-State Building and What It Means for Minority Groups," *Patterns of Prejudice* 34, no 2 (2000): 35.
[84] ibid, 29-37.
[85] ibid, 34.
[86] Heather Rae, *State Identities and the Homogenization of Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3-6.

categorize themselves in ethnic nationalist terms. Andreas Wimmer argues that the politics of nation building involves two modes of ethnic boundary-making strategies. State elites may "redefine an *existing* ethnic group as the nation into which everybody should fuse (hence, the "incorporation" mode) or "create a new national category through the amalgamation of a variety of ethnic groups" (the "amalgamation" mode).[87]

In the Ottoman territories, twentieth century Western political and economic changes and the independence movements in neighboring countries created a political and cultural discourse conducive to the development of a powerful nationalist movements: the Young Turk movement, the Pan-Arabist vision of Iraq (al-watan al-'Arabi)[88] and the emergence of Kurdish nationalism. The Young Turk ideology exemplified the mode of incorporation, aimed at enlarging the boundaries of ethnic Turkishness at the expense of marginalizing all other ethnicities.[89] In the case of Persia, the experiences of the Kurds were different. Even though Western economic and political penetration troubled the stability and authority of the Qajar Empire (1785-1925), its impact was not as severe as that experienced in the Ottoman Empire. The Persians did not foster and sustain economic prosperity in the nineteenth

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[87] Andreas Wimmer, *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 50-51.

[88] Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and World War I, two visions of Iraqi nationalism emerged. One was the The Pan-Arabist vision that viewed Iraq as a part of the larger Sunni Arab community, largely ignoring the Shi'a and other minorities in the country. The other was the Iraqi nationalism that surfaced following the British invasion of Iraq in 1914. For more information on politics and identity in Iraq, see Davis, Eric. *Memories of State: Politics, History and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 13-14.

[89] Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Kurdish Nationalism and Identity in Turkey: A Conceptual Reinterpretation," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [online], no 10 (2009), accessed May 6, 2014 http://ejts.revues.org/4008#quotation

century like the Ottomans, as they were mostly troubled with internal instability and tribal revolts supported by the Soviets. Moreover, as Denise Natali explains, geographical inaccessibility and lack of access to foreign markets and foreign direct investment limited European intervention. In the absence of powerful economic and political dynamics like those in the Ottoman Empire, the Kurds in Iran were able to retain their political and economic space and the power of their tribal structures.[90] After the downfall of the Qajar Empire, the succeeding Pahlavis (1925-1979) in the early 1900s tried to draw analogous lines between Persian ethnic identity and "Kurdayeti" (the Kurdish ethnic identity). They emphasized their shared religion and ethnic similarities through myths, refrained from forcing a standardized language and framed the Kurds as strictly a tribal community. The Pahlavis curbed the Kurdish nationalist sentiments and restrained their nationalist potential.[91]

When addressing in their theories the question of whether nationalism is useful in understanding the Kurdish dilemma, some scholars integrate ethnic conflict as a by-product of the state-building process. Nationalism as an ideology does not provide us with a linear process of cause and effect, but it is an indicator of change. There is a certain level of interconnectedness between Western expansion outside of Europe and the rise of ethnic conflict. Nineteenth century nationalist movements proved critical in furthering the decline of multi-ethnic empires and the rise of independence movements achieving statehood. Not fully modernized, the newly

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[90] Denise Natalie, *The Kurds and the State,* 19-20 & 117-121.
[91] ibid, xvii and 118-119. For instance, the only Kurdish rebellion during the Qajar Empire was led by Sheikh Obaidullah (1880–1881) to establish an independent Kurdish area under Turkey's protection. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 53-56.

established sovereign nation-states began to imitate the ways of the West. Donald Horowitz contends that the economic discrepancies among various ethnic groups placed some into more deprivation than others. The competition for resources expressed itself in ethnic violence.[92] For Saul Newman ethnic conflict is an inevitable result of modernization.[93] The term modernization is difficult to define. As the transformation of "traditional ways of life,"[94] it is ultimately a process of alteration "in which major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people have become more available for new patterns of socialization and behavior."[95] Modernization emphasizes the rise of secular forms of government, capitalist expansion and shift to a more secular and materialistic worldview.[96] Tribal kinship and primordial loyalties no longer remain important or tied to the state, and identity acquires a new meaning related to political themes in this new socio-economic context.[97] However, European expansion or modernization cannot be taken as a sole and direct cause of the rise of nationalism and ethnic conflict; it can be rationalized only that it has been, directly or indirectly, involved in the process. Modernization and the newly emerged nation-state system had devastating impacts on indigenous populations, ethnic groups and other minorities in

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[92] Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 100.
[93] Saul Newman, "Does Modernization Breed Ethnic Conflict?" *World Politics* 43, no. 3 (1991): 451-478.
[94] Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *The American Political Science Review* 55, no. 3 (1961): 493. Also see, Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1953).
[95] ibid.
[96] Alexander Laban Hinton, *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide.* (Los Angeles: University of California Press Berkeley, 20020, 7.
[97] Neil Smelser, "Toward a Theory of Modernization," in *Social Change: Sources, Patterns, and Consequences*, ed. Amitai Etzioni and Eva Etzioni (New York: Basic Books, 1964): 258-274.

affected lands. The Western expansion into non-Western parts of the world brought "serious if not total disruption, destabilization or displacement of existing patterns of social and economic relationship."[98] With the new social engineering, the twentieth century[99] was characterized not only by nationalism and ethnic conflict, but also by assimilation. Political violence was utilized as a sustained and deliberate attempt to destroy millions of "backward" ethnicities.

The problem of assimilation lies in what Alexander Hinton calls "the dark side of modernity," with its system of violence, mass destruction and sometimes genocide."[100] Part of the paradox on which Hinton elaborates is founded on the normative statement that modernization is linked to progress and intimately connected to Western modes of economic production. But it also carries subtle implications for those states with different multiple ethnicities. Denise Natali, for instance, maintains that the regional nationalist movement in the Balkans defined state-building processes in Iran, Iraq and Turkey, and had a particular consequence for the Kurds.[101] As Western liberalism and the fundamental ideals of the Enlightenment emerged as an ideological triumph on a global scale and buttressed

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[98] Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State: Volume 1: The Meaning of Genocide* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 11.

[99] With the new social engineering initiated at the nation-state level, the twentieth century has come to be known as the "century of genocide." The relationship between nationalism and genocide will be thoroughly examined later. Rogers Smith, "Human Destructiveness and Politics: The Twentieth Century as an Age of Genocide," in *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death*, ed. Isidor Walliman and Michael N. Dobkowski (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987): 21-39; Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Israel Charny, ed. *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts with Critical Views* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999).

[100] Alexander L. Hinton, "The Dark Side of Modernity," in *Annihilating Difference*, 1-40. For the devastating effects of modernity on indigenous peoples, see John H. Bodley, *Victims of Progress* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1999) & David Mayberry-Lewis, *Indigenous Peoples, Ethnic Groups and the* State (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997).

[101] Denise Natali, "Kurdayeti in the Late Ottoman and Qajar Empires," *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies 11,* no. 2 (2002): 177–199.

nineteenth-century claims to self-determination, ethnic and cultural distinctiveness among domestic populations emerged and the problem of multi-ethnicity began to disturb these states in the Balkans.[102]

History confirms that Persians, Turks and Arabs did not have a political or ideological desire to assimilate Kurds into their homogenized states until the end of the nineteenth century, with the start of the modernization period. The Ottoman, Safavid and Qajar empires were established and governed on the basis of pluralism, but also on religiously defined policies. The Ottoman idea of citizenship, for instance, was based on the *millet* system. Even though the term *millet* has its roots in the Arabic term *millah,* and literally translates into "nation," it only indicates membership of a religious category. Ottoman citizenship was determined in the absence of an ethnic hierarchy; it drew a binary distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims. Accordingly, it was religious affiliation, rather than ethnic origins, that established the status of citizenship.[103] As Bernard Lewis indicates, "in the empire

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[102] This research does not enter a lengthy discussion on what constitutes a nation as opposed to an ethnic group. The line between the two is thin. Both a nation and an ethnic group share demographic similarities (language, religion, shared territory, and history) and a sense of distinctiveness ("we"-ness vs. "they"-ness). The main difference between the two is that a nation is willing to be politically independent, whereas an ethnic group does not have such sentiments. But what is important for the purposes of this research is the notion of "national feeling," which creates a sense of belonging to the national group. It is vital for the existence of a nation and the functioning of the ethnic-national formation. Kecmanovic conceptualizes this feeling as a construction of psychological and sociological processes. Dusan Kermanovic, *The Mass Psychology of Ethnonationalism* (New York: Plenum Press, 1996). However, Anderson disputes the idea that the "national feeling" is constructed by the state, as opposed to a process of national awakening described by Kermanovic. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6-8. For a discussion on ethnonationalism, see Daniele Conversi, *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Amin Maalouf, *Olumcul Kimlikler [Fatal Identities],* trans. A. Bora (Istanbul: Yapi Kredi Yayinlari, 1999); and Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[103] Ilber Ortayli, *Son Imparatorluk Osmanli: Osmanliyi Yeniden Kesfetmek 2* [The Ottomans, The Last Empire: Rediscovering the Ottoman Empire 2] (Istanbul: Timas Press, 2006), 86-89.

there was a Muslim millet, but no Turkish or Arab or Kurdish millets; there were Greek and Armenian and Jewish millets, but as religious communities, not as ethnic nations."[104] Hence, Kurds, being Muslim,[105] and the borders of Kurdistan were not security concerns to the Empire. The Persian authorities treated the idea of citizenship along the same lines. Even though a millet system was not formally established, the categorization of citizens' identity was determined based not on ethnic terms, but on religious affiliation.[106] Following the rise of nationalism as a political ideology and the collapse of these multiethnic empires in the twentieth century, the conception of Persian citizenship and Ottoman millet acquired a radically different meaning – nation.[107] Such transition from once religiously defined policies to ethnically conceptualized state-building processes in Iran, Turkey, and Iraq (which was carved out of the Ottoman provinces of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra in 1920) had certain implications for the Kurds. Redefining themselves based on their distinct ethnicity, the modern nation-states struggled with reconciling Kurdish loyalty and solidarity and maintaining their conformity. As the formation of their

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[104] Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 329.
[105] The overwhelming majority of the Kurds in Iran, Turkey and Iraq are Sunni Muslim. Aside from Yazidis, a few thousand Christians and Jews, Zoroastrians, and Ithna 'Ashari Shi'is Iran's Kurds are Sunni Muslim, Alevi religion in central Anatolia is strong the Kurds in Turkey; Kurds in Iraq follow Sunni and Shi'i Islam as well as Christianity and Judaism. See McDowall, pp. 10-13 & Entessar, pp. 4-6
[106] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State*, xviii & 14-15.
[107] The academic debate on what constitutes a nation and what separates it from an ethnic group is abundant. For instance, for Anthony Smith, the "ethnie," the common myth of descent, is a necessary characteristic of nation building. The Kurds share various myths about their origins: Sarah, Abraham's wife, was a Kurd; Kurds are the descendants of King Solomon's slaves; and the myth of Zahhak, the child-eating giant. Similarly, Connor argues that a shared sense of kinship promotes an ethnonational bound, which then promotes national formation. See A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: Blackwell, 1986), 154; W. Connor, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 74-75; and McDonald, 4. The analysis on the role of myths and the nation building will be discussed in greater detail in the case of Turkey and Iran.

ethnic consciousness grew, the Kurds found themselves subjected to state oppression and forceful assimilation policies.

An analysis of the historical social contexts, in which an international system of nation-states arose, reveals that colonial penetration into the Ottoman land was, in some sense, directly responsible for the rise of nationalism as an ideology in these territories,[108] and indirectly for the later processes of political repression, state assimilation and state-sponsored violence that affect the Kurdish people. A further examination of the link between nationalism, violence and the role of the state requires us to understand the historical dimension of the Kurdish case in terms of its unique peculiarities in Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

2.4 Colonial Interests, National Politics and Kurds: Early Processes

A common theme in the Kurdish discourse is that the patterns of conflict trace back to the colonial impositions of Britain and France. These acts forced various ethnic groups that were not united around the same idea of a political community to live within the same boundaries. Specifically, it was Britain's imperialist ambition to acquire Mosul that defined the origins of the Kurdish problem, and as the boundaries of post-colonial Turkey, Iran and Iraq were drawn, the politics of authoritarian rule characterized the region.[109] Perhaps one of the most important arguments connected to colonial interests is on the effect of Kurdish nationalism in the dissolution of the

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[108] The following chapter further elaborates on the processes of Turkish, Iraqi and Kurdish nationalism.

[109] See Reidar Visser and Gareth Stansfield, ed. *An Iraq of Its Regions: Cornerstones of Federal Democracy* (London: Hurst and Company, 2007) for more information on ethnic diversity, authoritarianism and regionalism in Iraq.

Ottoman Empire. The Kurdish nationalist movement formed around the period when feudal leaders revolted against Sultan Mahmud in 1826, in hopes of ending the state's centralization policies and interference in local tribes. It grew with the Young Turks, and escalated with the assimilation policies of Mustafa Kemal under the newly established Turkish Republic.[110] Based on archival resources from the early 1900's, Janet Klein attributes the origins of Kurdish nationalism to imperial disintegration.[111] In this view, even though there were a number of Kurdish uprisings in the late Ottoman period, they were "non-nationalist" "Kurdist"[112] movements: Kurds were neither in conflict with their identity as Ottomans nor were they seizing an opportunity to declare independence as a separatist movement. It was rather a minority movement within the empire demanding equal rights and political arrangements that did not threaten their power or existence.[113] Kurds felt targeted by the state's assimilative policies that started with the *nizam-i cedid* (new order)[114] and the *tanzimat,* and felt aggravated by the Young Turks' Turkification policies. McDowall believes that the Young Turks had "the specific intention… to eliminate Kurdish identity."[115]

It is important to note that the Kurdish loyalties to the empire were largely based on religious sentiments. The Ottoman *millet* conception created a religious

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[110] W.G. Elphinston, *The Kurdish Question*, 91.

[111] Janet Klein, "Kurdish Nationalists and Non-Nationalist Kurdists: Rethinking Minority Nationalism and the Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire 1908-1909," *Nations and Nationalism* 13, no. 1 (2007): 135-153.

[112] ibid, 136-147.

[113] ibid, 143-147.

[114] Nizam-i cedid, translated as "the new order," refers to a series of Ottoman reforms in the eighteenth century. It was an effort to modernize the nation, state and economy.

[115] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 105.

discourse that superseded any ethnic or political sentiments. To that end, it created a sense of cosmopolitan citizenship based on a system where a great plurality of ethnicities harmoniously coexisted for hundreds of years at the expense of non-Muslims.[116] This notion of cosmopolitanism, evidently, was extremely restricted and was extended only to the Muslim communities; the Ottoman millet system placed the Muslims above the non-Muslim populations. Arabs, Kurds, Turks and Persians, despite the practical differences in their beliefs, were recognized as equal parts of the *ummah.[117]* This was exemplified by the Sheik Said Kurdish rebellion in 1925, the first-large scale uprising by the Kurds.[118] It arose as a reaction to the abolishment of the Caliphate that united the Muslim empires in the Middle East for over four hundred years. A group of scholars, including Martin van Bruinessen, Hamit Bozarslan, Gerard Chaliand, Abdul Rahman and Ergun Aybars, dispute the view that Sheik Said was a religious uprising.[119] Although the presence of nationalist elements in the claims of Sheik Said and his proponents cannot be understated, most of the literature on the Kurds contends that it was a religious uprising in its character with

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[116] For cosmopolitan citizenship in the Middle East, see Sami Zubaida, "Cosmopolitan Citizenship in the Middle East," *Open Democracy*, July 20, 2010, accessed March 6, 2013 http://www.opendemocracy.net/sami-zubaida/cosmopolitan-citizenship-in-middle-east

[117] *Ummah* is roughly translated as "the supra-national Muslim community."

[118] Kemal Kirisci and Gareth Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict* (Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), 100.

[119] For Martin van Bruinessen, the uprising can be categorized as neither solely religious nor nationalist. "The primary aim… was the establishment of an independent Kurdistan." Robert Olson, Hamit Borzarslan and Ergun Aybars contend that the Sheik Said was primarily nationalistic. Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheik and State*, 404-405; Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheik Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930) and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism," *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no. 1 (March 2000): 67-94; Gerard Chaliand and Abdul Rahman, *People Without A Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan,* ed. Gerard Chaliand and trans. Michael Pallis (London: Zed Press, 1993); and Ergun Aybars, *Istiklal Mahkemeleri [Independence Courts]* (Izmir: Ileri Press, 1994).

certain nationalist undertones.[120] "Its mobilization, propaganda and symbols were those of a religious rebellion."[121] Such rebellion provided an opportunity to the launch of the authoritarian powers of the new Turkish Republic, and contributed to the buildup of the Turkish Air Force (TAF), which would later be used to control and suppress the subsequent Kurdish challenges to the newly established nation-state.[122]

What is more significant about the abolition of the caliphate in 1924 is that it constituted a turning point for Turkey – it represented a switch from Ottoman cosmopolitanism to Turkish nationalism. As a response to growing frustration with the empire's lost territories in the Balkans, Young Turk policies shifted from millet to ethnic national identity. Pan-Turkism had an increasingly growing appeal in Istanbul's intellectual circles and Turkish reassessment of the millet was inevitable.[123] It was becoming clear that the situation of Kurds did not fit into this picture.

Subsequent to the World War I, many Kurds served in the Turkish Army during the Turkish Independence War (191-1923). Based on the millet conception, Kurds and Turks were still a part of the Ottoman society. In return, the Turkish state, after officially confirming its sovereign rule, would provide autonomy for the

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[120] See Ugur Mumcu, *Kurt-Islam Ayaklanmasi, 1919-1925 [Kurt-Islam Uprising]* (Ankara: Tekin Publishers, 1992); Yasar Kalafat, *Sark Meselesi Isiginda Seyh Said Olayi, Karakteri, Donemindeki Ic ve Dis Olaylari [Under the Prism of the Eastern Question, Sheik Said Rebellion, Its Character and its Domestic and International Affairs]* (Ankara: Bogazici Publishers, 1992); and Anton Allahar, *Ethnicity, Class, and Nationalism: Caribbean and Extra-Caribbean Dimensions* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2005).
[121] Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Shaeikh Said Rebellion: 1880-1925* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 153.
[122] For the impact of the Sheik Said rebellion on the development of Turkish Air Force, see Olson, *The Kurdish Rebellions.*
[123] David McDowall, *A Modern History on the Kurds*, 92-93.

province of Kurdistan. Concurrently, the Kurds negotiated with the Allies for an independent state within the eastern borders. The 1920 Treaty of Sevres included the Kurdish demands in three articles.[124] These provisions were never ratified or implemented.

ARTICLE 62

A Commission sitting at Constantinople and composed of three members appointed by the British, French and Italian Governments respectively shall draft within six months from the coming into force of the present Treaty a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia as it may be hereafter determined, and north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia…

ARTICLE 63

The Turkish Government hereby agrees to accept and execute the decisions of both the Commissions mentioned in Article 62 within three months from their communication to the said Government.

ARTICLE 64

If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that these peoples are capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas… If and when such renunciation takes place, no objection will be raised by the Principal Allied Powers to the voluntary adhesion to such an independent Kurdish State of the Kurds inhabiting that part of Kurdistan which has hitherto been included in the Mosul vilayet.

The Treaty of Sevres remains as a crucial historical juncture in understanding the contemporary Kurdish status in the Middle East and what has happened to the

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[124] The modern states of Iraq and Syria were created subsequent to the treaty.

Kurds for the past hundred years.[125] It is an important legal document for the Kurdish rights to self-determination. The Treaty exhibited international recognition of the Kurds as a nation, and legitimized their legal claims for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan.[126] It was the first time that the name "Kurd" appeared on an international legal document.[127] On the other hand, it also marked the beginnings of imperial politics in the Kurdish struggle. Initially, as Article 62 stipulated, the Treaty allowed for the "Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates" and "north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia" to become an independent state.[128] But when the Turkish military elite, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, gripped its control over the eastern borders of Kurdish territories, Turkey, Iran and Iraq rejected Kurdish independence. After two successive attempts to create an autonomous Kurdish region, Britain backed off from enforcing the Treaty. It had a carefully crafted alternative plan: controlling the rich oil resources in the Mosul vilayet. Administering Mosul in the newly established Iraq under British protection would be more stable than administering it in an independent Kurdish state whose future remained questionable.[129] In exchange for international recognition for the boundaries of its newly established state, Turkey withdrew its claims on the Mosul vilayet. Mosul remained outside of the Turkish borders and became a part of Iraq.

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[125] The Treaty of Sevres was signed in 1920. It has been precisely 96 years.

[126] Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Politics,* 70.

[127] Quil Lawrence, *Invisible Nation: How the Kurdish Quest for Statehood is Shaping Iraq and the Middle East* (New York: Walker & Company, 2008), 13.

[128] Articles 62, 63 and 64. These provisions were based on two conditions: "Majority of the population of these areas desires independence," and they "are capable of such independence." The World War I Document Archive, "The Treaty of Sevres, 1920," Brigham Young University Library Online, accessed May 19, 2014, http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Section_I,_Articles_1_-_260

[129] Gerald A. Honigman, "British Petroleum Politics, Arab Nationalism and the Kurds," *Middle East Review* 15, no. 1-2 (Fall 1982): 33-39; and Entessar, *Kurdish Politics,* 69-71.

It is at this precise point that colonial interests, regional powers, and realist politics started shaping the destiny of the Kurds. This picture of Kurdish aspirations trapped by colonial politics would repeat itself throughout the twentieth century. The politics of denial, forced assimilation, violence and in some cases genocide that the Kurds endured were a product of the political discourse that the Treaty of Sevres put in place. In order to understand the Kurdish status in the Middle East today, we must take into account the broader processes of nationalist movements of the nineteenth century and the implications of the Treaty for the borders of Turkey and Iraq, and what it meant for the minority populations within. This is explained in greater detail in the next sections.

2.5 The Kurdish Status in the Middle East

2.5.1 The Politics of Denial and Forced Assimilation: Kurds in Turkey

Representing 18 percent of Turkey's population, Kurds have been struggling for constitutional rights since the genesis of the Turkish Republic in 1923. The 14 million Kurdish people living in the southeast have been in continuous upheaval. The history of Kurdish oppression, forced displacement and socio-economic marginalization is long and complex. Historic fear and anxiety about the Kurds and their separatist tendencies are rooted in Turkey's nation building project, and reemphasized in the *Kemalist* discourse.[130] The status quo of the Kurdish populations

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[130] There are two important points on Kemalism and discourse here. Kemalism refers to the ideology created under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who is the founding father of the modern-day Turkish state. I refer to discourse in a Foucaultian sense as "systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak." Hence, discourse is interconnected with theories of state and power,

from the early period of the Turkish Republic in the mid-1920s to the end of 1980s

rested upon high levels of repression, the negation of Kurdish identity and the

assumption that there were no Kurdish elements in the Turkish territories.

The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which superseded Sevres, contained no

provisions for a Kurdish state or for Turkey's ethnic minorities. The Kurdish

territories were divided among different political and economic segments of Iran and

Turkey and the newly established territories of Iraq and Syria.[131] The British

promises and Turkish assurances of political and cultural autonomy made to the

Kurdish communities were never realized under the newly established Republic.

Furthermore, Kurds were not even accorded minority status within the Turkish

state.[132] According to Lord Curzon, the Turkish delegation insisted that "these

minorities… required no protection, and were quite satisfied with their lot under the

Turkish rule."[133]

Such arguments made by the state were rationalized on the basis that "Kurds

were not a minority, but actually first-class citizens of the Turkish state"[134] and that

"Turkey is a unified nation without any class distinctions or any special privileges

forming the basis of our accepted realities, norms, values, principles. This dissertation is concerned with the two distinct discourses that describe Kurdish issues either as "security issues" or "human rights issues." For a further discussion on discourse, see Susan Strega, "The view from the poststructural margins: Epistemology and methodology reconsidered," in *Research as Resistance*, ed. Leslie Brown & S. Strega (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2005), 199-235.

[131] Louise Fawcett, "Down But Not Out? The Kurds in International Politics," *Review of International Studies* 27 no. 1 (January 2001): 112 & Natali, *The Kurds and the State*, 26.

[132] In fact, Kurds have never been accorded minority status throughout Turkey's 91-year history. This will be explained in greater detail later.

[133] Philip Robins, "The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 69, no. 4 (October 1993): 660 (footnote 12).

[134] This was an argument made by Ismet Sezgin, the Turkish Minister of the Interior. See Robins, *The Overlord State*, 660, footnote 14.

for anyone."[135] Instead, guided by nineteenth century Balkan movements, the Republic embraced the Kemalist ideology and its emphasis on ethno-Turkish nationalism, modernization (secularization and Westernization) and authoritarian centralism. The Kemalist discourse was the "embodiment of the enlightenment progress," claiming values of rationality, science, democratic tradition and progress.[136] The essence of Mustafa Kemal's policies was based upon the ethnic Turkish singularity and driven by a desire to reunite the mosaic of ethnic populations into a single Turkish identity.[137] Preoccupation with the Ottoman Empire's failures and its obstacles of multi-ethnicity, the Republic favored the idea that Turkification could be the backbone for saving the state. Providing national education in Turkish, constraining the use of Kurdish language and culture in public places, and one-party rule were believed to be necessary steps within this process. For the state, authoritarianism and excessive political power guaranteed the survival of the regime, and were necessary to protect Turkish reforms. This was exemplified when Prime Minister Ismet Inonu declared himself the National Chief. The Republican People's Party's (CHP) one-party rule would remain in effect until 1945.

In this discourse of Turkish singularity, the existence of Kurds was highly problematic for national security, ethnic homogeneity, cultural uniformity, and most

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[135] Resat Kasaba, "Kurdish Society and Politics," Review of *Agha, Shaikh and State: On the Social and Political Organization of Kurdistan*, by M.M. van Bruinessen," *MERIP Reports* 85 (February 1980): 23.

[136] Christopher Hudson, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State* (New York & Oxford: Berg, 2001), 88-89.

[137] The Kemalist policies made a clear break with the Ottoman past. The Kurdish identity, with its tribal structures, distinct ethnicity and leanings on Islam, challenged the basis of Kemalist reforms, which aimed for industrialization, nation-state building, and secularization. Robins, *The Overlord State*, 660-661 & Kasaba, *Kurdish Society*, 24.

importantly, for territorial integrity. The state's politics were produced under this existential fear. The nation building efforts were built on strategies to prove that Kurds were in fact Turks. The state sponsored ethnic and linguistic research to validate the hypothesis that Kurds were Turks. It also prohibited "any form of Kurdish political organization, any Kurdish societies, any Kurdish cultural or language associations (even to the extent of prohibiting the speaking of Kurdish, or the giving of Kurdish names to children)."[138] Christopher Hudson in his *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State* provides an account of the research conducted on the negation of Kurdish identity by a Turkish Professor, Orhan Turkdogan in his book titled *Ethnic Sociology:*

> There is no such thing as the Kurdish people or nation. They are merely carriers of Turkish culture and habits. The imagined region proposed as the new Kurdistan is the region that was settled by the proto-Turks. The Sumerians and Scythians come immediately to mind. The Eastern problem [the Kurdish problem] as it is sometimes called shows itself to be solely the game of the imperialists, played when it suits with the Armenians, when it suits with the Iranians.[139]

In response to these policies, three Kurdish rebellions surfaced: the 1925 Sheik Said of Piran, the 1927 Khoybun and the 1937 Dersim. Wadie Jwaideh reports that the state used "the most inhuman methods to punish the rebels" in Dersim by aerial bombardment, poison gas and the deployment of 50,000 troops in the

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[138] The ban was partly lifted in 1991. Hudson, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State*, 99, footnote 3.

[139] Orhan Turkdogan, *Etnik Sosyoloji [Ethnic Sociology]* (Istanbul: Timas Publications, 1997), 137 & Hudson, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State*, 100.

province.[140] Robert Olson estimates the number of casualties to be around 40,000.[141] The rebellions provided a pretext for the state to prohibit cultural expressions of Kurdish identity as a threat against stability.[142] Voluntary and forced migration characterized the Kurdish movement into the northeastern parts of Syria. Such displacement contributed to the transnationalization of Kurdish status and the nationalization of Kurdish identity in the diaspora communities in Syria and elsewhere.

Succeeding the suppression of the rebellions, the Turkish state tightened its grip on its state-building processes. Forced migration became one of the vehicles of such course.[143] In fact, the Settlement Law of 2510, enacted on June 14, 1934, explicitly implemented mass deportations as the official state policy of nation building.[144] It granted the state the power to assimilate all non-Turkish cultures or evacuate them.[145] The government established martial law in Kurdish areas until 1946. Kurds were officially referred to as "the Mountain Turks." Any expression of Kurdish language, culture and fashion was officially prohibited. Every Kurdish village of reasonable size was placed under the control of the local Turkish gendarmerie.[146] Kurds were forcefully migrated to the non-Kurdish parts of

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[140] Wadie Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, 216.

[141] Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Rebellions,* 89-90.

[142] Wadie Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, 204-209.

[143] Voluntary and forced migrations also characterized the Kurdish movement in Iraq (thousands fled to Iran in the aftermath of the Anfal massacre). For the transnationalization of Kurdish nationalism, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Transnational Aspects of the Kurdish Question [Working Paper]," *Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies*, Florence: European University Institute, 2000, 3-5.

[144] "Iskan Kanunu [Resettlement Law]," *Code of [Turkish] Law*, no: 2510, Provision 3, Volume 15, June 14, 1934, pages 1156-1175.

[145] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 199-207.

[146] Gendarmerie (jandarma in Turkish) is one of the branches of the Turkish Armed Forces, mainly responsible for preserving order in public places. They work hand in hand with the Turkish National Police.

Turkey.[147] The word Kurdish and the region Kurdistan was replaced with the terms "Eastern" and "the Eastern problem." The Minister of the Interior Celal Bayar stated that "the Kurdish problem no longer exists."[148] Built upon such a prolonged campaign of assimilation, denial and imprisonment, the 1990s were characterized by Kurdish mass mobilization with armed struggle, and the Turkish state's attempt at "draining the swamp."[149] According to the 2005 Human Rights Watch report, by mid-1990s, "more than 3,000 villages were destroyed, and 378,335 Kurds were forced to evacuate their villages."[150] By 2002, 55,371 were arrested on terrorism-related charges.[151]

Since the early Republican period, the Turkish state's assimilation campaign has been used as a source of political and legislative practice. The politics of national culture have, until recently, characterized Turko-Kurdish relations.[152] In the words of Nader Entessar, "no country has been as preoccupied with the eradication of Kurdish national identity as Turkey in the twentieth century."[153] The Kurdish history is long and intricate. But what is evident about the period between the 1920s and 2000s is

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[147] Martin van Bruinessen, *Kurdistan Uzerine Yazilar [Writings on Kurdistan]*, trans. Nevzat Kirac, Bulent Peker, Leyla Keskiner, Halil Turansal, Selda Somuncuoglu & Levent Kafadar (Istanbul: Iletisim Publishers, 2008), 297-302.

[148] W.G. Elphinston, *The Kurdish Question*, 97. For an extended discussion on Inonu, see Metin Heper, *Ismet Inonu: The Making of a Turkish Stateman* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), 181-182.

[149] "Draining the swamp" is one of the counterterrorism tactics implemented by the Turkish state. See Gunduz S. Aktan and Ali M. Koknar, "Terrorism: Turkey," *Turkish Coalition of America*, accessed March 31, 2013 http://www.tc-america.org/files/news/pdf/koknar_aktan_terrorism.pdf

[150] Human Rights Watch, ""Still Critical" Prospects in 2005 for Internally Displaced Kurds in Turkey," *Report* 17, no 2(D) (March 2005): 4, accessed May 8, 2014 http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/turkey0305/turkey0305text.pdf

[151] Robert Hatem and Mark Dohrmann, "Ankara's Challenges: Turkey's Fix for the "Kurdish Problem,"" *Middle East Quarterly* 22, no 4 (Fall 2013): 51.

[152] Political life temporarily improved under Adnan Menderes during his leadership of the Democrat Party (1950-1960) with a greater degree of political freedom, and loosened assimilation policies.

[153] Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Politics,* 81.

the construction of Kurdish status vis-à-vis state power. The state problematized the Kurds on three accounts: domestic terrorism, international terrorism and resistance to assimilation. Why did the Kurds rebel? Why did they support the PKK? How could their support from neighboring Iraq and Syria be eliminated? Why couldn't they assimilate into the Turkish state? Solutions to the violence in the Kurdish areas were tackled from these viewpoints. This period was driven by the state's fear that ethnic awareness could lead to the resurgence of Kurdish nationalist demands. Practically, the claim that the Kurds were in fact "Mountain Turks" opened up a new social and political space to negate the identity of the Kurds. It reconfigured the Kurdish population as a source of a problem: a group of people who rejected the objectivity of the research on their ethnic origin, and henceforth, denied the evidence that they were ethnically Turkish.[154] The Kurdish identity came to be associated with a collection of social meanings opposite to being Turkish, created by acts of state power negating the Kurds through assimilation and exclusion.[155] The state's repression further polarized the two sides.

There is also an intimate relationship between the negation of the Kurdish identity and its re-construction as an issue of security and terrorism in the post-2000 era. The importance of this period relies on Turkey's continuing efforts to meet the European Union (EU) democratic membership criteria. There have been two transformative moments in the relationship between the Kurds and the state. First

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[154] Christopher Hudson, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State,* 103.

[155] Hifzullah Cakirbey, "Türkiyelileştirme ve Kürdistan'ın Kuzeyindeki Kürdlerin Durumu [Turkification and The Situation of Kurds in Northern Kurdistan]," *Rizgari,* January 4, 2010, accessed November 12, 2012 http://www.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=Rizgari_Niviskar&cmd=read&id=2002

was the emergence of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in 1984. Under Abdullah Ocalan's leadership, the PKK was engaged in insurgency and terrorism against the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) in the southeastern provinces. With the rise of violence came a shift in the Kurdish movement. In the words of Barkey and Fuller, this brought a "new Kurdish political self-awareness,"[156] redefining the Kurdish agenda. Receiving significant support from the European diaspora, cooperating with the Kurdish movements in neighboring Iraq, Iran and Syria, the Kurdish struggle radicalized the Kurdish youth and demanded recognition from the state. This conflict continued for the next 30 years. "More than 30,000 Kurds lost their lives."[157]

The second transformative moment came in February 1999 subsequent to Ocalan's arrest in Kenya. The Helsinki meeting of the European Council, which was held later that year, brought up the possibility of Turkey becoming a member of the European Union. The decline of the PKK insurgency, coupled with EU pressures, created a political environment conducive to the settlement of human rights issues through compromise and reforms. Further, Ocalan articulated a clear shift in the Kurdish movement that Kurds "want to give up the armed struggle and have full democracy."[158] What followed was initially encouraging. Turkey undertook many legal changes, including lifting the ban on teaching Kurdish in private classes and broadcasting radio and television stations in Kurdish.[159] "Between 2001 and 2003,

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[156] Henry Barkey and Graham E. Fuller. *Turkey's Kurdish Question,* 5.

[157] International Crisis Group, "Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency," Europe Report no 213, September 20, 2011, accessed March 25, 2013 http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/213%20Turkey%20-%20Ending%20the%20PKK%20Insurgency.pdf

[158] Stephen Kinzer, *Crescent and Star: Turkey between Two Worlds* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001), 127.

[159] Ibid.

the Turkish Parliament passed seven sets of reform packages that encompassed constitutional and legal amendments to meet the EU membership criteria."[160] In 2005, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan acknowledged past mistakes and the existence of Kurds.[161] Changing its official policy from denial to recognition and reconciliation, the state has adopted a comprehensive policy approach to resolve its tension with the Kurds: The Kurdish Opening.[162] It was followed by what Erdogan called a "democratization package" on September 30, 2013 – proposed legislative amendments designed to lift some restrictions on the issue of Kurdish language.[163] Many Kurds view the concessions of the current "peace process" as a politically calculated move. Erdogan will run for presidency in August 2014. The Kurdish constituency forms about one fifth of the Turkish population. It is an important voter base for Erdogan's election bid.[164]

Until recently, Kurdish letters (Q, X and W) were banned, political campaigning in Kurdish was outlawed, and registering Kurdish names in businesses and personal matters were prohibited. In 2005, 20 people were fined for using letters Q and X on placards as a violation under the 1928 Adoption and Application of

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[160] Senem Aslan, "Incoherent State: The Controversy over Kurdish Naming in Turkey," *European Journal of Turkish Studies 10* (2009), accessed March 27, 2013 http://ejts.revues.org/4142?&id=4142#bibliography

[161] BBC News, "Turkey PM Erdogan Apologizes for 1930s Kurdish Killings," November 23, 2011, accessed March 17, 2013 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15857429

[162] Carnegie Endowment, "Kurdish Opening in Turkey: Origins and Future?" December 1, 2009, accessed March 27, 2013 http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2009/12/01/kurdish-opening-in-turkey-origins-and-future/4cj

[163] It also included lifting the ban on headscarves in public institutions. Sebnem Arsu, "Turkish Premier Announces Proposals Aimed at Kurds," *New York Times*, September 30, 2013, accessed May 9, 2014 http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/01/world/europe/turkish-premier-announces-proposals-aimed-at-kurds.html

[164] Orhan Coskun & Gulsen Solaker, "Turkey's Kurdish peace process key to Erdogan's presidential hopes," *Reuters,* April 3, 2014, accessed June 27, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/03/us-turkey-election-kurds-idUSBREA3218L20140403

Turkish Letters. As a part of Ataturk's modernization efforts, the law changed the writing system of Turkish from an Arabic-based system under the Ottoman Empire to a Roman-based one.[165] Historically, the 1924, 1964 and 1982 constitutions all cemented the state's control over cultural identity, and made expressions of Kurdish identity illegal. In 1983, a law was introduced, forbidding the use of "any language other than the first official languages of countries recognized by the Turkish Republic."[166] Having never been revoked, it also implicitly meant that the Kurdish language was officially prohibited from the public use. While conducting dissertation research in Diyarbakir in the summer of 2013, the biggest city in Turkey's Kurdish-majority southeast, I observed that the name of the city's Merwani Park had been banned.[167] The Turkish alphabet does not contain the letter "W," and thus officials had decided that using names for public spaces that included this letter would potentially create discrimination and separatism. The democratization package annulled the prohibition of these letters and allowed private schools to provide education in Kurdish. However, it is still not legal for public Kurdish language schools to exist in Turkey without constitutional changes. A real progress on the Kurdish issues can only be possible through overcoming a variety of obstacles.

The post-2000 period is characterized by three major challenges. First, the current 1982 constitution is a significant barrier to the settlement of Kurdish

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[165] Hurriyet Daily News, "Court Fines 20 for Using Letters W and Q," November 26, 2005, accessed May 9, 2014 http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=court-fines-20-for-using-letters-w-and-q-2005-10-26

[166] Philip Robins, *The Overlord State,* 662.

[167] The name was changed to "Mervani Park."

grievances. The Turkish constitution's definition of citizenship is important to analyze here. The Preamble sets the ideological tone of the document:

> In line with the concept of nationalism and the reforms and principles introduced by the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Atatürk, this Constitution…affirms the eternal existence of the Turkish nation and motherland and the indivisible unity of the Turkish state…is entrusted by the Turkish nation to the patriotism and nationalism of its democracy-loving sons and daughters.[168]

The Preamble reflects the exclusionary spirit of the document. Even though it emphasizes the Turkish nation and Turkish nationalism, it presumes that the peoples of Turkey are homogenous in character.[169] The language of the Iranian constitution by comparison takes a more universal tone: "All people of Iran, whatever the ethnic group or tribe to which they belong, enjoy equal rights; and color, race, language, and the like, do not bestow any privilege" (Article 19).[170] Article 66 of the Turkish Constitution states that "everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk. The child of a Turkish father or a Turkish mother is a Turk." Here the concept of citizenship is built upon being Turkish, ignoring the

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[168] The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, as amended on October 17, 2001, accessed March 25, 2013
http://www.anayasa.gov.tr/images/loaded/pdf_dosyalari/THE_CONSTITUTION_OF_THE_REPUBLIC_OF_TURKEY.pdf

[169] Kurban and Ensaroglu have made similar arguments that the Constitution reflects one ethnic identity. Dilek Kurban and Yilmaz Ensaroglu, *Kurt Sorunu'nun Cozumune Dogru: Anayasal ve Yasal Oneriler* [Towards the Solution of the Kurdish Problem: Constitutional and Legal Recommendations] (Istanbul: TESEV, 2010), 23.

[170] Preamble, The Spanish Constitution, accessed March 25, 2013
http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso/Hist_Normas/Norm/const_espa_texto_ingles_0.pdf & Barkey and Kadioglu makes valuable points in their article where they compare and contrast the Spanish constitution with the Turkish one. Henry Barkey and Direnc Kadioglu, "The Turkish Constitution and the Kurdish Question," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, August 1, 2011, accessed March 25, 2013 http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/08/01/turkish-constitution-and-kurdish-question/4eog#

presence of other ethnic groups.[171] Thus, the existence of the Kurdish identity is circumvented through Turkishness. Evidently, the Turkish constitution is one of the significant barriers against the settlement of Kurdish grievances. The democratization package must include constitutional amendments and legal reforms, as they are absolutely vital in reducing the tension between the state and the Kurdish population, as well as facilitating pluralism and tolerance as prerequisites of democratization.[172]

Second, Erdogan's proposal makes no amendments to Turkey's anti-terror laws. Let's consider the definition of terrorism according to the Law on the Fight against Terrorism (Act 3713), which was amended in 2006:

> Terrorism is any kind of act done by one or more persons belonging to an organization with the aim of changing the characteristics of the Republic as specified in the Constitution, its political, legal, social, secular and economic system, damaging the indivisible unity of the State with its territory and nation, endangering the existence of the Turkish State and Republic, weakening or destroying or seizing the authority of the State, eliminating fundamental rights and freedoms, or damaging internal or external security of the State, public order of general health by means of pressure, forces and violence, terror, intimidation, oppression and threat (Article 1).[173]

This definition extends not only to the 80 journalists, currently incarcerated for being members of the PKK organization, but also to students, "2,824 of whom are in prison, almost a quarter of them charged with 'membership of a terrorist group'

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[171] ibid & Dilek Kurban and Yilmaz Ensaroglu, *Kurt Sorunu'nun Cozumune Dogr* [Towards the Solution of the Kurdish Problem], 23.

[172] Osman Silivani, "Nereden Nereye [From There to Here]," *KurdInfo*, July 22, 2009, accessed March 25, 2013 http://www.kurdinfo.com/gotar_bixwine.asp?id=84&yazid=55

[173] Kurdish Human Rights Project, "Turkey's Anti-Terror Laws: Threatening the Protection of Human Rights," (KHRP, London, 2008): 3, footnote 1, accessed March 27, 2013 http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/briefing-papers.html

for calling for free education and other 'sins.'"[174] According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Turkey more journalists are detained in Turkey than anywhere else in the world; in fact, Turkey has imprisoned more journalists than China and Iran combined.[175] Muharram Erbey, Vice President of the Human Rights Association (IHD) of Turkey and President of the IHD's branch office in Diyarbakir, was among the 151 Kurdish lawyers, mayors, politicians and human rights activists who were detained by Anti-Terror Units of the Security Directorate for their membership in the KCK (Kurdish Communities Union), a branch of the outlawed PKK.[176] It was a part of an operation launched concurrently in 11 provinces of Turkey. Regulating media freedom is under the jurisdiction of Turkey's anti-terror law. According to the Article 26 of the Constitution, the right to freedom of expression is subjected to restriction "for the purposes of protecting national security, public order and public safety, the basic characteristics of the Republic and safeguarding the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation."[177] Of the 39 articles limiting freedom of expression for intellectuals, perhaps, the most controversial statute is set out in the Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK). It criminalizes insults against the Turkish nation or the state.[178] In this vein, its

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[174] The Economist, "Erdogan's Counterproductive Ambition," September 1, 2012, Ankara and Istanbul, accessed April 1, 2013 http://www.economist.com/node/21561918

[175] Hurriyet Daily News, "Turkey 'world leader' in imprisoned journalists, IPI report says," August 4, 2011, accessed April 1, 2013 http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=ipi-report-declares-turkey-world-leader-of-imprisoned-journalists-2011-04-08

[176] Human Rights Association Press Release, "Urgent Appeal for Action on Behalf of Jailed Human Rights Defender Mr. Muharrem Erbey," Diyarbakir, Southeastern Turkey, January 4, 2010 & Kurdish Human Rights Project, "Report of the KCK Trial," Diyarbakir, Turkey, March 2011, accessed April 1, 2013 http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/doc_details/282-the-diyarbakir-trial-of-151.html

[177] The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Article 26.

[178] Article 301 (1) states: "a person who publicly denigrates the Turkish Nation, the State of the Republic of Turkey, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, the Government of the Republic of

application has juridical and political implications in the context of civil and human rights. It can often serve as a "political weapon of the judiciary against the freedom of expression."[179] Even Orhan Pamuk, the Turkish Nobel laureate, was charged with "public denigration of Turkish identity" for his remarks in an interview: "30,000 Kurds and a million Armenians were killed in these lands and nobody but me dares to talk about it."[180]

Furthermore, Turkey has struggled with the rehabilitation of its "stone-throwing kids," Kurdish youth who have been arrested, prosecuted, jailed and abused under Turkey's strict anti-terrorism laws after throwing stones at police during demonstrations. According to the IHD 2009 report, a "stone-throwing" child in Diyarbakir can face a 24-year prison sentence for making a peace sign at the police.[181] In 2006-2007, 737 children were tried in the context of anti-terror law; 422 children under Article 220 for establishing an organized group with an intention of committing a crime, being a member of a terrorist group and terrorist propaganda; and 413 children under Article 314 for establishing, and managing illegal armed

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Turkey or the judicial bodies of the State, shall be sentenced a penalty of imprisonment for a term of six months and two years." Bulent Algan, "The Brand New Version of Article 301 of Turkish Penal Code and the Future of Freedom of Expression Cases in Turkey," *German Law Journal* 9, no 12 (2008): 2239.

[179] Erol Onderoglu, "301: Ifade Ozgurlugune Karsi Yarginin Politik Silahi [301: The Political Weapon of the Judiciary against the Freedom of Expression], *Ankara Bar Journal* 65, no 4 (Fall 2007) & Bulent Algan, *The Brand New Version*, 2240.

[180] Fazel Hawramy, "Suppressing Kurdish identity has failed. Turkey must take a new approach," *The Guardian*, October 6, 2011, accessed May 9, 2014 http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/oct/06/turkey-kurdish-question-recep-tayyip-erdogan

[181] Human Rights Association Report, "Kanunla Ihtilafa Dusen Cocuklar Raporu [A Report on Children Contradicting with Law]," February 2009.

groups or organizations.[182] This illustrates the wide scope of the definition, which is "too wide and vague by increasing the range of crimes that count as terrorist offences, and by posing a serious threat to the freedoms of expression and association, the right to a fair trial, and the prohibition of torture."[183] The terminology is carefully calibrated to suit acts of terrorism. Activism for Kurdish rights is interpreted by the state as helping and supporting a terrorist organization.[184] National security concerns shape the understanding of Kurds and their demands, and align the idea of basic expression of Kurdish identity with terrorism "where all Kurds are seen as separatists, though in Turkey as elsewhere, autonomists outnumber separatists."[185] As Rebwar Vali points out, these perspectives help Turkey define the Kurdish issue as terrorism, not as demands for basic human rights as a part of an invaluable process of democratization.[186]

Third, the historic socio-economic marginalization of the Kurdish areas in Turkey is still a reality. The armed conflict between the PKK and the TSK, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, destroyed thousands of Kurdish villages. Since the Kurds were framed as a terrorism problem, it became important for the state to take control of the Kurdish areas to ensure the security of the region. An estimated 3.5 million were displaced from the southeastern provinces into more developed urban

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[182] Ibid, 2 & Human Rights Watch, "Protesting as a Terrorist Offense: The Arbitrary Use of Terrorism Laws to Prosecute and Incarcerate Demonstrators in Turkey," New York, November 2010, accessed April 1, 2013 http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/turkey1110webwcover.pdf
[183] ibid, 59.
[184] Senem Aslan, *Incoherent State.*
[185] Loiuse Fawcett, *Down but not out?* 115.
[186] Rebwar Karim Wali, "Politics, Not Guns, Will Help Kurdish Cause," *Rudaw-English*, September 6, 2011, accessed March 26, 2013 http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/3956.html

areas.[187] As mentioned before, the role of the 1983 State of Emergency Law[188] in the evacuation of Kurdish villages and their displacement is significant. There is another factor. Particularly starting in the 1980s, due to the expansion of the Western capitalist markets into the domestic economy, the country's Western provinces started experiencing rapid economic growth and prosperity. Amidst high unemployment, lower growth rates and lack of opportunity in the impoverished areas of the southeast, internal migration to the more industrialized Western cities became the only avenue for the Kurds "to gain access to such prosperity,"[189] beginning their assimilation into the Turkish economy as a source of cheap labor.

The economic divisions between the eastern and western parts of Turkey further exacerbated the political polarization of the eastern provinces in the post-2000s. It has always been true that there is a significant level of center-periphery conflict in Turkey, with the eastern region being significantly underdeveloped compared to the rest.[190] Tribal loyalties, feudalism and traditional honor concepts characterize social life in the east. According to the Association of the Southeastern Anatolian Region Municipalities (GABBB) [Guneydogu Anadolu Bolgesi Belediyeler Birligi] 2012 report, the 21 cities located in the eastern and southeastern

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[187] This comes from the 2010 briefing paper of the Kurdish Human Rights Project in London. Kurdish Human Rights Project, "Internal Displacement in Turkey," Briefing Paper, September 2010, accessed April 3, 2013 http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/briefing-papers.html

[188] "Olaganustu Hal Kanunu [State of Emergency Law]," *[Turkish] Code of Law*, no: 2935, Provision 5, Volume 22, October 25, 1983, pages 6175-6187.

[189] Philip Robins, *The Overlord State,* 663.

[190] The center-periphery model refers to the territorial inequalities between a developed core (metropolitan cities) and an underdeveloped periphery (poor, rural areas). In the case of Turkey, there are great social, economic, political, cultural and geographic differences between the developed parts of Western Turkey and the less developed Eastern Turkey. Serif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" *Daedalus* 102, no 1 (Winter 1973): 169-190.

parts are socio-economically the least developed in the country. More than half of the population lives under the national poverty line.[191] Even though the region comprises 16% of the country's population, it only receives about 8.5% share of the national budget. When the level of public investment in the region is compared with the level of public investment in other cities, the findings raise questions. Let's consider the 2003 State Planning Organization report, a comparative study on public investment in four cities in 2002-2007. The report compares public investment in Diyarbakir with three other cities of equal population (Samsun, Mersin and Kocaeli). Diyarbakir is the largest city in southeastern Turkey; it is also the largest Kurdish-populated city in the region. Samsun is located in the north, Mersin in the south, and Kocaeli in the northwest. The study concludes that $424 million was invested in Diyarbakir as opposed to $528 million in Samsun, $650 million in Mersin and $879 million in Kocaeli.[192] As Sahin and Gulmez further explain, "the average income and the rate of annual increase in the regions have always been the lowest of all other regions. This indicates that people in these regions were poorer on average than people in the other regions."[193] Many scholars draw a parallel between the underdevelopment of the Kurdish cities and the ethnic composition of these places (Denise Natalie 2005; Nader Entessar 2010; Paul J. White 1998). It is not, however,

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[191] In this study, seeking medical treatment with a green card was used as an indicator of poverty. Poverty then was measured based on the number of green card holders seeking medical treatment. In 2008, there were 9.4 million green card holders seeking medical treatment, 46% of whom lived in the eastern and southeastern cities of Turkey. Guneydogu Anadolu Bolgesi Belediyeler Birligi (GABB) [Association of the Southeastern Anatolian Region Municipalities], "Dogu ve Guneydogu Anadolu'da Sosyo-Ekonomik Sorunlar ve Cozum Onerileri [Socio-Economic Problems in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia and Solution Proposals]." *GABB Research Findings.* 2012, 5.

[192] ibid, 6.

[193] Sahin, Ismet & Yener Gulmez, "Efficiency of education: The case in Eastern and South-Eastern Turkey," *Social Indicators Research 49* (2000): 222.

the ethnicity of the people, but the way the state approaches Kurdish ethnicity through its economic policies that creates socio-economic disparities between the eastern and non-eastern regions of the country.

When Prime Minister Erdogan first introduced the idea of the reform package[194] in early 2013, he seemed so determined to disarm the PKK and end the Kurdish insurgency and terrorism that he said he would risk "drinking poison to bring peace and welfare to this country."[195] In March 2013, the Kurdish leader Ocalan called for a cease-fire from his prison cell and offered a truce with Turkey, "in a landmark moment for a newly energized effort to end three decades of armed conflict with the Turkish government."[196] In May, the call was followed by the first group of Kurdish rebels withdrawing from the Turkish soil retreating towards northern Iraq. Ocalan described the new, yet hopeful, set of peace attempts as a "move from armed resistance to an era of democratic political struggle."[197] Barrington Moore reminds us that political ideas "do not descend from heaven."[198] Only by observing the historical processes can one understand why and when political ideas are formulated in a given society and why it takes a particular form. The futile war in the region was born as a strategy to resist the state's assimilation policies. Hence, without addressing

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[194] Here, I refer to the "democratization package," as mentioned on page 52.

[195] Today's Zaman, "Turkey's Erdoğan calls for more support for peace move," February 26, 2013, accessed April 3, 2013 http://www.todayszaman.com/news-308165-turkeys-erdogan-calls-for-more-support-for-peace-move.html

[196] Sebnem Arsu, "Jailed Leader of the Kurds Offers a Truce with Turkey," *New York Times,* March 21, 2013, accessed April 4, 2013 http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/22/world/europe/kurdish-leader-declares-truce-with-turkey.html?_r=0

[197] BBC News, "Murat Karayilan announces PKK withdrawal from Turkey," April 25, 2013, accessed August 27, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22293966

[198] Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 486.

the legal, ethnic and socio-economic foundations of the problems, securing Kurdish status in the constitution, eliminating racism in public spending and finding a solution to the thousands of Kurdish people incarcerated under the pretense of terrorism, the sustainability of the ceasefire remains in question.

2.5.2 Between Denial and Recognition: Kurds in Iran

Some eight million Kurds live in the Islamic Republic of Iran, mainly concentrated in the four provinces in the West, along the eastern borders of Iraq: West Azerbaijan, Kordestan, Kermanshah and Ilam.[199] These provinces were integrated into the Persian territories in 1514. When compared to their counterparts in Turkey and Iraq, Iranian Kurds have not experienced significantly different treatment. Similarly, their historical position in the country is characterized by oppression, repressive state measures and socio-economic marginalization. Although the Iranian conditions were not as brutal,[200] the relationship between the Kurds and Persians seems to have its own peculiarities.

The Kurds, as Sunnis in a country dominated by Shi'as, are an ethnic and a religious minority in Iran. Despite their seeming differences, culturally and linguistically, they have more similarities with Persians than Arabs or Turks. When Europe's nineteenth century nationalist sentiments swept through the Ottoman Empire, it impacted Iran and its minority populations as well.[201] The Persian

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[199] Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, last updated February 12, 2013, accessed May 12, 2014 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html

[200] David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 65.

[201] Gerard Chaliand, *The Kurdish Tragedy* (London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd, 1994), 73-74.

Constitutional Revolution in 1905, which ascended Reza Shah to the throne after the dissolution of the Qajar Empire, marked a defining moment for the development of Iranian nationalism. It also provided the Kurds with a sense of ethnic consciousness. Yet, the monarchs suppressed the Kurdish separatist tendencies, encouraged their disjointed tribal structure and took advantage of the hostilities among them.[202] On the contrary, the Pahlavis[203] did not deny Kurdish identity or language. They built the idea of Iranian citizenship on the "basis of [their] civil and political rights and obligations," recognizing Persian as the official language, and subordinating, but not denying, all other, what they would be called, "provincial" languages.[204] In this sense, Kurdish was somewhere in between recognition and denial. The absence of a standardized language was another factor hindering Kurdish national self-awareness during the Pahlavi period. Such conditions created a "political space that limited incentives and opportunities for Kurds to manifest their ethnonational identity."[205] In this vein, compared to the violent and ethnically based nature of Kurdish nationalist movements in Turkey in the early Republican years, Kurdish nationalism in Iran was "barely existent" until the mid-twentieth century.[206]

Despite the restrained potential for Kurdish nationalism, several separatist uprisings occurred in Kurdistan.[207] Perhaps the most threatening uprising was the

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[202] Vali Abbas, "The Kurds and their Others: Fragmented identity and fragmented politics," *Comparative Studies of Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 18, no. 20 (1998): 82-105.

[203] The Pahlavis were initially mentioned on page 36.

[204] Minoo Alinia, "Spaces of Diaspora: Kurdish identities, experiences of otherness and politics of belonging," Doctoral Dissertation, Goteborg University, 2004, 57-58.

[205] Denise Natalie, *The Kurds and the State,* 121.

[206] ibid.

[207] McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 53-56. Two rebellions are worth mentioning: Ismael Agha Simko's rebellion of the Shikak tribe in northern Kurdistan and Jaafar Sultan's rebellion of the Avroman Tribe in southern Kurdistan. W.G. Elphinston, *The Kurdish Question*, 97.

Ismail Agha Simko rebellion in 1921.[208] Many scholars posit that the revolt marked

the beginning of Kurdish nationalist demands.[209] According to Nader Entessar, it was

the first attempt to create a Kurdish nation state in the country. David McDowall

disputes that the rebellion was driven more by Simko's personal ambition than his

nationalist tendencies.[210] Robert Olson maintains that whether nationalism was

important in the emergence of Simko's rebellion, "Reza Shah's government treated

it as if it were a *nationalist* rebellion because it threatened the state."[211] In fact, the

Shah organized the state's military forces —12,000 troops to be exact — to crush the

insurgency: "Simko's ten-thousand-man army had been reduced to one thousand men

from his Shakkak tribe." In 1930 Simko was killed.[212] Reza Shah was deeply

concerned with the ethnic plurality of the Iranian territories, which included various

minority groups, such as Kurds, Azeris, Arabs, Persians, Turkmens, Baluchis and

Lurs. The Iranian politics of national identity and citizenship favored Persians at the

expense of other provincial groups. This was based on the Shah's desire to protect

the unity of his state, and prevent any probable ethnic separation. Hence, following

Simko's assassination, hundreds of Kurdish, Baluchi and Lur tribes "were deported

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[208] Following the downfall of the Qajar dynasty (1785–1925), Reza Shah, who served as a defense minister after the 1921 coup d'état backed by the British, quickly became the head of state. In 1925, he declared himself the new Shah, and Iran a constitutional monarchy. Pahlavi dynasty consisted of two rulers, Reza Shah Pahlavi, who served until 1941, and his son Mohammad Shah Pahlavi, who served until the collapse of the dynasty in 1979. For further details on the Pahlavis, see David McDowall, *The Kurds,* 65-67; Robert Olson, *the Kurdish Question*, 20-22; and Nader Entessar, *The Kurdish Politics*, 18-20.

[209] Other scholars (Abbas Vali, 1998) point at the establishment of Mahabad Republic as the birth of Kurdish nationalist demands. Simko's rebellion was not as politically organized as the Turkish uprisings. Due to rivalries within the larger tribes, it could not gather enough support from its Turkish counterparts. See David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement,* 222-223.

[210] David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 66-67.

[211] Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Question,* 21.

[212] Initially, Simko was captured, yet pardoned by the state when he pledged his loyalty to the Shah. Nader Entessar, *The Kurdish Politics*, 17.

and made to live in forced residence at Tehran or elsewhere. Their lands were confiscated and military strong points linked by roads were established at strategic positions in the Kurdish tribal areas."[213]

The situation of Kurds in Iran resembled that in Turkey in two ways. First, the state's early processes of identity politics and suppression of "[Kurdish] political and cultural manifestations by the force of arms" were similar.[214] Understanding history and how the Kurdish region was divided into separate parts is important. After the end of World War I, the eastern borders of the Ottoman Empire were partitioned between Britain and France, Britain controlling Ottoman Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq), and France controlling the northern part of Ottoman Syria (modern day Syria). In early 1920s, the Ottoman Kurds found themselves as a part of British-controlled Iraq and French-controlled Syria. Those in Iran were beaten into submission by Reza Khan's centralizing measures. British and Soviet invasion, tribal fighting and financial crises had devastating impacts on the Iranian people.[215] The Shah shaped the structural economic and political conditions in the country. Though he did not abolish the tribes, by offering economic incentives, he certainly transformed the way they functioned. This also meant drastic changes in the cultural patterns of urban Iran.[216] His regime brought a sense of national order: he refrained from framing the Kurds as a separate ethnicity, instead treating them as a tribal

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[213] W.G. Elphinston, *The Kurdish Question*, 97 & David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement,* 224.

[214] Abbas Vali, "The Kurds and Their 'Others': Fragmented Identity and Fragmented Politics," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 18*, no 2 (1998): 82.

[215] David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 214.

[216] Eckart Ehlers and Willem Floor, "Urban Change in Iran, 1920-1941," *Iranian Studies* 26, no ¾ (Summer-Autumn 1993): 251-275.

community with Persian identity.[217] For Abbas Vali, the denial of "Kurdayeti" was "the necessary condition" of nation-state building practices.[218]

Reza Shah's modernization and secularization efforts were parallel to those of Ataturk in Turkey. Both were based on statism, secularism and nationalism.[219] He introduced government centralization as a part of his project, and achieved full control over the economy. Centralization meant that tribal leaders would be eliminated or forcefully displaced, and all non-Persians would be categorized as tribal people.[220] In public, the role of religion was minimized and religious institutions were shut down. This indicates another similarity. Many historians observe that Ataturk eliminated Islam from the public sphere as well. The abolishment of the caliphate, the alphabet revolution and the new dress code regulations are all clear examples. In comparison, the Shah's policies were not as drastic. Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zurcher suggest that Reza Khan relied on the connection between Islam and Islam's emphasis on development, growth and advancement.[221] Consider his famous quotation: "If the Great Lawgiver of Islam were alive today to see the progress of the world, he would confirm the complete

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[217] Denise Natalie, *The Kurds and the State,* 118. According to Robert Olson, Britain sided with Iran and Turkey in curbing Kurdish nationalism on grounds that a strong nationalist movement within Iran or Turkey would destabilize the power balance in Iraq. However, Britain encouraged Kurdish nationalism in Iraq as a part of its strategy of "divide and rule." Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Question and Turkish-Iranian Relations* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1998), 4-6.

[218] ibid.

[219] Reza Shah's reforms were not as drastic. Ataturk's ideology was based on six official principles: republicanism, *statism,* secularism, nationalism, populism, and revolution. However, Reza Shah never officially declared any principles. One can argue that it was the principle of republicanism that determined the successful fate of Ataturk's reforms and the failure of the Shah's efforts. For more information on a comparative study of Ataturk and Reza Shah, see Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zurcher, ed. *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Ataturk and Reza Shah* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 45-46.

[220] Denise Natalie, *The Kurds and the State,* 120-121.

[221] Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zurcher, *Men of Order*, 45-46.

harmony of his true teachings with the basis and institutions of the civilization today."[222] Like Ataturk, the essence of the Shah's nationalism was rooted in his desire for a pan-Iranian identity— all Persians, as Aryans, could be cohesively united.[223]

As Firoozeh Kashhani-Sabet explains it, "the Iranian homeland, though still formally the birthplace of Armenians, Kurd and Baluchis, as well as Farsis and others, increasingly came to represent the vatan [country] of Shi'i Persians through the persistent efforts of the state to extirpate competing cultures."[224] The discourse of Persian singularity arose as the predominant element of nationalism in this period. It was used "to glorify Iran's past and create a fictitious notion of territorial unity."[225] As previously mentioned, the Shah standardized the Persian language and declared all non-Persian languages "local dialects of Persian."[226] Moreover, he went to the extent that any use of Kurdish was banned in schools, publications and public speech. Although Iran did not prohibit the use of the term "Kurd" in public as it was done in Turkey, Kurds were officially referred as "the Mountain Persians."[227] However, the Iranian policies only targeted the political and military organization and the power of the Kurdish tribes; they did not target their ethnicity. They tried to include Kurds

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[222] Cyril E. Black, Louis Dupree, Elizabeth Endicott-West, Daniel C. Matuszewski, Eden Narby, and Arthur N. Waldron, *The Modernization of Inner Asia* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1991), 268.
[223] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State,* 122.
[224] Firoozeh Kashhani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804-1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 5 & Nader Entessar, *Competing National Identities,* 189.
[225] Mustafa Vaziri, *Iran as Imagined Nation: The Construction of National Identity* (New York: Paragon House, 1993) & Nader Entessar, "Competing National Identities: The Kurdish Conundrum in Iran," in *Kurdish Identity: Human Rights and Political Status,* edited by C. G. MacDonald & C. A. O'Leary, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007), 189.
[226] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State*, 120.
[227] Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 13.

as a part of the Iranian identity, whereas Turkish policies denied their existence altogether.[228]

As Tehran strived to merge non-Persian ethnic groups into its centralized power structure, the Kurdish unrest surfaced as a response. But, perhaps, the biggest Kurdish threat toward the Pahlavi dynasty occurred in 1946 with the establishment of the Mahabad Republic. It is the only independent Kurdish state in history: it existed less than a year.[229] Many of its leaders were arrested and publicly hanged.[230] According to Nader Entessar, it constituted a breaking point for the irredeemable politicization of Kurdish ethnic identity.[231] David McDowall seems to argue otherwise, claiming that the portrayal of the republic as a rupture "at which the Kurds realized their freedom is arguably a rosy version of the reality."[232] In the end, the Iranian army reasserted its tight control over Kurdish lands. The Kurds were left "with the knowledge that this venture, like many others before, had not come off and

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[228] "The Turkish strategy of assimilating the Kurds, of pretending that everyone in the country shared Turkish ethnicity, could not work as easily in Iran, a country composed of six large ethnic groups (Persian, Azeri, Kurdish, Baluchi, Lur, and Arab)." David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement,* 229.

[229] During World War II, Iran was invaded by the Russians in the north and the British in the south. Taking advantage of the power vacuum, the Kurds established their first political party, Komala Jiwaneyew Kurd (The Kurd Resurrection Group) (JK) and declared independence from Iranian rule in 1946. The Mahabad Republic's independence was short-lived. After the Russians left Iranian soil, the Republic fell back under Tehran's control. Later that year, the JK became the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI). David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 53-67.

[230] Amnesty International, "Iran: Human rights abuses against the Kurdish minority," July 2008, MDE 13/088/2008, accessed April 13, 2013, http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/489174f72.html

[231] Nader Entessar, *Competing National Identities*, 190. It is also important to note that the political space in Iran was not as repressive as that in Turkey; hence, the forms of Kurdish nationalism were not as violent as the actions of the PKK. Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State,* 117-139.

[232] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 246.

that for the time being they had better sit quietly and show themselves good citizens."[233]

The second similarity of the Kurdish position in Turkey and Iran is the relationship between the repression of Kurdish rights and that repression's reconstruction as an issue of national security in the pre- and post-2000 periods. In the pre-2000 period, there are two moments worth mentioning. The first moment came with the Islamic Revolution (1978-1979), which transformed the political space in Iran and emphasized a shift from ethnicity to religion: Persian-ness was recast as an Islamic identity. By drawing parallels between the Sunni and Shi'i Islam, Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhallah Khomeini declared his vision for "uniting under one big Islamic state and under one flag:"[234]

> In an Islamic Republic, there is no oppression… situations of forcefulness do not exist… The arrogant must become as the deprived and the deprived must be elevated, not like the arrogant but rather, like brothers and live in this country together. I say to all groups of the nation that in an Islamic Republic, there are no privileges between the rich and the poor, the white and the black, Sunni and Shi'i, Arab and non-Arab, Turk and other than Turk… All people are equal to one another. They are all given equal rights. They are all equal. The rights of religious minorities will be preserved. Islam respects them. It respects all groups, the Kurds and other groups who have a different language are all our brothers. We are with them and they are with us. We all belong to one nation, to one faith.[235]

Initially, Khomeini's reconstruction of being Persian as a religious identity paved the way to incorporate religious and non-religious minorities into the state. It

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[233] Hassan Arfa, *The Kurds: An Historical and Political Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 103.

[234] Ruhallah Khomeini, *Selected Messages and Speeches of Imam Khomeini* (Tehran: Ministry of National Guidance, 1980), 50-53 & Natalie Denise, *The Kurds and the State,* 141.

[235] Ruhallah Khomeini, *Selected Messages*, 5-11.

raised Kurdish hopes for ethnic equality.[236] He seemed to be willing to negotiate with the Kurds. Tehran recognized Kurdish rights and their culture in political and religious institutions. But during the drafting of the 1979 constitution, Khomeini changed his language. Kurds were no longer recognized as a minority group.

> Sometimes the word minorities is used to refer to people such as Kurds, Lurs, Turks, Persians, Baluchis and such. These people should not be called minorities, because the term assumes there is a difference between these brothers. In Islam, such a difference has no place at all.[237]

The republic designated Kurds as a national security concern on grounds that Kurds were pursuing independence from Iran. Their demands for regional administration could cause further secessionist movements among the Azeris, Baluchis and Arabs, and bring the eventual disintegration of the country. McDowall explains that the Islamic Republic was actually never sure about what to do with the Kurds and how to handle their demands. Its fear of territorial disintegration eventually led to the rejection of Kurdish "self-administration," a vague term used during the negotiations between Tehran and the Kurds. This caused disagreements because the term did not carry any connotations for autonomy.[238] What followed were the clashes between the Revolutionary Guards and the two Kurdish political parties: KDPI (The Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan) and Komala (The Revolutionary Organization of Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan). The conflict destroyed dozens of Kurdish villages, and caused 10,000 casualties.[239] Crucially, the

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[236] Kurdish hopes were also elevated by the legalization of the KDPI in 1979. The party had been banned with the collapse of the Mahabad Republic in 1946.

[237] According to McDowall, some Shi'i Kurds did not desire autonomy, preferring to be included in the Persian identity. David McDowall, *The Modern History of the Kurds*, 271.

[238] David McDowall, *The Kurds,* 74-75 & F. Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 172.

[239] Amnesty International, "Iran," 8.

subsequent Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) provided a particular opportunity for the Kurds to reassert their demands for autonomy. Rising Kurdish claims, coupled with Baghdad's military support to the KDPI and Komala at the height of the war,[240] further facilitated the framing of the Kurds as "traitors in the country's most dire moment."[241] Kurdish claims continued to be settled through repression and military power.[242]

The second critical moment was the emergence of the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK). Although Komala and KDPI provided the necessary political leadership to overcome tribal allegiances, the differences in their political views incapacitated the Kurdish movement in Iran. KDPI is a liberal ethnic Kurdish party while Komala supports a more radical Marxist-Leninist ideology. Their discrepancies caused clashes between the two in 1980s.[243] The Islamic government's use of the Kurdish political rivalries, coupled with intense government repression, complicated the relationship between Tehran and Kurdistan. Kurdish nationalism in the 1990s became radicalized.[244] Despite Muhammad Khatami (1997-2005)'s efforts

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[240] The historical documents indicate that KDPI and Komala received military support from Iraq, but they never fully cooperated with Iraq against Iran.

[241] David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement*, 238.

[242] According to Louise Fawcett, the revolution gained the Kurds a few rights in the cultural space. Particularly, Fawcett evaluates Muhammad Khatami's election in 1997 positively based on his agenda of liberalization, encouraging and strengthening of social and political pluralism and developing civil society. However, David McDowall is highly unconvinced if the Islamic Revolution contributed anything positive to Kurdish political, social, or economic space, even though he admits the Kurds enjoyed a loosened grip in some cultural matters (i.e. permission to publish in Kurdish). David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 261-280; David McDowall, *The Kurds*, 73-79; Louise Fawcett, *Down But Not Out?,* 116.

[243] Minoo Alinia, *Spaces of Diasporas*, 59-60.

[244] The civil society networks in Iran were not as well developed as those in Turkey. Thus, the political organization of Kurdish ethnic nationalism did not function in Iran as a unified and consolidated unit (like Dev-Genc or PKK in Turkey). For further information on Kurdish nationalism, see Abbas Vali, ed., *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, Inc., 2003).

to grant the Kurds the right to broadcast, publish and seek education in Kurdish,[245] Komala and the KDPI turned into small radical movements, engaging in military activities in the mountainous border regions.[246] Inspired by Turkey's PKK, PJAK's insurgency redefined the Kurdish agenda. It has called for a free democratic and political system in Iran, in which Kurdistan would exist as an autonomous entity. It has highlighted the failure of nonviolence and traditional parties seeking "the attainment of Kurdish national rights within a democratic federal republic of Iran" through diplomacy and nonaggression.[247] Instead, the movement has drawn attention to the necessity of armed struggle for defending the ethnic and cultural rights of the Iranian Kurds. By this token, PJAK violence has helped the Iranian government discredit Kurdish demands, and center the problem on security, rather than democratic political solutions. Ordinary Kurds were held responsible for PJAK insurgency, and they were marginalized because of their ethnic background.[248]

Parallel to the Kurdish position in Turkey, the post-2000 period in Iran is characterized by three similar challenges. First, in theory, the Iranian Constitution (1980) embraces an inclusionary language providing equality for all of its citizens. Yet, in practice, the reality depicts an utterly different picture. The Iranian

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[245] Khatami seemed to be committed to the resolution of Kurdish issues. With authorizing the right to broadcast, publish and seek education in Kurdish, he created a space for the Kurds to practice their culture. This would all change with the election of his successor, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad in 2005.

[246] In fact, both are currently operating in Iraqi Kurdistan to escape persecution. Vladimir van Wilgenburg, "Kurdish Parties Urge Iranians to Boycott Elections," *Kurdish Media*, May 22, 2009, accessed April 11, 2013, http://www.kurdmedia.com/article.aspx?id=15730

[247] Michael Gunther, *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds,* 178-179.

[248] PJAK, "About Us," Website, accessed April 11, 2013, http://pjak.org/eng/about.php & Kenneth R. Timmerman, "The Turkey-Iran Pact," *Rojhelat,* September 17, 2011, accessed April 11, 2013, http://www.rojhelat.info/english/perspectives/1597-the-turkey-iran-pact

Constitution is a product of many contradictions.[249] Articles 3(14) and 19 promote

the equal rights of people and protect them from discrimination.

> …the government of Islamic Republic of Iran has the duty of… securing the multifarious rights of all citizens, both women and men, and providing legal protection for all, as well as the equality of all before the law. Article 3(14)

> All people of Iran, whatever the ethnic group or tribe to which they belong, enjoy equal rights; and color, race, language, and the like, do not bestow any privilege. (Article 19)

Under these provisions, as a religious and ethnic minority, the rights of Kurdish

people should be respected. However, Article 13 adds an interesting twist to the

concept of equal rights:

> Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians are the only recognized religious minorities, who, within the limits of the law, are free to perform their religious rites and ceremonies, and to act according to their own canon in matters of personal affairs and religious education.

These recognized minorities have a right to be represented in the legislature

– Zoroastrians, Jews and Armenian Christians with one representative each, and

Assyrian and Chaldean Christians with one representative between them.[250] Because

they are defined as Muslims, Kurds, as well as other Sunni groups (Baluchis and

Turkmens), are considered "unrecognized religious minorities."[251] They have no

political representation. Moreover, they are subjected to restrictions on their religious

rights. The capital Tehran hosts 2 million Sunnis, but it does not have a single Sunni

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[249] For further information on the contradictions in the Iranian Constitution, see S. Waqir Hasib, "The Iranian Constitution: An Exercise in Contradictions," *Al-Nakhlah* (2004), accessed May 15, 2014, http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Al-Nakhlah/Archives/~/media/Fletcher/Microsites/al

[250] ibid, Chapter VI, Article 64.

[251] The rituals of Ahl-e Haqq, another religious minority group, mostly Kurds living in Kermanshah, are prohibited under Iranian law. Amnesty International, "Iran," 8.

mosque within its perimeter.[252] Two recent attempts to erect a Sunni mosque faced

state intrusion.[253] Security forces often prevent Sunnis from accessing public

facilities to hold prayers.[254]

Second, similar to Turkey, the Kurdish position in Iran is a part of a larger

problem – socio-economic and political discrimination, including restrictions on

linguistic rights, denial of employment and economic marginalization of the four

Kurdish provinces. "The use of regional and tribal languages in the press and mass

media, as well as for teaching of their literature in schools"[255] is guaranteed, and

protected under the Article 15 of the Iran's Constitution. Article 24 brings one

exclusion criteria. Freedom of expression can be silenced if "detrimental to the

fundamental principles of Islam or the rights of the public."[256] Kurdish language is

permitted in some broadcasts and publications, yet, "freedom of expression and

dissemination of thoughts" on Iranian television and radio must be "in conformity

with Islamic criteria."[257] The Amnesty International 2008 report found proof of

harassment and discrimination against the schools in Kordestan province for

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[252] Saeed Kamali Dehghan, "Sunni Muslims banned from holding own Eid prayers in Tehran," *The Guardian*, August 31, 2011, accessed April 16, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/31/iran-forbids-sunni-eid-prayers & Amnesty International, "Iran," 8.

[253] There were two attempts to build Sunni mosques in Mashhad and Bojnourd. Both were destroyed. Ali Riza Gafuri, "Is Iran engaging in sectarian discrimination against its Sunnis?" *Today's Zaman,* April 29, 2012, accessed April 16, 2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/news-278878-is-iran-engaging-in-sectarian-discrimination-against-its-sunnis-by-ali-riza-gafuri.html

[254] ibid.

[255] The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Chapter II, Article 15: "The official language and script of Iran, the lingua franca of its people, is Persian. Official documents, correspondence, and texts, as well as text-books, must be in this language and script. However, the use of regional and tribal languages in the press and mass media, as well as for teaching of their literature in schools, is allowed in addition to Persian."

[256] ibid, Chapter III, Article 24.

[257] ibid, Chapter XII, Article 175.

"permitting the teaching of a non-national language."[258] Kerem Yildiz explains that prior to the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, private schools faced no obstacles to offering education in Kurdish, especially in the western parts. Even though most of the classes were conducted in Farsi, a language most children were familiar with, Kurdish was also a part of the curriculum. Since 1982, such initiatives have disappeared.[259] In recent times, when parents give Kurdish names to their children, they need to pick a name from the "book of permitted names at civil registers."[260] Only certain Kurdish names are allowed.

The United Nations 2011 report raises questions on the level of "enjoyment of political, economic, social and cultural rights...by Kurdish communities."[261] The International Labor Office (ILO) 2011 report expresses similar concerns for the gozinesh criterion and its negative impact on the Kurdish populations' access to employment.[262] The Gozinesh Law (1985) makes employment within certain agencies conditional upon the candidates' allegiances to Shi'i Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran.[263] Economically, it marginalizes the Kurdish populations as

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[258] Amnesty International, "Iran," 13. The report cites the closing down of Soma, a non-governmental organization, for two consecutive years in 2007 and 2008.

[259] Kerem Yildiz provides a detailed account on the Kurdish media in Iran. Kerim Yildiz, *Kurtlerin Kulturel ve Dinsel Haklari [Cultural and Language Rights of the Kurds],* trans. Atilla Tuygan (Istanbul: Belge International Publications, 2004), 29-30.

[260] Ali Riza Gafuri, "Is Iran engaging in sectarian discrimination against its Sunnis?" no page number.

[261] ibid, 11.

[262] Aside from Kurds, the gozinesh system impacts Baluchis, Azerbaijanis, Ahwaz, Turkmen and Kurds. International Labour Office, "Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations," *General Report, Report III (Part 1A),* 2011, accessed April 17, 2013, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_151556.pdf

[263] These include "the totality of ministries, state organizations, firms and companies; the national companies for oil and gas and petrochemicals; the Organization for Propagation and Rebuilding of Industry; the Red Crescent Society; municipalities; the social security organization; […] firms and companies for which all or a portion of their budget is secured by public [state] funds." International Labor Organization, *Amnesty International's concerns relevant to the 91st session of the International*

followers of Sunni Islam, and limits their opportunities. Consequently, it leads to unbalanced levels of high unemployment among Sunni Kurds, Baluchis and Arabs.[264] Kamran Nori and Farhad Zand conducted a study on the Kurdish Kermanshah province between 2006 and 2011. Based on development levels in education, employment, housing facilities, healthcare, roadways and agriculture, all 14 counties in the province are "completely deprived," their research concluded.[265] It has always been true that Iranian Kurdistan has been the poorest compared to the other parts of Iran. According to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights report, the Kurdish areas experience poor housing and living conditions where "open-air sewage was sometimes observed and uncollected garbage blocked streets, obstructing traffic and access from the outside in case of emergencies."[266] These inequalities have further widened the gap between the dominant cities and Kurdish provinces, and created socio-economic differences between the center and the peripheral regions of the country.

Labor Conference, 3 to 9 June 2003, 14 & The United Nations General Assembly Sixty-Sixth Session, "The Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report of the Secretary-General A/66/361," *Item 69 (c) of the Provisional Agenda, Promotion and Protection of Human Rights: Human Rights Situations and Reports of Special Rapporteurs and Representatives*, September 15, 2011, accessed April 14, 2013 http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/499/42/PDF/N1149942.pdf?OpenElement

[264] Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, *Alternative Report submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for the consideration of the Second Report of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the 49th Pre-Sessional Working Group*, March 2012, accessed May 15, 2014, http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/ngos/UNPO_IranWG49.pdf

[265] Kamran Nori and Farhad Zand, "Evaluation of Development Rate Among the Counties of Kermanshah Province Using HDI Method in the Time Period of 2006-2011," *Technical Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences* 3, no. 21 (2013): 2828-2831, accessed May 15, 2014 http://tjeas.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/2828-2831.pdf

[266] Miloon Kothari, "Report of the special rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living," *United Nations Commission on Human Rights,* para 77, March 21, 2006, accessed May 15, 2014, http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/human-rights-documents/aadel-collection/14002-report-of-the-special-rapporteur-on-adequate-housing-as-a-component-of-the-right-to-an-adequate-standard-of-living-miloon-kothari.html#.U3UzzPldXTo

Third, the rhetoric of terrorism has become a contemporary state instrument for the suppression of Kurdish identity. National security concerns shape the understanding of the Kurds. PJAK's violence helps Tehran shift the terms of the debate, rally Persians against terrorists and divide the Kurds. Let's consider Iran's Islamic Penal Code (2012), titled "Offenses against the National and International Security of the Country" (hereinafter "security laws"). According to articles 513 and 514, the right to freedom of expression is subjected to restriction to protect "national security." It criminalizes "insults" against any of the "Islamic sanctities," holy figures in Islam or the Supreme Leader of Iran.[267] Similarly, Article 498 prohibits the establishment of any group that "disrupts national security."[268] The code does not offer any specifics on what might constitute as an insult or an action that is breach of security. Such vague definitions extend to a large segment of the civil society. Any individual or organization that criticizes the policies of the government is arrested and imprisoned under these security laws. With the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005, there has been a widespread crackdown on Kurdish opposition activists, human rights defenders, journalists and intellectuals on the basis of security and terrorism related charges. Reports indicate increasing governmental control on freedom of speech, association and assembly.[269] Since the 2009 election, 150

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[267] Human Rights Watch, "Codifying Repression: An Assessment of Iran's New Penal Code," August 2012, accessed May 16, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iran0812webwcover.pdf
[268] Ibid, 6.
[269] Human Rights Watch, "You Can Detain Anyone for Anything: Iran's Broadening Clampdown on Independent Activisms," 20, no. 1(E) (January 2008), accessed May 15, 2014, http://hrw.org/reports/2008/iran0108/ & Human Rights Watch, "Iran: Freedom of Expression and Association in the Kurdish Regions," January 2009, accessed May 16, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iran0109_web.pdf

journalists have left the country while 42 journalists are currently incarcerated.[270] The Ahmadinejad administration also placed heavy constraints on the publication and circulation of books in Kurdish and any other local languages. "Now Iranian Kurds have to import Kurdish-language books from Iraqi Kurdistan."[271]

Even though Kurds are fairly well integrated into the Persian identity, in the words of Abbas Vali, they have become "strangers in their own homes."[272] The contradictions in the constitution prevent them from enjoying any real sense of political or cultural rights. Chris Zambelis posits that the conditions of poverty, ethnic persecution and human rights abuses alienate the Kurds from the larger society and provoke dissidence among them.[273] The Penal Code offers a justifiable ground for attacks on the Kurds. It creates a channel to persecute Kurdish opposition.[274] The state use of terrorism rhetoric to discredit Kurdish resistance and their demands has become the "Iran's anti-PJAK project," Kardo Bokani argues.[275] The relationship between security and Kurdish rights is a significant barrier to the settlement of Kurdish issues in Iran.

The status of Iranian Kurds revolves around the necessity for a political opening in the country. Nothing will change as long as "the conditions defining the

[270] The United Nations General Assembly Sixty-Sixth Session, "The Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran," 16.
[271] The reformist Khatami presidency allowed for Kurdish language publications. The Kurds during his term enjoyed the circulation of Kurdish works. Human Rights Watch, "Iran," 16.
[272] Abbas Vali, *The Kurds and Their "Others,"* 84.
[273] Chris Zambelis, "The Factors Behind Rebellion in Iranian Kurdistan," *CTC Centennial*, March 1, 2011, accessed April 11, 2012, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-factors-behind-rebellion-in-iranian-kurdistan
[274] Kaveh Ghoreishi, "Iran Attacks Kurds to Deflect Attention Away from Regime Conflict," *Inside Iran*, July 27, 2011, accessed May 15, 2013, http://www.insideiran.org/news/iran-attacks-kurds-to-deflect-attention-away-from-regime-conflict/
[275] Kardo Bokani, "Iran's Anti-PJAK Project," *Rojhelat: The Kurdish Observer,* May 24, 2011, accessed April 11, 2013, http://www.rojhelat.info/english/perspectives/1200-irans-anti-pjak-project

relationship between the Kurdish and sovereign identities remain unchanged."[276] The election of the moderate Hassan Rouhani government in June 2013 raised hopes that the country may accommodate some minority rights at the turn of the 21st century. It seems that the general consensus of the Kurdish newspapers on Rouhani indicates no real sign of change.[277] The resolution of the Kurdish issues is still pending.

2.4.3 From Genocide to Independence? ISIS and Kurds in Iraq

Iraq has been a battleground since June 2014. Capturing the country's second largest city, Mosul, as well as Tikrit and Samarra, cities important for Arab Shia, ISIS has now expanded as far as 70 miles south of the capital. Alarmed by the possibility of the Sunni take-over of Baghdad, Tehran has already interfered with the situation, and supplied three battalions of the Revolutionary Guards. 300 U.S. troops arrived in Iraq as advisers to the Maliki government at the end of June. The rising levels of political turmoil, ISIS's growing power in Syria and Iraq, and Washington's lack of progress in defeating insurgency have vast implications not only for the countries involved, but also for American national security and regional stability. With 5,000 casualties and $2 trillion military spending, the United States has already invested too much to let the Iraqi regime fall into the hands of extremists. Many policy

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[276] Kerem Yildiz and Tanyel B. Taysi, *Kurds in Iran: The Past, Present and Future* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2007).

[277] Fuad Haqiqi, "Iranian Kurdish activists see 'No sign of change' under new president Rouhani," *Rudaw*, May 2, 2014, accessed May 16, 2014, http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2014/5/irankurd1091.htm; Fuad Haqiqi, "Ex-Kurdish MP in Iran: Rouhani's Promises Remain Unfulfilled," *Rudaw*, March 3, 2014, accessed May 16, 2014 http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iran/20032014 & Behdad Bordbar, "Iranian Kurds disappointed with Rouhani," *Al-Monitor*, December 23, 2013, accessed May 16, 2014 http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/12/rouhani-disappoints-iran-kurds.html

analysts have already jumped the gun and suggested a military intervention. However, it is important to realize that, eleven years after the invasion, we still do not understand how complicated Iraq is and how limited American power is in the country. It has also exhibited the deeply rooted tensions between Sunnis, Shia and Kurds and their distrust for each other. Taking advantage of this power vacuum, the Kurdish forces took control of the disputed city of Kirkuk, a place with one of the world's largest crude oil reserves and historical and ethnic symbolic importance to Kurds. Analyzing the current Iraqi crisis requires us to shed some light on the issues facing Kurdish populations in the country.

There are more than four million Kurds living in Iraq today, comprising less than a quarter of its population. The US-led coalition that toppled the Ba'athist regime has created new opportunities for the Kurds to attain a federal autonomous region in northern Iraq. Kurdistan has become "Iraq's post-2003 success story,"[278] an ethnic population controlling the large portion of the country's resources, sitting on top of "some 45 billion barrels of oil reserves and more than 110 trillion cubic feet of gas."[279] The post-2008 period has improved conditions of security[280] and political stability, and increased Kurdish leverage within the larger population. Iraqi Kurds, after "80 years of nightmare repression and genocide," offer valuable lessons for their neighbors. They now have greater rights, with a lot more political influence than those in Turkey and Iran. In return, the recognition of their social, political and

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[278] Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2007,* 21.
[279] Rudaw, "Kurdish Independence from Iraq in Five Years, KRG Advisor Says," January 25, 2014, accessed May 18, 2014, http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/25012014#sthash.49L1LTxY.dpuf
[280] The country has recently experienced one of its highest annual death tolls since 2009.

economic rights has reduced Kurdish radicalization in the country.[281] However, the Kurdish historical position in Iraq is characterized by similar issues we have discussed in Turkey and Iran: nationalism, identity politics and sectarian interests as ethnic violence and political instability have become the realities of post-Saddam era. In this vein, the case of Iraq shares a long period of convergence and a recent period of divergence with its neighboring countries. Understanding the source and evolution of the Kurdish problems in Iraq requires us to link the most recent Kurdish developments to important elements of its past, while using the Kurdish success in post-2003 to provide critical perspectives on obstacles undermining the democratization process in the region.

The Kurdish problems in Iraq date back to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the growing popularity of the national self-determination in the nineteenth century.[282] The Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 divided the territories of the empire between Britain and France, which had a significant influence in the creation of the modern nation-states, from Palestine to Iraq.[283] By the end of World War I, British forces had occupied the former Ottoman provinces of Basra and Baghdad. The status of Mosul, with its predominantly Kurdish population, strategic

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[281] Peter W. Galbraith, "Last Chance for Iraq," *New York Review of Books* 52, no 15 (2005): 20-25.

[282] The Treaty of Sevres is particularly important because it led to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and left the oil-rich Mosul and Kirkuk under the British Mandate. Many scholars posit that Iraq was created as an "artificial state." Gareth R. V. Stansfield, *Iraq: People, History, Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 67.

[283] There is a minor nuance here. Many scholars posit that the Sykes-Picot agreement created "artificial borders" in the Middle East. This seems to be the most commonly accepted view in the literature. Others (Davis, 2005) argue that it was the Ottoman Empire, which created the "artificial borders." In the late 1800s, the empire tried to modernize the Ottoman Iraq. In early 1900s, the region's Arabs were disturbed by the Young Turks' turkification policies. This further polarized the two groups. In either case, I argue that the Sykes Picot heavily influenced the borders of some modern Middle East nation-states. Iraq and Syria are among the ones in which this research is invested.

location, natural resources and close proximity to the hydrocarbon reserves in Kirkuk, became an important issue. Should the Kurds be granted their independent state or should they be administered within the territories of other nations? The Kurdish question was born.

The instability that followed the initial years of the British Mandate gave some political leverage to Kurds. The British officers allowed for autonomous regional administration in Sulaimani and appointed a prominent Kurdish leader – Sheik Mahmoud Barzanji as governor in December 1918.[284] Only a few months later, he revolted, because he was displeased by the status of Mosul and his limited governorship. Barzanji's political power was constrained due to his internal conflicts with other Kurdish tribes, and he was quickly defeated. However, he sparked the initial fire of Kurdish nationalism as a dynamic of Baghdad's inability to accommodate the Kurdish demands within the state.[285]

Under American pressures and monitoring by the League of Nations, Iraq was carved out of the provinces of Basra, Baghdad and eventually Mosul in 1926. It must be noted here that the 1920 Treaty of Sevres originally allowed for the "Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates" and "north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia" to become an independent state.[286] During the negotiation of peace

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[284] Under the British mandate, Kurds were "an integral part of the new state." They participated in elections. Gareth Stansfield, "The Kurdish Question in Iraq, 1914-1974," *The Middle East Online Series* 2 (2006): 2, accessed May 21, 2014, http://www.gale.cengage.com/pdf/whitepapers/gdc/TheKurdishQuestion.pdf

[285] Barzanji revolted again in 1930. He was quickly suppressed, and exiled in southern Iraq. David McDowall, "The Kurds," 81-88.

[286] Articles 62, 63 and 64. These provisions were based on two conditions: "Majority of the population of these areas desires independence," and they "are capable of such independence." The World War I Document Archive, "The Treaty of Sevres, 1920," Brigham Young University Library Online, accessed May 19, 2014, http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Section_I,_Articles_1_-_260

treaties, Britain's initial position was following the Wilsonian principles of self-determination and drawing the borders of states based on their ethnicity, not economics or geography.[287] In 1921, Britain turned to the family to which it was allied and supported Hashemite King Faisal ibn-Hussein in the 1921 referendum. The monarchy marked the beginning of Sunni Arab rule in the newly created state. The superseding 1923 Treaty of Lausanne declared Mosul a part of Iraq and rejected Kurdish demands for independence. The annexation reflected a change in British policy, partly because of its imperial interests in controlling oil in the region, and partly because of Faisal's desire to counterbalance the dominance of the Shi'a in the country with a Sunni-dominant vilayet.[288] This meant that three distinct provinces with diverse ethnic and religious groups were united, centralized under King Faisal and administered from Baghdad.[289] The Kurdish populations of the north refused to be governed by the Arab nationalists in Baghdad or the Shi'i tribesmen in the south. The Shi'i governorates shared similar sentiments about Sunni Baghdad and other Christian and Jewish populations of central Iraq. It marked the beginning of the discontinuities within the society and a future of civil conflict that characterize present-day Iraq.[290]

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[287] Fuat Dundar, ""Statisquo" British Use of Statistics in the Iraqi Kurdish Question (1919-1932)," *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* Crown Paper 7, July 2012, 10.

[288] Yaniv Voller, "From Rebellion to De Facto Statehood: International and Transnational Sources of the Transformation of the Kurdish National Liberation Movement in Iraq into the Kurdistan Regional Government," Dissertation, London School of Economics and Political Science, June 2012, accessed May 19, 2014, http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/474/1/Voller_From%20rebellion%20to%20de%20facto%20statehood.pdf

[289] With forced and voluntary migration in the following years, many different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups would flock to the more secure urban areas. This would mean that the once Sunni Baghdad would acquire a Shi'i majority over time.

[290] Sunni Muslims in Iraq represent about a one-third of the population, including both Arabs and Kurds. The majority of the Arabs are Shi'a. Iraq has the largest Shi'i population of any Arab state, compromising 60-65% of the population. The Kurdish population in Iraq is one of the most

Similar to the Kurdish position in Turkey and Iran, the situation of Iraqi Kurds is characterized by seven decades of marginalization, victimization and repressive government policies. In the pre-2000 period, we can identify two points of convergence.[291] First came with the end of the Hashemite monarchy through a military coup led by General Abd el-Karim Qassem in 1958. In its early stages, Qassem's policies looked promising. He granted Kurds cultural and educational rights. A provisional constitution in 1958 declared, for the first time, that Iraq was an integral part "of the Arab nation," yet, "Arabs and Kurds are considered partners in this homeland."[292] This was an important step forward from the earlier Hashemite policies, particularly under Prime Minister Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, in 1946, who proclaimed, "There is no Kurdish problem in Iraq because the number of Kurds in Iraq is very low."[293] Looking at the pathways of state attitudes toward Kurdish issues in Turkey and Iran, what becomes conspicuous are the similar Iraqi attempts at undermining Kurdish nationalism through denial. From this end, even though Qassem "had no intention of granting the Kurds the institutional autonomy," he elicited change with a few "gestures." He legalized the Kurdistan Democratic Party

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heterogeneous communities in terms of its religious diversity. Although most are Sunni, there is a large Shi'i minority known as Faylis, as well as other religious groups, including Yazidis, the Kakais (Ahl al-Haqq) and the Shabak. Martin van Bruinessen, Kurtluk, *Turkluk, Alevilik: Etnik ve Dinsel Kimlik Mucadeleleri [Kurdishness, Turkishness and Alevism: Struggles for Ethnic and Religious Identity]* (Istanbul: Iletisim Publications, 1999).

[291] For Iraqi Kurds, the first rupture that changed their status came with the First Gulf War in 1991. The 1995 UNSC 986 resolution, "food-for-oil" program, improved conditions in Kurdistan. Kurds first enjoyed limited autonomy in 1974.

[292] Saad N. Jawad, "The Iraqi Constitution: Structural Flaws and Political Implications," *London School of Economics Middle East Centre,* Paper Series 1, November 2013, accessed May 21, 2014, http://www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/publications/Paper-Series/SaadJawad.pdf

[293] Yaniv Voller, "From Rebellion to De Facto Statehood," 103.

(KDP) and allowed the return of Kurdish chief, Mulla Mustafa Barzani from Iran.[294] Barzani's return helped him eliminate the opposition, consolidate his power among the Kurds and use them as a balancing force against the Arab nationalists.[295] Nevertheless, as his rule grew stronger, his relations with Barzani deteriorated considerably. Widespread Kurdish tribal revolts followed, and Qassem changed his rhetoric, denying the existence of Kurds as a nation for they were an "indistinguishable, indivisible segment of the Iraqi people... the word [Kurd] had no national significance."[296] The Ba'athists, this time with Kurds on their side, overthrew Qassem in 1963.

A couple of comments must be made here on Kurdish nationalist groups. Despite their high level of organization at the political level, the internal divisions have limited their effectiveness. Kurdish parties were not formed until after World War II. Built around the Barzani tribe, the initial Kurdish political formation was established in 1946, with the KDP. Emphasizing a distinct Kurdish identity, Barzani was able to group under the same umbrella the tribal rural Kurds with the urban, leftist ones. The KDP dominated the Kurdish scene for the next three decades.[297] On the other hand, the American press did not seem to be in favor of the KDP movement or Barzani. The discord in the tone of a story that ran on *Time* magazine on May 4, 1962 is evident:

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[294] David McDowall, "The Kurds," 81-88; Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 148 & Yaniv Voller, "From Rebellion to De Facto Statehood," 109.

[295] David McDowall, "The Kurds," 302-306.

[296] Saad Jawad, *Iraq and the Kurdish Question 1958-1970* (London: Ithaca Press, 1981), 73 & Yaniv Voller, "From Rebellion to De Facto Statehood," 110-111.

[297] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: Past, Present and Future* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2004), 16.

"The revolt could not be dismissed as merely another example of Kurdish cussedness… Buffeted within and without, Qassim's regime is in danger of collapse… Leading the rebellious Kurds is veteran pro-Communist Mustafa Barzani, a onetime mullah – religious teacher – and military boss of a Red-supported puppet republic of Kurdistan just after the war."[298]

As the urban-rural differences within the party weakened the unity among its members, the KDP started to split into various factions, mainly led by Jalal Talabani and Ibrahim Ahmad. Those, under the leadership of Talabani, established the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in 1975, the second Kurdish political party.[299] Since then, the PUK and KDP have become the main opposition group in the country.[300]

Another important comment is that, in contrast to the Turkish and Iranian Kurds, the duality of the Kurdish national movement characterizes its political scene in Iraq.[301] There is a level of continuity within the traditional Kurdish parties in the country. The differences in their vision distinguish the KDP from PUK although they are not divided by significant fault lines. While the KDP has sought political solutions to the Kurdish issues in Iraq through negotiations with the central government, the PUK has advocated for regime change and sought political power.[302]

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[298] Quil Lawrence, *Invisible Nation: How the Kurds' Quest for Statehood is Shaping Iraq and the Middle East* (New York: Walker & Company, 2008), 19.

[299] For Iraqi opposition groups, see Yash Ghai, Mark Lattimer, and Yahia Said, *Building Democracy in Iraq (Report)* (London: Minority Rights Group International, 2003), 19-20.

[300] The Iraqi Communist Party is another political party to house various Kurdish political groups under its shelter. It is comparatively small. Rather than Kurdish nationalism, it advocates for a Marxist-Leninist system. Minoo Alinia, "Spaces of Diaspora," 56.

[301] For clarification purposes, in the case of Iran, there was a sense of duality in the Kurdish political movement with the KDPI and Komala. However, the emergence of PJAK brought a break with the past. In the case of Turkey, a new political party came about in October 2012: Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). Even though HDP is a pro-Kurdish party, it is not exclusively a Kurdish party. It generally supports minority rights, including LGBT rights, women's rights and minority rights.

[302] The 1970 March Manifesto can serve as an example of the KDP negotiations with Baghdad. Barzani signed a peace agreement with the new Ba'athist regime. The central government agreed to

In reality, as a tribal confederation, each party has controlled specific areas of three Kurdish provinces of Iraq – Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaimani.[303] The KDP controls the western part of the country by the Turkish border. The PUK controls the eastern part of the country near the Iranian border (see Figure 4). The Iraqi opposition led by these dual Kurdish parties has become particularly important after the First Gulf War and taken even a sharper turn since 2003. They have helped the Kurds achieve successfully a power-sharing deal with Iraq's other ethnic and religious groups. They have acted as stabilizing forces in a country fueled by political and sectarian conflict. Yet, their clashes against each other have made it difficult at times to achieve political stability in the region. In the end, Barzani and Talabani both succeeded in becoming permanent actors in the contemporary political scene in Iraq. Mustafa Barzani's son Masoud Barzani became the president of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in 2005 and Jalal Talabani seized the Iraqi presidency in the same year.[304] The oil wealth in KRG is now controlled by the KDP and PUK elites.

The second point of convergence between the Iraqi Kurds and those in Turkey and Iran is the responses they received from the state. The suppression of Kurdish political and cultural manifestations took a dramatic turn under the Ba'athist regime in post-1963. For the next three decades, the Kurdish discourse of self-determination

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grant the Kurds full cultural rights. Kerim Yildiz, "The Kurds in Iraq," 18-19 & Yash Ghai et al, "Building Democracy in Iraq," 19-20.

[303] Eric Davis, "Understanding Iraq: An Educational Outreach Initiative," *America Abroad Media*, Washington D.C., 2011, 22.

[304] Kenneth Katzman and Alfred B. Prados, *The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq (Congressional Research Service Report)* (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, December 12, 2009), accessed May 22, 2014, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/79340.pdf & Peter Bartu, "Wrestling with the Integrity of a Nation: The Disputed Internal Boundaries in Iraq," *International Affairs* 86, no 6 (2010): 1329-1343.

justified the state's killing of the Kurds via air strikes, shelling, napalm, phosphorous and chemical weapons. The Preamble of the Constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan (2009) clearly highlights such Kurdish suffering:

> The interim Constitution for the Republic of Iraq issued in 1958 stated in Article 3 that Arabs and Kurds are partners in the Iraqi state and then on March 11, 1970 an agreement was reached between the Kurdish leadership and the Government of Iraq that recognized autonomy for the people of Kurdistan within the Iraqi Kurdistan Region as the constitutional means for their rights in Iraq. In spite of this, successive Iraqi governments have turned their backs on these obligations to the Kurds and instead have practised a racist and chauvinistic policy of ethnic cleansing and destruction by all political and military means. They have altered the demographic reality through forcible deportation of the Kurds and changing their national identity to Arab. They have even gone as far as using internationally prohibited chemical weapons in such areas as the city of Halabja, Balisan and parts of the Duhok Province. They have razed some 4,500 towns and villages while driving tens of thousands of unarmed civilian Kurds, among them Faylis and Barzanis, into an unknown future. This was followed by other campaigns of collective destruction...[305]

The 1988 al-Anfal campaign killed up to 180,000 people, displaced 1.5 million people and destroyed 3,000 villages.[306] Saddam Hussein explained the state's justification for the killings: "They betrayed the country… and we meted out a stern punishment to them and they went to hell."[307] Kurds were framed as a national security concern on grounds that the PUK and KDP collaborated with Iran during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). In the words of David McDowall, "The Kurds could thus be portrayed as traitors to the state, not merely opponents of Saddam Hussein."[308] Saddam's genocidal policies help us understand the institutionalization of authority

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[305] The Constitution of the Iraqi Kurdistan, Preamble, accessed May 22, 2014, http://www.unpo.org/article/538
[306] Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2008*, 26.
[307] Quil Lawrence, "Invisible Nation," 31.
[308] David McDowall, "The Kurds," 353.

and the continuity of state oppression. The Ba'athist regime used the oil revenues to create a political discourse on the exclusivity of the Sunni Arabs, aimed at the destruction of the Kurdish opposition, particularly Jalal Talibani's PUK. The Halabja massacres of 1988 demonstrated that Saddam Hussein possessed the desire and the capacity to destroy anyone who challenged his power.[309]

Meanwhile, Saddam was promoting his *Qadisiyat Saddam* campaign to promote an Arab nationalist identity. Various Sunni Arab nationalist movements emerged – first to unite with Jordan in 1950s, then with Syria and Egypt in 1963 under the United Arab Republic and lastly to unite with Kuwait in 1990. Clinging to a narrative of victimization that dated back to the Abbasid Empire (750-1258CE), and feeling threatened by the Shi'a majority in the south and a Kurdish one in the north, Sunni Arabs persisted that they were the "most appropriate people" for some posts, particularly the management of foreign ministry.[310] After all, Iraq's national ethnic identity was Arab, they further claimed. Based on this argument, some government, particularly foreign ministry, posts were denied to Kurds.[311] In this sense, the Kurds in Iraq are similar to those in Turkey and Iran. Framed as a threat to the state's territorial framework and as the "other" against the state's ethnic identity, the nationalist movement in Iraq arose because Kurds did not feel they were a part

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[309] David McDowall, "The Kurds," 358.

[310] Rafaat, "An Independent Kurdish State: Achievable or Merely a Kurdish Dream?" *The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies* 32, no 3 (Fall 2007): 272- 273.

[311] Perhaps, one of the greatest victims of the Ba'athist Arabization campaign is the Fayli Kurds. In the beginning of 1970s, thousands of Faylis, most of whom resided in Baghdad, were deported to Iran based on the claim that "they were not Iraqi citizens." Many from the Goyan tribe of the northern regions were deported to Turkey based on similar claims. The Kurds who were residing in oil-rich cities such as Kirkuk and Khanaqin were deported elsewhere in Iraq. For more information on forced deportations, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Turkluk, Kurtluk, Alevilik," 44-46.

of the Iraqi identity. In fact, they never accepted the Iraqi state as their own, Gareth

Stansfield posits. Most of them do not identify themselves as Iraqis.[312]

1991 brought the accidental birth of a semi-state for the Kurds. After the First

Gulf War, the Kurds gained de facto autonomy through the creation of a "safe haven"

in northern Iraq.[313] Even though the Kurdish movement was plunged into internal

conflicts between KDP and PUK, autonomy brought many positive outcomes within

the movement. First free and fair elections were held in 1992. Under the UN's "Oil-

for-Food" program, Kurdistan received food, medicine as well as 13% of the Iraqi

oil revenues between 1997 and 2003.[314] This also improved living standards, which,

in return, ameliorated high infant mortality rates. In the words of David Romano,

"promotion of Kurdish language, culture and history also became legal under

autonomy, leading, of course, to something of a renaissance in these areas."[315]

Operation Iraqi Freedom may have kicked off the beginning of the golden

age for Iraqi Kurds. The establishment of the KRG in the north has given the minority

a significant leverage (see Figure 5). Iraqi Kurdistan emerged as the only autonomous

and legitimate Kurdish entity in the region as a center of cultural and political

representation, with their own symbols, flag and the institutionalized right to speak

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[312] Aram Rafaat, "An Independent Kurdish State," 275.

[313] The U.S. allies created a "no-fly zone" over the Kurdish territories as an effort to protect them from Saddam's genocidal aggression. Kenneth Katzman and Alfred B. Prados, "The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq," 1.

[314] United Nations Treaty Series, "Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 986 (1995)," no. 32851, May 20, 1996, accessed May 22, 2014, http://untreaty.un.org/unts/120001_144071/25/7/00020981.pdf

[315] These positive improvements were hindered by the clashes between Barzani and Talabani between 1994 and 1998. As a result of the U.S. diplomatic efforts, their conflict ended with the 1998 Washington Declaration. Romano argues that these clashes produced a positive result in the end, pushing the two parties to collaborate with each other in the post-2003 era. David Romano, "Iraqi Kurdistan," 1347-1348.

their language in public.[316] In the post-Saddam period, Kurds are recognized and represented within the state structure, and enjoy broad political, cultural and economic rights. Their existence is no longer threatened by state persecution, repression or violence. With the new constitution, Iraqi Kurds have fulfilled their "42-year-old dream."[317]

Two years after the withdrawal of American troops in Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan has many challenges. The rising levels of violence across the country, the status of Kirkuk, KRG's ongoing disputes with Baghdad over the management of oil resources, deficiencies of rule of law, institutional and infrastructural development and interest politics remain unresolved. A *Wall Street Journal* article that ran on December 11, 2002 captures the essence of the security challenges for post-Saddam Iraq:

> "If a US-led force succeeds in ousting Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the victors would inherit a traumatized society full of fostering conflicts that didn't start with him and wouldn't suddenly fade with his departure... How can the nation avoid being dismembered by its neighbors or breaking up in spasms of violence like the former Yugoslavia?"[318]

If we consider the sectarian violence that has been threatening the stability of the country, particularly since December 2013, we can see that the advancement of the ISIS is no surprise. There have been many warning signs that the U.S. simply chose to ignore. With recent parliamentary elections in April, the security situation

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[316] Keya Izol, "TC'nin Son Numaralari [Turkey's Recent Tricks]," *Kurdinfo,* March 17, 2012, accessed May 18, 2014, http://www.kurdinfo.com/gotar_bixwine.asp?id=455&yazid=62

[317] Hiwa Osman, "A 42-Year-Old Dream," *Rudaw,* March 17, 2012, accessed May 18, 2014, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/4532.html

[318] Wall Street Journal, "Ethnic, Religious, Political Rifts Test U.S. Hopes for a Stable Iraq," December 11, 2002. Cited from Yash Ghai et al, "Building Democracy in Iraq," 6.

has taken a dramatic turn for the worse. Following 7,818 civilian deaths, the country has experienced one of its highest annual death tolls in the past five years.[319] Sectarian tensions, Maliki's anti-Sunni policies,[320] and the political instability continue to feed many jihadist movements, such as ISIS. The tension between the Sunnis and the Iraqi army is important in helping us to understand sectarian polarization and why the Iraqi military forces failed to end the violence in Sunni-populated cities such as in Falluja and most recently in Mosul. Let's consider the ethnic composition of the army. Based on Aram Rafaat's research, "of the 115 army battalions, 60 are Shiite, and are located in southern Iraq, 45 are Sunni Arab, and stationed in the Sunni governorates, and nine are Peshmerga stationed in Kurdistan."[321] International Crisis Group's 2014 report highlights such sectarian dynamic in the most current violence in Falluja.[322] The Sunni residents of the city "hate" the Iraqi army because it is "seen as an instrument of Shiite, sectarian regime, directed from Tehran that discriminates against Sunnis."[323] The army is a tool of Baghdad's Shia, sectarian policies, Sunnis believe. Maliki's rule has indeed become increasingly authoritarian. In addition to his role as a prime minister, Maliki is also serving as an Acting Minister of Defense, Interior and National Security. Under his

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[319] At its peak, the sectarian conflict killed 34,452 people in 2006, 17,956 in 2007 and 6,787 in 2008. Especially compared to the rates between 2009 and 2012 (the death tolls did not go over 3,300), this was a significant increase. BBC News, "Iraq's annual death toll highest in five years – UN," January 1, 2014, accessed May 17, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25568687

[320] Since 2012, Iraqi Sunnis have participated in many demonstrations, protesting the discrimination they currently face in the country, demanding better political representation at the institutional level. See International Crisis Group, "Iraq After Hawija: Recovery or Relapse?" April 26, 2013, accessed May 23, 2014, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/alerts/2013/iraq-alert.aspx

[321] Aram Rafaat, "An Independent Kurdish State," 280.

[322] Falluja is an Arab Sunni populated city, located in the Iraqi province of al-Anbar.

[323] International Crisis Group, "Iraq: Falluja's Faustian Bargain," *Middle East Report* 150, April 28, 2014, accessed May 18, 2014, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-iran-gulf/iraq/150-iraq-falluja-s-faustian-bargain.aspx

rule, Sunni Arabs have been pushed out of the way. They have been prosecuted and arrested, and their demands for a Sunni region have largely been ignored. Sunni Arabs are not the only ones Maliki is infuriating. Just a few weeks ago, Maliki fired senior level Sunni and Kurdish military officers, and reappointed new ones without consulting anyone. Almost all of the important military positions are occupied by Shia. However, in comparison to the Turkish and Iranian cases, the biggest point of divergence of Kurdish issues in Iraq is that they are not about recognition and legitimacy, but rather about issues of governance, transparency, accountability and state-level responsibility in establishing democracy.

Perhaps, the greatest Kurdish achievements in the post-2003 period are the legal recognition of Kurdish autonomy and Kurdish representation at the institutional level. The 2005 elections brought many Kurds to several government posts: The PUK leader Talabani as the President of Iraq, the KDP leader Barzani as the President of KRG and Falah Mustafa Bakir as the Foreign Minister. With more political leverage, the new leaders have seized every opportunity to make concessions on the Kurdish issues.[324] The Permanent Iraqi Constitution of 2005 formally recognizes Kurdish autonomy as a legal entity.[325] This means that the Kurds are now able to engage in a formal dialogue at the international level with states, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.

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[324] Denise Natali, *The Kurdish Quasi State* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 105.
[325] In Erbil, Sulaimani, Dohuk, some parts of Kirkuk, Ninawa and Diyala. For an English version of the Constitution of Iraq, see
http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/20704/11332732681iraqi_constitution_en.pdf/iraqi_constitution_en.pdf

The ISIS crisis has brought a new dimension to the status of Kirkuk, an oil rich city that has been a major contested issue between KRG and Baghdad. The Iraqi Kurds has now full control of the city. Originally, the new constitution includes a provision, Article 140, as a solution to Kirkuk and other "disputed territories" which are populated by Kurds, Arabs and Turkmens. According to Article 140, measures would be taken to "normalize" the area and "reverse" the Arabization policy (Arab settlers would return to their native lands and the deported Kurdish settlers would return to the city). Based on the new constitution, all parties agreed in 2005 that a referendum would be held by December 31, 2007 to determine if Kirkuk would be integrated into the KRG.[326] However, no referendum was taken place.

Another important point about the current status of Kirkuk is related to the KRG's suspicion of the Maliki regime, directly because of their disputes about how to manage the natural resources. Since 2003, the KRG's economy has been dependent upon the revenue received from the central government. According to the Iraqi constitution, Kurds are entitled to receive 17% of the federal budget, 95% of which is derived from petroleum resources. The Kurds complain that the central government threatens them with budget cuts, and that they are already given less than what was legally promised. Barzani describes the situation as Baghdad's "lack of commitment to the constitution" and its manipulation of "the KRG share of the federal budget as a pressure card."[327]

[326] Article 140, the Constitution of Iraq.
[327] Bassem Francis, "KRG Oil Revenue Tops $2 Billion, Debate with Baghdad Drags on," *Al-Monitor,* September 6, 2012, accessed May 26, 2014, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/business/2012/09/iraqi-kurdish-oil-revenue-exceed.html#ixzz32vyXnQye & Christopher M. Blanchard, "Iraq: Oil and Gas Legislation, Revenue-Sharing and U.S. Policy,"

The other aspect of contention is the absence of federal hydrocarbon legislation. The KRG passed the Kurdistan Oil and Gas Law in 2007, and signed various production-sharing contracts (PSCs) with various major international oil companies, including Total, ExxonMobil, Chevron Corp and Russia's Gazprom. From Baghdad's viewpoint, it is a breach of the constitution. According to Article 112(2), "federal government and the governments of the producing regions and governorates shall jointly… develop oil and gas wealth in a way that yields the greatest benefit to the Iraqi people."[328] The KRG has violated its legal responsibility by acting singly and entering into legal oil and gas contracts, Baghdad argues. Discordantly, Kurds, pointing out to the fact that there is no legal structure for hydrocarbon exploration and development, contend that they have the right to dictate their own oil policy. In May 2013, the Iraqi parliament passed the 2013 federal budget amidst protests by the Kurdish members over their small share of the oil revenues. Oil exploration rights and the development of oil fields inside and outside of Kurdistan are indeed "deeply intertwined with territorial disputes between the KRG and the federal government over areas of Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salahaddin and Diyala provinces."[329] All of these provinces are ethnically heterogeneous, populated

Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, March 3, 2010, accessed May 26, 2014, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34064.pdf

[328] International Crisis Group, "Iraq and the Kurds: The High-Stakes Hydrocarbons Gambit," *Middle East Report* 120, April 19, 2012, accessed May 26, 2014, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Iraq/120-iraq-and-the-kurds-the-high-stakes-hydrocarbons-gambit.pdf

[329] Massimo Morelli and Constantino Pischedda, "The Turkey-KRG Partnership: Assessing its Implications," Conference Paper, presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, March 26-29, 2014, Toronto, Canada.

with Arabs, Turkmens and Kurds, holding one of the world's largest crude oil reserves.[330]

Most Kurds, Turkmens and Arabs see Kirkuk as an important part of their historical, geographical and cultural region. Kirkuk, as well as Mosul, were once ethnically homogenous Kurdish cities. This changed under the Saddam's Arabization campaign. Hundreds of thousands of Kurdish, Turkmen and Christian[331] populations were deported from their homes. As a replacement, poor Arabs living in the southern part of Iraq were given financial incentives to move to Mosul and Kirkuk. Over time, Mosul became a Sunni Arab city. However, the situation of Kirkuk remained a bit different. Particularly after the 2003 invasion, the Kurdish populations started returning back to their homes. Today, Turkmens, Sunni Arabs and Kurds form the basis of the city's ethnic identity, escalating ethnic tensions among these communities. In this sense, the status of Kirkuk is similar to the status of Jerusalem, a city known as a significant place for Christian, Jewish and Muslim civilizations and a center for conflict. Kirkuk is often called the "Kurdish Jerusalem."[332]

Now, the Kurdish peshmerga has full control over Kirkuk. The Kurds have two options. They can either use Kirkuk as leverage to negotiate with Baghdad on their disputes issues (budget cuts, hydrocarbon laws and the referendum on the status of Kirkuk). Or they can keep it. Massoud Barzani, the President of the KRG, recently

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[330] Iraq possesses the world's fourth largest crude oil reserves. International Energy Agency, "Iraq Energy Outlook," *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,* 2012, accessed May 26, 2014, http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/weoiraqexcerptsummaryWEB-1.pdf

[331] Namely, Assyrians.

[332] Fazel Hawramy, "Kurdish peshmerga seize a chaotic victory in Kirkuk," *The Guardian*, June 12, 2014, accessed June 28, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/12/kurdish-peshmerga-kirkuk-iraq-maliki

made his intentions clear: Kurds are not retreating from Kirkuk. "There is no going back on autonomous Kurdish rule in the oil city Kirkuk," Barzani said in an Al-Jazeera interview. "We waited for 10 years for Baghdad to solve Article 140."[333] Barzani's response has already created some tensions between the Kurds and the Kirkuk's Turkmen population. A serious Turkmen-Kurdish crisis is brewing in Kirkuk and might erupt into full violence in the weeks ahead. The Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) has started mobilizing its forces for a possible attack.[334] Without considering the ethnic composition of Kirkuk, and finding a unique formulation giving all three ethnicities equal political representation in a unique autonomous status, Kirkuk might indeed become a Kurdish Jerusalem.

Furthermore, the budget decision has exacerbated tensions between the Kurdish government and Baghdad. The stalemate has suspended oil exports from the northern region and hindered the country's economic development.[335] In April 2014, the city of Erbil announced its new energy partnership with Turkey, for construction of oil and gas pipelines that will connect the KRG oil with international markets (see Figure 6). In an interview with Rudaw, Barzani seemed determined to defy the central government: "they [Turkey and KRG] will start exporting oil as of May 2, with or

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[333] Al-Jazeera, "Iraq's Kurds rule out retreating from Kirkuk," June 28, 2014, accessed June 28, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/iraq-kurds-rule-out-retreating-from-kirkuk-20146271440878594.html

[334] Jacob Russell, "Kurdish-Turkmen tension on the rise in Kirkuk," *Al-Jazeera,* June 18, 2014, accessed June 28, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/kurdish-turkmen-tension-rise-kirkuk-2014617122142958412.html

[335] Hassan Hafidh, "Iraq Budget Deepens Dispute Over Kurdish Oil Revenues," *The Wall Street Journal,* March 8, 2013, accessed May 26, 2014, http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323628804578347633442751330

without the central Iraqi government's consent."[336] By the end of May, one million barrels of crude oil were loaded from new pipelines to a southern port in Turkey. Baghdad retaliated by cutting the KRG's portion of the federal budget.[337]

The Kurds in Iraq definitely have an "oil card."[338] Yet, the presence of these resources also makes the Kurdish territories a battleground for interest politics and global power. Oil resources and pipelines passing through Kurdistan are a vital energy resource for oil-dependent European countries. At the same time, the Kurdish issues can be used as a "proxy war" between the national interests of neighboring states, particularly Iran and Turkey.[339] The local dynamics in Kurdistan have unique features. Turkomans have ethnic allegiances towards Turkey, and Sunni Arabs feel loyal toward Baghdad.[340] A KRG-Turkish partnership could create some leverage against Iranian influences in the Shia-Iraq. Post-2003 politics will either improve or aggravate the situation of Iraqi Kurdistan, but Kurds should be viewed in the context of the democratization process. Implementing long-term institutional and infrastructural development policies for all Iraqis can assist during the country's transition to a more democratic political regime, and alleviate Kurdish grievances.

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[336] Baghdad seems to be wary of this partnership on grounds that it will give more leverage to the Kurds on revenue sharing. Hurriyet Daily News, "Kurdish oil export to world 'starts in May,' Arbil and Ankara declare," April 29, 2014, accessed May 25, 2014, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/kurdish-oil-export-to-world-starts-in-may-arbil-and-ankara-declare.aspx?pageID=238&nID=65715&NewsCatID=348

[337] Orhan Coskun and Humeyra Pamuk, "Iraqi Kurdistan defies Baghdad load first pipeline oil sale," *Reuters,* May 22, 2014, accessed May 26, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/22/energy-turkey-iraq-idUSL6N0O840O20140522

[338] Serdar Aziz, "Nabucco and the Kurds," *Rudaw*, November 23, 2011, accessed May 23, 2014, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/4168.html

[339] David Romano, "Proxy Wars in Kurdistan," *Rudaw*, August 8, 2011, accessed May 18, 2013, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/3869.html

[340] Nihat Ali Ozcan, "Could a Kurdish State be set up in Iraq?" *Middle East Policy* 11, no. 1 (2004): 119-122.

The problems in the KRG cannot be resolved without addressing the existing problems in the country, especially the human rights issues.

According to the Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) research in Iraq, there is "little evidence of long-term training or education in human rights norms and mechanisms, either amongst public officials or the wider populace."[341] The human rights situation in Kirkuk and other "disputed areas" is alarming. "Intimidation, harassment and killings of journalists" are among common practices in the region.[342] Violence against women and female suicide rates are alarmingly high. Air bombardments, artillery and ground incursions by the Turkish and Iranian armies have created large numbers of internally displaced persons in the region. They are still waiting to return to their homes. The absence of political authority, basic services, and rule of law have left these areas completely deprived.[343] There is no sign of political development. In fact, the central government in Baghdad has now institutionalized the tribal identities and their patronage networks. They still operate under the same mechanism of the Baath Party style of kinship networks.[344] The situation in the KRG is no different. Elite gains have been institutionalized, with the KDP and PUK elites now possessing monopolies over the oil wealth in the Kurdish provinces. At the expense of any real sense of transparency or accountability, they

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[341] In addition to KDP and PUK, there is a new Kurdish party that emerged in recent years, Goran. Directly translated as "Change," Goran challenges the lack of accountability, transparency and corruption present within the KDP and PUK parties. It reflects a new perspective independent from the traditional politics. Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2008*, accessed May 15, 2014, http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/impact-reports/doc_details/221-impact-report-2008.html

[342] Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2008*, 27.

[343] Kurdish Human Rights Project, *Impact Report 2008,* 26.

[344] ibid.

have brought stability to the Iraqi Kurds, but they are seriously undermining progress in the region. In the words of Matan Chorev, these elites are "like mafia families delineating their spheres of authority; the two Kurdish parties divided up Iraqi Kurdistan into separate governance zones after the civil war."[345]

The case of the Iraqi Kurds is different from, yet, so similar to the case of Kurds in Turkey or Iran in the post-2003 period. It is different because Iraqi Kurds are now politically influential and economically powerful. They have achieved de facto statehood.[346] The Kurdish Regional Government has acquired what Robert Jackson refers to as "positive sovereignty."[347] It possesses all basic principles of statehood:[348] an entity with a functioning government, clearly defined borders and a group of people with demographic similarities that associate with that entity. Yet, it lacks negative sovereignty, "an act of general recognition," namely international acknowledgment.[349] In other words, although it is politically understood as a state domestically, it will perhaps never achieve that status internationally. Conceivably, the status of the Iraqi Kurds are not at the discretion of their central government, like those in Turkey and Iran, but the pursuit of their international legitimacy is at the

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[345] Matan Chorev, "Iraqi Kurdistan: The Internal Dynamics and Statecraft of a Semistate," *al-Nakhlah*, The Fletcher School, Tufts University, Fall 2007, 6.
[346] Based on the definition of Scott Pegg, a de facto state can be describes as an "organized political leadership which has risen to power through some degree of indigenous capability; receives popular support; and has achieved sufficient capacity to provide government services to a given population in a specific territorial area, over which effective control is maintained for a significant period of time." On de facto states, see Scott Pegg, *International Society and the De Facto State* (Brookfield: Ashgate Publications, 1998), 13.
[347] Robert Jackson, *Quasi States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 29.
[348] On the principles of statehood, see the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States. A copy can be found here: http://www.cfr.org/sovereignty/montevideo-convention-rights-duties-states/p15897
[349] Robert Jackson, "Quasi States," 30.

discretion of other states. The recognition of its global legal sovereignty is a political matter. Kurdish regionalism and independence may indeed destabilize Iraq. Michael Gunter posits that an independent KRG would be complicated, and threaten national and regional stability and security of Turkey, Iran and Syria.[350] "The possibility of instability and turmoil would not only be detrimental to the region but to the U.S. and broader international community."[351] Graham E. Fuller further explains, "The international system characteristically does not welcome the break-up of existing states and the resulting turmoil and violence, as witnessed by Yugoslavia."[352] Hence, creating a federal structure based on a Quebecian model would be a viable alternative, Gunter suggests.[353] Improving the Kurdish condition in Iraq raises a lot of concerns for Iran, Syria and Turkey. It has political implications for the Kurdish movement in their own territories. What is apparent is that the Iraqi Kurds can serve as a model to Iran and Turkey that the Kurdish issues in these states can be resolved peacefully within a political framework. The resolution of issues can then lead to greater stability and democratization in the region.[354] In the meantime, the international status of the KRG remains a political, not a legal, matter.

2.5.4 Concluding Remarks on ISIS and Syria

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[350] Michael Gunter, "The Permanent and New Realities Facing the Kurdish Regional Government: Options and Prospects," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 28, no. 2 (2008): 238-249.

[351] Michael Gunter, "The Kurds in Iraq: Why Kurdish Statehood is Unlikely," *Middle East Policy* 11, no. 1 (2004): 108.

[352] Graham E. Fuller, "The Fate of Kurds," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 109.

[353] Michael Gunter, *Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 21-27.

[354] Rebwar K. Vali, "A Kurdish Initiative for Turkey," *Rudaw*, September 16, 2011, accessed May 18, 2013, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/3980.html

Today, some of Syria's two million Kurdish populations attract international attention. The three-year-old civil war has already claimed as many as 220,000 lives.[355] As occurred in Iraq in 1991 and 2003, the political and security vacuum in the country has created an opportunity for the Kurds to ameliorate their status quo – a distinct ethnic and linguistic group who have been denied their basic cultural, political and civil rights.[356] Today, the north and northeastern provinces, where Kurds reside, are locally referred as "Rojava," Western Kurdistan, not as the northeastern provinces in Syria.[357] There is a growing concern in the Middle East about the possibility of a separate Kurdish state in the country.

Baghdad, Tehran and Ankara have all used repression and systematic violence against the Kurdish populations in their own territories. The case of Damascus is no different. With the rise of the Ba'ath party in 1958, amidst soaring nationalist sentiments, Kurds were framed as the "other" against the state's Arab identity. They posed a security threat to the country's territorial integrity, the Ba'athists argued. The regime targeted the Kurdish population, and did everything

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[355] Reuters, "Death toll in Syria's civil war above 150,000: monitor," April 1, 2014, accessed May 26, 2014,
http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/01/us-syria-crisis-toll-idUSBREA300YX20140401

[356] The origins of their issues can also be traced back to the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1917. The state repression took a drastic turn with the rise of the Ba'athist party in 1958.

[357] Rojava literally translated as "West" in Kurdish. Based on the interviews I conducted in Turkey and Iraq, I observe that, generally, Kurds refer to Syrian Kurdistan as the "Western Kurdistan," Turkey's Kurdish provinces as the "northern Kurdistan," and the KRG as the "southern Kurdistan." During one of my interviews with an Iraqi Kurdish academic, the responded said, "the KRG is not northern Iraq, it is southern Kurdistan." Another point I would like emphasize is that Rojava, unlike Iraq, Iran and Turkey, is not geographically cohesive. Kurds are dispersed across the country, but they are concentrated in the north/northeast. Rojava is also ethnically mixed with Yazidis, Sunni Arabs, Assyrians and Turkomans. It is not ethnically homogenous.

to eradicate their presence from the public. As a result, Kurds faced deportations,[358] lost their ability to speak their language, perform their traditions, attend their schools and give their children non-Arabic names. In 1962, 120,000 Kurds were stripped of their rights to citizenship on grounds that they might have formed a majority in the north and northeastern provinces of the country.[359] Their fundamental right to vote, own property, obtain positions in public offices or travel outside of Syria were revoked.[360]

As the crisis with ISIS unfolds in Iraq and Syria, Kurdish issues have been internationalized. The rapid expansion of Sunni insurgency in Iraq has exhibited at least one single mistake of the American foreign policy towards the Kurds. Realizing that Maliki might be a part of the problem, the U.S. is trying to do some damage control now. Secretary of State John Kerry was in the Kurdish capital of Erbil this week and suggested a "broad-based inclusive government in Iraq" that shares more power with minority Sunnis and Kurds.[361] But isn't Iraq already functioning as an

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[358] In 1973, under the "Arab Belt," thousands of Arab settlers from Aleppo were moved into Kurdish provinces by the Turkish/Iraqi border. The goal here was to prevent the possibility of a Kurdish-majority in these areas.

[359] The Kurds in Syria were divided into three categories: Syrian Kurds, alien Kurds and concealed Kurds. Syrian Kurds were the ones granted citizenship. Alien Kurds were the ones denied Syrian citizenship, thus, they were commonly referred as the "foreigners." They are mainly based in Hasaka province (Qamishli). Concealed Kurds are the ones that were not publicly registered. One or both of their parents might be Kurdish. See Radwan Ziadeh, "The Kurds in Syria: Fueling Separatist Moments in the Region?" *United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 220, April 2009, accessed May 29, 2014, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/kurdsinsyria.pdf, 2.

[360] This was changed with the Legislative Decree 49 on April 7, 2011. President Bashar al-Asad granted "Syrian Arab nationality" to the people who were registered as "foreigners" in Hasaka. According to BBC estimates, this might have affected 150,000-300,000 people. On the flip side, there are still thousands of unregistered Kurds, waiting to be granted citizenship. BBC News, "Syria's Assad Grants Nationality to Hasaka Kurds," April 7, 2011, accessed May 29, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12995174

[361] Matt Bradley, "Iraq's Premier Rejects Calls for a More Broad-Based Government," *The Wall Street Journal,* June 25, 2014, accessed June 28, 2014, http://online.wsj.com/articles/iraqs-premier-rejects-calls-for-a-more-broad-based-government-1403696111

"inclusive government"? The president is Kurdish, the prime minister is Shiite and the speaker of the parliament is a Sunni Arab. Now, Baghdad might achieve such government with or without Maliki in the weeks ahead. But establishing a functioning democracy in Iraq requires going beyond. It entails a political system characterized not only by an inclusive government, but also by constitutionalism, decentralization and power-sharing. If the U.S. wants to help Baghdad create a society based on social, political and ethnic equality, it can start by pushing the Maliki government for power-sharing with Sunnis and Kurds. Iraq can be stabilized by decentralizing its power as already outlined in the constitution. It is the only way to rehabilitate the broken trust between Baghdad and Iraq's Sunnis and Kurds. All else is a lip service to democracy that will lead to nothing but further chaos. With a growing jihadist movement like ISIS, no one is safe.

In terms of Syria, since 2012, the Assad government withdrew most of its security forces from the Kurdish areas of the northeast "to concentrate on the rebel insurgency elsewhere in the country."[362] The Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) took advantage of the political vacuum, and declared a de facto provincial government in three Kurdish towns in the north and northeast: Qamishli, Afrin and Kobani in January 2014 (Figure 7). Given that the PYD is a Syrian offshoot of the PKK, which has launched attacks against the Turkish state from the Syrian border in the past, Turkey has been wary about the implications of an independent Rojava for

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[362] Alexander Christie-Miller, "Emboldened by victory over jihadists, Syrian Kurds push toward autonomy," *The Christian Science Monitor,* November 2013, accessed May 29, 2014, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2013/1113/Emboldened-by-victory-over-jihadis-Syrian-Kurds-push-toward-autonomy

its own Kurdish population, yet unwilling to intervene militarily so far.[363] Curbing the PYD presence within the Syrian border has been largely left on Barzani's shoulders.

The geopolitical implications of an autonomous – or an independent -- Kurdistan in Syria are complicated for all parties involved. From Ankara's perspective, the PYD is a "carbon copy of the PKK that is attempting to establish a foothold in Syria."[364] An independent Rojava would offer a new terrain for the PKK operational bases. With an alternative location to launch cross-border attacks into Turkey, this would give the Kurds a significant level of leverage. Further, Syria's oil and gas reserves are located in the northeastern part of Syria. An autonomous Kurdistan would have economic ramifications for the international energy markets.

The refugee crisis has reached alarming levels. According to the UN reports, there are approximately three million Syrian refugees registered with the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Nearly 800,000 have taken refuge in Turkey while 230,000 have escaped to Iraqi Kurdistan.[365]

The problems in Syria cannot be resolved without addressing existing problems in the country. Just like the Kurds elsewhere, Syria's Kurds should be

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[363] I would argue that Turkey is unwilling to intervene because it does not want to jeopardize its relationship with NATO. Also, an intervention in the complicated Syrian civil war would be an uncalculated move for Turkey right now as the Prime Minister has been challenged by internal problems (i.e. corruption allegations against himself and his family, upcoming Presidential elections and most recently the Soma mine crisis).

[364] These were the words of a Turkish official based on an interview from the International Crisis Group in Ankara in 2012. See International Crisis Group, "Syria's Kurds: A Struggle Within a Struggle," *Middle East Report*, no. 136, January 22, 2013, accessed May 29, 2014, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2013/mena/syrias-kurds-a-struggle-within-a-struggle.aspx

[365] Most current data can be found on the UNHCR website at http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php

viewed in the context of the country's democratization process. Implementing long-term policies that assist in the democratization process can alleviate Kurdish historical grievances as well as benefit all Syrian citizens.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is largely concerned with the politics of cosmopolitanism – the conceptual contours, the long-standing realpolitik trends and the disproportionality in human rights policies. Its purpose is to examine the tension between human rights principles and political realism vis-à-vis the Kurdish case. Specifically, one of the key objects of the study is to determine the relationship between ethics, politics and power by discussing how Kurdish issues have been shaped by the political landscape of the twenty-first century. These issues are studied within the context of democratization, minority rights and politics of exclusion. Analyzing these issues raises inherent theoretical and practical questions. This research is guided by the following questions: from a theoretical perspective,

1. What do the Kurdish narratives tell us about the status (social, political and economic) of Kurds in Iraq and Turkey?

2. What do the differences and commonalities of Iraqi and Turkish policies toward their domestic Kurdish communities suggest about Kurdish politics in the Middle East?

3. What can Kurdish politics teach us about the link between nationalism, state violence and genocide? If such a link exists, how is it connected to the normative processes of nation-state building in the contemporary political era in the Middle East?

From a practical perspective,

4. What is the relationship between ethics, politics and power that characterize the Kurdish case in the twenty-first century?

5. What lessons can we draw from the Kurdish experience to maintain a cohesive universal human rights agenda in global politics?

The central theme of this dissertation is to generate theoretical and practical inferences about the tension between ethics and politics. Particular emphasis is given to how the Kurdish struggle toward self-determination has questioned that dilemma. A qualitative method was deemed appropriate for this study. Accordingly, an explanatory, multiple-case study based on discourse analysis was employed. Critical theory was also used in the study as a theoretical framework.

This chapter describes the adopted research design and methodology. It explains the rationale for a qualitative research methodology. It presents the research design and provides a detailed narrative on how the data was collected and how it was analyzed. The chapter concludes with a discussion on ethical implications, issues of rigor and trustworthiness and the strengths and limitations of the research.

3.1 Rationale for Qualitative Research Method

Nel Verhoeven explains that qualitative research "takes the research into the 'field'" –human experiences are understood "on their own turf, in their own normal surroundings."[366] Qualitative inquiry often explains how the participants give meaning to their experiences.[367] It stresses the "what, how, when and where" of the phenomenon being investigated[368] – "how people interpret their experiences, how

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[366] Nel Verhoeven, *Doing Research: The Hows and Whys of Applied Research*, (Chicago: Lyceum, 2011), 134.

[367] Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000).

[368] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Second Edition,* (Thousand Oaks, London & New Delhi: Sage, 2003), 5.

they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences."[369] Qualitative methods of data collection contrast with quantitative procedures as the latter are characterized by "the "power" of numbers and precision of measures"[370] of causal interactions between variables. As Bruce L. Berg makes clear, qualitative approaches seek to analyze "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things."[371] In that sense, "the notion of *quality* is essential to the nature of things."[372]

Qualitative and quantitative research have distinct features, with their unique strengths and weaknesses. The choice of my methodology was dictated by the goals of this study. The main rationale for qualitative research method was rooted in the fact that it allowed for an analysis of the research problem from the perspective of the respondents' lived experiences. It reflected the "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions" of Kurdish issues in Turkey and Iraq from the viewpoint of the participants, and their knowledge, expertise and interactions. Hence, using a qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to explore the problem in its natural setting, and develop a holistic picture based on the meanings that the participants brought.

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[369] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 5.

[370] Glenn A. Bowen, "Preparing a Qualitative Research-Based Dissertation: Lessons Learned," *The Qualitative Report* 10, no. 2 (June 2005): 208.

[371] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Fourth Edition*, (Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon, 2001), 3.

[372] ibid, 2.

3.2 Multiple-Case Study Methodology

Since the goal of this research is to assess Kurdish politics in the Middle East from a variety of national, regional and international angles, a qualitative case study approach is employed as the methodology of this research. Case study has been discussed as an important research strategy (Sharan B. Merriam, 1998; Robert K. Yin, 1981, 1984, 1994, 1999, 2003, 2005; and Robert E. Stake, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2008). Yin defines the case study approach as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident."[373] For John W. Creswell, it is a "bounded system" that helps researchers increase their knowledge on a specific issue.[374] Its best use is to further improve our understanding of human problems.[375] Its purpose is to provide further insights to fathom the theoretical shape of such problems.[376] In other words, the case study method is preferred when the researcher explains, "a contemporary set of events over which [he/she] has little or no control."[377] It can then present new insights into an already-existing problem that could be valuable to practitioners and policy makers.[378]

Case study approach has been criticized because of the multiplicity of meanings that can define what a case study is. Meyer therefore highlights the need

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[373] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods,* 13.

[374] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1998).

[375] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education,* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 19.

[376] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences,* 229.

[377] Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*, 9.

[378] Robert E. Stake, "Case Studies," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), 245.

for researchers "to be very clear about their interpretation of the case study, and the purpose of carrying out the study."[379] In this research, a multiple-case study was used based on two cases. As Yin suggests, single-case study and multiple-case study designs are "under the same case study strategy."[380] There are no methodological differences between them (see Figure 9). Iraq and Turkey were chosen as the subjects of an individual case study in order to investigate the Kurdish experiences in these sites post-2000. The same research design was conducted in both locations. The study as a whole, however, utilized a multiple-case method. In this respect, this case study aimed at understanding the social, political and economic challenges of Kurdish-populated areas in Iraq and Turkey individually and explaining, as a whole, how the differences and commonalities of Iraqi and Turkish policies towards Kurds inform us about Kurdish politics in the Middle East.

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[379] Christine B. Meyer, "A Case in Case Study Methodology," *Field Methods* 13, no. 4 (2001): 349.
[380] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research,* 44-45.

Figure 9: A Multiple-Case Study Method (Yin, 2003, 49)
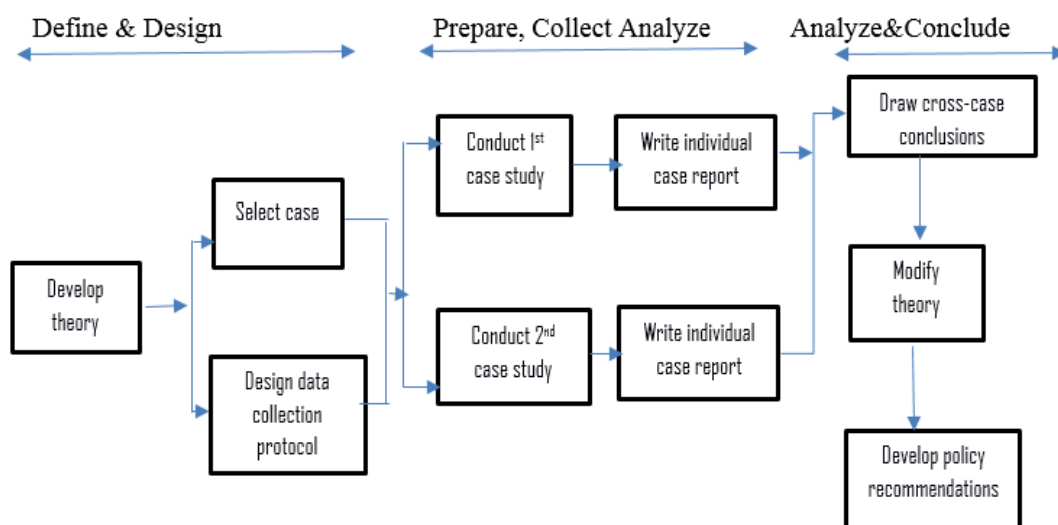
Multiple-case study analysis was chosen as the preferred research strategy for two reasons. First, it provided the flexibility to use various methods, including documents, archives, interviews and observations.[381] The researcher became directly involved in the data collection process. Being immersed in data in such a fashion helped the researcher to gain further perspectives and to become better equipped to offer analytical explanations. The case study method provided "in-depth understanding of a situation and meanings for those involved."[382] It also allowed the research to reveal "holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events."[383] Rather than focusing on a specific variable, it enabled the study to focus on the processes of nation-state building in the contemporary political era in Iraq and Turkey, and to explore causal links among nationalism, violence, genocide and the

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[381] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education.*
[382] ibid., 3-8.
[383] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research,* 3.

role of the state in each case. This was one of the strengths of this method.[384]

Second, the case study method is a suitable design for testing a theory in an exploratory way. Berg states that exploratory case studies are undertaken when there is not a rich theoretical framework or extensive empirical evidence to explain a phenomenon.[385] A qualitative mode of explanatory research seemed appropriate to develop explanations of Kurdish politics in the Middle East. The existing empirical, statistical and survey data on the study of Kurds is limited and incomplete. There is still no official census data on the number of Kurds living in Iraq, Turkey, Iran or Syria; restrictive state policies prevent researchers from conducting impartial and independent research about the Kurds. Previous studies on the Kurds mainly addressed Kurdish issues in their respective countries from a security perspective. Those studies generally looked at the possibility of Kurdish independence and how it might stabilize the region. In my view, such studies did not give enough attention to Kurdish issues from the perspective of human rights and ethical considerations. Hence, an exploratory case study became a useful design to better understand the Kurdish struggles as a human rights issue by focusing on the causal processes, relationships and contexts in the cases of Iraq and Turkey. The respondents' experiences, knowledge and analyses were essential in understanding the challenges of democracy, minority rights and the politics of human rights.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

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[384] ibid.

[385] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences,* 229-231.

This section gives detailed information on the ways in which data was collected. Following the regulations and guidelines established by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a number of steps had to be taken prior to the collection of data. The first step was the completion of a Human Subjects Certification on Protecting of Human Research Subjects on January 22, 2013. The second step was the acquisition of an approval notice from the IRB to continue the study and the subsequent data analysis.[386] The IRB deemed my study to be suitable for expedited review as it qualified as "no greater than minimal risk to subjects" under the Federal Policy 45 CFR 46.102(i).[387] Since the interview questions did not single out specific individuals or groups for critical judgment or solicited attribution of blame, there was little risk of retribution. The qualitative data collection process included semi-structured, open-ended interviews, archival research and participant observation in selected events, which contributed to the triangulation of data.

3.3.1 Interviews

The primary method of qualitative data collection process first included interviews. As Weiss argues, interviews are a suitable method for qualitative studies.[388] The interviews conducted were in-depth, semi-structured and open-ended based on an interview guide: a list of eight questions (see Appendix 2). The rationale

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[386] The most current IRB Notice of Approval can be located under Appendix 1.1.

[387] The Federal Policy 45 CFR 46.102(i) defines "minimal risk" as "minimal where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, in and of themselves, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests."

[388] Carol H. Weiss, *Evaluation: Methods for Studying Programs and Policies*, (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998), 153-154.

behind using semi-structured interviews was based on the flexibility and pertinence of this method as a valuable source of information for the phenomenon investigated for exploratory research. As Rubin and Rubin explain, "design in qualitative interviewing is iterative. This means that each time you repeat the basic process of gathering information, analyzing it, winnowing it, and testing it, you come closer to a clear and convincing model of the phenomenon you are studying."[389] In other words, interviews gave an opportunity for the researcher to obtain in-depth information and examine complex processes. The interviewee responses were particularly useful in exploring attitudes, knowledge and experiences of Kurdish problems. Michael M. Gunther interviewed government officials in Iraq for a 1992 case study to evaluate the Kurdish condition in the country.[390] Similarly, the International Crisis Group recently interviewed government officials and members of civil society organizations in Diyarbakir to assess the Kurdish situation in Turkey.[391] Interviews are vital contributions to the limited scholarship on the Kurds, and provide insightful guidance on their present-day challenges.

3.3.1.1 Snowballing Sampling

The qualitative research method that this study employed used snowballing sampling. This form of sampling refers to the researcher's technique of "intentionally

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[389] Herbert J. Rubin and Riene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data,* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995), 46-47.

[390] Michael M. Gunther, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992).

[391] International Crisis Group, "Turkey's Kurdish Impasses: The View from Diyarbakir," *Europe Report 222*, November 20, 2012.

select[ing] participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or key concept being explored in the study."[392] The snowballing sample included three groups of actors: Kurdish academics, government representatives and members of civil society organizations in Iraq and Turkey. Erbil in Iraq and Diyarbakir in Turkey were chosen as the research sites because they are considered to be the "Kurdish capitals" in their respective countries. The individuals interviewed are considered to be experts in the field of Kurdish issues, and they actively undertake roles to resolve Kurdish issues. The equal representation of samples from each group was ensured (see Table 1). This method allowed the study to reflect a diversity of opinions and experiences.

Further, the snowballing sampling method was used to recruit individuals to participate in the study. I lived in Diyarbakir for six months from June 2012 to December 2012. During my time there, the Human Rights Association in Diyarbakir helped me to network with Kurdish and non-Kurdish academics, politicians, scholars and other civil society organizations in Turkey and Iraq. I began the recruitment process with reaching out to the previously established contacts. Those who were suitable for and participated in the study were asked to recommend other individuals who may also be qualified and interested in becoming research subjects. Snowballing sampling proved to be a valuable method to identify a diverse group of experts.

3.3.1.2 Interview Process

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[392] John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research, 2nd Edition*, (London: Sage, 2011), 173.

Twenty interviews were conducted between May 2013 and July 2013 with individuals who were eligible and agreed to participate in the study. This included university professors, governors, sub-governors, members of parliament, political party members, experts and members of various civil society organizations. All of the participants were of Kurdish ethnicity. Since a qualitative study focuses on quality, rather than quantity, my objective with the interviews was not on the maximization of the participants, but rather on becoming "saturated with information about a specific topic."[393] (See Table 1 for a list of the interviews conducted).

To establish contact, set up interviews and correspond initially, I reached out to the interviewees via telephone. No email correspondence was used, as this method proved to be ineffective. I refrained from writing down or recording any personal information anywhere. During the time of the interview, participants were asked 8 questions based on the interview guide below:

1. Can Kurds freely speak Kurdish at schools, businesses, government buildings, and public and private institutions?
2. Can Kurds freely practice their religion and customs?
3. Do Kurds face any social discrimination in public?
4. Do Kurds face any deliberate political discrimination?
5. Do the Kurdish regions face any deliberate economic discrimination?
6. When it comes to the Kurdish issues, how do you evaluate the situation post-2000?
7. **What is the future of the Kurds and how does that affect the Kurds in the region?**

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[393] Deborah K. Padgett, *The Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research: Challenges and Rewards*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1998), 57.

8. If there is any solution, what would you recommend to resolve the Kurdish problems?

Table 1: Conducted Interviews, May-July 2013

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED	EXPERTS	INTERVIEW LOCATION
TOTAL: 20	Ethnicity: Kurdish	
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (3)	Representative, Goran (Movement for Change)	Erbil, Iraq
	Member of Parliament, Kurdish Regional Government (Goran)	Erbil, Iraq
	Representative, Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	Erbil, Iraq
INTELLECTUALS (3)	Professor, Salahaddin University-Erbil	Erbil, Iraq
	Professor, Salahaddin University-Erbil	Erbil, Iraq
	Professor, Salahaddin University-Erbil	Erbil, Iraq
MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (4)	Representative, Kurdish Human Rights Institute	Erbil, Iraq
	Representative, Kurdish Human Rights Institute	Erbil, Iraq
	Representative/Journalist, Kurdish Human Rights Institute	Erbil, Iraq
	Journalist, Associated Press	Erbil, Iraq
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (3)	Representative, Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Representative, Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Representative, Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	Diyarbakir, Turkey
INTELLECTUALS (3)	Professor, Dicle University	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Professor, Dicle University	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Professor, Dicle University	Diyarbakir, Turkey
MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY	Representative, Sarmasik, Association for the Alleviation of Poverty and Sustainable Development	Diyarbakir, Turkey

ORGANIZATIONS (4)		
	Representative, Human Rights Association	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Representative, Education and Science Workers' Union	Diyarbakir, Turkey
	Representative, Diyarbakir Medical Association	Diyarbakir, Turkey

During the time of the interview, participants were also reminded that they could choose to not answer or skip any of the questions, could quit the interview whenever they wanted and that there would be no obligation for them to respond to all of questions. Those who consented to be interviewed were prepared for minimally invasive questions. Some personal information, such as job title, ethnicity, birth country and place of residence, was collected. To ensure complete confidentiality, this data was coded. For example, the responses of the participants, which were linked to a file, were each assigned a number code. Participants were assured that this information, as well as their answers to the interview questions, would not be disclosed to anyone under any circumstances. Although the risk for participating in the interview was no greater than minimal risk to subjects (i.e. harming the participant's reputation, public image or causing the participant to lose his/her job), there was a risk for loss of confidentiality. Such potential risk was minimized by undertaking a careful list of safeguards to ensure data security and confidentiality. A strict process was followed to collect, store and process data, in addition to data destruction for minimizing potential risks to the subject's confidentiality. (This will be discussed under "ethical considerations").

Once the identifiable information was coded and the identity of the interviewee was secured, interviews were conducted. After the participants were informed about and provided with a copy of the consent forms, their oral consents were requested to participate in the study and to allow the researcher to digitally record the interview. Oral consent in this study was considered more appropriate to maximize the protection of subject confidentiality. All of the interviewees granted their consent for both. To ensure data security, a recording device with a protected sign-on password was used.

In total, 20 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants between May 2013 and July 2013. All of the interviews were conducted in one session. Interviews lasted between 44 minutes to 116 minutes depending upon the willingness of the interviewee. The researcher took hand-written notes on scratch paper, and digitally recorded all of the responses. A total of twenty-four hours and twelve minutes of interviews were recorded. Thirteen interviews were conducted in Turkish, and seven were conducted in English. All of the handwritten notes and transcriptions were recorded in either English or Turkish. The interviews conducted in Diyarbakir took place at the research site, either at the participant's workplace or in a public place (i.e. a restaurant). The interviews conducted in Erbil took place via telephone or Skype. In that case, a consent form was emailed to the participant prior to the interview. During this process, the correspondence with the participant was not linked to the data records in any way (none of them replied back). My emails were permanently deleted not only from my Inbox, but also from my Trash folder.

The third step was to transcribe the interviews. All of the transcriptions were completed without any outside help. A total of 108 pages of transcriptions were written down from all of the interviews and uploaded on a safe server. Each recording and transcription was assigned a number. The master interview list was saved as a separate document, and kept in a different location on box.com. The information will be kept there until the prescribed time period is over that is required by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – three years after the completion of this study. The Institutional Review Board and I are only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law.

3.3.2 Archival Research

Archival research constituted the second data collection method employed in this study. As suggested by Yin, it can be one of the methods of a case-study research.[394] Two types of public archives were used: commercial media accounts and actuarial records. Berg describes commercial media accounts as "written…and recorded material produced for general or mass consumption."[395] The archival research focused on the accounts covering issues – social, political, economic, cultural and religious – impacting the Kurdish population in Iraq and Turkey. It included both online and hard copies of reports, collected books, magazines, transcripts of speeches (i.e. government officials), maps, pamphlets, official party documents, Kurdish newspapers and news agencies, issuances from the European

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[394] Robert Yin, *Case Study Research,* 89.
[395] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences,* 191.

Court of Human Rights, Kurdish state surveys, reports, censuses, and election data, pamphlets, journals, newspapers and magazines. Since 1991, Arabic and English have been widely used by the Kurdish administrations in Iraq. Many of these are in English, with some Turkish sources being translated and used as well. I also relied on reports provided by the Kurdish Human Rights Project in London, the Kurdish Institute of Paris, the Kurdish Institute of London and the Washington Kurdish Institute. In addition, I collected 300 newspaper articles from the Iraqi *Al-Rafidayn* between the dates of May 16, 2013 and January 17, 2010. This newspaper was selected because it is mainstream and state-owned. Only articles that contained the word "Kurd," "Kurdish" and "Kurdistan" were recorded (see Table 2). In addition, this list included personal conversations with various key individuals (see Table 3).

The second type of public archives used in this study included actuarial records. According to Berg, these documents are "produced for special or limited audience but are typically available to the public under certain circumstances."[396] The collection of these sources required two field trips to Diyarbakir and Ankara in September 2012 and December 2013, specifically the National Library in Ankara, the Parliamentary Library in Ankara, the Human Rights Association in Diyarbakir and Sarmasik (Association for the Alleviation of Poverty and Sustainable Development) in Diyarbakir.

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[396] ibid, 192.

Table 3: Personal Communications, May-August 2013

Interviewee	Location	Method of Communication
Independent Journalist	Erbil, Iraq	Skype Talk, informal conversation
Independent Journalist	Erbil, Iraq	Email correspondence
Representative, Human Rights Association	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Information conversation
Representative, Saturday Mothers	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Informal conversation
Representative, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in the U.K.	London, U.K.	Informal phone conversation
PhD Researcher, London Metropolitan University	London, U.K.	Informal Skype conversation
Representative, Roj Women's Association	London, U.K.	Informal phone conversation
PhD Researcher, Centre for Kurdish Studies, University of Exeter	London, U.K.	Informal Skype conversation
Representative, Turkish Armed Forces	Ankara, Turkey	Email correspondence

3.3.3 Participant Observation

As Yin explains, observational evidence can be an additional resource to the research being investigated.[397] It also contributes to the triangulation of the data, therefore strengthening the robustness of the research.[398] During the course of this study, I attended a total of 15 events to obtain additional information through observation. They included forums, protests, public prayers and a conference (see Table 4). As one of the research method tools, observation helped the researcher to give meaning to the ideas, concepts and issues that were repeated throughout the interview process. These events provided insights into understanding the public demands of Kurdish populations, their problems and struggles. They provided

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[397] Robert Yin, *Case Study Research,* 8.
[398] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Sage Publications, 1994), 145.

context for the socio-politico-economic and cultural issues facing Kurds and for their contemporary demands not only in Turkey, but also in Iraq, Iran and Syria. These events were particularly useful in understanding the historical grievances from a Kurdish frame of reference.

Table 4: Events Attended during Fieldwork in Diyarbakir, Turkey

Date	Event	Location	Sponsoring Organization
May 3, 2013	Sicil Cuma (Public Friday Prayer)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, to protest the politicization of religion
May 10, 2013	Sicil Cuma (Public Friday Prayer)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, to protest the politicization of religion
May 17, 2013	Sicil Cuma (Public Friday Prayer)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, to protest the politicization of religion
May 24, 2013	Sicil Cuma (Public Friday Prayer)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, to protest the politicization of religion
May 4, 2013	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
May 11, 2013	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
May 18, 2013	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
May 25, 2013	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
June 15, 2013	Gezi Park protest	Istanbul, Turkey	Public event, to protest the Erdogan regime. I particularly observed the Kurdish BDP supporters.
September 11, 2012	Polis Saldirisi Protestosu (Protest against Police Violence)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Egitim-Sen (Education and Science Workers' Union)
September 8-9, 2012	Kurdistan Islam Conference	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)
September 1, 2012	World Peace Day	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)
August 11, 2012	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
August 4, 2012	Cumartesi Anneleri (Saturday mothers)	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Public event, mothers protesting their disappeared Kurdish sons
July 14, 2012	Direnis (Resistance) Protest	Diyarbakir, Turkey	Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)

3.6 Data Analysis

In this research, theory and data have been complementary in the analysis of the interview transcripts and field notes. Data analysis was carried out based on the theoretical framework of critical theory. Derived from the Greek words, krinein (to judge) and *theoria* (theory), critical theory is a school of thought combining multidisciplinary approaches to the problems of the human condition (Held, 1980; Freire, 1973, 1985, 1996; Bronner & Kellner, 1989; Bronner, 1999, Marshall, 1993; Phillips 2000). It is built on the assumption that human knowledge – what we know – is inextricably connected to the systems of our societies – social, economic, political and cultural – and their ideological patterns. Kincheloe and MacLaren describe critical theory as:

> [a social theory] concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy, matters of race, class and gender, ideologies, discourses, education, religion and other social institutions and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system.[399]

It examines issues of oppression, exploitation and domination.[400] From this angle, critical theory is not concerned with understanding society, but rather its change through critical reasoning.[401] It is built on the "critique of ideology fueled by the power of speculative reason."[402] Hence, it takes a radically different approach from traditional social theory, which is concerned with preserving the "what is" in

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[399] Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative research & evaluation methods, 3rd edition,* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002), 131.

[400] Stephen E. Bronner, *Of Critical Theory and Its Theorists*, *2nd edition,* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[401] ibid.

[402] Stephen E. Bronner, *Ideas in Action: Political Tradition in the Twentieth Century*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 173.

society. The purpose of critical theory, as Marcuse put it, is to bridge political theory with practice and impact change.[403]

Critical theory was valuable for this study – it sought to bridge the theory of human rights with the actual practice of human rights through analyzing the values, ideas and beliefs of a system that dominates the human rights discourse in the international system of the twenty-first century. It reflected the "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions" of Kurdish issues in Turkey and Iraq. Specifically, building on a theoretical discussion on Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of the culture industry as my organizing framework, the "Kurdish problem" was situated within critical theory research. In the economically and politically marginalized Kurdish ethno-spaces, such perspective was important to understand the root causes of the Kurdish conflict, the contexts of violent spaces and the marginalization of the Kurdish community.

Further, a discourse-interpretive paradigm underpinned this research. This was in line with the qualitative approach of this study and the goals of its inquiry. In examining the interview transcripts and field notes, discourse analysis was chosen as the primary method of analysis. As Freeden puts it, discourse can be described as "the communicative practices through which ideology is exercised."[404] For Dryzek, it is "a shared way of apprehending the world… [that is] embedded in language [and] enables those who subscribe to it to interpret bits of information and put them

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[403] Herbert Marcuse, *Negotiations: Essays in Critical Theory*, (London: Heinemann, 1968).

[404] Michael Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 103.

together into coherent stories or accounts."[405] From this perspective, language is seen as "a communicative set of interactions, through which social and cultural beliefs and understandings are shaped and circulated."[406] Therefore, discourses can be seen as "sets of linguistic material that are coherent in organization and content and enable people to construct meaning in social contexts."[407] In other words, as Wittgenstein once argued, "the meaning of a word is its use in the language;" understanding its meaning requires us to understand its "habitus" – the nature of the culture where it was embodied.[408] Constituting the perceptions in all social practices, and connecting individuals with the social processes, discourses "construct the world in meaning."[409]

Recognizing the importance of language, discourse analysis focuses on discursive practices– how texts are produced, how they are consumed and how they contribute to the construction of social realities.[410] They reflect the "socially shared habits of thought, perception, and behavior reflected in numerous texts."[411] The purpose of discourse analysis is to explore such "linguistic-discursive dimension" of social processes. Discourse, from this perspective, has a dialectical dimension – it helps construct social practices, but it is also constructed by these elements.[412]

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[405] J.S. Dryzek, *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses*, (New York: Oxford University Press, *1997*), 8.

[406] Michael Freeden, "Ideology," 103.

[407] Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion & Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education, 6th edition,* (London: Routledge, 2008), 389.

[408] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, *3rd edition*, trans. by G.E.M Anscombe, (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1958), 223.

[409] James Paul Gee, "Discourse Analysis: What Makes It Critical?" in *Critical Discourse Analysis in Education,* ed. R. Rogers, (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004), 48.

[410] Marianne W. Jorgensen & Louise J. Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, (London: Sage, 2002), 61.

[411] Michael McCarthy, *Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 538.

[412] Marianne W. Jorgensen & Louise J. Phillips, *Discourse Analysis*, 62.

A discourse paradigm used in this research was interpretive in its essence, aimed at generating hypotheses and building theory from the blocks of the data. [413] It generated new patterns in analyzing the cause and effect processes within its natural context.[414] It also attempted to "discover the new and to develop empirically grounded theories."[415] The Kurdish narratives, along with their social, political and economic challenges in Iraq and Turkey, were analyzed according to their socio-political, economic and historical context.

This approach was particularly useful for examining the extent to which discursive practices played in understanding the origins of the Kurdish discourse in Iraq and Turkey, but also from the perspective of the American foreign policy. The purpose of this research was not simply to deconstruct and reconstruct such discourse, but rather to genuinely engage critical theory with the practical concerns of politics, offer a new perspective and create a new space within which Kurdish issues can be discussed. From this angle, discourse analysis allowed this study to combine the individual narratives within their particular socio-political, economic and historical settings. It situated the participants' singular experiences within a larger context, in relation to Kurdish history, forms of cultural repression, the role of the state, nationalism and violence. It helped in the framing of Kurdish experiences within a post-structuralist perspective to explore the ideological dimensions of Kurdish problems and the processes of the Kurdish struggle in Iraq and Turkey.

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[413] Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Handbook of Qualitative Research," 2 & John W. Creswell, "Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design," *15*.

[414] Joseph A. Maxwell, "Using Qualitative Methods for Causal Explanations," *Field Methods* 16, no. 3 (2004): 243-264.

[415] Flick Uwe, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, (London: Sage, 1998), 5.

3.4.1 Open Coding

After the data was collected from interviews, archival research and observations, the process of data analysis began. Open coding was employed to discover, develop and provisionally verify categories in the data.[416] As this case study was exploratory in nature, it was "content-driven." Codes were not pre-determined, but rather derived from the data. McNabb defines coding as "the process of applying some conceptually meaningful set of identifiers to the concepts, categories, and characteristics found in the data."[417] Strauss describes open coding as the "unrestricted coding of the data," the broad conceptualization of the concepts, themes and categories found in the data.[418] From Ryan and Bernard's perspective, coding is a process of "analytical induction."[419] Open coding was beneficial for this study as it allowed the researcher to look for "key words, trends, themes or ideas in the data that help[ed] outline the analysis."[420] It also facilitated the examination and refinement of the data based on a series of thematic codes and concepts in an effort to generate a universally applicable theory. The process of open coding followed the four basic guidelines suggested by Strauss (1987).[421]

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[416] Open-coding is one of the most frequently used data analysis methods in grounded theory. Anselm Strauss & Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*, (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990), 23.

[417] David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods*, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 390.

[418] Bruce L. Berg, "Qualitative Research Methods," 255.

[419] Gery W. Ryan and H. Russell Bernard, "Data Management and Analysis Methods," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd edition*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000), 780.

[420] Greg Guest, Kathleen M. MacQueen & Emily E. Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012), 7-8.

[421] Cited in Bruce L. Berg, "Qualitative Research Methods," 251-253.

1. Ask the data a specific and consistent set of questions.
2. Analyze the data minutely.
3. Frequently interrupt the coding to write a theoretical note.
4. Never assume the analytic relevance of any traditional variable until the data show it to be relevant.

According to these guidelines, transcribed interview notes were categorized and assigned codes that fit the data according to their groups (Diyarbakir and Erbil participants) in a three-stage process. During the initial coding procedure, direct quotations from the respondents' narratives were grouped into eight sections (since there were eight interview questions) and organized based on broad and lose categories (guidelines #1 and #2). Similar responses to the identical questions were then analyzed based on their social, political, economic and historical context. Narratives were constructed to describe the Kurdish grievances in Iraq and Turkey, as well as forms of repression, their demands and current state policies in each case (guidelines #2 and #3). In the last stage, overarching themes and concepts were tied to the analysis of relevant theoretical perspectives. These theoretical angles led the analysis of the narratives to theory formulation on the causal links between the processes of nation-state building and group destruction, and the causal links between nationalism, violence and the role of the state (see Table 5 for a sample of narratives based on open-coding). These were the major findings of this research (guideline #4).

3.5 Ethical Considerations

As Babbie observed, "All of us consider ourselves as ethical; not perfect perhaps, but more ethical than most humanity."[422] Conducting qualitative research involves various ethical issues: issues of data safety, consent and confidentiality. Following the IRB regulations and guidelines, this study took a number of steps to comply with ethical standards. As previously mentioned, this research qualified as "no greater than minimal risk to subjects" under Federal Policy 45 CFR 46.102(i). Since the interview questions did not single out specific individuals or groups for critical judgment or solicited attribution of blame, there was little risk of retribution, which posed no greater than minimal risk to subjects. The only discernible risk that participants may have faced was personal discomfort about revealing and sharing their personal experiences living as a Kurdish minority. This had been addressed by providing complete freedom for participants to withdraw from the study before, during or after the interview combined with immediate destruction of existing records. Participants were only requested to give their oral consent to participate in the study, and to allow the researcher to digitally record the interview. Oral consent in this study was considered more appropriate to maximize the protection of subject confidentiality.

Once the interviews were complete, a number of steps were followed to ensure the security of the data. The handwritten notes were typed on a Microsoft document and saved as an encrypted file on my personal computer. The digitally recorded interviews were uploaded on this computer as well. Like the recording

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[422] Bruce L. Berg, "Qualitative Research Methods," 39.

device, the personal computer used for the research was protected with a high-security password. The second step was to upload the interview notes and the recordings to a secure server. Box.com was found to be a suitable one for this purpose since all of the data on this server is saved as an encrypted file. Once uploaded, all of the notes and recordings were deleted from my personal computer. The paper-based information was shredded. The study data will be stored at Box.com for a period of three years after the completion of this study based on the IRB regulations. All future publications will only state group results.

3.6 Reliability, Validity and Transferability

Reliability, transferability and validity are traditional standards in ensuring trustworthiness in quantitative studies and evaluating their rigor. Although these three concepts have to be redefined in qualitative research, they can still be used to measure the quality of relevant research from a qualitative perspective. These three concepts and how they contribute to the rigor of this study is discussed below.

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability, as suggested by Joppe (2000), is concerned with "the extent to which [research findings] are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study."[423] It is focused on the idea that same results could be reproduced under the same methodology. Lincoln and Guba highlight the

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[423] Nahid Golafshani, "Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research," *The Qualitative Report* 8, no.4 (December 2003): 597.

importance of consistency in qualitative research.[424] A number of steps were taken to ensure the reliability of the study. The data collection and analysis processes were made as transparent as possible for external investigation. A sample was provided in the appendix on how the open-coding procedure was conducted. The use of snowballing sampling in the recruiting of the interview participants prevented the researcher from taking an active role in the selection process, hence, eliminating bias in the recruitment stage. The selection of three groups of actors (academics, government representatives and members of civil society organizations) also ensured the diversification of opinions and experiences included in the study. Since Turkish and English were the instrumental languages in which the interviews were conducted, the translation of the interview guide was an important issue. Merriam (2009) lays out a method called "peer review: "the process of study… and tentative interpretations" can be consulted with another expert "who is familiar with the research."[425] I invited two bilingual researchers, who are also experts on Kurdish studies, Dr. Onur Koprulu and Derya Berk, to provide feedback on the translations as an effort to prevent any terminological misunderstandings.

3.6.2 Validity

Lincoln and Guba suggest that "since there can be no validity without reliability, a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter."[426]

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[424] Lincoln and Guba actually use the term "dependability." From their perspective, this term is related to the term "reliability" generally used in quantitative studies. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1985), 300.

[425] Sharamn B. Merriam, "Qualitative Research," 220-229.

[426] Nahid Golafshani, "Understanding Reliability and Validity," 601-602.

Validity refers to the degree to which the research findings accurately represent reality. The validation strategy this study used was based on data triangulation – multiple methods of data were collected through interviews, archival research and observation (see Figure 10). John W. Creswell (1994) claims that research triangulated by drawing upon multiple data sources strengthens the robustness of the research and increases its internal validity.[427] Robert K. Yin (2011) explains the advantages of seeking at least three methods of data verification for strengthening the validity of a study.[428] Triangulation strengthens the "confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem."[429] Using these standards, data triangulation in this research confirms the validity of findings.

Further, frequent debriefing sessions helped the researcher to seek feedback from other experts in the field. The findings of the research were presented at two international conferences: the International Studies Association Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada in March 2014 and the International Association of Genocide Scholars Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Canada in July 2014. The findings were later revised based on constructive comments received from various scholars at these events.

Figure 10: Triangulation (Creswell, 1994 & Yin, 2011)

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[427] John W. Creswell, "Research Design," 145.
[428] Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*, 8l.
[429] Veronica A. Thurmond, "The point of triangulation," *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 33, no. 3 (2001): 254.
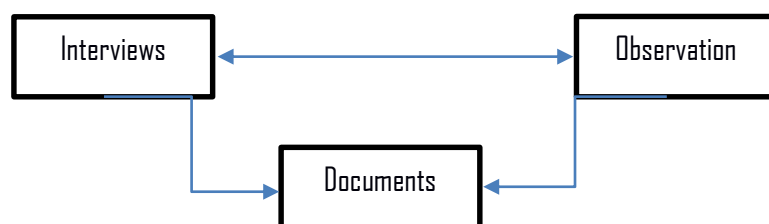
3.6.3 Transferability

According to Merriam, transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalizable and applicable to another situation wider in scope. On the other hand, Shenton articulates the problem of generalizability in qualitative studies: "since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations."[430] From this perspective, transferability refers to not generalizability, but rather to the "context-bound extrapolations," the way that the research findings can be applied "under similar, but not identical, conditions."[431] Therefore, to allow transferability, this study provided a "thick" description of the context of the research study to determine whether the findings can be pertinent to another similar setting. The meeting of the transferability criterion was fulfilled by providing an extensive background on the issues being investigated as well as the political history and context as outlined over 78 pages in Chapter 2.

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[430] Andrew K. Shenton, "Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Projects," *Education for Information* 22, no. 2 (2004): 69.

[431] Linda D. Bloomberg and Marie Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Road Map from Beginning to End, 2nd edition,* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012), 31.

3.7 Strengths and Limitations of the Research

3.7.1. Strengths of the Research

This research has several strengths as well as limitations. One of the strengths of this study was its use of multiple methods of data collection, a combination of semi-structured interviews, extensive archival research and, to a limited degree, observation. The bilingual ability of the researcher (Turkish and English – and to some extent Arabic) created opportunities to conduct research at the National Library and Parliamentary Library in Turkey and to access resources that were translated from Arabic and Persian to Turkish but not available in English. Being bilingual also helped the researcher to become directly involved in the data collection, interview and transcription and data analysis process. Such immersion in the data provided the researcher with further perspectives and deeper analytical explanations.

In addition, prior to writing of this study, the researcher spent six months in Diyarbakir, Turkey from June 2012 to December 2012. Such previous experience helped the researcher establish contacts and network with various Kurdish academics, politicians, scholars and other civil society organizations not only in Turkey but also in Iraq and the United Kingdom. These connections helped build trust with the interview participants, and allowed for a snowball sampling.

3.7.2 Limitations of the Research

Stake argues that "the more episodic, subjective procedures, common to the case study, have been considered weaker than the experimental or co-relational

studies for explaining things."[432] Many quantitative researchers are critical of qualitative studies based on a case study approach. This research has a number of limitations. It was limited to the examination of the interview questions. It focused on processes, rather than testing causal relationships between variables because it was more interested in the *quality* of information, rather than the maximization of the study participants or variables. While considering the strengths and limitations of every research method, advantages and disadvantages must be weighed against each other. The qualitative case study method was appropriate for this purpose. Despite its limitations, such methodology helped the research acquire useful information that policymakers, practitioners and scholars would consider valuable. This research aimed at bridging political theory with practice and revealed important policy implications from the Kurdish case for the newly emerged democracies in North Africa and elsewhere in the Middle East. These implications are particularly significant in the contemporary international system currently threatened by a small, yet, powerful radical movement of ISIS.

Researcher bias was among the limitations of this study. Merriam (1998) points out the issue of the researcher's subjectivity during data collection and interpretation. Two precautions were taken to prevent and eliminate researcher bias. The snowballing sample, which was used to recruit interview participants, ensured the diversification of experts included in the research, and minimized the role of the researcher during this recruitment stage. Also, this study relied on peer reviews and

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[432] Robert E. Stake, "The Case Study Method in Social Inquiry," in *Case Study Method: Key Issues, Key Texts*, eds. R. Gomm, M. Hammersley and P. Foster, (London: Sage, 2000), 20.

debriefing sessions with other scholars in the field for comments and feedback on the analysis of the research findings.

One of the most important limitations of the study was its difficult research setting due to security issues. Considering the history of Kurdish repression, the security limitations were a sensitive issue during the interview process in Turkey. There was no email correspondence with the research participants as a deliberate effort to leave no traces of the data. Once the participants were identified, they were reached out to via their cellular phones. An original research proposal, which included Erbil as one of the observation sites, was rejected by the IRB citing security concerns – security of both the data and the researcher. Hence, the observational fieldwork notes only pertained to Diyarbakir. However, the observational notes from Diyarbakir were particularly useful in providing background information and perspectives and assisting the researcher to come up with the "right questions" to ask during the interviews.

4. THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

AND THE POLITICS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1 The Politics of Human Rights

The Kurdish case has started a new conversation about the possibility of pursuing a way for human rights to complement politics and state power. It has also initiated a dialogue about following a new avenue for thinking about a meaningful form of foreign policy. The contingencies between human rights and political interests bring a question of great importance to contemporary political theorists: how can we reconcile ethical principles in assessing their political implications? Second, can we reach attainable goals in international politics via a moralistic approach? In this respect, can we separate global ethics from the realm of politics? At stake is whether the international community can maintain a consistent universal human rights agenda: should human rights be understood as regulative ideals based on the universal statements of international bodies, or should they be evaluated and determined based on interest politics?

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this research. First, it uses the politics and ideological challenges of human rights. Then it includes a theoretical discussion on the concept of "culture industry," and demonstrates how the "Kurdish problem" situates within the critical theory research. Building upon Adorno and Horkheimer's ideas, the second part of the chapter elaborates on the ideological marketing of Kurdish politics. It demonstrates the domains of interconnections between Kurdish issues, neoconservatism and Marxism, and illustrates the complexity of formulating ethical principles that can be applied universally.

There is a great degree of complexity with the subject of human rights given that it displays the intricacies of converging the abstract ethical sphere with that of

the political. Such complexity is critical to the character of human rights. Many Enlightenment thinkers uphold Immanuel Kant's contributions to the idea of moral universalism.[433] Kant's innovation was to devise a formulation, the categorical imperative – a transcended platform from which absolute norms of morality can be derived.[434] The central problem here is that universal ethical norms are based on the presupposition that they are valid across time and space. In the case of Kant, his teleological reading of history, his Eurocentrism treated as universalism and his focus on state sovereignty hampers the applicability of his formulation to the contemporary challenges.[435] For instance, it cannot address the volatile effects of globalization, democratization or transnationalism in the twenty-first century political system.[436] Formulating an abstract universal ethical or moral claim for human rights requires a political and legal framework consistent across political borders.

The first origins of the conception of human rights can be found in Sophocles' work. When Antigone broke King Creon's law by burying her brother (for she

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[433] Among these thinkers are Jeremy Bentham, David Hume, Thomas Paine, and Adam Smith etc.

[434] See Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, ed. Mary Gregor (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Three general principles can be derived from Kantian ethics. First, actions are moral as long as their motives are pure. Actions must be undertaken with no ulterior motives other than the mere respect for the moral law. The morality of an action is not bound by its consequences. Actions out of this motivating principle can become a universal law. See "How is categorical imperative possible?" in Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* trans., Thomas Abbott (Radford, VA: Wilder Publications, 2008), 67-80.

[435] These criticisms were made by David Held in "Cosmopolitan Democracy and the Global Order: A New Agenda," in *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal*, ed. J. Bohman and M. Lutz-Bachmann (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1997).

For a general critique on cosmopolitanism, see Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Beyond a Cosmopolitan Ideal: the Politics of Singularity," *International Politics* no. 44 (2007): 107-124.

[436] See David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) & David Held, "Cosmopolitan Democracy and the Global Order: A New Agenda."

reasoned, it was the Gods' laws, above the King's laws, that gave her the right to do so):

> I dared.
> It was not God's proclamation. That final Justice
> That rules the world below makes no such laws.
> Your edict, King, was strong.
> But all your strength is weakness itself against
> The immortal unrecorded laws of God.
> They are not merely now: they were, and shall be,
> Operative for ever, beyond man utterly.[437]

This captures the dilemma between the competing ideological bases of human rights. Like Sophocles, liberals, such as John Locke, believe that rights are innate within the individual based on its primary source – God. On the other side of Lockean maxims we find Marxists and their attacks on the ideological basis of human rights (God). Marx's thesis is that human rights subsist at the discretion of the state. They are the product of the ruling social class. Human rights, in the utilitarian sense, are nothing more than "nonsense on stilts."[438] They are a collection of fantasies and childish thinking, Jeremy Bentham would suggest. Conservative Carl Schmitt, like Bentham, recognizes that in the absence of a universal government, universal human rights are mere abstractions and do not correspond to any political reality.[439] For Rousseau, acting on behalf of universal human rights is not an abstract principle; it is an act of power. In his own words, "as it is possible to disobey with impunity,

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[437] Helga Druxes, *Resisting Bodies: The Negotiation of Female Agency in Twentieth Century Women's Fiction* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 36.

[438] Jeremy Waldron, ed., *'Nonsense Upon Stilts': Bentham, Burke, and Marx on the Rights of Man* (London & New York: Taylor & Francis, 1987).

[439] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political,* trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 55.

disobedience is legitimate; and the strongest always being in the right, the only thing that matters is to act so as to become the strongest."[440]

There is a more nuanced concern with pursuing human rights policies. Growing concern over tragedies of the past, border-transgressing problems and global refugee influx are all entangled with issues of crossing sovereign state borders and the lack of any social institutions to ensure state survival. Michael Ignatieff still insists on the necessity of taking a practical approach to human rights, reminding us of the murderous and genocidal twentieth century. Indeed, there is truth to Ignatieff's point that the management of genocide, atrocities and mass human rights violations necessitates international cooperation. Human rights cannot be abstract philosophical conceptions. That would be "philosophical idolatry."[441] In the Ignatieffian sense, human rights must operate on the political sphere to encourage cooperation among the states and create international practices that respect human rights. However, Michel Foucault is highly suspicious of the practices of human rights. How can we be sure that the universal formulations of human rights are not suppressing the experience of the singular into the universal, he asks.[442] This is exactly the paradox

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[440] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1998), 8.

[441] Michael Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (Oxford: Princeton University Press), 54-57 & Michael Ignatieff, "I. Human Rights as Politics, II. Human Rights as Idolatry," The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Princeton University, April 4-7, 2000, accessed October 24, 2013, http://tannerlectures.utah.edu/lectures/documents/Ignatieff_01.pdf

[442] Consider his following quotation: "I do not appeal to any "we" — to any of those "wes" whose consensus, whose values, whose traditions constitute the framework for a thought and define the conditions in which it can be validated. But the problem is, precisely, to decide if it is actually suitable to place oneself within a "we" in order to assert the principles one recognizes and the values one accepts; or if it is not, rather, necessary to make the future formation of a "we" possible by elaborating the question. Because it seems to me that "we" must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result — and the necessary temporary result — of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it." Foucault remains skeptical of the emancipatory power of universal policies of human rights. Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought* (London: Penguin, 1984), 385.

at the heart of the human rights discourse today.[443] The possibility of developing a universal ethico-political sphere is interlaced with power dynamics. These conflicting ideologies undercut a cosmopolitan foreign policy. It produces greater liberal cynicism,[444] and hampers any restoration of a genuine dialogue. In order to understand the complexity of formulating a global ethic, we must first examine the ideological challenges of human rights.

4.1.1 Challenges from the Political Right: Neoconservatives and Human Rights

In the wake of September 11, 2001, amidst the heightened security concerns reverberating throughout the world and anxieties over a "rising China," neoconservatives found a new voice in the concept of human rights: planting freedom and democracy and liberating those oppressed under dictatorships. Security interests within a realist agenda manifested themselves in the Bush Doctrine as the commercial and ideological components of U.S. foreign policy.[445] This is clear in George W. Bush's Second Inaugural Address. "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world."[446] A careful examination of history reveals that a similar vision of the Early Republic's statesmen was built upon the tenets of isolationism and nonintervention. George

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[443] David Held called this "the paradox of our times." See David Held, *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities* (Malden, MA & Cambridge, UK, 2010), 15.

[444] Schmitt clearly expresses such cynicism: "The concept of humanity is an especially useful ideological instrument of imperialist expansion, and in its ethical-humanitarian form it is a specific vehicle of economic imperialism. Here one is reminded of a somewhat modified expression of Proudhon's: whoever invokes humanity wants to cheat." Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political,* 54.

[445] Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001).

[446] "George W. Bush Jr., Second Inaugural Address on January, 20, 2005," C-Span Video Library, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/185043-6.

Washington's farewell address in 1796 and John Quincy Adams' Fourth of July address in 1821 echo similar messages. Adams said, "America … goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all."[447] Human rights were transformed into a policy of promoting democracy and freedom, and maintaining American supremacy in the world.

The central tenets of neoconservatism include a belief in economic growth and social conservatism combined with a foreign policy based on nationalism and military intervention. Michael Harrington is among the first intellectuals who used the term "neoconservative." In this writings, such a label referred to those philosophers and thinkers who disapproved of the politics of the New Left and new social movements in the name of preserving traditional values and family.[448] These intellectuals were based in New York, and contributed their writings to journals like *Public Interest,* edited by Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell, and *Commentary*, edited by Norman Podhoretz. Their ranks included Seymour Martin Lipset, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Nathan Glazer.[449] Even though the original neoconservatives were mainly composed of New Yorker thinkers with a liberal heritage, largely interested in domestic issues, the contemporary neoconservatives are Washington D.C.-based politicians, identified with the political Right, primarily interested in social

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[447] James Kirchick, "In Search of Monsters to Destroy: Bin Laden and Beyond," *World Affairs Journal,* 2 May 2011, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/blog/james-kirchick/search-monsters-destroy-bin-laden-and-beyond.

[448] This was in the 1970s. Michael Harrington, "The Welfare State and Its Neoconservative Critics," *Dissent (*Autumn 1973): 435–454 & Justin Vaisse, "Why Neoconservatism Still Matters," *Brookings Institution,* Policy Paper, no 20 (May 2010), accessed June 4, 2014, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/papers/2010/4/05%20neoconservatism%20vaisse/05_neoconservatism_vaisse

[449] Bronner, *Ideas in Action,* 65-67 & Justin Vaisse, "Why Neoconservatism Still Matters," 1.

engineering abroad. Such contradiction is clearly expressed in Francis Fukuyama's *America at the Crossroads*. He describes neoconservatism as an ideology where "the internal character of regimes matters and … foreign policy must reflect the deepest values of liberal democratic societies," and the exercise of power can help instill such values in societies abroad.[450]

William Kristol, Robert Kagan and Justin Vaisse argue that the central tenets of contemporary neoconservatism include internationalism, democracy, hegemony, unilateralism and militarism.[451] Leo Strauss, known as "the godfather of American conservatism,"[452] is often credited with creating the American "doublethink" image of internationalism – the belief that the global political order postulates the necessity of the United States' role. In Kagan and Kristol's view, "the overarching goal of American foreign policy – to preserve and extend an international order that is in accord with both our material interests and our principles – endures."[453] Whether advocated by the political Right or the political Left, internationalism presupposes the primacy of American values, including liberalism and democracy, as a universal norm, and constructs an ideological framework for its promotion. This early vision

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[450] Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 48.

[451] See William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* (July–Aug 1996); Robert Kagan, "Neocon Nation: Neoconservatism, c. 1776," *World Affairs* (Spring 2008); Justin Vaisse, "Why Neoconservatism Still Matters."

[452] Shadia B. Drury, *Leo Strauss and the American Right* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). Strauss indeed identified conservatism as "identical with what originally was liberalism." Leo Strauss, "Preface," *Liberalism: Ancient & Modern* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), ix. However, Bronner, argues that the latter-day conservatism had "little use" for Strauss's classicism. See Bronner, *Ideas in Action*, 67.

[453] Robert Kagan & William Kristol, "Burden of Power is Having to Wield It," *Washington Post,* March 19, 2000, accessed October 9, 2013, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2000/03/19/burden%2Dof%2Dpower%2Dis%2Dhaving%2Dto%2Dwield%2Dit/dzx4.

of internationalism formed the backbone of the contemporary hegemony doctrine. Framing the U.S. as "the indispensable nation," to quote Madeleine Albright, Bush's Manichean[454] vision after 9/11 convinces the masses that "the world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. […] There are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East."[455] America, who can never turn a blind eye to the atrocities of human rights elsewhere in the world, does not invade, but rather liberates, neoconservatives declare. By this logic, when security or economic interests are at stake, human rights troubles serve as perfect opportunities to intervene (or to not intervene).

There is a guiding logic that democracies do not fight each other.[456] Promoting democracy throughout the world necessitates the fourth and fifth tenets of neoconservatism: unilateralism and militarism. Neoconservatives insist that the search for a solution, for instance, restoring peace in the Middle East to protect the American security interests, requires unilateral military action.[457] American

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[454] Manicheanism originates from an ancient Mesopotamian religion that believes in duality. It views everything from opposing sides: good and bad, good and evil, black and white. Frantz Fanon, in his *The Wretched of the Earth*, argues that colonialism created Manichean divisions between the inferior white people and the superior "towel-heads" and "niggers" (2-5). Bush's Manicheanism is between the duality of spreading democracy and freedom and advancing national interests as opposing ends.

[455] George W. Bush, "President Discusses the Future of Iraq," Speech, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., February 26, 2003 accessed October 9, 2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030226-11.html.

[456] The democratic peace theory was first introduced by Immanuel Kant (1795). Kant argued that democracies are less likely to go to war against each other than non-democracies. Kant's theory was later enhanced by empirical data that non-democracies and democratization state are more likely to fight each other than democracies (Small and Singer 1976, Eric Weede 1984, Steve Chan 1984, Bruce Russett 1992 & 1993). For more information on democratic internationalism, see Elcin Haskollar, "The Conceptualization of Democratic Internationalism as a Norm of Global Governance," *Journal of Global Change and Governance* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2010).

[457] It must be noted here that although many countries, including Britain, Australia and Poland, contributed troops and provided logistical support during the Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003, the

intervention is a suitable means towards human rights ends, to bring liberation, freedom and democracy to the rest of the globe, they contend. These tenets, as Eric Hobsbawm would describe them, could be said to be the beginning of an "invented tradition" which merged American national security strategy with human rights rhetoric.[458] Such a tradition has brought the old economic and military goals of imperialism and a realpolitik agenda to the new global order where American national security is threatened by global terrorism and instability in the Middle East, and the Muslim populations await American redemption.[459] This is how a neoconservative "global imaginary"[460] has been constructed.

What makes neoconservatism interesting is that such constructed imaginary was well accepted in the American public space. In the Foucaultian formation, using human rights rhetoric to achieve political goals indicates motives of power. In the post-9/11 period, Iraq was targeted as a national security interest, a part of the "axis of evil" in America's war on terror, despite the lack of enough evidence of an intimate connection between Saddam's Ba'athist Party and al-Qaeda. The American intervention in Iraq was then framed as a mission to spread democracy there. The support of the American citizenry for bringing peace and freedom to Iraq, in Foucaultian terms, is a clear example of the workings of power in society.[461] Power

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decision to pursue military action was taken unilaterally by the United States. It is on this basis that I argue the Iraqi War had unilateral elements.

[458] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Tradition," in *The Invention of Tradition* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

[459] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Tradition," in *The Invention of Tradition* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

[460] Manfred B. Steger, *The Rise of the Global Imaginary: Political Ideologies from the French Revolution to the Global War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[461] Stephen E. Bronner, Lecture Notes, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ, March 2011.

and society, in this sense, intermingle. They have a dialectical dimension. While power is linked intrinsically to all domains of society, social memory and practices, it illuminates the nature of social agents and their actions that contribute to the creation and exercise of power. In this respect, Hegelian dialectics remains useful. In *The Phenomenology of the Spirit,* Hegel posits that we cannot understand the system without studying the system that produces it. [462] For Hegel, the way to understand how the neoconservative ideology is built and accepted in American society is through understanding how power has produced that reality. In the Hegelian formation, individual instances of neoconservative interventions can be explained by America's desire to spread democracy to the world. Such a desire as the basis for intervention then becomes the social reality and provides a moral justification for the pursuit of national security interests. Power also legitimizes certain ideologies as universal. From the Hegelian perspective, the interplay between discourse and power has helped create a certain definition of democracy that features markets, economics and individualism as the key aspects. Although it is just one definition of democracy that favors certain elites, it has taken on a universal meaning as a result of a confluence of power over time, Hegel would argue. This is a crucial separation between how human rights are envisioned in theory and how neoconservatives exercise them.

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[462] My knowledge and understanding of the connection between knowledge and power has been shaped largely by my readings of Foucault. Michel Foucault, Discipline *and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Second Vintage Books Edition, 1994), 194. Also see, Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1990), 93.

4.1.2 Challenges from the Political Left: Marxists and Human Rights

Examining Marxist attacks on the social foundation and ideological basis of human rights, alongside the neoconservative preoccupation with power and security, is crucial to unifying political purpose with critical theory. One point still remains unsettled and open to further debate: what is a right? The seventeenth and eighteenth century political and legal debates claim that, as John Locke put it, rights are innate within individuals and assigned to them. It views the individual as the repository of rights, and allows rights to be exercised against the state. On the other end of Locke's maxim we find Giambattista Vico and Friedrich Nietzsche. Vico essentially argues that myth, not science, is the key to human understanding, because we *create* knowledge through society, rather than acquire it in some pure form from God. In Vico's terms, human rights are constructed in language.[463] Further, Nietzsche's treatment of knowledge and truth is a rejoinder to Locke, as he is more closely following the Enlightenment tradition. Nietzsche, like Foucault and Vico, remains suspicious. For him, a truth must be called into question. What if "the methods of truth were not invented from motives of truth, but from motives of power, of wanting to be superior"? The institutionalized norms that are universally accepted prevent such process.[464]

The contemporary meaning of the word has replaced abstract conceptions of natural rights. It has gained a more pragmatic and functional definition, avoiding the

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[463] Joseph Mali, *The Rehabilitation of Myth: Vico's New Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 13.

[464] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power,* trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollindale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 455.

lengthy philosophical debate about the nature of rights. Based on Jay A. Sigler's definition, "a claim which is recognized and accepted by authoritative decision makers (courts, legislatures, governors) can grow into a right... A right does not exist, except as a moral abstraction, unless someone or some group is prepared to make a claim for its implementation... In a nutshell *a right is a valid claim.*"[465]

At the same time, we must recognize that abstract conceptions of natural rights have now been replaced with new frameworks of thinking, wherein rights are social and political products of the states in which the individual subject lives. Marxist political theorists, generally, reject human rights or natural rights because, as George G. Brenkert contends, "they are relative to capitalist society."[466] In the Marxist maxim, rights depoliticize man and privatize inequalities of class, race, and gender. As Marx argues, they do not have the capacity to provide full "human emancipation," but only limited "political emancipation."[467] Universal human rights, in the Marxist sense, are suspicious.

In one of his earlier works, during his critical *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Rights,* Marx asserted that the foundation of the right and the forms of the state are not productions of the human mind or nature. They are the products of "material conditions of life."[468] Marx proposed that an analysis of the economic structure of society sheds light on the roots of these conditions. Social production of life

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[465] Jay A. Sigler, *American Rights Policies* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1975), 5.

[466] George G. Brenkert, "Marx and Human Rights," *Journal of History and Philosophy* 24, no.1 (January 1986): 55.

[467] Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, second edition, ed. David McLellan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 89.

[468] This appeared in the *Deutsch-Franzosische Jahrbucher* (German-French Annals) in Paris in 1844. Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, second edition (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), 3-6.

cultivates "material productive forces." The total sum of this socio-economic relationship therefore facilitates the development of a foundation on which a legal and political structure can be built and social consciousness can be formed.[469] In Marx's view, an individual's opinion is no longer based on what he thinks of himself, but is a result of a process drawn from such contradictions of material life. In *Das Capital*, Marx illustrated his skepticism regarding what he referred to as the "pompous catalogue of the inalienable rights of man."

> It must be acknowledged that our labourer comes out of the process of production other than he entered. In the market he stood as owner of the commodity "labour-power" face to face with other owners of commodities, dealer against dealer. The contract by which he sold to the capitalist his labour-power proved, so to say, in black and white that he disposed of himself freely. The bargain concluded, it is discovered that he was no "free agent," that the time for which he is free to sell his labour-power is the time for which he is forced to sell it… In place of the pompous catalogue of the "inalienable rights of man" comes the modest Magna Carta of a legally limited working-day, which shall make clear "when the time which the worker sells is ended, and when his own begins." Quantum mutatus ab illo! [What a great change from that time! – Virgil].[470]

The Marxist point to remember is that the right to property, considered to be an "inalienable right" by John Locke, does not go any further than the "right to selfishness," if the right is exercised without any regard for other members of society. Such a right, then, facilitates the exploitation of labor by expropriating the land for the few.[471] The rights of man fail to embrace social concerns and promote sociality,

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[469] ibid.

[470] Karl Marx, *Das Capital, Volume One: A Critique of Political Economy* ed. Friedrich Engels, trans. Samuel Moore & Edward Aveling (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications Inc., 2011), 326.

[471] Karl Marx, "The War in France: The Paris Commune, Third Address," Speech, May 1871 accessed October 20, 2012 http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/ch05.htm. In *On the Jewish Question,* Marx explained: "The right of man to property is the right to enjoy his possessions and dispose of the same arbitrarily, without regard for other men, independently from society, the right of selfishness." Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question*, 60.

Marx criticized.[472] Therefore, any discussion of human rights in the Marxist tradition must start with the teleology of the negation of individual rights. It is important to understand that the matrix of Marxist thought was neither "scornful"[473] of rights nor "attacked the very concepts of the rights of man and of civil and political rights."[474] He was critical of the "bourgeois right" – the egoistical, competitive, individualistic right that was "wholly preoccupied with his private interest and acting in accordance with his private caprice."[475] Even though Marxists may have attacked the mistaken conceptions of rights, particularly their social foundation and ideological basis,[476] they defined civil liberties and individual rights in practice, and defended the bourgeois notion of a republic. Consider the G. A. Cohen's following quotation.

> The language of natural (or moral) rights is the language of justice, and whoever takes justice seriously must accept that there are natural rights. Now Marxists do not often talk about justice, and when they do they tend to deny its relevance, or they say that the idea of justice is an illusion. But I think that justice occupies a central place in revolutionary Marxist belief. Its presence is betrayed by particular judgments Marxists make, and by the strength of feeling with which they make them. Revolutionary Marxist belief often misdescribes itself, out of lack of clear awareness of its own nature, and Marxist disparagement of the idea of justice is a good example of that deficient self-understanding.[477]

Marx's arguments in *On the Jewish Question* and *Critique of the Gotha Programme* have provided the analytical framework that formulated his understanding and commitment to civil liberties and individual rights in practice. His criticisms pointed out that the greatest obstacle to human emancipation is human

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[472] Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question,* 41.
[473] Steven Lukes, *Marxism and Morality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 27.
[474] Allen E. Buchanan *Marx and Justice: The Radical Critique of Liberalism* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield Publications Inc., 1982), 67-68.
[475] Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question,* 41.
[476] See Steven Lukes, "Can a Marxist Believe in Human Rights?" *Praxis International* 4 (1981): 334-345.
[477] G. A. Cohen, "Freedom, Justice and Capitalism," *New Left Review* 126 (1981): 12.

egoism.[478] On one hand, man acts as an egotistical being in civil society; on the other hand, he is an abstract citizen in the state. In Kantian terms, he "regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes the play thing of alien powers."[479] Borrowing Kant's language, Marx can be read to suggest that man must always be treated as an end in himself, not merely as a means. By their nature, rights must be applied in an equal standard.[480] It is the negation of human dignity that Marx opposed in his discussion of human rights, not the concept of rights.

It is exactly at this point in idealism that we must understand human rights and what is ethical and just in world politics, and the deficiencies of developing a more pragmatic foreign policy. The cynicism of Marxist political thinkers in maintaining a cohesive human rights agenda has pushed many to embrace isolationist ways of thinking.[481] Overcoming the dichotomy between Marxist idealism and neoconservative realism calls for a new understanding of human rights in light of new global politics. This becomes crucial for unifying political purpose with critical theory. Developing a meaningful expression of "the ethical" beyond political calculations requires a cosmopolitan re-conception of human rights.

4.1.3 Ideological Marketing of Kurdish Rights in the Twenty-First Century

What are the ideological domains through which the Kurdish struggle, neoconservatism and Marxism are interconnected? One obvious answer is the

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[478] His criticism mainly developed as a response to Bruno Bauer on the Jewish question.

[479] Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question,* 151.

[480] Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 525-541.

[481] Stephen Eric Bronner, *Blood in the Sand: Imperial Fantasies, Right-Wing Ambitions, and the Erosion of American Democracy* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 163.

marketing of the Kurdish struggle for liberation, and the absence of a radical political response in the foreign policy discourse (from the political discourses of American foreign policy and of the countries where Kurds live – Iraq, Turkey and Iran). There has been plenty of research conducted on the Kurds, particularly on the interaction between the Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria, and their notions of regional security and the United States' strategic partnership with the Middle East. Most of the published work on the Kurds analyzes it from the security perspective. The argument is always the same – Kurdishness is an agent of national or regional conflict, and creating an independent Kurdistan would threaten the territorial integrity of pre-existing states. For example, Michael M. Gunter framed the situation of Kurds as a "problem,"[482] Hakan Yavuz as a "question,"[483] Gareth Stansfield as a "dilemma,"[484] and James Brown as an "imbroglio."[485] Referring to the Kurdish issue in Turkey, E. Fuat Keyman noted that phrasing it as a "problem," at the political level, is a good thing; it has the potential to create more efficient and permanent solutions.[486] These frames continuously engage in acts of legitimation of viewing a nation of forty million people and their basic rights as a national concern facing the

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[482] Michael M. Gunter, *Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

[483] Hakan Yavuz, "A Preamble to the Kurdish Question: The Politics of Kurdish Identity," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998); Can Dundar, "The Kurdish Question: The Reasons and Fortunes of the 'Opening'," *Insight Turkey* 11, no. 4 (2009); Henry Barkey & Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998).

[484] G. Stansfield, "The Kurdish Dilemma: The Golden Era Threatened," in *Iraqi Kurdistan: Political Development and Emergent Democracy,* ed. T. Dodge and S. Simon (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 131-148.

[485] James Brown, "The Turkish Imbroglio: Its Kurds," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 541 no. 1 (September 1995), 116-129, accessed May 30, 2014, http://ann.sagepub.com/content/541/1/116#cited-by

[486] E. Fuat Keyman, *Turkiye'nin Iyi Yonetimi: Demokratiklesme ve Ozgurlukcu Sol Alternatif [Turkey's Good Governance: Democratization and A Liberal Left Alternative]* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Universitesi Yayinlari, 2008), 129.

territorial integrity of their homeland, and an international concern facing their region's stability. These frames produce a political myth that Kurds are a threat. The theme of "threat" then prevents the public from even considering the situation of the Kurds as an issue of human rights or democratization.[487]

The ideological proponents of neoconservatism offer valuable explanations in this regard. Consider this: the geographical location of Kurdistan[488] occupies a critically marginal zone. It has gained significant economic importance due to its growing levels of oil and water: both vital resources for the Middle East in the post-World War II era. Today, Iraqi Kurds alone sit on top of some 45 billion barrels of oil. Syria's oil and gas reserves are also located in the newly autonomous Kurdish provinces in the northeast. No state would be willing to let the oil flow into the Kurdish hands. Furthermore, the distribution of the waters of the Euphrates, Tigris and Asi rivers and the construction of dams on these rivers (the Dukan, Darbandikan and Bakhma dams in Iraq, and the dams on the Upper Tigris and Euphrates in Turkey) are intimately intertwined with state policies based on interest politics. The earlier analysis of Turkish and Persian constitutions clearly displays the current nationalistic sentiments within the state territories. The political implications of an independent Kurdistan in the Middle East are complicated for all the states involved and for the

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[487] Robert L. Ivie and Oscar Giner calls this the "mythic constitution of political culture." See "Genealogy of Myth," 303.

[488] The word Kurdistan here is used to denote the larger geographical region in the Middle East where Kurds live, which stretches from eastern Turkey, northern Iraq, Western Iran, eastern Syria, Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the case of Turkey, Kurdistan refers to thirteen southeastern provinces in the southeast; in the case of Iraq, it refers to the autonomous region, bordering Iran in the east, Turkey in the north and Syria in the west; in the case of Iran, it refers to the provinces of Kurdistan and Kirmanshah as well as the Kurdish parts of western Azerbaijan.

region as a whole. This makes the Kurds what Charles G. McDonald refers to as "pawns on a chessboard of power politics and resource competition."[489]

The greater puzzle here is exactly this "Kurd Industry" talk that the situation of the Kurds has largely been defined as a "Kurdish problem," or a "Kurdish question" based on national or international security concerns, and rarely as an issue of human rights or democratization. Practically, the possibility of Kurdish independence is difficult considering its implications for regional and international politics. Ethically, Kant's moral universalism[490] argues that the claims for an independent Kurdistan should not be quickly dismissed for the sake of regional stability. A genuine solution requires what Immanuel Kant would call the cosmopolitan (Weltbürgerrecht) right - a universal basis for morality and politics wherein the principles of freedom and equality are not arbitrarily applicable to some; they are universally attributed to all human beings. In other words, the recent past is full of examples of the international community's support for various nations' right

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[489] Charles G. McDonald, "Kurdish Identity: An Introduction," in C. McDonald & C. O'Leary, *Kurdish Identity: Human Rights and Political Status* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 3. Other notable works on the Kurdish identity includes David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 25-182; Mohammed M.A. Ahmed and Michael Gunter, ed. *The Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 2007).

[490] For Kant, the rational idea that everyone has a moral obligation towards his/her fellow and non-fellow citizens stems from the Stoic political philosophy – *kosmo-politês* (the citizen of the world). *Kosmopolitês* presupposes the moral superiority of the *kosmo* (universal natural right) over the political and singular polis. The bond bridging people together is not circumscribed by their borders. Rather, everyone is equivalently interconnected to one another by their equalizing communal element: logos (reason). This shared equality defines people based on a principle of universality: as a member of the international community, with a "right to communal possession of the earth's surface," and a duty of reciprocal hospitality towards one another. This duty of reciprocal hospitality gives way to the concept of cosmopolitanism – "the ability of citizens to feel at home everywhere." See in order: Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 106; H.S. Reiss, *Kant: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 20; Stephen Eric Bronner, *Ideas in Action: Political Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (Lanham, Boulder, New York & Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999), 303 & Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Beyond a Cosmopolitan Ideal: the Politics of Singularity," *International Politics* no. 44 (2007): 107-124.

to self-determination: South Sudan, Kosovo, Montenegro, Eritrea and Palestine are among the many. In the Kantian sense, if the right to self-determination has been granted to many nations in the world, then Kurds, who encompass the world's largest stateless nation, are entitled to this right.

Hence, solving the Kurdish issue entails a cosmopolitan[491] commitment to granting the Kurds formal recognition of their ethnic heritage, with cultural, social and political rights, and to reconfiguring the "Kurd industry" as an issue of human rights and democratization. Going beyond ethics and politics and merging them into a single avenue is only possible by offering concrete political solutions for the Kurdish struggle. The Western state policies of recognizing Kurds as a distinct people with the fundamental attributes of nationhood, and therefore, a right to self-determination, represent a double standard of liberal rule of law and the inherent tensions between the politics of human rights and ethical choice as a foreign policy

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[491] There are various definitions of cosmopolitanism in the literature. For David Held, "there is not one unified or monolithic understanding of cosmopolitanism." Robert Jackson defines it as "a body of thought, which envisages a world that is progressing some distance beyond a society of states, and is becoming a solidarist community or cosmopolis of humankind, where ethics are truly universal, in the sense of applying to every man and woman on earth." It may also be described as "the ethical and political space which sets out the terms of reference for the recognition of people's equal moral worth, their active agency, and what is required for their autonomy and development." Andrew Linklater views it as a post-Westphalian struggle to create a "worldwide public sphere" where the relationship between "man" and "citizen" is transformed into an ideal citizenship: men work to avoid harm, exercise compassion, empathy, and pity, for the creation of an open community. For Thomas Pogge cosmopolitanism has shared elements of individualism, universality and generality. See in order: David Held, *Cosmopolitanism,* 15 & 49; Robert Jackson, *Classical and Modern Thought on International Relations: From Anarchy to Cosmopolis* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), x; Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Beyond a Cosmopolitan Ideal: the Politics of Singularity," *International Politics* no. 44 (2007): 107-124; Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); Andrew Linklater, "Cosmopolitanism," in *Political Theory and the Ecological Challenge,* ed. ed. A. Dobson and R. Eckersley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) & Thomas Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 169.

strategy.[492] Guided by the idea of what Stephen E. Bronner calls the "cosmopolitan sensibility," analyzing ideas and claims of the Kurd Industry, thus, allows us to develop a dialogue between political theory and the practical concerns of politics.[493]

4.2 The Culture Industry, Myths and Hegemony

The culture industry demonstrates a critical method of analyzing the process of myth in political rhetoric. What is the role of myths in understanding the Kurdish issues in the political discourse, from the perspective of American foreign policy and also from the perspective of the countries where Kurds live? To understand the Kurdish issues, we first need to understand how the Kurds are thought of and talked about – how they are constructed. Further, to theorize any solution, we need to take into account the lived realities of the people involved, which are constructed realities with problematic histories. The culture industry explains how the idea of Kurds operates in the global political discourse and the process of myth in the political persuasion. It provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the politics of human rights, and analyzes the normative claims of the Kurd Industry: the cultural and sociopolitical discrimination against Kurds as a group curtained in normative terms, norms and meanings that emphasize the security, stability, and territorial and political integrity of the states and the stability of the region as a part of an ideological canon.

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[492] For a larger discussion on ethical choice as a foreign policy, see Stephen Eric Bronner, *Ideas in Action,* 299-377.

[493] Stephen Eric Bronner, *Peace out of Reach: Middle Eastern Travels and the Search for Reconciliation* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 4.

The Kurd Industry has three claims on Kurdish identity, its relationship with the state and the Kurdish national movement. As I interpret these claims, I draw upon the insights of Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer's conception of the culture industry as an organizing framework. A close analysis is also given to the role of myths and hegemony, in the context of the culture industry, with their particular contributions to the maintenance of the Kurd Industry. Edward Said and Frantz Fanon's contributions to understanding power, knowledge creation and violence retain their usefulness. Before elaborating on these arguments in greater detail, let us have a discussion on myth, hegemony and the culture industry, and how they relate to the Kurdish case.

In the definitional sense, myths can be defined as manifestations of inherited symbols and collective mentalities of a particular culture that are "no less real than the empirical facts of economic and social history."[494] Robert L. Ivie and Oscar Giner describe myths as "plastic images [that] are the cultural DNA of national identity."[495] They represent the political culture of a society involving beliefs, values and relations among its people. In the operational sense, myths can create a "hegemonic" way of thinking about the leading definitions of societal norms, goals and identity.[496] In other

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[494] Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 21. Myth of Venice simply refers to the historical reputation for beauty, religiosity, liberty, peacefulness and republicanism of Venice.

[495] Robert L. Ivie and Oscar Giner, "Genealogy of Myth in Presidential Rhetoric," *The Sourcebook for Political Communication Research: Methods, Measures, and Analytical Techniques*, ed. Erik P. Bucy and R. Lance Holbert (New York: Routledge, 2011), 300-320.

[496] The Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci first introduced the idea of hegemony. While exploring the absence of a revolutionary working-class movement and the rise of fascist movements in Western Europe in 1920-30s, Gramsci argued that "dominant groups in society, including fundamentally but not exclusively the ruling class, maintain their dominance by securing the 'spontaneous consent' of subordinate groups, including the working class, through the negotiated construction of a political and ideological consensus which incorporates both dominant and dominated groups." Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), 165.

words, they can serve as a vehicle for the political elites to convince subaltern groups that their interests equal the interests of society at large. They can utilize language, knowledge, religion and the education system, and, most importantly, they can prevent subaltern groups from considering alternatives to their current socio-economic and political realities.[497]

Each myth is structured around certain political ideas and claims that give it an ideological function. In the words of Barrington Moore, political ideas "do not descend from heaven."[498] They are largely affected by the events that took place in the past. For Almond and Verba, the "political memories" and "historical experiences" of a nation can have an important influence on its "political beliefs."[499] Indeed, history is our repository of information about the past. By observing historical processes, one can understand why and when political ideas are formulated in a given society, and why they take a particular form. Then historical textbooks, monuments, museums and other forms of public history can supplement the legitimatization of the existing regime.

In other words, historical memory is a way of recording and recalling traumas of past generations that have an emotional or psychological impact. It is also an

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[497] For a discussion on hegemony, see Robert Bocock, *Hegemony* (Chichester, London and New York: Ellis Horwood and Tavistock, 1986), 22.

[498] Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 486.

[499] Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Countries* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 1989), 399 & 556. Almond and Verba are not the only theorists who highlight the role of historical legacies on political/civic beliefs and behaviors. Marx asserts that revolutions awaken the "spirits of the past" by borrowing names, battle slogans and symbols from major historical events; the past is like a "recurring nightmare." See Eric Davis, "The New Iraq: The Uses of Historical Memory," *Journal of Democracy 16 no. 3* (2005): 54-68. Moore in a similar fashion maintains that culture is constituted of many different experiences and values driven from the past. See Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,* 485.

important tool for elites to enhance their legitimacy and control. Historical memory here largely refers to the collective understanding of a specific group of people about their social, political, economic and cultural status and identity.[500] What therefore makes historical memory distinct and different from social and collective memory, and also an important element for myths, is its political character. Creating these types of myths is critical to the formation of collective identity in any given society.

Myths are intertwined with the notion of hegemony. They can serve as a vehicle, facilitating the process of rewriting a state's socio-political history and fostering a general consensus on it among the public.[501] The nexus and power creating the myth is embedded in the language. In this sense, everyday language contains philosophical notions: it is systematically organized, and it operates to affect perceptions and actions. For Wittgenstein, "ordinary language" can be infused with ideas from the past, leaving traces in the language for various groups to use in the present.[502] The past, in this formation, can be constantly recycled. The language can then serve a vehicle of what Edward Said called the "institutionalized domination." Said meant by that term that by manipulating the use of language and culture and formal institutions of the state (schools and textbooks), elites can define the history and political culture of a country. This is the hallmark of Adorno and Horkheimer's culture industry.

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[500] Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 4.
[501] ibid.
[502] Robert Bocock, *Hegemony,* 62.

Adorno and Horkheimer are the Frankfurt School philosophers who crystallized our understanding of the relationship between culture and society. Industry, from the matrix of their thought, does not actually refer to industrial production, but rather the standardization and commodification of mass culture into a singular form. In other words, the society in which we live is "a system which is uniform as a whole and in every part."[503] This system creates a version of reality based on persistent sameness. It takes away individual choice and dissidence and leaves no room for imagination, critique or creativity.[504] Adorno and Horkheimer elaborate on these points:

> "Real life is becoming indistinguishable from the movies. The sound film, far surpassing the theater of illusion, leaves no room for imagination or reflection on the part of the audience, who is unable to respond within the structure of the film, yet deviate from its precise detail without losing the thread of the story; hence the film forces its victims to equate it directly with reality."[505]

Society and culture, as defined by Adorno and Horkheimer, are intertwined. The interaction between them is a dynamic process. It serves a specific ideological function of capitalist ethos.[506] It is precisely this dynamism that contributes to the standardization and rationalization of mass culture as a part of an ideological function

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[503] Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1993), 1, accessed June 3, 2014, http://ada.evergreen.edu/~arunc/texts/frankfurt/hork/hork.pdf

[504] The culture industry does not oppose to dissidence or opposition, it simply ignores it. People become successful to the extent to which they conform to the ideals of the system. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments,* ed. Gunzelin S. Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 94-136 & Theodor W. Adorno and Anson G. Rabinbach, "Culture Industry Reconsidered," *New German Critique*, no 6 (Autumn 1975): 12-19.

[505] Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 1993, 4.

[506] Language becomes the trademark for the culture industry in that it provides a specific discourse in implanting such ideology in the social reality. "The blind and rapidly spreading repetition of words with special designations links advertising with the totalitarian watchword. The layer of experience which created the words for their speakers has been removed." Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 1993, 23-24.

– to normalize and legitimatize the existing capitalist order and the commercial power by which social knowledge is controlled.[507] For Adorno and Horkheimer, culture is an important agent of socialization. It is where "the masses are the ideology of the culture industry."[508]

The concept of culture industry can help us understand the institutionalization of authority in the Middle East and the continuity of state oppression in countries such as Iraq, Turkey and Iran. There are plenty of examples. For instance, the post-1968 Ba'athist regime in Iraq used state oil revenues to rewrite its history on a massive scale. This kind of tradition of reinterpreting the past had not been witnessed in the country before.[509] By clinging to a narrative of victimization, Ba'athists traced their roots back to the Golden Age in the 'Abbasid Empire and emphasized their glorious past. Saddam Hussein made links between his rule and the Babylonian kings.[510] Furthermore, he utilized historical memory to promote distrust among the many ethnic groups in Iraq, particularly the Kurds and Shi'a populations, by arguing that al-shu'ubiyun[511] undermined the 'Abbasid empire from within. Prior to Saddam's regime, Abd al-Karim Qasim's rule introduced myths that favored authoritarianism. Qasim tried to convince Iraqis that corporate rule protected the common good in that collective identity transcended individualism. In the end, his

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[507] ibid.,,14.
[508] ibid., 12.
[509] Eric Davis, *Memories of State,* 3.
[510] Eric Davis, "History Matters: Past as Prologue in Building Democracy in Iraq," *Foreign Policy Research Institute,* Spring 2005, 230, accessed June 2, 2014, http://fas-polisci.rutgers.edu/davis/ARTICLES/History_Matters.pdf
[511] Al-shu'ubiyun are the Persians who comprised the Abbasid Empire's bureaucratic core and were accountable for causing the empire's downfall. Here, Persian is a code word for Shia. Eric Davis, *Memories of State*, 4, 122, 129, 131-133, 184-188.

corporatist regime destroyed the civil society and degraded the political discourse.[512]

Ataturk's regime in Turkey created a similar fantasy that accentuated the magnificence of the Ottoman Empire, the harmony of the millet system and the superiority of the mighty Turks as exemplified by the 1453 Conquest of Constantinople. The subsequent Inonu government in Turkey officially referred to its 11 million Kurdish population in textbooks as "Mountain Turks." Analogously, In Iran, Kurds were officially referred as "the Mountain Persians." State-sponsored history writing and cultural production coupled with state violence ensured in Iraq, Turkey and Iran that this new form of history gained legitimacy among the masses.

History is full of positive and negative examples of myths from elsewhere in the world. Historic Japanese colonialism left many Koreans skeptical about Japanese policies and their objectives. Some American Anglo-Saxons like Glenn Beck often reminisce about the "good old days" despite the enslavement of Africans, the massacres of Native people and the suppression of women's rights.[513] The culture industry, in Adorno and Horkheimer's formation, signifies the institutionalization of these myths and society's common belief in their constructed political discourse. Myths, in this sense, help manipulate historical memory and create altered versions

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[512] ibid., 5-10 & Eric Davis, "Abd al-Karim Qasim, Sectarian Identities and the Rise of Corporatism in Iraq," (unpublished manuscript). This manuscript was distributed in class in Fall 2010 at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ. Scholars such as Davis would argue that even though Qasim's rule destroyed the civil society, it demonstrated that Iraq's various ethnic populations, the Sunnis, Shia, Kurds, Turkomans and others, could indeed cooperate with each other and live side by side.

[513] Hannah Arendt argues that a historical catastrophe should not be preserved in ritualized collective memory. Rather we must understand, and learn from the "holes of oblivion." Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 439.

of reality.[514] From the matrix of Adorno and Horkheimer's thought, myths then can explain the underlying authoritarian legacies in Iraq and Turkey and how these states have justified their assimilation campaigns that were used as a source of social, political and legislative practice. Understood this way, they can also yield better insights into the constructs and representations of the Kurds.

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[514] Consider the following quotation. "The whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry. The familiar experience of the moviegoer, who perceives the street outside as a continuation of the film he has just left, because the film seeks strictly to reproduce the world of everyday perception, has become the guideline of production. The more densely and completely its techniques duplicate empirical objects, the more easily it creates the illusion that the world outside is a seamless extension of the one which has been revealed in the cinema." In this example, movies pitch certain myths to the masses. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 1993, 9.

5. THE KURD INDUSTRY

5.1 The Kurd Industry

A closer analysis of Said's reading on orientalism reveals the various elements regarding myths, hegemony and the culture industry and their interconnection with the Kurdish case. Richard Clarke points out, Said posits that orientalism is not "essentially an idea, or creation with no corresponding reality" or just an "airy European fantasy about the Orient."[515] In Said's view, it is an instrument of Western colonialism and capitalism, with "consistency," based on "regular constellation of ideas."[516] Orientalism is an ideology justifying the subjugation of deprived groups in society such as blacks, Palestinians and many others.[517] For Said, Homer's writings conjured a series of "orientalist fantasies"—i.e., stereotypical images. Being good, rational, humane and superior was associated with the West (occident/the self), being corrupt, backward, inferior, and feminine was reserved as attributes for the Orient (the other). Together, they created a "saturating hegemonic system," and an orderly practice in which knowledge about the orient was filtered through and into general Western culture, Said argued.[518]

Said's essentialization of the orient in such terms has been criticized by David Kopf in *Hermeneutics versus History* for lacking historical precision, by John MacKenzie in *Edward Said and the Historians* for being "supremely a-historical," and most famously by Bernard Lewis in *The Question of Orientalism* for "arbitrary

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[515] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1978), 5.
[516] Ibid, 5-6 & Richard L.W. Clarke, "Edward Said, Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient (1978)," Lecture Notes, University of the West Indies, Barbados, West Indies, 2008-2009, accessed June 4, 2014, http://www.rlwclarke.net/Courses/LITS3304/2008-2009/06CSaidOrientalism.pdf
[517] ibid.
[518] ibid., 6.

reengagement of the historical background" and a "capricious choice of countries, persons, and writings."[519] Said's work does not contribute significantly to post-colonial studies because of its historical enrichment, although it makes a "Copernican turn"[520] on Western scholarship, revealing categories of perception in concepts of the orient, which serve the interests of colonialism and Western imperialism. His work constitutes a teleological movement aimed at understanding of historical processes. The hallmark of Said's theories is that they are a curative science to history.[521] It is precisely at this point that Said's scholarship becomes an indispensable asset for the essence of this dissertation. It becomes useful in understanding the social and political contexts that perpetuates and justifies the discourse where Kurds are reproduced as the backward and inferior orient. It can explain how the Kurds are politically and culturally seen in Iraq and Turkey. Onur Gunay writes:

> While the regime depicted Kurds as primitive and backward savages or separatists manipulated by foreign powers in the early years of the [Turkish] Republic, in the last three decades both Turkish official and popular discourses have represented Kurds as subversives and violent terrorists – against supported by external powers.[522]

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[519] See David Kopf, "Hermeneutics versus History," *Journal of Asian Studies* 39 no. 3 (1980): 495-506; John MacKenzie, "Edward Said and the Historians," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 18 (1994): 9-25; and Bernard Lewis, *Islam and West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Lewis' article first published in *New York Review of Books on* June 24, 1982. Lewis also argued that Said's scholarship was an assault on Zionism.

[520] Here, I refer to Immanuel Kant's "Copernican turn." Copernicus created a paradigm shift in astronomy by proving that the earth was not static. Kant created a similar shift in the way we thought about how we processed knowledge. Kant went against the popular belief that human mind was passive when it received empirical knowledge. He argued otherwise that human mind had an active role and that it actually shaped the perception of the person's reality. In the Kantian senses, people create their own realities. From this perspective, both Copernicus and Kant showed that there are other sides and alternatives to human knowledge. Said's work is important because he showed a different perspective than what was already available in the literature.

[521] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Wanderer and His Shadow: Complete Works* (New York: Gordon Press, 1974),188 & Edward Said, *Orientalism,* 203.

[522] Onur Gunay, "Toward a Critique of Non-Violence," *Dialectical Anthropology* 37, no. 1 (March 2013): 171.

In the early years of the Turkish discourse, Kurds were problematized as "Mountain Turks" – a group of people who refused to be assimilated into the state's national identity. This opened up a new social and political space in which the Kurdish collective identity was negated, aimed at eradicating its group life. The process of what Alex Hinton calls the "manufacturing differences" made such constructed identity more concrete.[523] Such space allowed for the normalization of the state's assimilation campaign that was used as a source of social, political and legislative practice and target Kurds in the name of national security. In the contemporary Turkish political and social discourses of Turkish singularity, Kurds are depicted through the lenses of the orient as a perceived threat. Terrorism has become synonymous with activism for Kurdish rights, which in return, has become synonymous with refusing to be associated within the Turkish national discourse. One participant explained the underlying social assumptions of being a Kurd:

> Kurds have become the "other" due to their ethnic and political identities. In movies, they are portrayed as comical characters who speak a weird language. They are calculating, dishonest and primitive. It is always the "other" we laugh at. It is due to our collective memories and perceptions. Perception is unfortunately an important paradigm here. Whenever I attend medical conferences with my Turkish colleagues from the West,[524] I recognize the same perception in their analysis – Kurds are separatist ungrateful people who betray the country that feed them.[525]

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[523] Alexander Laban Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide,* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 211.

[524] Here, the respondent refers to the Western part of Turkey, which has a predominantly Turkish population.

[525] Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

In this social discourse, Kurds are reconstructed as sub-human and backward ethnicities. Their identity is constructed in contrast to the Turkish identity as unwanted and detrimental. "When I meet people in the Western cities, they are shocked. "You cannot be Kurdish. You are so nice and so different," they proclaim,"[526] a representative from the Human Rights Association in Diyarbakir elaborated on the social impacts of such representations. Another narrative relates to the role of prejudice and racism in schools:

> During the 1980 coup, my family was sent into exile in the Black Sea region. I was being ostracized at school. Other children would call me names: "You are a Kurd; you've got a tail. Filthy Kurds." There was verbal and social exclusion in schools.[527]

Being defined as "filthy"[528] and "dirty,"[529] perhaps, the most serious psychological consequence of such representations are borne by the Kurdish children in public schools. "I got beaten up by the teacher whenever I spoke Kurdish in school. It was psychologically abusive because getting beaten up for speaking Kurdish also meant that my identity was being denied," another participant added.[530]

For Said, knowledge is a product of power, domination and hegemony.[531] Power is the outcome of a process that consists of a series of representations upon

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[526] Interview with Human Rights Association, Diyarbakir Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[527] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[528] ibid.
[529] Interview with Human Rights Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[530] Interview with Education and Science Workers' Union Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013. A BDP Representative talked about similar childhood memories: "The first couple of times, I got away with a warning. But I eventually ended up getting beaten up by my teacher. Is there anything else more traumatic than a child getting physically abused by her teaching for speaking his native tongue?" Interview, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[531] ibid., 5 & Richard L.W. Clarke, "Edward Said, Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient (1978)."

which the orient Kurd and occident Arab/Turk are predicated in antithetical terms: the orient was formed as a negative transposition of occident's identity.[532] Being Kurdish is built on prejudices and racism. They belong to the "other" group. Then the histories of "other" ethnicities are framed in the public cultural discourse to define the boundaries of otherness. We can observe an interplay of Kurdish identity and its alienation in the words of an Alevi Kurdish professor.[533]

> When I was in school, in *Religion and Moral Education[534]* courses, Alevism was depicted in the textbooks and in the classroom as a deviant sect. I did not display any deviant behavior, but had to describe my religion as deviant. It was such a traumatic situation for a child.[535]

Self-shaming becomes discernible in another narrative:

> My mother came to visit me at school one day. She was dressed in a traditional Kurdish outfit. I did not want to walk next to her so that people would not think she was my mom. As a child, I did not get the impression that being a Kurd was perceived as something positive.[536]

The narratives in Iraq resonates similar experiences. Although the post-2003 created opportunities for the Kurds to have their autonomous region, Kurds face tremendous challenges outside of the KRG, especially in places where they live side

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[532] Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman ed, *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (Hemel Hempstead, Harvester: Wheatsheaf, 1993), 133-134.

[533] Edward Said, "The Politics of Dispossession," 351.

[534] In the Turkish education system, *Religion and Moral Education* is a one-hour core class every student need to take 1st through 12th grade. It is offered every semester.

[535] Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013. Another participant explained: "The Turkish Republic is built on the tradition of denial of the other. This tradition is a continuation from the Young Turk movement. It is based on the ideology of the single. One nation, one state, one religion, one language. It does not allow for any multiplicities a space to live. Such state mentality is imposed upon the society. It is carried into the education system. The textbooks portrays Turkey as the land of the Turks. No other ethnicities are recognized." Interview with Education and Science Workers' Union Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[536] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.

by side with Arabs. "The interplay of identity and alienation"[537] can be observed in the social and political discourse in Iraq. Framed as a threat to Baghdad's territorial integrity, Kurds are reconstructed as the "other" against the Arab identity. "The Arab media labels Kurds as traitors. We are accused of breaking up the country and of having relations with Israel,"[538] a representative from the Kurdish Human Rights Institute in Erbil explained. Kurdish Yazidis (non-Muslim Zoroastrian Kurds) and Faylis (Shia Kurds)[539] are the particular targets of Sunni attacks. They are at the forefront of societal and political discrimination. Perhaps, the greatest victims of the Ba'athist Arabization campaign are the Fayli Kurds. In the beginning of 1970s, thousands of Faylis, most of whom resided in Baghdad, were deported to Iran based on the claim that "they were not Iraqi citizens."[540] The narratives of Yazidi identity perpetuate various modes of cultural otherness. Yazidis, for they are non-Muslim and Kurdish, fall outside of the Arab social discourse. Their representations revolve around terms such as "dirty,"[541] "unclean," and "filthy."[542] The words of a member of the Iraqi Kurdish Parliament convey the Yazidi social representations in its clearest

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[537] Edward Said, "The Politics of Dispossession," 351.

[538] Iraqi Kurds tend to be sympathetic to Israel. They look at the Israeli experience of creating their own homeland as an example of their own experiences and struggles. For an extended discussion, see David, Romano, "Does the Israeli Experience Offer Any Lessons to the Kurds?" *Rudaw*, July 10, 2014, accessed July 13, 2014, http://rudaw.net/english/opinion/10072014

[539] Yazidis live in northern Iraq and in Iran. Faylis are mostly found in Iranian Kurdistan and Baghdad.

[540] Many from the Goyan tribe of the northern regions were deported to Turkey based on similar claims. For more information on forced deportations, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Turkluk, Kurtluk, Alevilik," 44-46.

[541] The exact quotation is the following: "Yazidis are targeted because they are Kurdish and non-Muslim. They are viewed as dirty people, hence, not respected in society." Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

[542] The exact quotation is the following: "Sunni, Christian and Yazidi populations face problems in finding employment. People do not want to hire Yazidis because they are seen as dirty. They are unclean, do not take showers and Yazidi men don't cut their moustaches. People think of them as filthy." Interview with Iraqi Associated Press Journalist, June 2013.

fashion: "My sister does not allow us to buy fish at restaurants where Yazidi work because they are filthy."[543] "Yazidi children are called names and spat on in schools."[544]

Since Kurds are associated with being corrupt, backward, inferior, Kurdish is seen in public as "a filthy language."[545] It normalizes the use of "hate speech" and "bigoted language towards… Kurds" in public.[546] "I wish I could have been assimilated. I felt ashamed of speaking in Kurdish when I was in college. It was traumatic to speak in a language that you knew was not publicly appropriate," explained one Kurdish respondent from Turkey.[547] The respondent's mention of self-shame raises the issue of the ritualized discrimination that characterizes how the Kurdish language is socially seen. "When I go back to more metropolitan cities, such as Istanbul, I feel the societal pressure to not speak in Kurdish. Whenever I do, I face harassment. "Do not speak Kurdish. You are a citizen of the Turkish Republic. You must speak in Turkish," many react," another responded explicated.[548]

The narratives in Iraq on the use of Kurdish language resonate similar experiences. It must be noted that there are no legal limitations against speaking

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[543] Interview with Member of Iraqi Kurdish Parliament (Goran), June 2013.

[544] Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

[545] Interview with Human Rights Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013. The exact quote is: [when the respondent spoke Kurdish in Western cities, people reacted], "You cannot speak Kurdish, Kurdish is prohibited. Kurdish is a filthy language, you need to learn Turkish."

[546] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, Diyarbakir, May 2013. The exact quote is: "The hate speech is very common in Turkey and it is normalized at the societal level. The bigoted language discriminates against women, different sexual orientations, Kurds, Armenians and non-Muslims. This is the public mentality. A high-level bureaucrat can use a derogatory language to describe Alevis, Armenians and Kurds."

[547] Interview with Sarmasik, Association for the Alleviation of Poverty and Sustainable Development Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[548] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

Kurdish in public in Iraq. However, there are practical problems associated with the

Kurdish language outside of the KRG. A Fayli respondent from Baghdad explains:

> Socially, it is unacceptable to speak Kurdish in public places in Baghdad. "It is a shame to speak Kurdish in public," Arabs react. It is not a clear pressure. They are not putting a gun to our heads. But socially, it is not acceptable. If you do speak Kurdish, they [Arabs] bother you. They don't leave you alone.[549]

A representative from the Iraqi Kurdish Human Rights Institute further elaborates on

the challenges of speaking Kurdish in an Arab-dominated discourse:

> Although Kurdish is recognized as one of the official languages of the constitution, it is not being taught in Arab universities in Arab cities such as Baghdad. The Kurdish Department at Baghdad University was closed in February 2013. In Baghdad, the state media stopped broadcasting in Kurdish. The Arab Dijla Radio and Al-Sabah newspaper, also owned by the state, eliminated their Kurdish sections in 2011. Until now, speaking Kurdish is not allowed inside the Iraqi Parliament, although it is legally allowed. The policies of Saddam are continuing, the high level of social stigma against Kurds and Kurdish language are still prevalent in the Arab areas. The Arabization of the Kurdish language is still continuing. The majority of the Kurdish people inside Iraq and outside of Kurdistan cannot talk in Kurdish.[550]

According to Fanon, it is through the use of the colonizer's language that the

orient's representations become significant weapons of power: by keeping the orient

subservient to imperial rule, convincing people to internalize the colonizer's values,

speaking his language, and most importantly, viewing the world from his perspective.

"To speak means, to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology

of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the

weight of a civilization," Fanon said.[551] Speaking a language is more than mere

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[549] Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.
[550] Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.
[551] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press,

communication. In his thought, it actively reflects reality through the mirrors of the colonizer's mind. Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong's points on language are relevant here:

> Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world… Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, specific history, a specific relationship to the world.[552]

For Fanon, speaking French for a black person presupposes the fact that he or she is forced, persuaded, has accepted and internalized the collective consciousness of the French. In the Fanonian formation, a man, through the language, "possesses the world expressed and implied by that language."[553] Speaking about his personal experiences as a black man in France, Fanon points out the language used by strangers to refer to his identity: "dirty nigger" and "negro."[554] Similar to the relationship between the orient and the occident, the black man's identity is pitted against the white and constructed in oppositional terms; black "niggers" being associated with bad and evil and white "towel-heads" with good. In the Iraqi discourse, the Arab identity is pitted against the Kurd. "Islam inevitably romanticized the Arab preeminence with which Arab often regard themselves. It is based upon the idea of Arab superiority – Qur'an was delivered in Arabic. Such romanticism created

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1967), 17-18.

[552] Ngugi wa Thiong, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey Ltd.: 1986), 16.

[553] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* 18.

[554] ibid., 112-113.

a social imagery that situated the Iraqi identity in oppositional terms: Arabs and the "other."'"[555]

One point is fundamentally important in Fanon's understanding of the colonized person's identity. The black "negro" "epidermalizes" the values and knowledge produced by the colonizers, and his inferiority into his consciousness as truth. In his participation in the colonizer's world as a universal subject, he becomes the other, Fanon asserts. In his *Letter to the Resident Minister* (1956), Fanon's view on such colonial domination is apparent: "If psychiatry is the medical technique that aims to enable man no longer to be a stranger to his environment, I owe it to myself to affirm that the Arab, permanently an alien in his own country, lives in a state of absolute depersonalization. What is the status of Algeria? A systematized de-humanization."[556]

Frantz Fanon's theorization on the construction of the colonial subject (in terms of his/her race and class)[557] is essential for fathoming Kurdish violence — the rebel groups of PYD in Syria, PJAK in Iran and PKK in Turkey — in all of its complexity.[558] On the cultural level, the mentality of the public in these countries, according to Fanon, prefers the values and systems of their mass culture. Historical evidence demonstrates that Kurdish identity was systematically negated throughout Iraqi, Iranian and Turkish histories and reproduced through the state's national

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[555] Interview with BDP Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

[556] Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 53.

[557] Fanon was also largely inspired by Jean-Paul Sartre. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, trans. George Joseph Becker (New York: Schocken Books, 1948).

[558] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004).

identity. Kurds became "mountain Turks" or "mountain Persians." A variety of sources substantiate the impact of state policies on the perceptions of Kurdish people in society.[559] In the words of a young nurse from Izmir, Turkey, who considers herself apolitical: "Kurds are ungrateful dogs. They are all the same."[560] On the tragic death of the Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) deputy Sirri Sakik's son who committed suicide on September 16, 2012, the language used on Twitter clearly documents the public's sentiments against Kurds in Turkey. "Wishing him [Mr. Sakik] the same end," "Nice to start the day with wonderful news," "Laughed out loud," "Wishing his entire extended family would vanish soon."[561]

The binary between Arab nationalism and Kurdish alienation becomes apparent in a narrative. A representative from Kurdish Human Rights Institute in Erbil explains:

> I cannot visit Baghdad because I am scared that I would get killed. I serve as the director of a civil society organization, I am a journalist and I am a Kurd. Legally, I have not been discriminated against, but socially, I have been. They [the Arabs] say we are brothers, but in practice, we are not. There is a big difference between me and them. They see us as a minority, a dangerous one that want to separate from Iraq. They say we are a friend of Israel, and we work with the American forces. They don't accept the Kurds as a separate nation. They say the Kurdish tribes come from Arabic tribes. They say our territory is "north of Iraq" not "Kurdistan" region."[562]

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[559] Musa Anter, *Hatiralarim [My Memories]* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1999), 31-34; Tarık Ziya Ekinci, *Türkiye'nin Kürt Siyasetine Eleştirel Yaklaşımlar [A Critical Approach to Turkey's Kurdish Politics]* (Istanbul: Cem Publications, 2004), 94-97; and Hasan Cemal, *Kürtler [Kurds]* (Istanbul: Doğan Publications, 2003), 15-34.

[560] *Personal Interview.* Izmir, Turkey, Summer 2012.

[561] A list of Twitter messages could be located on Milliyet, a leading Turkish newspaper. Milliyet, "Evlat Acisi Bile Dinlemediler [They Didn't Even Care for the Loss of a Child]," September 16, 2012 accessed November 1, 2013, http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/evlat-acisi-bile-dinlemediler/gundem/gundemdetay/16.09.2012/1597001/default.htm

[562] Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

These comments cannot be representative of all sentiments against the Kurds. Albeit, they capture the essence of Kurdish alienation and their state of depersonalization in their own country, just like the Algerian Arabs, Fanon would reason. Power, he argues, is the ability to colonize an entire population and its mind through language.[563] The stories of what happens to those who think differently than the state create a public cultural discourse and regulate private identity. The historical experiences of Kurdish populations "subjected to state violence produce particular knowledges about the state within a culture of terror and fear."[564] Such culture "works as a reciprocating yet distorted mimesis as a colonial mirror which reflects back onto the colonialists the barbarity of their own social relations, but as imputed to the savage or evil figures they wish to colonize."[565] This ensures the colonial configurations of power. Let's consider the state discourse of Iraq under Saddam's Ba'athist rule in the words of a Kurdish Professor at Salahaddin University in Erbil:

> My brother was overrun and killed by a military vehicle. The government did nothing to apologize. My father was so upset that he did not even report his death. When the time came for my brother to complete his mandatory military service, soldiers came to our house asking for my brother. I replied to the officer in a way that he did not like. He took me back to the station. He said to me, "do you want me to slaughter you like a lamb now?" I knew that he could do that. That was our expectation of life.[566]

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[563] For Said, knowledge is power. By influencing the production of knowledge at the political or state level (the military, governing bodies) and at societal level affiliations (religious institutions, schools), orientalism becomes a part of the political-intellectual culture, and comes to operate in civil society "not through domination but… by consent." Edward Said, *Orientalism,* 12-13 & Richard L.W. Clarke, "Edward Said, Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient (1978).

[564] Onur Gunay, "Toward a Critique of Non-Violence," 175.

[565] ibid., 177.

[566] Interview with Professor at Salahaddin University in Erbil, June 2013.

The Kurdish historical experiences in Iraq resonate with the everyday experiences of the Kurds in Turkey and how their perceptions on the contemporary political discourse:

> Since 2009, many intellectuals have been detained for their membership of a terrorist group based on evidence from a warrantless wiretap. My wife is an attorney and I am a physician. Although we don't have any illegal connections, I used to be the president of a civil society organization. The other night, my doorbell rang at 5am. My wife and looked at each other in fear. "The police is here. They are going to take us in," we thought. There was an elderly woman at the door, asking for medical help for her husband who fell unconscious. I am a doctor and the first thing that came to my mind when I heard my doorbell rang at 5am was "the police is here," not "there is a medical emergency." That is my perception.[567]

The Kurdish narratives from Turkey also exhibit state violence in its purest forms, including physical and psychological torture. "Sakine Cansiz, also known as the Kurdish Rosa Luxemburg, is one of the female founders of the PKK. While she was detained in the Diyarbakir Prison, she was tortured by physical pain – both of her nipples were cut off."[568] The state created a public discourse of fear and legitimized its violence based on the preservation of the "singular Turkish ethnicity," and sustained by "the politics of physical and social assimilation of other ethnicities."[569] An Education and Science Workers' Union representative gives chilling details about such discourse:

> I was detained on September 12, 1980 and tortured by starvation and sleep deprivation for 44 days. The police would ask us "How many K's do you have?" First, we were surprised, then we understood what they meant. K stood for three things: Kurdish, Komunist (communist) and Kizilbas

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[567] Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[568] Sakine Cansiz was murdered in Paris, along with two other female Kurdish activities, on January 10, 2013. Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[569] The exact quote is: "The Turkish ethnicity is singular and based on the politics of physical and social assimilation of other ethnicities." Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

(Redhead, a derogatory term for Alevi). "If you are only Kurdish, we can negotiate. But if you have more than 2 K's, you will always be in trouble," the police said. Then we would be tortured based on how many K's we had.[570]

I met with a BDP representative at a public café in Diyarbakir for an interview. Because of his leg, he could not sit at a table. We requested one of the rooms where he could sit down on the floor and stretch out his leg. He explained:

> I was incarcerated twice because I am Kurdish and I am politically active. I was convicted on terrorism charges based on my personal telephone conversations with a friend that the government discovered through wiretapping. I was asking a friend to bring me *cheese* from Hakkari [a predominantly Kurdish city in the southeastern corner of Turkey that is famous for its cheese]. It was argued in court that *cheese* was a code name. I spent 10 months in prison because of *cheese*. Prior to that, I had spent 12 years in prison for similar reasons. I faced physical torture for 35 days. That's why I am limping.[571]

On the economic level, socioeconomic marginalization has long characterized the condition of the Kurdish regions in Turkey, Iran, and, until recently, Iraq. The modernization of these states has given rise to a new pattern of dependence between them and their Kurdish populations and to new socioeconomic imbalances in Kurdish areas. In the case of Turkey, there are significant economic divisions between the Kurdish east and Turkish west. According to the findings of the 2012 GABBB report, the 21 Kurdish cities located in the eastern and southeastern parts are socio-economically the least developed in the country. More than half of the population lives under the national poverty line.[572] All of the interview participants

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[570] Interview with Education and Science Workers' Union Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[571] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[572] Guneydogu Anadolu Bolgesi Belediyeler Birligi (GABBB) [Association of the Southeastern Anatolian Region Municipatilities], "GABBB Research Findings," 5.

from Turkey drew a parallel between the underdevelopment of the Kurdish cities and their ethnic composition. The Kurdish narratives on the issue of socio-economic marginalization echoed one another: The state economic policies created "deliberate socio-economic disparities between the eastern and non-eastern regions of the country" as a part of an ideological canon.[573] Such discourse found more clarity in its meaning in another narrative:

> When the possibility arose to build a university in eastern Turkey in 1957, three cities were presented as an option: Van, Erzurum and Diyarbakir. Although Diyarbakir was initially picked, it was later dropped due to a presidential veto. "We cannot handle *their* illiterate ones, how could handle *their* educated ones?" President Cemal Gurses reasoned.[574]

Defining itself as a victim of PKK terrorist activities, the state legitimated its use of violence through the interplay of national security. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, thousands of Kurdish villages were destroyed, and an estimated 3.5 million Kurds were displaced from their homes.[575] "The Kurdish habitat was abolished, its eco-system was damaged and thousands of agricultural workers were forced to migrate to metropolitan cities. In the western Turkish capitalist markets, Kurds found themselves subjected to economic assimilation as a cheap source of labor, and to

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[573] 9 out of 10 respondents said that the Turkish state economic policies display clear signs of "deliberate economic discrimination against the Kurdish regions." Only one respondent partially agreed with this statement. He added: "Without a doubt, when we analyze the state politics towards Kurds since the genesis of the Turkish Republic, it is possible to say that the state has pursued a policy based on negative discrimination. However, we cannot explain the state economic and social policies towards the Kurdish regions solely based on Kurdish ethnicity. Other variables, such as the geographic conditions, the socio-cultural structure of the Kurdish society and its feudal nature, must be taken into account." Interview with Professor, Dicle University, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[574] Interview with Professor, Dicle University, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[575] Kurdish Human Rights Project, "Internal Displacement in Turkey," 2010.

ethnic assimilation as the "other.""[576] A Kurdish politician from Diyarbakir explained:

> I spent 13 years in prison in the western parts of Turkey. Based on my personal observation, 70% of the prison population is composed of Kurds. The only alternative to prison was either to be involved in illegal activities or become a source of cheap labor. That was the only economic alternative for most Kurds.[577]

Looking at the pathways of socio-economic discourses that determined the Kurdish position in Turkey and Iraq, what becomes conspicuous are the economic politics pursued through the discourse of Arab supremacy. A Professor at Salahaddin University of Erbil explains:

> Kurds have never been seen as the equal citizens of Iraq. There is not a single Kurd who has not experienced discrimination, oppression and persecution. I lost my job as a civil servant because I used to serve as a Kurdish peshmerga. Anfal campaigns are the clearest example of the government politics. The Arab-Kurdish relationship under the Ba'ath regime was tense.[578]

Saddam's regime created a culture of terror through structural violence. Massacres, genocide, torture and racism characterized the foundational elements of the Ba'ath regime. The annihilation of 180,000 people, displacement of 1.5 million people, the use of chemical weapons, and the destruction of thousands of villages, 1,754 schools, 270 hospitals, 2,450 mosques and 27 churches were justified through

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[576] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[577] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[578] Interview with Professor, Salahaddin University, Erbil, June 2013. The respondent also added, "undoubtedly, there were people who became instruments of such policies. But we cannot really talk about direct Arab hatred towards Kurds. The root cause was the state." More will be said on this in the following chapter.

the interplay of national security.[579] "They betrayed our country," Saddam proclaimed to legitimize his genocidal acts.[580] The everyday experiences occupy a significant place in the collective Kurdish memories. "There is a kind of a hate relationship between the Arabs and Kurds for the past 80 years. They attacked and killed us. It is not easy for us to repair our relationship with them," a professor at Salahaddin University in Erbil explained. Another described the contemporary condition of the Kurdish populations in Iraq:

> The Maliki administration is a continuation of the Saddam's regime; the system is the same, the mentality remains unchanged. It is based on the politics of Arab nationalism. Kurds have been able to speak their own language in their own television channels, schools and in public. But Arabs are allergic to Kurdish. They would prohibit its use, if they were given a chance. But KRG has an autonomous status, there are various Kurdish universities (University of Duhok, University of Salahaddin and University of Suleimani), and Kurdish is taught in public schools from the 1st grade through 12th grade. Hence, people do not feel such pressure in Kurdistan. They do feel repressed outside, in places where they live with Arabs, particularly in Baghdad.[581]

Although the socio-economic Kurdish issues in Iraq are more about lack of transparency, accountability and issues of good governance, as discussed in Chapter 2, there is a foundational binary element between the discourse that determines the Kurdish position and "Arab chauvinism."[582] Kurds are entitled to receive 17% of the

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[579] Mohammad H. Tofiq, *A Brief On: Anfal as Kurdish Genocide and Its Similarity to the Holocaust*, (Erbil: Margaret Center, 2014), 12-13. A copy of this book was obtained at the International Association of Genocide Scholars Conference on July 16-19, 2014 in Winnipeg, Canada.

[580] Quil Lawrence, "Invisible Nation," 31.

[581] Interview with BDP Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

[582] Interview with Professor, Salahaddin University, Erbil, June 2013. The exact quote is: "There is a very strong Arab chauvinism in the country, which stems from the assumption that Islam places a level of superiority over them. Arabs look down upon people."

federal budget based on the Iraqi constitution. With the exception of one narrative,[583] all of the respondents in Iraq complained that the KRG is given less than what was legally promised.[584] Article 109 of the Iraqi constitution demands that Baghdad distribute "oil and gas revenues in a fair manner in proportion to the population distribution in all parts of the country."[585] Many of the narratives questioned the equitable distribution of these revenues. There has not been a consensus since 1980s, "Baghdad overestimates the Arab population by enlisting Yazidis and Faylis as Arabs," a Goran Representative complained.[586]

If Fanon were to assess the alarming ethnic discrimination in Iraq and Turkey in terms of their socio-economic discourses, he would probably point to the reconfigurations of colonialism, and argue that the emergence of the Kurdish rebel groups in both states came as a critique of this "narrow-minded nationalism."[587] In the Fanonian sense, nationalism (whether Arab or Turkish) represents a disenchantment with the hegemonic ideology that deprives Kurds of their basic rights,[588] and explains the origins of the outbreaks of violence between people with

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[583] The respondent said, "The Baghdad government exaggerates the population of Arabs, and minimizes the Kurdish population to reduce the part of the budget Kurds receive. I cannot say that this is true or not." Interview with Representative/Journalist, Kurdish Human Rights Institute, Erbil, June 2013.

[584] After the KRG exported one million barrels of crude oil to Turkey, after signing a new energy partnership with Turkey in April 2014, despite Maliki's outcries, Baghdad cut off the Kurd's share of the budget. David Romano, "Mosul and the Failure of American Policy Towards Iraq," Rudaw, June 6, 2014, accessed July 15, 2014, http://rudaw.net/english/opinion/12062014

[585] Full text of Iraqi constitution, Washington Post, accessed July 15, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/10/12/AR2005101201450.html

[586] Interview with Goran (Movement for Change) Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

[587] "If nationalism is not explained, enriched and deepened, if it does not very quickly turn into a social and political consciousness, into humanism, then it leads to a dead-end." Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* 144.

[588] This is based on the presupposition that Fanon agrees that education, health and literacy are basic rights.

the same homeland.[589] Through violence, Fanon believed, populations become a part of a national experience of decolonization. For Kurdish populations, it is to reclaim their history, cultural identity and existence in the Turkish, Arab, and Persian discourses.

"Decolonizing," according to Fanon, "is always a violent phenomenon."[590] Only violent insurrection can end the dichotomy in society that categorizes its subjects either black or white.[591] Only "absolute violence"[592] can create a new national identity constructed not by the norms of European powers, but by the pre-colonial indigenous community, because "colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence."[593] Fanon's descriptions of Algeria and the French response, including torture, insurgency, violence and cultural genocide, directly resemble the workings of present-day Turkey, Iraq and Iran. This is why ordinary people from unremarkable backgrounds would leave their homes and loved ones behind and run to the mountains to fight for guerilla movements.[594]

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[589] The imposed state-bans on Newroz celebrations in Turkey, Iraq and Syria can serve as an important example in illustrating the oppressive state policies. Newroz is the celebration takes places on March 21st every year. It is a widely celebrated spring festival in agrarian societies of Ancient Mesopotamia. For a detailed account of Newroz, see "The Iranian New Year Norooz," The Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies, accessed September 13, 2013, and E. Yarshater, "Nowruz: The Iranian New Year," *Iranian Embassy Website,* accessed September 13, 2013.

[590] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 35.

[591] ibid., 45-46.

[592] ibid., 37.

[593] ibid., 61.

[594] Summit Ganguly, "Explaining the Kashmir Insurgency: Political Mobilization and Institutional Decay," *International Security* 21 no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 76-107 & Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1951* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 235.

5.2 The Kurdish Myths

Having examined the role of myths in constructing the Kurd Industry (how the Kurds are socially and politically seen), the section analyzes the constructs and representations in the scholarship and reporting on Kurdish issues. The purpose here is to examine these claims, or what I call the Kurdish myths, by linking them with the theoretical orientations of the culture industry. It is important to note that these claims do not necessarily contain all of the myths discussed below, but they do contain some of them. The myths will help identify three key problem areas and concepts of Kurdish politics. Since this dissertation seeks to bridge theory with praxis, each of these problem areas will be evaluated and examined within the multi-dimensional context of study based on the available literature.[595]

The most important claim constructed by neoconservatives in the West and nationalists in Iran, Iraq and Turkey is the following: Creating an independent Kurdistan would threaten the territorial integrity of the pre-existing states, and create national, transnational, or regional conflict. Let us analyze this claim, and examine the concept of the Kurd Industry through the values, ideas and beliefs of a system that dominates the human rights discourse in the international system in the twenty-first century. The link between the geographic, economic, and political struggle between the Kurds and the politics of their "host" states offers an explanation of the Kurd Industry and its myths.

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[595] To avoid repetition, the literature used and examined for the purposes of this study is provided under the methodology section. There the reader can view the types of primary and secondary sources used in this research.

5.2.1 Myth One: The Kurdish Movement is an International Security Concern

This first claim of the Kurd Industry reflects the neoconservative belief in territorial stability as the normative foundation for the international order. This perspective is intertwined with the legal notion of territorial integrity, equal sovereignty and preservation of existing boundaries as embodied in the UN Charter. The claim to be made here is on the ethical choices of American foreign policy.

The vital function of territorial preservation is derived from the norm that under international law, states should refrain from providing support for secession in other states.[596] This presupposes the principle of equal sovereignty, that states have comparable power within their borders. For Michael Walzer, territorial integrity and sovereignty are essential as the rights of political communities. Violation of these rights in any state is considered to be aggression.[597] The UN normative documents helped to determine this moral climate of international relations. According to Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, "the norm of sovereignty-as-territorial integrity" became widely accepted through the UN's "resolutions, monitoring devices, com-missions, and one famous peacekeeping episode in the Congo in the 1960s."[598] The language used in UN accounts made it clear that ethnic groups were not given any legal rights to declare independence, asserting that "any attempt aimed

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[596] For a larger discussion on the territorial integrity as an international norm, see Mark W. Zacher, "The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force," *International Organization* 55 no. 2 (Spring 2001): 215-250.

[597] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations,* second edition (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 52-53.

[598] Michael N. Barnett & Martha Finnemore, "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations," *International Organization* 53, no. 4 (1999):699–732.

at the partial or total disruption of the national unity or territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."[599]

However, following the terrifying experiences of the twentieth century with ethnic, religious and political persecution and the genocide of over 60 million people, the UN called for humanitarian intervention "to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them in the progressive development of their free political institutions, according to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and their varying stages of advancement."[600] This was followed by the Helsinki Final Act: "Frontiers can [only] be changed, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement."[601] The principle of territorial integrity acquired a "morally progressive interpretation."[602]

There is a second and more nuanced issue with the concept of sovereignty – the abuse of power. There are plenty of examples in history of states deliberately pursuing policies of political oppression or even ethnic or religious cleansing. Leo Kuper's work, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* provides a way for us to understand the link between sovereignty and the political use of genocide. For Kuper, when it is coupled with other conditions, such as ethnic diversity, wide economic disparities and state ideology to create a homogenous society, state

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[599] United Nation General Assembly Resolution 1514, "Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," 1960.
[600] United Nations Charter, *Chapter XI, Article 73b.*
[601] The Helsinki Final Act, *Article 1.a.3.*
[602] A. Buchanan, "Theories of Secession," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 26 no. 1 (1997): 31–61.

sovereignty may generate "both the desire and the power to commit genocide."[603] Theorists such as Roger Smith and Helen Fein stretch Kuper's point as far as suggesting that genocide is a deliberate instrument of the processes of modern nation-state building. In their views, it is designed to pin down the new order.[604] The argument on the modern practices of nation building is another discussion topic, and will be examined extensively in *Chapter 6, Framing the Kurdish Experience in the Middle East.* Let us turn back to our discussion on the ethical dilemmas of American foreign policy.

There are salient parallels in U.S. foreign policy before and after 9/11. An analysis of former presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush's public speeches provides evidence that American foreign policy was based on a discourse of "vital interests" and "territorial integrity." In his first inaugural address, Clinton told his audience, "When our vital interests are challenged or the will and conscience of the international community is defied, we will act, with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary."[605] From the matrix of Derrida's thoughts, vital interests in Clinton's foreign policy meant "ensuring uninhibited access to key markets, energy supplies, and strategic resources, along with anything that might be considered a vital interest by a 'domestic jurisdiction'."[606] Such

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[603] Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 50.

[604] Roger Smith, "Human Destructiveness and Politics: The Twentieth Century as an Age of Genocide," in *Genocide and the Modern Age,* ed. I. Wallimann & M. Dobkowski (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987) & Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide* (New York: Free Press, 1979).

[605] The American Presidency Project, *William J. Clinton Inaugural Address*, January 20, 1993, accessed November 1, 2012, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=46366

[606] Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 103.

"sovereign unilaterality" would also denote the violation of the principle of equal sovereignty, which the UN embraces and cherishes as a symbol of democracy. Then is sovereign unilaterality an indirect attack on democracy? According to Blumenthal, Clinton's "new internationalist foreign policy" reflected the neoconservative principles of internationalism and hegemony. It accentuated the US as "the indispensable nation" and its crucial role in the Middle East for "re-establish[ing] collective security for a new age of globalization and interdependence," he contended.[607]

The transition from Clinton's to Bush's administration post-9/11 demonstrates similar policies captured in analogous rhetoric. As Michael Lind revealed in *Made in Texas*, "in his first year, Bush canceled more international treaties than any other president in American history."[608] The argument was usually the same. Highlighting vital interests and the necessity for unilateral action, many international agreements, including the Kyoto Protocol, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Small Arms Treaty, and the International Criminal Court, were terminated

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[607] Sidney Blumenthal, *The Clinton Wars* (New York: Plume Books, 2003): 789 & Stuart Elden, Blair, *Conservatism and Territorial Integrity*, 43. Barack Obama's West Point commencement address in May 2014 recently laid out the new American foreign policy post-Iraq and Afghanistan: "But to say that we have an interest in pursuing peace and freedom beyond our borders is not to say that every problem has a military solution." Obama's speech highlights a clear shift in American foreign policy. Underlying the necessity of cooperation, Obama emphasized acting in "partnerships" and with "allies." For instance, he has a new plan for a $5 billion "global anti-terrorism fund" to fight terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa. Although Obama's foreign policy seems to be a drastic change from that of the Bush administration, it still echoes similar sentiments when it comes to defending America's "vital interests." For Obama, the possibility of using unilateral force is a viable option "when our core interests demand it – when our people are threatened; when our livelihood is at stake; or when the security of our allies is in danger." Barack Obama, West Point Comment Speech, *Foreign Policy,* May 28, 2014, accessed June 4, 2014, http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2014/05/28/watch_now_president_obama_at_west_point

[608] Michael Lind, *Made in Texas: George W. Bush and the Southern Takeover of American Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 135.

on grounds that they would "hamstring" American military operations, and undermine its sovereignty.[609] The same rhetoric also dictated the American foreign policy governing Kurdish issues.

The Project for the New American Century report in 2000 implicitly conveys that the purpose of American foreign policy is to maintain a military presence, secure geostrategic leadership and preserve the peace at home.[610] The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon's 2012 speech made clear statements regarding American foreign policy in Syria:

> I think the U.S. can be clear on several things regarding the Kurds. When we say that the Syrian opposition needs to be inclusive, it is to give a voice to all of the groups in Syria, and that includes Kurds… But we don't see an autonomous Kurdish area or territory…We don't support any movement towards autonomy or separatism. We are very clear about that.[611]

Obama administration displays similar policies captured in different rhetoric. Like Clinton, Obama fits the same American exceptionalism mold – pushing democracy throughout the world in the name of international stability. Obama's political discourse is based on "restoration and renewal that would turn the myth of exceptionalism into a certification of democratic aspirations, and democracy into a vehicle for pursuing the American dream."[612] In terms of the American position on

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[609] ibid.

[610] Project for the New American Century, *2000 Report on Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century,* accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf

[611] Cansu Camlibel, "No US Nod to Kurdish Rule," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 31, 2012, accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/no-us-nod-on-kurdish-rule.aspx?pageID=238&nID=26718&NewsCatID=359

[612] Robert L. Ivie and Oscar Giner, "American Exceptionalism in a Democratic Idiom: Transacting the Mythos of Change in the 2008 Presidential Campaign," *Communication Studies* 60, no. 4 (September 2009): 359-375.

Kurds, the U.S. foreign policy is firm on not supporting autonomy or separatism. This was clearly expressed in President Obama's June 2014 speech on the current Iraq crisis:

> Above all, Iraqi leaders must rise above their differences and come together around a political plan for Iraq's future. Shia, Sunni, Kurds, all Iraqis must have confidence that they can advance their interests and aspirations through the political process rather than through violence. National unity meetings have to go forward to build consensus across Iraq's different communities. Now that the results of Iraq's recent election has been certified, a new parliament should convene as soon as possible.[613]

Maliki's regime has destabilized Iraqi society, and further widened the sectarian divisions between Sunnis, Kurds and Shia. However, until ISIS made significant advances inside of Iraq in June 2014, the Obama administration supported the Maliki government against any other option. A united Iraq, though authoritarian, was more preferable for the American foreign policy. According to this perspective, the Kurdish secessionist movements in Iran, Turkey, Syria, and until recently, Iraq, jeopardize the territorial integrity of their host states. (There is a particular divergence from this position in the American policy, which will be discussed below). This is a consequence of the previous historical experiences with nationalist-driven Kurdish movements, particularly the PJAK in Iran, the PKK in Turkey, and most recently, the PYD in Syria. From Ankara's perspective, the PJAK is an "offshoot of the PKK," and shares "allegiances to its leader, Abdullah Ocalan."[614] Michael M. Gunter, a

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[613] Barack H. Obama, "The Crisis in Iraq," Washington D.C., June 19, 2014, *Washington Post*, accessed June 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/transcript-obamas-june-19-statement-on-iraq/2014/06/19/91380028-f7cc-11e3-a3a5-42be35962a52_story.html

[614] Richard A. Oppel Jr., "In Iraq, Conflict Summers on a 2nd Kurdish Front," *New York Times*, October 23, 2007, accessed November 1, 2013 http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/23/world/middleeast/23kurds.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

prominent figure in Kurdish studies, writes that the PJAK, during its transformation from a peaceful student organization into an armed rebel group, was inspired by the PKK.[615] What is interesting here is that the U.S. Department of State's list of foreign terrorist organizations records the PKK as a "terrorist organization" while the same list does not include the PJAK.[616] Based on Seymour Hersch's article in *The New Yorker,* PJAK "has been reported to be covertly supported by the U.S. and to be operating against Iran from bases in northern Iraq" since 2005.[617]

The paradoxical labeling of the PKK and PJAK can be explained by Michael Gunter's "good Kurd-bad Kurd" dichotomy in U.S. foreign policy. The origins of U.S. involvement with the Kurds dates back to President Woodrow Wilson and his concerns for the autonomy of the multiple ethnicities under the new Turkish Republic.[618] After Britain's acquisition of the oil-rich Kurdish regions of Mosul and Kirkuk, Washington conceded its policy against possible Kurdish independence for the sake of regional stability. Quickly afterwards, it was drawn into an isolationist position until the tragedy of World War II. In the aftermath of the war, the "bad Kurds" image was conceived in the eyes of the policymakers. The Cold War underlined Turkey's vital position as a key American ally in the Middle East, and an

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[615] Michael M. Gunter, *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds (Historical Dictionaries of People and Cultures, no. 8)* (Lanham, Toronto, Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2011),178.

[616] See U.S. Department of State Website, *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, September 28, 2012 accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm

[617] Seymour M. Hersh, "Annals of National Security: Preparing the Battlefield," *The New Yorker,* July 7, 2008, accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/07/07/080707fa_fact_hersh

[618] According to Gunter, there are five stages in the U.S. foreign policy concerning Kurds. This constitutes the first stage. See Michael M. Gunter, "The Five Stages of American Foreign Policy Towards the Kurds," *Insight Turkey* 13 no. 20 (2011): 93-106, accessed June 4, 2014, http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight-turkey_vol_13_no_2_-2011_gunter.pdf

early ally in containing Soviet expansion in the region. Rationally, the U.S. supported the Turkish position on Kurdish issues, and looked the other way when the state denied the rights of the country's many ethnicities, displaced thousands of Kurds from their homes and ignored the military coups. A stable authoritarian Turkey, from the American perspective, would be more beneficial for U.S. interests than an unpredictable independent Kurdish state. Therefore, any support for Kurdish rights would undermine American self-interests. The Kurds who supported the PKK and its cause became "bad Kurds" according to American foreign policy.

Similarly, throughout the 1980s, the American position was oriented towards supporting the authoritarian, yet, stable Baghdad regime. Iraq, during those years, served as an important actor for the region's stability and a vital bulwark against Ayatollah's regime in neighboring Iran. Citing Iraq's territorial integrity, the Reagan administration did nothing to stop the massacres of Halabja in 1988 or politically pressure Saddam after the atrocious chemical attacks, which claimed the lives of more than 30,000 Kurds. Instead, the administration, backed by the National Security Advisor Colin Powell and Dick Cheney, blocked a bill that the U.S. Senate passed unanimously on September 8, 1988.[619] *The Prevention of Genocide Act of 1988* aimed at cutting all military and economic aid to Iraq, and stopping all import of oil and petroleum products from Iraq. The House never passed the bill; it was ultimately defeated. Even though the Article 2.13 of the bill confirmed that Iraq's campaign

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[619] Even though the bill was passed by the U.S. Senate, it was never passed by the House of Representatives. For more information, The Prevention of Genocide Act of 1988, GovTrack, The U.S. Congress and Federal Legislation, Website, accessed June 4, 2014, https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/100/s2763#

against Kurdish people constituted "an act of genocide," and it became clear that Saddam's regime was pursuing the production of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons as used against the Kurds, the U.S. financing of Iraq continued. America's support signified a coordinated plan. The National Security Directive 26 (1989) clarifies the rationale behind this plan: "access to Persian Gulf oil and the security of key friendly states in the area are vital to U.S. national security," and friendly relations between the U.S. and Iraq "would serve our longer term interests and promote stability in both the Gulf and the Middle East."[620] The duplicity of the U.S. foreign policy became even more palpable after Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, after which the image of the Iraqi Kurds quickly shifted from "victims" to "strategic allies." The Kurds, against Saddam's aggression, became "good Kurds" for the U.S. foreign policy. "Good Kurds" in the post-2003 Iraq continue to be a vital American ally in the region; the relations between Washington and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) have been stable.

America's "good Kurd/bad Kurd" dichotomy in its foreign policy shows the neoconservative concern for territorial stability in the Middle East to maintain U.S. national security and other vital interests in the region. America's scheming policies towards the Kurds follow an awful duality. They frame the Kurdish movement in Iraq as a movement of democracy while constructing the Kurdish populations in Turkey, who have suffered under comparable socio-economic and political

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[620] The National Security Directive 26, White House, Washington D.C., October 2, 1989, Website, accessed June 4, 2014, http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsd/nsd26.pdf & Manfred Weissenbacher, *Sources of Power: How Energy Forges Human History, Volume 1 and Volume 2* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009), 601.

grievances, as a national security issue. In the words of Kani Xulam, the founder of

the American Kurdish Information Network (AKIN):

> America's policy towards the Kurds of Iraq is not related to America's policy towards the Kurds of Turkey. The latter policy is driven by America's policy towards Turkey…The United States has looked at the Kurds through Baghdad and Ankara and not through Erbil and Diyarbakir [the Kurdish regions in Iraq and Turkey.][621]

To clarify the American foreign policy on the situation of Iraqi Kurdistan,

let's consider a headline by *Time*: "After bin Laden, al-Qaeda in Iraq Looks for a

Leader." The piece describes the security situation in Iraq as being in a dire position

based on the possibility of al-Qaeda "carrying out… revenge attacks for the death of

bin Laden." It also points out to the fact that "with all the added support they [al-

Qaeda] have now, they will be able to."[622] A *Los Angeles Times* headline, "Al Qaeda

in Iraq Threatens Attacks in U.S." calls attention to the al-Qaeda "threat" against

American security.[623] A *New York Times* headline, "Syrian War's Spillover Threatens

a Fragile Iraq" denotes the necessity of American presence in the country due to its

"vulnerable" situation.[624] All three headlines share a commonality, which reflects the

essence of American policy – their dominant effort is to portray the conditions in Iraq

as "vulnerable and "fragile," necessitating U.S. presence in the country.

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[621] Reina Saiki, "A Study of US Policy Towards Kurds of Iraq and Turkey," *Rudaw*, April 22, 2012, accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/editorial/4662.html

[622] Nizar Latif and Sarah Prince, "After bin Laden, al-Qaeda in Iraq Looks for a Leader," *Time,* May 15, 2011, accessed November 12, 2013, http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2071081,00.html

[623] Brian Bennett, "Al Qaeda in Iraq Threatens Attacks in U.S.," *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 2012, accessed November 10, 2013, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jul/25/nation/la-na-qaeda-us-20120726

[624] Tim Arango, "Syrian War's Spillover Threatens a Fragile Iraq," *New York Times,* September 24, 2012, accessed November 14, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/25/world/middleeast/iraq-faces-new-perils-from-syrias-civil-war.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

The American goal has been to "leave behind a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq, with a representative government that was elected by its people."[625] This way, "terrorists who threaten America will have no safe haven," and Iraq can be a partner of America in the Middle East.[626] A lack of good governance and its fragmented society, coupled with sectarian conflict, has created favorable conditions for the growth and expansion of ISIS in many parts of Iraq. Iraq is disintegrating. A Sunni jihadist armed group 15 times smaller than the Iraqi military forces has been able to capture the country's second largest city and largest oil refinery. The US has already lost 4,484 military personnel and spent $823.2 billion since 2003.[627] Leaving a stable Iraq behind, for Washington, ultimately means balancing the country's Shia power with the Kurdish and Sunni populations in Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq, and curbing the drift towards Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's authoritarian rule. The Obama administration is worried that Mr. Maliki, a Shia, "oversteps the Iraqi constitution by bypassing the formal military chain of command," and jeopardizes Iraq's chances of having an inclusive government.[628] Therefore, an independent Kurdistan would have significant implications for Iraq's internal power dynamics.

Furthermore, a possible Kurdish-Sunni-Shia split in Iraq would upset the regional balance. Such a divide would jeopardize the security and the stability of

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[625] President Barack Obama Iraq Speech, December 11, 2011, accessed November 11, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-16191394
[626] ibid.
[627] Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11," *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress*, September 2, 2010, accessed November 12, 2013, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl33110.pdf
[628] Michael R. Gordon, "In U.S. Exit From Iraq, Failed Efforts and Challenges," *New York Times*, September 22, 2012, accessed November 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/23/world/middleeast/failed-efforts-of-americas-last-months-in-iraq.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

natural resources in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Consider this: a Kurdish rupture in the North and a Shia rupture in the South would create three territorial divisions in Iraq. It would place Mosul and Kirkuk, along with their oil reserves and energy resources, under Kurdish control. Basra, with its immense petroleum reserves and Shia-dominated population, would likely fall under Iranian control.[629] The Iraqi Shia population united under the foreseeable Iranian dominance would also mean Iran coming in direct territorial contact with Saudi Arabia. (They are currently separated by about 150 miles of Gulf waters). Aside from what Michael Rubin calls the "hate-hate relationship"[630] between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this may offer a tremendous opportunity for the Shia populations in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries to organize for contentious politics or even create what Uslu suggests a "Shia Spring."[631]

As clearly seen, the Kurdish movement in Iraq, for American foreign policy, is not about granting a nation their right to self-determination, but rather about political realism, calculating national security politics and self-interest. "The biggest obstacle against an independent [Iraqi] Kurdistan is the United States of America," said Emre Uslu.[632] In the words of Edward Said, one of the most "ominous

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[629] Dow Jones Newswires indeed confirms the vitality of the northern Iraqi gas for the European marketplace as an alternative to reduce the region's dependence on Russian gas. Iraq Business News, *Nabucco Could Still Use Iraqi Gas,* February 25, 2012, accessed November 10, 2013, http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2012/02/25/nabucco-could-still-use-iraqi-gas/

[630] Michael Rubin, "Iran and Saudi Arabia's 'Hate-Hate' Relationship," *CNN*, October 11, 2012, accessed November 10, 2013, http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2011/10/11/iran-and-saudi-arabias-hate-hate-relationship/

[631] Emre Uslu, "The Biggest Obstacle."

[632] Emre Uslu, "Bağımsız Kürdistan'ın önündeki En Büyük Engel Amerika [The Biggest Obstacle Against an Independent Kurdistan is America]," *Taraf*, April 28, 2012, accessed November 10, 2013, http://www.taraf.com.tr/emre-uslu/makale-bagimsiz-kurdistan-in-onundeki-en-buyuk-engel.htm

developments in the Middle East" is the "rise of a public policy consisting of the traditional realpolitik but incorporating the terminology of a liberal mutual interest, respect, and assistance platform against extremism and disorder."[633] Just like the Palestinian movement, the American foreign policy regarding the Kurds weighs the implications of their issues against international instability. However, it must be remembered that the U.S. has acquired its power through a belief in its own moral righteousness. What is now needed is a cosmopolitan foreign policy – a foreign policy that remains faithful to republican democratic ideals and trustful of the belief in the universality of human rights; a policy that uses the efficacy of American power to respect the dignity of the other as an end.

5.2.2 Myth Two: The Kurdish Movement is a National Security Concern

The second myth is on the reduction of the Kurdish movement as a national security issue in Iran and Turkey. The efficacy of American foreign policy is revealed in the triumph of the internationalization of the Kurdish issue as a security issue, as opposed to an organic movement of popular sovereignty.[634] The underlying problem here is the normative theorizing effort in the historical reading of Kurdish history: decontextualization and dehistoricization – the origins of the Kurdish struggle in which state and international actors understand historical contexts. In order to analyze this process, we must first grasp the role of the state (Iran and Turkey) and their media in reducing the Kurdish struggle to the PJAK and PKK as the

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[633] Edward W. Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 207.

[634] This is an argument made for the Palestinian movement by Said. See Edward Said, *The Politics of Dispossession*, 207-208.

interlocutors of the Kurdish movement.

Chapter 2 already provided extensive background information on the cultural and socioeconomic discrimination against the Kurds in Iran and Turkey. The literature on the Kurdish issues in these states generally analyzes it from the categorical lenses of "security" and "terrorism." The struggles between the PKK and Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) and PJAK and The Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (IRGC) have set the ground for an environment conducive for containing the Kurdish issue within the sole domain of national security. The Rudaw columnist, an Erbil-based Kurdish newspaper, Rebwar Wali, conveys a similar perspective and argues, "The war that PJAK and PKK have declared against Iran and Turkey will not harm those countries at all. On the contrary, these two countries have exploited it to their advantage. They have switched the Kurdish cause from a question of democracy to a question of violence and terrorism."[635] From Wali's perspective, the media campaign is an instrumental tool to nationalize the populations and bring out public anger. The media coverage of Kurdish issues in these countries is limited to covering stories of dead TSK/IRGC soldiers wrapped in the Turkish/Iranian flags, images of the mourning of their families or the number of civilians killed in their attacks. Perhaps the most eloquent expression of the myth that the Kurdish struggle is an agent of national conflict can be found in the headlines of *Tehran Times:* "IRGC Personnel Killed in Clash with PJAK terrorists."[636] "IRGC Company Commander

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[635] Rebwar Karim Wali, "Politics, Not Guns, Will Help Kurdish Cause," *Rudaw*, September 6, 2011, accessed November 2013, http://www.rudaw.net/english/science/columnists/3956.html

[636] Tehran Times, April 25, 2012, accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/97259-4-irgc-personnel-killed-in-clash-with-pjak-terrorists

Killed by PJAK Planted Mine."[637] "PJAK Has Killed 397 Innocent Iranians."[638] The

Turkish newspaper headlines have striking parallels: "How PKK Supports Burned a

Police Officer."[639] "PKK Burned Two Schools in Hakkari."[640] "They Burned Police

Cars."[641]

The Iranian journalist Kawe Qoraishy takes Wali's argument a step further:

"The executions and other crackdowns in Iran have set up a bind for the country's

Kurds, who increasingly fear that the price of political activism within Iran is death

or imprisonment."[642] Reporters, columnists and academics revealing human rights

abuses in both states have been arrested, jailed and sometimes prosecuted. The most

recent example of this is when Kaweh Ghassemi-Kermanshahi, a member of the

central committee of the Kurdistan Human Rights Organization in Iran, was arrested

after he spoke to the foreign media. During my visit at the Human Rights Association

(IHD) in Diyarbakir, Turkey, Raci Bilici, the President of the organization, portrayed

a very similar picture of the Kurdish situation in Turkey:

> The state tries to contain its human rights abuses by an intimidation campaign
> aimed at the press and the pro-Kurdish students, politicians, civil society
> organizations and even children. Muharrem Erbey, the preceding President of
> the IHD, was a human rights advocate and a lawyer. Now he has been in
> prison for three years. He is accused of membership of the KCK [the alleged
> political front for the PKK].[643]

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[637] Tehran Times, October 25, 2011, accessed November 1, 2013,
http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/3928-irgc-company-commander-killed-by-pjak-planted-mine

[638] Tehran Times, August 23, 2011, accessed November 1, 2012
http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/1897-pjak-has-killed-397-innocent-iranians-general-

[639] Milliyet, November 1, 2012, accessed November 1, 2013, http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/pkk-yandaslari-polisi-boyle-yakti/gundem/gundemdetay/01.11.2012/1620301/default.htm

[640] Milliyet, November 1, 2012, accessed November 1, 2013, http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/hakkari-de-pkk-iki-okulu-yakti/gundem/gundemdetay/01.11.2012/1620090/default.htm

[641] Milliyet, November 7, 2012, accessed November 9, 2013, http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/polis-araclarini-yaktilar/gundem/gundemdetay/07.11.2012/1623292/default.htm

[642] Kawe Qoraishy, "Iran's Kurdish Question," *Inside Iran*, May 18, 2010, accessed November 1, 2013, http://www.insideiran.org/news/irans-kurdish-question/

[643] Personal interview, Diyarbakir, Turkey, August 2012.

Turkey and Iran imprison more journalists than any other country in the world. 57 Turkish journalists and 42 Iranian journalists are currently incarcerated on the basis of national security and terrorism related charges.[644] Many intellectuals, writers, authors and newspaper columnists are reported to have quit their jobs due to government restrictions on freedom of speech, association and assembly.[645] Edward Said believed that imperial politics shapes the interaction between the orient and the occident. On the Palestinian movement, he wrote that terrorism has become a phenomenon in the Western public sphere to negate its identity.[646] This is no different than the negation of the Kurdish movement in Iran and Turkey. The media campaign in both places, reinforced by state intimidation tactics, has limited the public and political space for a meaningful discussion on Kurdish rights and reduced the Kurdish discourse to a pre-set political agenda. Consider his inquiry into the word terrorism:

> There *has been* terrorism, there has been cruel, insensate, shameful violence, yes, but who today can stand before us and say that violence is all, or even mainly, on the side of the labeled "terrorists," and virtue on the side of the civilized states who in many ways do tend in fact represent decency, democracy and a modicum of "the good"? ... There are a few ways to talk about terrorism now that are not corrupted by the propaganda war even of the

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[644] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), *Press Release,* July 29, 2010, accessed November 9, 2013, http://www.osce.org/fom/76374 & Constanze Letsche and Luke Harding, "Dozens of Kurdish journalists face terrorism charges in Turkey," *The Guardian*, September 11, 2012, accessed November 8, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/sep/10/kurdish-journalists-terrorism-charges-turkey; Human Rights Watch, "You Can Detain Anyone for Anything: Iran's Broadening Clampdown on Independent Activisms," 20, no. 1(E) (January 2008), accessed May 15, 2014, http://hrw.org/reports/2008/iran0108/; Human Rights Watch, "Iran: Freedom of Expression and Association in the Kurdish Regions," January 2009, accessed May 16, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iran0109_web.pdf & The United Nations General Assembly Sixty-Sixth Session, "The Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran," 16.
[645] ibid.
[646] Edward Said, *The Politics of Dispossession*, 341-359.

past decade, ways that have become, in my opinion, disqualified as instruments for conducting rational, secular inquiry into the causes of human violence. Is there some other way of apprehending what might additionally be style of thought and language that pretends neither to get past the word's embroiled semantic history, not to restore it, cleansed and sparkling new, for further polemic use?[647]

Said's investigation of the root causes of Palestinian violence in all of its complexity offers incredible parallels to the causes of Kurdish violence, interlinked with the politics of negation and the alienation of their identity.[648] As mentioned in Chapter 2, in the Persian and Turkish national discourses, the existence of Kurds has been problematic for the state's national security. The politics of Kurdish issues has been predicated on the existential fear of possible Kurdish independence. Throughout their long history, therefore, Kurds have been treated not as a minority, but as a part of the Persian or Turkish nation. Their existence is legally recognized, albeit, they have not been given any special group rights. The language of the 1961 Constitution simply treats Kurds as "a part of the Turkish nation" (as opposed to "the nation of the Turkish Republic," a language with undertones of a more multi-ethnic and pluralistic society).[649] In fact, former Prime Minister Ismet Inonu, during an interview with a national newspaper, highlighted this political spirit: "only the Turkish nation is entitled to claim ethnic and national rights in this country. No other element has any such right."[650] At the matrix of Inonu's philosophy we can find

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[647] ibid, 341-349.

[648] Based on email correspondence with the Turkish Armed Forces, the PKK guerilla movement has killed 5,257 Turkish soldiers. Turk Silahli Kuvvetleri [Turkish Armed Forces], email correspondence, July 23, 2012. The 5,257 personnel were killed between 1984 and July 19, 2012.

[649] Sadik Balkan, Ahmet E. Uysal, and Kemal H. Karpat trans., *The Constitution of the Turkish Republic 1961*, Turk Anayasa Hukuku Sitesi [The Website of Turkish Constitutional Law], accessed September 19, 2013, http://www.anayasa.gen.tr/1961constitution-text.pdf

[650] Ceng Sagnic, "Mountain Turks: State ideology and the Kurds in Turkey," *Information, Society and*

Khomeini's Iran – in Islam, there is no place for minorities.[651] Subordinated as a "provincial identity," Iranian Kurds are the new face of "unrecognized religious minorities," for while they are defined as Muslims, they cannot be legally defined as a minority, like the Chaldean Christians, Zoroastrians, Jews or Armenian Christians.[652] They have no political representation, face high discrimination and have limited access to employment due to the Gozinesh Law.[653] It is important to understand that a dialectic relationship between politics and culture is constructed based on this legality that reduces Kurdishness to a group of people destined to be assimilated into the state's identity.

From Frantz Fanon's perspective, the hegemony of the state cannot be merely explained as the political domination of the Kurdish periphery. It is built on the Hegelian "master-slave" dialectic, Fanon would argue, wherein Kurds are separated from their individuality and culture. Offering his views on the reciprocal relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, Fanon explains:

> Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, that other will remain the theme of his actions. It is on that other being, on recognition by that other being, that his own human worth and reality depend. It is that other being in whom the meaning of his life is condensed.[654]

For Fanon, the identity of the Kurd is constructed to be antithetical to the Iranian/Turkish in oppositional terms. It is a vital process upon which the Turkish

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Justice 3 no. 2 (July 2010): 127-134.
[651] David McDowall, *The Modern History of the Kurds*, 271.
[652] Amnesty International, "Iran," 8.
[653] Iranian Constitution, Chapter VI, Article 64 & Amnesty International, "Iran," 8.
[654] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 216.

and Persian identities are constructed.[655] In the Fanonian formation, it is a matter of understanding how Kurdishness is conceptualized by the state and how their struggle is constructed through the use of language, the colonizer's language, in the media.[656] "To speak is to exist absolutely for the other," said Fanon.[657] The colonizer's language is where popular imagination, provincial prejudices and understanding of the "other" take place.

Both Said and Fanon remind us that the Kurdish identity is produced at the opposite of being Persian or Turkish based on a dichotomy of assimilation and exclusion. This dichotomy is between state sovereignty and the destruction of Kurdish culture through assimilation, between the oppressor and the oppressed and between the humiliated and the exalted.[658] The Kurdish struggle for basic human rights is created based on a historical and conditioned social product, a product of violence and terrorism. Such a product legalizes, at the state level, the domination of Persians/Turks over Kurds, and justifies the policies of assimilation for national security purposes. How many people PJAK or PKK kill shapes the understanding of Kurds, and aligns the idea of a Kurdish movement with terrorism. These perspectives

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[655] In his *Orientalism*, the identity of the Orient is constructed against the European identity against "idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures" Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 133.

[656] This claim, to some extent, is parallel to Talal Asad's argument on the formation of the secular identity in Europe and the conceptualization of Europe by Europeans in such a way that makes it impossible for the Muslims as a "religious minority" to be "satisfactorily" represented in it. The discourse on the idea of European identity (or "the myth of Europe") makes it extremely challenging to represent Muslims as Muslims in Europe. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 159-180.

[657] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 17.

[658] Hifzullah Cakirbey, "Türkiyelileştirme ve Kürdistan'ın Kuzeyindeki Kürdlerin Durumu [Turkification and The Situation of Kurds in Northern Kurdistan]," *Rizgari,* January 4, 2010, accessed November 12, 2012 http://www.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=Rizgari_Niviskar&cmd=read&id=2002

fix the issues on security, not demands for basic human rights as a part of an invaluable process of democratization.

It goes without saying that both PKK and PJAK have indeed utilized systematic terror as their weapon. But approaching the PKK and PJAK violence from Fanon's perspective and from the matrix of Said's thought on the Palestinian movement, terrorism must be understood within its "contexts, structures, histories and narratives."[659] It must be recognized as a historical and social phenomenon, reflecting the "dysfunctions, symptoms and the maladies of the contemporary world."[660] Terrorism cannot be "shrunk from the public world into a small private world reserved tautologically for the terrorists who commit terrorism, and for the experts to study them."[661] PKK and PJAK violence cannot be understood without its links to superstructures and underlying historical conditions. This disconnection requires a reconnection with history, colonial inner structures and political ideologies. The origins of either guerilla movement cannot be reduced to singular terms associated with terrorism. The state and international actors must understand the origins of the Kurdish struggle based on its historical and structural contexts. Thus, the PKK and PJAK must be understood through the juxtaposition of historical state assimilation practices over the past one hundred years.

5.2.3 Myth Three: Kurdish Nationalism Formed as a Reaction to Repressive State Policies

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[659] Edward Said, *The Politics of Dispossession,* 343.
[660] ibid., 342.
[661] ibid., 343.

This claim lies at the very core of the Kurd Industry because it provides affirming comments on the Kurdish national identity. The point to be made here is one on the framing (in the available literature) of the emergence, rise and radicalization of Kurdish nationalism in a state-society dichotomy.

The belief in the reduction of Kurdish nationalism to a binary dichotomy shows the assumptions underlying Kurdish scholarship: state oppression facilitated the emergence, formulation and radicalization of Kurdish identity, nationalism and contention. Consider the remarks of Michael Gunter: "Kurdish nationalism largely developed in the 20th century as a stateless ethnic reaction against the repressive official state nationalisms of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria."[662] The dominant discourse on Kurdish issues echoes such generalizations. Martin Van Bruinessen argues that while the Turkish state tried to destroy Kurdish culture through repression, it oversaw its growth and expansion.[663] Hakan Yavuz sustains the same claim that repression indeed shaped contemporary Kurdish nationalism.[664] Abbas Vali traces the origins of Kurdish nationalism in Iran back to Shaikh Ubaid Allah's nineteenth century rebellion against the Ottoman Empire's suppression of Kurdish identity.[665] Nationalist movements in various contexts indeed have transformed history into a

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[662] Michael Gunter, "The Modern Origins of Kurdish Nationalism," in Mohammed M. A. Ahmed & Michael Gunter ed., *The Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2007), 15.

[663] Martin Van Bruinessen, "Ehmedî Xanî's Mem û Zîn and Its Role in the Emergence of Kurdish Nationalist Awareness," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism* ed. Vali Abbas (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2003),40-57.

[664] Yavuz talks specifically about "the construction of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey" without giving specific references to "culture." Hakan Yavuz, "Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey," *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics* 7 (Autumn 2001): 1-24.

[665] Abbas Vali, "The Making of Kurdish Identity in Iran," *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 4 no. 7 (1995): 1-22.

major item of identity and contention. A dichotomous perspective that reduces Kurdish nationalism to state repressive policies can perhaps explain the ideological and tactical radicalization of the Kurdish movement in Iran (with the emergence of PJAK), in Iraq (with the emergence of KDP and PUK), in Turkey (with the emergence of PKK) and in Syria (with the emergence of PYD) based on the state-society relationship. Yet, it does not shed any light, for instance, on why Kurdish nationalism in Iran and Iraq was supportive of the state, whereas in Turkey, it was against the state.

Nationalism cannot be explained entirely with parsimonious one-level variables. As Denise Natali contends, it is a "part of a contextually contingent process whereby a national can follow multiple paths over long periods."[666] In Turkey, it was the state ideology to civilize the backward and dangerous Kurdish populations through integration and assimilation into the larger Turkish nation,[667] while in Iran and Iraq, it was economics and tribal factors that shaped the contentious Kurdish politics.[668] Comparatively, the first traces of Kurdish nationalism in Iran were seen at a later phase. As Feridoon Koohi-Kamali has written, it was the sectarian divide, rather than ethnicity, which served as a determinant factor in the Kurdish transition from a predominantly tribal structure into a national movement.[669] Therefore, Kurdish nationalism and national identity, or what Natalie refers as the "Kurdayeti,"

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[666] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran* (New York, NY: Syracuse University Press 2005), xxiv.

[667] Ragan Updegraff, "Turkey Under the AKP: The Kurdish Question," *Journal of Democracy 23* no. 1 (2012): 119-128.

[668] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State,* 160-165.

[669] Feridoon Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

offers "political and cultural opportunities for groups to express their ethnic identity and the possibility to assume alternative identities over time."[670] Nationalism is determined by various factors across time and space. Perhaps David McDowall was right when he inherently debated that "any modern history of the Kurds" must fathom "the struggle between the Kurdish people and the governments to which they are subject for control of the lands they inhabit."[671] But in understanding the emergence and fostering of Kurdish nationalism, with an absence or presence of mobilization against the state, multiple contexts must be examined, and connections between historical conditions and structures must converge.

A quick look into the Kurdish history indeed reveals the fact that the origins of Kurdish nationalism date back to Enlightenment. The Western liberalism and the fundamental ideals of Enlightenment, including freedom, progress and individuality, emerged as the ideological triumph on a global scale, and constituted the nineteenth-century claims to self-determination. The opening decade of the twentieth century became a battlefield of the states' emotionalized ideology – emotional and ideological attachments to their lands. Therefore, an analysis of the historical social contexts in the countries hosting Kurdish minorities reveals that a political or ideological desire to assimilate Kurds into a homogenized entity was not apparent until the end of the nineteenth century. The Ottoman, Safavid and Qajar empires were all established, and governed on the basis of pluralism, yet on religiously defined policies. The Ottoman Empire's idea of citizenship was governed according to the

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[670] Denise Natalie, *The Kurds and the State*, xviii.
[671] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 1.

millet system. Even though the direct translation of the word *millet* corresponded to the English word *nation*, it was based on membership of a religious community. Built on two hierarchical categories of citizenship, Muslims and non-Muslims, it emphasized the superiority of the former over the latter. Hence, Kurds, for they are Muslim,[672] or the borders of Kurdistan, were not a security concern to the empire.[673] In the twentieth century, this took a different turn. With the rise of nationalism as a political ideology and the collapse, and in some cases, the overthrow, of these multiethnic empires, the conception of millet acquired a radically different meaning – nation, this time, in the real sense of the terminology.

What is a nation after all? The academic debate on what constitutes a nation, and what separates it from an ethnic group is abundant. The terminology of ethnicity derives its roots from the Greek word "ethnos" (people).[674] In social science research, the term ethnic group generally refers to a sense of togetherness among individuals on the basis of real or presumed shared modes, traditions or values. For scholars like

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[672] The overwhelming majority of the Kurds in Iran, Turkey and Iraq are Sunni Muslim. Aside from Yazidis, a few thousand Christians and Jews, Zoroastrians and Ithna 'Ashari Shi'is Iran's Kurds are Sunni Muslim, Alevi religion in central Anatolia is strong among the Kurds in Turkey; Kurds in Iraq follow Sunni and Shia Islam as well as Christianity and Judaism. See David McDowall, *A Modern History on the Kurds,* 10-13 & Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Politics in the Middle East* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2010), 4-6.

[673] The literature on the Kurds is extensive, some of which includes: D. McDowall, *The Kurds: A Nation Denied* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1992); L.I. Meho & K. Maglaughlin, *Kurdish Culture and Society: An Annotated Bibliograph* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001); G. Chaliand, *A People without a country: the Kurds and Kurdistan* (London: Zed Press, 1993); D. Natali, *The Kurds and the State* (New York, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005); M. Gunter, *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2011); D. McDowall, "The Kurdish Question: A Historical Review," in *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview* ed. P. G. Kreyenbroek, & S. Sperl (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011); P. G. Kreyenbroek & S. Sperl, *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992).

[674] The Greek word "ethnikos" also means the same thing.

Fredrik Barth, ethnic identity is just a question of legal borders.[675] In Cynthia Enloe's

thought, it is mainly a rational matter of socio-psychology.[676] Others highlight the

element of cohesion as a necessary characteristic of building a nation. For Anthony

Smith, it is the common myth of descent, or "ethnie," and for Connor, it is the sense

of shared kinship that promotes national formation.[677] Other scholars explain the idea

of a nation based on psychological elements or contextual conceptualizations. Dusan

Kecmanovic posits that the "the national feeling" is a psychological and sociological

process: it creates a sense of belonging in the group. Complementing Kecmanovic's

ideas, McAllister maintains that a nation is "a self-conscious and vocalized identity;"

it is a "mytho-historical legacy."[678] On the other end of the Kecmanovic-

McAllisterian maxim that a nation is based on a shared history, religion, language

and other demographics is Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson's hypotheses. They

argue that nations are state-formations, or in Anderson's words, "imagined

communities," constructed against the imaginary of other groups.[679]

Whether the concept of a nation is created based on emotional, psychological

or historical accounts, whether they are the instruments of the state or purely organic

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[675] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in Fredrik Barth ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (London & Oslo: Universitets Forlaget, George Allen & UNWIN, 1969).

[676] Cynthia H. Enloe, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development* (Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1986), 15.

[677] Kurds share various myths about their origins that Sarah, Abraham's wife, was a Kurd or that Kurds are the descendants of King Solomon's slaves. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York, NY: Blackwell, 1986), 154; Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 74-75; and McDonald, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 4.

[678] Stanley J. Tambiah, "The Nation-State in Crisis and the Rise of Ethnonationalism," in *Ethnic Premises in a World of Power,* ed. E. N. Wilmsen, & P. A. McAllister (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1996): 124-143.

[679] Michael M. Gunter, "Why Kurdish Statehood is Unlikely," *Middle East Policy XI* no. 1 (2004): 106.

sociological phenomena, nationalism emerges in two integral segments. On one hand, it may lead to the further homogenization of a population within a territory identified by the dominant ethnic group; on the other, it may manifest into secessionist movements for political autonomy.[680] This had a particular consequence for the Kurds. Redefining themselves based on their distinct ethnicity, as "non-assimilating minorities"[681] to use Crawford Young's terminology, the newly emerged nation-states in the twentieth century struggled with reconciling the loyalty and the solidarity of the Kurds and maintaining their conformity. As the ethnic and cultural distinctiveness among the millets emerged, the problem of multi-ethnicity began to disturb the states. The Kurds, as a direct consequence, found themselves being directly subjected to state oppression and forceful assimilation policies. They became an object of conflicting political claims and intense nationalist attachment, linking four Middle Eastern populations together: Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria.

This transition from once religiously defined policies to ethnically conceptualized state-building processes was followed by a period of European colonization. As Charles Tilly explains, the borders were drawn "without regard to the distribution of peoples," and they "became defended frontiers of post-colonial states; only rarely did the new states accommodate to their cultural heterogeneity by partition or by reordering of administrative subdivisions."[682] According to Nader Entessar, the political organization and the bureaucratic control of these modern

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[680] Martijn A. Roessingh, *Ethnonationalism and Political Systems in Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996): 9.

[681] Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

[682] Charles Tilly, "War and State Power," *Middle East Report* 21, no. 171 (July-August 1991): 39.

nation-states was designed to benefit the dominant ethnic group.[683] It is not difficult to see why assimilation practices could become an integral element of a state's political organization and bureaucratic control.

The history of building a nation-state – building a nation within a clearly defined territory that identifies itself largely with the state apparatus – has been conceptualized as what Bauman describes as "a perfect marriage, one made in heaven."[684] Liberal democratic states require the promotion of shared values and traditions – often at the expense of other groups – to enact their common fate as representative governments, and operate effectively and efficiently. However, once a new trend was established in the international system based on the nation-state model, and as these political units acquired power and monopolistic control over their territories – in education, legal codes and judicial institutions – the world "became more tolerant of a state's massacre or displacement of its own residents on the ground of their disloyalty to the regime in power, with the result that civilian deaths from state action came to rival deaths in combat, and refugees mounted to millions."[685] This perfect marriage created a relationship between rationalization and excesses of political power. State assimilation practices have become the normative processes of state formation and nation building in this era. Hence, the origins and radicalization of Kurdish nationalism are too ambivalent and characterized by complex economical and tribal conditions to be reduced simply to state repression.

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[683] Nader Entessar, "The Kurdish Mosaic of Discord," *Third World Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (October 1989): 83-100.

[684] ibid & Zygmunt Bauman, "Europe of strangers," *ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Seminar Series* 24 (1998): 4.

[685] Charles Tilly, "War and State Power," 39.

6. FRAMING THE KURDISH EXPERIENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The connection between myths and state practices of assimilation makes our next inquiry easier: How relevant is the idea of genocide in framing the Kurdish experience in Iraq and Turkey? What do the Kurdish experiences tell us about other forms of group destruction? How is this discussion related to the interlocutors of the Kurd industry and its myths? This study hypothesizes that the Anfal campaigns of 1987-1989 were an episode of a larger process of destruction, physically and culturally – an episode of coordinated state measures of violence, oppression and ethnic discrimination aimed at eradicating the Kurdish social life from its living presence. It contextualizes Anfal as a part of almost a century of state assimilation policies in Iraq and Turkey. From a post-structuralist perspective based on the pioneering work of Raphael Lemkin, this study explores the concept of cultural genocide in the Kurdish case.

By converging two discussions, one on the conceptual genealogy of cultural genocide and the other on the reconfiguration of Kurdish issues, this chapter initiates a new discussion, a new intellectual space on how we can frame the Kurdish experience in the Middle East. Several methods of destruction are discussed, with an emphasis on religion, language and racial epithets. The empirical ingredients of this assessment rest mainly on the semi-structured interviews with Kurdish academics, intellectuals, politicians and members of civil society organizations in Diyarbakir and Erbil. Analyses of forms of cultural repression are indispensable to understanding the root causes of the conflict, the contexts of violent spaces and the marginalized Kurdish community. The successful transformation of the Kurdish experience is indispensable for the host countries and for their democratization processes, but also to the region and international society as a whole.

6.1 The Pattern of Destruction: Anfal (1988) and Dersim (1938)

More than a quarter century after Saddam's chemical attacks, the recognition of the Anfal campaign[686] as genocide has become a question of politics. But how should we understand the Kurdish genocide? The Anfal campaign, with its mass graves in which up to 180,000 Kurdish bodies were buried was only the apex – Saddam's killing operations must be analyzed based on the larger context of Iraqi

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[686] Al-Anfal is an Arabic word that literally translates into "the Spoils," [the spoils of war]. It is the title of the eighth sura (chapter) of the Qur'an. Over 75 verses, the sura calls upon Muslims to fight against non-believers. Anfal refers to the extermination campaign carried out against the Kurdish populations over seven months in six different sites in northern Iraq. Kanan Makiya, "The Anfal: Uncovering an Iraqi Campaign to Exterminate the Kurds," *Harpers* 284, no. 1704 (May 1992): 56-57.

history. It cannot be explained without any references to how the Kurds were seen, and how they were politically framed by the Ba'athists, particularly, during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988).

The question of Kurdish independence had been a threatening issue for Iraq since it was carved out of the provinces of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul in 1926. Controlling the Kurdish rebel groups and also seizing the vital oil fields in Kurdistan[687] became a strategic economic interest of the regime. Under the pretext of Saddam's Arabization campaign, the Ba'athist military coup negotiated a deal with the Kurds, and granted them a limited degree of autonomy in 1968.[688] According to this agreement, the governorates of Erbil, Sulaimani and Dohuk were left to Erbil's authority while other oil-producing Kurdish areas of northern Iraq, namely Kirkuk and Khanaqin, along with their "major oil fields, rich agricultural land, minerals, and the Tigris River" were handed over to the Ba'athist control.[689] Kirkuk, Khanaqin, as well as Mosul, cities that were a part of ancient Kurdish homeland, became a part of Saddam's resettlement program in 1987. Through such meticulous plan of eviction and mass deportation, Kurds were gradually moved to state-controlled camps farther

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[687] Here, Kurdistan refers to southern Iraqi Kurdistan.

[688] Another argument here is that in 1968, the Ba'athist regime was not strong enough to stand against a potent Kurdish rebellion. This forced the regime to negotiate with the Kurds, at least for the time being. Joost R. Hilterman, "The 1988 Anfal Campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan," *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, February 3, 2008, accessed August 11, 2014, http://www.massviolence.org/Article?id_article=98

[689] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files: A Documentary Record of the Anfal Genocide," 71. According to Human Rights Watch, the area granted to Kurds were about 14,000 square miles (approximately the size of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island combined), only half of the historically Kurdish areas. This area was first called "The Autonomous Region of Kurdistan." After the operations started, Kurdistan was dropped from the name and it was changed into "The Autonomous Region." Human Rights Watch, "Introduction: Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign against the Kurds," 1993, accessed August 11, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/ANFALINT.htm & Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 74.

south where they could be under close scrutiny of the Iraqi army.[690] The empty houses, along with other financial incentives, were offered to low-income Sunni Arab families living in the southern parts of the country.[691] Half a million Kurds were forcibly removed from their homes. 700 Kurdish towns and villages were destroyed.

The Arabization policies took a different turn with the start of the Iran-Iraq War. The internal deportations continued with the expulsion of thousands of Fayli Kurds to neighboring Iran on the basis that "they were not Iraqi citizens."[692] They were intensified with mass disappearances, kidnappings and murders. According to the evidence gathered from Iraqi Secret Police files, captured in northern Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War, thousands of men, women and children were kidnapped and executed.[693] In light of the ongoing war with Iran, the Iraqi regime made a convincing counterargument – the deportations were "for their own protection." Each Kurdish family was compensated with $9,000 "for the loss of their homes and livelihoods," Baghdad justified.[694] Evictions were all a part of a state effort to "create a 14,000-square-mile security zone around Iraq's northern border," to be able to better protect

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[690] European Parliament Website, "The Kurdish Genocide: Achieving Justice through EU Recognition," 2013, accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/d-iq/dv/03_kurdishgenocidesofanfalandhalabja_/03_kurdishgenocidesofanfalandhalabja_en.pdf

[691] According to the Human Rights Watch 2004 report, a teacher from Baghdad was offered "free plot of land and 10,000 dinars ($30,000) as an incentive." Human Rights Watch, "Claims in Conflict: Reversing the Ethnic Cleansing in Northern Iraq," Report 16, no. 4(E) (August 2004), accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/iraq0804/

[692] Martin van Bruinessen, "Turkluk, Kurtluk, Alevilik," 44-46.

[693] These files were captured in Dohuk, Erbil and Suleimani governorates. Some of the records can be found at the University of Colorado-Boulder's archives under the collection, "The Captured Iraqi Secret Police Files." See http://www.colorado.edu/news/releases/1998/02/04/cu-boulder-archives-acquires-iraqi-secret-police-files#sthash.EwBClQod.dpuf

[694] John M. Broder and Robin Wright, "Iraqis Seeking to 'Neutralize' Kurds, U.S. Says."

its citizens.[695] Particularly, during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) collaborated with Iran. This facilitated the portrayal of the Kurds as a national security concern and "traitors to the state."[696] It gave the legitimate authority to Baghdad to regain control of the northern areas of Iraq from these rebel forces via military means.

The Anfal operations took a dramatic turn with Chemical Ali's issuance of two orders. Ali Hassan al-Majid, a cousin of Saddam Hussein, and also the Defense Minister, was granted extensive powers in March 1987. Within three months, he increased the targets of the operations from Kurdish rebel groups to all Kurdish civilians in the rural areas. Chemical-Ali seemed determined to solve the Kurdish problem in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan, permanently. As he put it, "yes, I'll certainly look after [the Kurds]. I'll do it by burning them with bulldozers. That's how I'll do it."[697] The first directive 28/3650, dated June 3, 1987, prohibited all human presence in the prohibited areas, granting the right to the armed forces to "kill any human being or human present."[698] The second order, the directive SF/4008, dated June 20, 1987, commanded the Iraqi army to conduct an explicit rule of mass murder – "carry out random bombardments, using artillery, helicopters and aircraft, at all times of the day or night in order to kill the largest number of persons present in those prohibited zones," and execute all persons captured in the areas, and those

[695] John M. Broder and Robin Wright, "Iraqis Seeking to 'Neutralize' Kurds, U.S. Says," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1989, accessed August 11, 2014, http://articles.latimes.com/1989-07-12/news/mn-3401_1_iraqi-government

[696] David McDowall, "The Kurds," 353.

[697] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 70.

[698] Human Rights Watch Report, "Prelude to Anfal," 1993, accessed August 12, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/ANFAL2.htm

aged between 15 and 70.[699] In the words of a villager from Karim Bassam who was captured and taken to a prison: "I could not forget these scenes. One day I asked one of the guards, "When do you free us?" He said, "[the] government brought you here to die and this place is a symbol of death.""[700] The term "necessary measures" were also found in the official documents. "We are sending to you the families… who surrendered to our forces in the area of Sofi Raza on April 15, 1988. Please take the necessary measures against them according to the directives of the Northern Bureau and acknowledge their arrival."[701] The Ba'ath Party ordered: "The entry of any kind of human cargo, nutritional supplies, or mechanical instruments into the security-prohibited villages under the second stage [of the operation] is strictly prohibited… It is the duty of the members of the military forces to kill any human being or animal found in these areas."[702]

It is evident that Anfal was not merely an episode of mass deportations out of the security concerns and the economic interests of the regime. Rather, it was the continuation of a highly organized extermination campaign against the Iraqi Kurds – rebels, villagers and all civilians.[703] Saddam's military campaign "went much further than was required to restore its authority."[704] The poison attack on Halabja on March

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[699] Human Rights Watch Report, "Prelude to Anfal."

[700] Diler Karim, "Anfal from Karim Bassam to Tikrit," trans. Hawzhin Zharawae, (Erbil: Margaret Center, 2014), 70.

[701] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 89.

[702] The date of the order was June 14, 1987. Judith Miller, "Iraq Accused."

[703] According CIA, the Kurdish population in Iraq is between 4.6-6.2 million. In addition to mass deportations and evictions, the Arabization campaign also included mass political executions, disappearances of thousands of civilians and arbitrary arrests and detentions. Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, last updated February 12, 2013, accessed March 1, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html

[704] Human Rights Watch, "Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds," A Middle East Watch Report, New York, Washington, Los Angeles and London, July 1993, accessed August 18, 2014, xiii, http://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/i/iraq/iraq.937/anfalfull.pdf

16, 1988 and the use of chemical weapons in Badinan on August 9, 1988 clearly demonstrated that the Iraqi regime "committed a panoply of war crimes, together with crimes against humanity and genocide."[705] The Iraqi secret files found evidence of "indiscriminate use of chemical weapons against Kurdish civilians." About 5,000 civilians were killed in Halabja due to poison gas.[706]

Saddam's genocidal policies help us understand the institutionalization of authority, the continuity of state violence, and the frames used to portray the Kurds. The Iraqi Secret Police files exposed that "like Nazi Germany, the Iraqi regime concealed its actions in euphemisms. Where Nazi officials spoke of "executive measures," "special actions" and "settlement in the east," Ba'athist bureaucrats spoke of "collective measures," "return to the national ranks" and "resettlement in the south."[707] The official documents contained terms such as the "purification" "liquidation" and "transfers" of the Kurdish populations. The Ba'athist ideology constructed frames through which Kurdish identity was understood and its destruction was normalized. The word "Kurd" itself meant "non-Arab,"[708] and acquired a connotation of "traitors," "criminals," or "human cargo."[709] A field report

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[705] George Black, "Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign against the Kurds," A Middle East Watch Report, (New York, Washington, Los Angeles & London: Human Rights Watch, 1993), xiii-xiv & Human Rights Watch, "Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds," A Middle East Watch Report, New York, Washington, Los Angeles and London, July 1993, accessed August 6, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/index.htm#TopOfPage
[706] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 77.
[707] Human Rights Watch Report, "Introduction: Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign against Kurds," 1993, accessed August 11, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/ANFALINT.htm
[708] This word "Kurd" also possibly meant non-Sunni in the case of Faylis and non-Muslim in the case of Yazidis.
[709] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 89 & Judith Miller, "Iraq Accused: A Case of Genocide," *The New York Times,* January 3, 1993, accessed August 11, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/1993/01/03/magazine/iraq-accused-a-case-of-genocide.html

gives chilling details about the execution of a teacher who "was teaching the Kurdish Language using Latin letters because of his chauvinistic and separatist beliefs."[710]

"The most fundamental question" here is "*how* the adjective 'ethnic' modifies the noun 'violence'"[711] In the Kurdish case, Kurds were dehumanized through the use of frames. The PUK was labeled as "agents of Iran" and "Iranian Zionists." The KDP was described as "the offspring of treason."[712] Kurds were referred as "saboteurs."[713] During the initial stages of the Iran-Iraq War, "saboteurs" was a common term to describe the Kurdish pershmergas. However, the term was later extended to include all civilians who refused the deportation orders and their immediate relatives. The directive SF/4008 made their execution legally permissible. For Baghdad, any site harboring Kurdish rebels and all civilians supporting them had to be annihilated.[714]

John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond explain that "collective dehumanization processes place groups outside the normative universe of moral protection, leaving them vulnerable to be targeted for genocidal victimization." The processes create conditions conducive to genocide.[715] During the intercommunal violence in Darfur, for instance, Janjaweed and Sudanese military used various racial epithets to describe black Africans. "You are slaves, kill the slaves" or "this is the

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[710] Judith Miller, "Iraq Accused."

[711] Rogers Brubaker and David Laitin, "Ethnic and Nationalist Violence," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 427.

[712] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 89.

[713] Here, saboteurs refers to the Kurdish peshmerga forces and their supporters. George Black, "Genocide in Iraq," 4.

[714] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files," 89.

[715] John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond, "The Collective Dynamics of Racial Dehumanization and Genocidal Victimization in Darfur," *American Sociological Review* 73 (2008): 876.

last day for blacks."[716] The frames and euphemisms used in Darfur and Iraq help create what Alexander Hinton calls the "process of manufacturing difference.[717] As the Nazis dehumanized their victims to justify their genocidal acts, the Ba'athists defined the Kurds based on the stereotypical images that they constructed. They shaped the way that the Kurds were socially and politically understood groups by creating clear ethnic and religious lines between "us, the Sunni Arabs," versus "them, the saboteurs, the Shia traitors, the terrorists." The understanding of the victim built on such racism and prejudices "play similar roles in genocide and hate crimes."[718] As Stephen Bronner notes, prejudice persists in the modern world because it is shaped by social and political labels. Subaltern groups are identified "as inherently inferior with fixed traits and an unchangeable status."[719] Thus, although genocide cannot be reduced to a set of racially and ethnically prejudiced acts,[720] Bronner believes that prejudice gives birth to violence.[721]

When connecting the patterns of destruction Kurds endured in Turkey and Iraq, it becomes self-evident that the Anfal campaign is an important episode of Kurdish genocide; but it is not the only case. The brutal military campaign during

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[716] John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond, "The Collective Dynamics of Racial Dehumanization, 878.

[717] Cambodia would be an excellent example in case. Two frames were used to differentiate the friend from the foe during the 1975-1979 genocide – "us" the proletarian and the collectivists versus "them" the capitalists and the land-owners. See Alex Hinton, "The Poetics of Genocidal Practice," in *Violence*, ed. Neil K. Whitehead, (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press & Oxford: James Currey, 2004), 157-162.

[718] John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond, "The Collective Dynamics of Racial Dehumanization, 878.

[719] Stephen Eric Bronner, "The Bigot," 27.

[720] On the "definitional conundrums" of genocide, see Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Vol. 1: The Meaning of Genocide,* (London: Tauris, 2005).

[721] Stephen Eric Bronner, *The Bigot: Why Prejudice Persists*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 13.

the Dersim rebellion (1937-1939) in the early years of Turkish Republic is another example where the state clearly threatened the existence of Kurds, both culturally and physically. Based on the official state documents, aerial bombardments, the deployment of troops, and poison gas were used to suppress the uprising, which killed more than 14,000 people, including women and children.[722] Robert Olson estimates the number of casualties to be around 40,000.[723] According to Ruwayda Mustafah, that number goes as high as 70,000.[724] Aside from sheer numbers, what is more apparent is that once the rebellion was under control, forced migration became a state instrument as a part of a carefully planned campaign to assimilate the Kurds into becoming Turkish. Under the Settlement Law of 2510, enacted on June 14, 1934, 12,000 people were deported from their homes.[725] Any expression of Kurdish culture, identity or language was identified as a threat to stability, and was strictly prohibited.[726]

There are salient parallels between the state responses to the Dersim rebellion and the Anfal operations and the way that the Kurdish movement was problematized as an existential threat against the state's territoriality and national security. In both of the cases, the state's retaliation was framed as a calculated national security decision to break the Kurdish resistance. In fact, Onur Oymen, the Turkish People's

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[722] Sahin Alpay, "Dersim Katliami Nicin Yasandi? [Why did Dersim Massacre Happen?]" *Zaman,* November 23, 2011, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.zaman.com.tr/sahin-alpay/dersim-katliami-nicin-yasandi_1206485.html
[723] Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Rebellions,* 89-90.
[724] Ruwayda Mustafah, "Why Did Erdogan Apologise for the Dersim Massacre?"
[725] Sahin Alpay, "Dersim Katliami Nicin Yasandi?
[726] Wadie Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, 204-209.

Party (CHP) Deputy Chairman, during a parliamentary speech in 2009, described what happened in 1937 as "an example of struggle against terrorism."[727]

The violence and the attempt to annihilate the Kurds during Anfal operations must be understood as a continuation of a social and political discourse in which certain norms and ideas shaped the way that the Kurds were seen. Genocide cannot be analyzed as a single function of "perpetrators" and "victims." As Ian Buruma explains, "There are no dangerous peoples; there are only dangerous situations, which are the result of, not of laws of nature, or history, or of national character, but of political arrangements."[728] In the case of Anfal, genocide occurred as a form of mass killings built on deportations, graves, kidnappings, and the destruction of Kurdish village life and its economic base.[729] In the case of Dersim, the political conditions[730] gave rise to the destruction of a group – not through physical killing, rather through destroying their "national pattern," their ethnic identity. Does group destruction and social death in Dersim constitute genocide? Can we conceptualize genocide beyond the mass murder of individuals and emphasize the broader means

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[727] Habib Guler, "Alevilerden CHP'li Onur Oymen'e 'Dersim' Isyani [From Alevis to CHP Onur Oymen: 'Dersim' Rebellion]," *Zaman*, November 12, 2009, accessed August 19, 2014, http://www.zaman.com.tr/politika_alevilerden-chpli-onur-oymene-dersim-isyani_914729.html

[728] Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of Nation-State: Volume I: The Meaning of Genocide*, (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 5.

[729] Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide of Kurds," in *The Widening Circle of Genocide*, ed. Israel W. Charney, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991), 165.

[730] Guided by the nineteenth century nationalist movements in the Balkans, the political leaders of the Turkish Republic embraced the European-inspired nation-state system, with its emphasis on modernization and authoritarian centralism. According to this ideology, modernization meant the embodiment of secularization and Westernization. It required a single category of religion, language, and ethnicity. Hence, the multiplicity of cultures within the borders of the country had to be assimilated into a single and fixed category of language (Turkish), culture (Turkish) and religion (Hanafi Sunni – In Sunni Islam, there are four schools of jurisprudence: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali. Most Turks are Hanafi and most Kurds are Shafi'I although there are a great deal of Alevi Kurds who are neither Sunni nor Shia). For further information, see Chapter 2.

of group destruction – physically and non-physically? Understood this way, genocide recognition becomes not just a moral, but also a political phenomenon. This is exactly the starting point for the politics of genocide. Let's think about the massacres of Dersim. They have recently been acknowledged by the Turkish Republic not as genocide, but rather as "one of the most tragic events of our near history… a disaster waiting to be enlightened and boldly questioned."[731] Martin van Bruinessen makes a fair argument on whether or not the Dersim massacres can be classified as genocide under the Genocide Convention, whose definition is arguable. Particularly, the issue of "intent to destroy" is thorny. What is certain, however, is that large segment of the Kurdish civilians "were deliberately killed or left to perish and their Kurdish identity was the major reason for their plight."[732] In the words of van Bruinessen, Anfal is "one of the best documented cases of genocide since the Holocaust."[733] Anfal has received plenty of international attention. Yet, ironically, Iraq remains as the sole government that recognizes it as genocide. But what is the dilemma over the use of the word *genocide* and the politics surrounding it?

6.2 What's in a name? The Politics of Genocide

Human Rights Watch declared that the atrocities committed from March 29, 1987 to April 23, 1989 "amounted to genocide and crimes against humanity."[734] For

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[731] Ruwayda Mustafah, "Why Did Erdogan Apologise for the Dersim Massacre?" *The Huffington Post,* November 29, 2011, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ruwayda-mustafah/why-did-erdogan-apologise_b_1113732.html

[732] Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide of Kurds," 165.

[733] ibid, 191.

[734] It must be noted here that, according to Human Rights Watch, the Anfal operations lasted between February 23, 1988 and September 6, 1988. Human Rights Watch, "Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds," *A Middle East Watch Report*, New York, Washington, Los Angeles

Adam Jones, the campaign "was both genocidal and gendercidal in nature."[735] In 2005, a court in The Hague concluded that the systematic killing of the Kurds could legally be described as genocide under the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The convention defines genocide as "acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such."[736] According to the court, "these attacks were committed with the intent to destroy the Kurdish population of Iraq."[737] In 2006, the Iraqi Special Tribunal (now the Supreme Iraqi Criminal) adjudicated seven individuals, including Saddam Hussein, for the crimes they committed with connection to Anfal.[738] This was the first genocide case to appear in the International Court of Justice at The Hague, the highest court in the international system.

Nonetheless, Britain still insists that genocide recognition is the responsibility of legal courts, not governments. "In the UK we all agree that Saddam's Anfal campaign was an appalling crime, and we all acknowledge the

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and London, July 1993, accessed August 11, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/index.htm#TopOfPage

[735] Bruce P. Montgomery, "The Iraqi Secret Police Files: A Documentary Record of the Anfal Genocide," *Archivaria* 52 (Fall 2001): 70. Men aged between 15 and 50 were sent to a different camp than women and children. There, there were executed by firing squads. Hundreds of women and children were sent to a separate camp, many of whom were kidnapped and killed. Adam Jones, "Case Study: The Anfal Campaign (Iraqi Kurdistan), 1988," *Gendercide Watch*, Website, accessed July 29, 2014, http://www.gendercide.org/case_anfal.html

[736] BBC News, "Killing of Iraq Kurds 'genocide,'" December 23, 2005, accessed August 11, 2014, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4555000.stm & See Article 2, United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html

[737] BBC News, "Killing of Iraq Kurds 'genocide.'"

[738] Although Saddam Hussein was charged with crimes against humanity, he was found not guilty of genocide. Ali Hassan al-Majid (Chemical Ali), Sultan H. Ahmed, Hussein R. Mohammed were all found guilty of genocide. They were all executed. Farhan Jubori and Sabir A. Aziz al-Douri were both sentenced to life in prison. Tahir T. al-Ani was released. Mohammed H. Tofiq, "A Brief on: Anfal as Kurdish Genocide," 36-37.

suffering of the Iraqi Kurds. But the recognition of a genocide can only be done by a judicial body. It is not up to a government to say what is or is not a crime."[739] Bringing a case of genocide to the attention of the world's highest international court requires political leadership by a leading state that is willing and able to bring the case against another state. At the time, the Bush administration also lacked such political will, denying its knowledge of the extent of Saddam's gross atrocities. However, a report from the American Embassy in Baghdad later confirmed otherwise. The U.S. had full knowledge on the "large number of Kurds" that had been "placed in 'concentration' camps located near the Jordanian and Saudi Arabian borders."[740]

Since the Bush administration, Anfal has been recognized by various political bodies around the world. The Swedish and Norwegian parliaments formally gave their recognition of the Kurdish genocide in 2012, which was followed by British and North Korean support in the subsequent year.[741] Although the international recognition of the crime of genocide committed against the Kurds is "a significant landmark,"[742] the Kurdish genocide, more than a quarter century after Saddam's atrocious chemical attacks, has yet to be recognized by a state government, other than Iraq. Genocide recognition remains as a question of politics. It is apparent that the systematic persecution of the Kurds falls under the definition of genocide as laid out in Article 2 of the Genocide Convention. On the other hand, official recognition of

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[739] Sofia Barbarani, "Iraq Kurds Press States to Recognize Genocide," *Al-Jazeera*, April 14, 2014, accessed July 29, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/04/iraq-kurds-press-states-recognise-genocide-anfal-201441371637191288.html
[740] Judith Miller, "Iraq Accused."
[741] European Parliament Website, "The Kurdish Genocide."
[742] Responding to the British parliament's recognition of the Kurdish genocide, the KRG called the vote "a significant landmark." ibid.

crimes as *genocide* makes states, for instance the United Kingdom, susceptible to legal repercussion. Margaret Thatcher greatly contributed to building Saddam's "war machine" after all.[743] Through military contracts and generous arms sales to the Iraqi regime during its prolonged war against Iran, Britain also laid the foundation for the genocidal operations such as Anfal.[744] Understood this way, genocide recognition becomes not just a moral, but also a political phenomenon. The bigger issue here is how we should understand and conceptualize genocide. Should we define genocide based on the Genocide Convention's narrow definition of physical destruction, in other words, mass murder? Or should we offer an alternative conception based on the original theorization of genocide, as formulated by Raphael Lemkin? The next section discusses the problem of defining genocide.

6.3 Understanding Ontological Destruction and Cultural Genocide

The connection between the "definitional conundrums"[745] of genocide and the Kurd industry facilitates our next inquiry: What do the Kurdish experiences tell us about group destruction? How is this discussion related to the interlocutors of the Kurd industry? More importantly, what is at stake? History is full of examples of intergroup conflicts and their ideologically charged narratives. What makes the Kurd industry and its myths political is the way it shapes "the pictures in our heads," and

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[743] Glenn Frankel, "How Saddam Built His War Machine – With Western Help," *The Washington Post*, September 17, 1990, accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/iraq/stories/wartech091790.htm

[744] David Leigh and Rob Evans, "How £1bn Was Lost When Thatcher Propped up Saddam," *The Guardian,* February 27, 2003, accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/feb/28/iraq.politics1.

[745] Mark Levene, "The Meaning of Genocide," 36-89.

determines how we learn to think about "the world outside." Walter Lipmann offers

critical thoughts on this process:

> News and truth are not the same thing. Each of us lives and works on a small part of the earth's space… Inevitably our opinions cover a bigger space, a longer reach of time, a greater number of things, than we can directly observe. They have, therefore, to be pieced together out of what others have reported and what we can imagine.[746]

The primary sources of information about the Kurds are brought to local

populations in the Middle East and to non-local populations in the West through

state-constructed frames: traitors, terrorists, saboteurs, ungrateful dogs. These frames

that are built on prejudices and racism then shape "the pictures in our heads" with

buzzwords about national security and terrorism;[747] and they become the grim

realities of our world.[748] What is peculiar about these frames is the extent to which

states have used them to justify indiscriminate killing, physical annihilation and

group destruction.

Group orientation defines the "natural localness" – the customs, traditions,

the psychological feeling of identity, belonging and even the boundaries of thought

in a given geography. Hence, the borders of nation-states are "central to

understanding concepts and practices such as identity, belonging and culture."[749]

Lemkin insists on the centrality of local culture as the basis of human subjectivity.

He explains: "We need the specification because a variety of nations, traces and

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[746] Walter Lipmann, *Public Opinion,* (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1997), 53.

[747] Lawrence Davidson, *Cultural Genocide,* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 7.

[748] Barry Sautman, ""Cultural Genocide" and Tibet," *Texas International Law Journal* 38, no. 173 (2003): 174.

[749] Lawrence Davidson, *Cultural Genocide*, eds. Alexander L. Hinton, Stephen E. Bronner and Nela Navarro, (New Brunswick & London: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 5.

religious groups represent a great enrichment of our civilization. World culture is like a subtle concerto. It is nourished and gets life from the tone of every instrument. When you destroy one instrument, the harmony is destroyed."[750] With such an idea of locality regarding the residents of these local spaces and their knowledge about the outside world in full mind, Walter Lippmann writes on the stereotypes people construct in their minds about the nonlocal world and its people. "The real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance."[751] For Lippmann, our knowledge about the outside world is limited. Hence, we rely on the media and its "experts," and their analyses to make sense of it. "The pictures in our heads" are shaped by the academics, politicians, researchers, scholars, and the clergy and their own political, religious and ideological interests.[752] Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, like Lippmann, recognize the "elite domination of the media" its power in influencing ideas in action. They postulate that the media "filters" the news to "marginalize dissent," and convince the masses of a reality they constructed from the lenses of their self-interest.[753] Then the prejudices, frames and the stereotypes that dehumanize the "other" become "collective conviction."[754] These prejudices, or what Bronner calls the "clusters of hatred," have

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[750] Raphael Lemkin, "Proposal for Introduction to the Study of Genocide," Raphael Lemkin Papers, Manuscript and Archival Division, New York Public Library, Reel 3.

[751] Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*, (New York: Penguin, 1922), 20.

[752] Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*, 226-227.

[753] Lawrence Davidson, "Cultural Genocide," 8 & Edward S. Herman and Naom Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 2.

[754] Ernest Gellner, *Reason and Culture,* (Cambridge, Blackwell, 1992), 2.

social, political, ideological and cultural dimensions.[755] This is how genocide, mass atrocities, and ethnic cleansing become possible.

Changing global conditions have indeed given way to the contestation of state-sponsored mass murder, postcolonial ethnic conflicts and nationalism.[756] There is a frightening increase in the way that the powerful core nations use violence as a means of cultural and political assertion over the weak periphery. Scholars attempt to make sense of these changes by making references to nationalist movements.[757] In the economically and politically marginalized spaces of Iraq, Turkey and Iran, violence finds forms in the state practices of assimilation. The Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government Nechirvan Barzani's recent speech echoed the very same premise. "Hostility against Kurds was not a series of random acts of violence."[758] U.S. Congressman Bob Filner took Barzani's argument to a step further: "Cultural genocide is the law of the land. A way of life known as Kurdish is disappearing at an alarming rate."[759] Kurdish populations have been oppressed by the governments that have ruled them for nearly one hundred years. As a target of systematic efforts, Kurds have been and continue to be forcefully assimilated into their host states' national habitus. Their villages have been destroyed. Their fighters

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[755] Stephen Eric Bronner, "The Bigot," 4.

[756] See Neil L. Whitehead, ed., *Violence* for a discussion on the "poetics of violence practice." Accordingly, scholars seek to explore how cultural conceptions of violence can generate a variety of meanings for violent death.

[757] See Andreas Wimmer, *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation, and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[758] Nechirvan Barzani, "Perspective of Nechirvan Barzani, Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government," in *Kurdish Identity: Human Rights and Political Status,* ed. C. G. MacDonald & C. A. O'Leary, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007), 16.

[759] Lokman I. Meho, *The Kurdish Question in U.S. Foreign Policy: A Documentary Sourcebook*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 400.

have been imprisoned and executed. Their language has been banned. Their voices have been silenced. Cultural and physical death has been used to connote such scenarios.

There are two issues here. In the case of Iraq, Anfal presents us with a clear case of total physical destruction. The captured Iraqi secret police files prove state-sponsored mass murder beyond reasonable doubt, and the state motivation for the total destruction of the Kurds as an ethnic group. However, the recognition of the Kurdish genocide is hampered by the lack of political will at the international level. In the case of Turkey, the recognition of the Dersim massacres as genocide under the Genocide Convention only further muddies the water. Yet, based on the respondent narratives, what remains clear is that the state practices of assimilation are aimed at eliminating the Kurds as a cultural group. Is social destruction intrinsic to the concept of genocide? How should we conceptualize the practice of genocide and violence, especially in the cases where genocide is mediated not through physical death, but through the death of cultural forms, as in the case of Turkey? Perhaps, a better question is – how should we conceptualize the Kurdish genocide?

For some scholars, genocide is far too complex to be adequately described under the definition of the Genocide Convention. According to Mark Levene, Article 2 treats genocide as a "pre-existing teleology, almost to the point where the actors responsible for genocide were governed by a fixed and given blueprint for what they were going to do."[760] Other groups of genocide scholars focus on the processes of

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[760] Mark Levene, "The Meaning of Genocide, 35.

colonialism and imperialism and their link to genocide.[761] Some emphasize state violence and politicide.[762] For Israel Charny, the definition of genocide must be broad and all-inclusive. He argues that "unless clear-cut self-defense can be reasonably proven, whenever a large number of people are put to death by other people, it constitutes genocide."[763] On the other end of the maxim in genocide studies we find Irvin Horowitz's thesis in *Taking Lives* on a more limited definition. Viewed through his lens, the death of individuals is a necessary condition for genocide and its *modus operandi*. Horowitz reasoned that genocide cannot be understood as the death of culture; it must take lives and physically kill and destroy a group.[764]

The origins of the concept of genocide go back to Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish attorney, who coined the term in 1948. Lemkin understood genocide as "an organic concept of multiple influences and consequences."[765] For him, the term meant the synthesis of two etymological notions: *genos* and *cide.* While *cide* simply meant killing, his insights on genos was more complex. Genos, whether it means the race, nation, tribe or a spiritual group, is as an inherent part of a group, Lemkin argued. The existence of this collective entity depends upon its "internally homogenous, external bounded groups, even unitary actors with common

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[761] A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony and Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008).

[762] Barbara Harff, "Recognizing Genocides and Politicides," in *Genocide Watch*, ed. Helen Fein, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1992), 27-41 & Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945," *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (1988): 359-371.

[763] Israel W. Charny, ed. *Genocide: A Critical Bibliographical Review, Volume 1,* (London: Mansell, 1988), xii.

[764] Irvin L. Horowitz, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power,* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002).

[765] Raphael Lemkin, "Totally Unofficial," Raphael Lemkin Papers, Manuscript and Archival Division, New York Public Library, Reel 3, Under "Description of the Project," no page number.

purposes."[766] Even though Article Two defines genocide as a systematic mass destruction of a special sort, it deliberately excludes cultural genocide from its description. This was highly problematic for Lemkin because genocide entails actions beyond the mere killing. From the matrix of his thought, genocide meant killing the wholeness of the entire social process: the destruction of the social and political institutions, physical territories, intellectual leadership, and any other essential foundations of culture. It meant the termination of the lives of the members of a society as a last remedy.[767] It meant the death of the genos, physically, culturally, emotionally and psychologically – the destruction of the genos from the get-go.

Lemkin did not refer to cultural genocide specifically in his published works. But his unpublished works and archives reveal that cultural genocide constitutes an important element of his conceptualization.[768] He wrote, "It is clear that the destruction of cultural symbols is genocide, because it implies the destruction of their function and thus menaces the existence of the social group which exists by virtue of its common culture."[769] Genocide does not require the complete extermination of individual members, Lemkin believed. It could merely occur with the death of the

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[766] Dirk A. Moses, "Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and Dirk A. Moses, 22-35 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[767] Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation - Analysis of Government - Proposals for Redress* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), 79-95. See Tanya Elder, "What You See Before Your Eyes: Documenting Raphael Lemkin's Life by Exploring his Archival Papers, 1900-1959," *Journal of Genocide Research 7 no.4* (2005): 469-499; Dominik J. Schaller and Jurgen Zimmerer, "From the Guest Editors: Raphael Lemkin: the "Founder of the United Nation's Genocide Convention" As a Historian of Mass Violence," *Journal of Genocide Research 7 no.4* (2005): 447-452.

[768] In his *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, Lemkin also coined the word "ethnocide" as an alternative to genocide. But ethnocide and cultural genocide were not analogous. The way he thought of ethnocide was the same with the way he thought of genocide.

[769] Raphael Lemkin, "The Concept of Genocide in Anthropology," Raphael Lemkin Papers, Manuscript and Archival Division, New York Public Library, Reel 3, Box 2, Folder 3, page number.

"essential foundation of life."[770] Depriving a specific group of their "political and social institutions, their culture, language, national feelings and religion and their economic existence," and by taking away their "personal security, liberty, health, dignity and even their lives" could be genocidal, Lemkin understood.[771] Thus, genocide could be a process of colonization, occupation and invasion as much as a singular episode of annihilation.[772] It can, from Lemkin's perspective, be tied to Arabization, Persinization and Turkification of the Kurdish populations. Genocide could be done vis-à-vis the production of a "normalized" subject, a loyal citizen through the policies of assimilation. Such normalization and subordination at the micro level, according to Lemkin, would not constitute "cultural change," but rather cultural assassination.[773] These policies "may result in the total or partial destruction of a group."[774] Such "compulsory assimilation" then fulfills the two stages of genocide: "destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group," and "the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor."[775] Stories, myths, jokes, using cultural symbols and various kinds of minor acts of disobedience are ways in which the normalization is questioned, subverted and undermined. The Kurdish narratives provide an impeccable account on the state assimilationist attempts, through these

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[770] Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule,* 79.

[771] ibid.

[772] Jeff Benvenuto, "What is Cultural Genocide? Understanding Group Destruction in Genocide Studies" (Master's Thesis, Jagiellonian University, 2010), 21-22.

[773] Shamiran Mako, "Cultural Genocide and Key International Instruments: Framing the Indigenous Experience," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 19 (2012):181.

[774] Raphael Lemkin quoted in Robert van Krieken, "Cultural Genocide in Australia," in *The Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (London: Palgrave Macmillian, 2008), 138.

[775] Raphael Lemkin, "Revised Outline for Genocide Cases," Raphael Lemkin Collection, Manuscript Collection P-154, Box 8, Folder 10, no page number, American Jewish Historical Society at the Center for Jewish History, New York City, NY (hereinafter AJHS) & Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule*, 79.

two stages, toward the eradication of Kurdish social life in Turkey. The Kurdish case discloses cultural destruction on three accounts: religion, language, and cultural producers (intellectuals, politicians etc.).

Today, cemevis [Alevi houses of worship] in Turkey "has no legal status."[776] "Kurds, for they are mostly Shafi'i, have experienced various problems throughout their history. However, these problems are not at the level of those in Iran."[777] The state exercises full control over the regulation of religion and the 80,000 mosques in the country. The appointment of all imams, as they are considered to be civil servants, is handled by the Directorate for Religious Affairs, which is controlled by the Office of the Prime Minister.[778] A Kurdish political representative explained the standardization of religion:

> Are Kurds free to practice their own religion? Evidently, there are problems on this issue, not only for the Kurds, but for all non-Muslims. The Turkish state still identifies itself according to the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam and declares all others as illegitimate.[779] For instances, cemevis are considered to be illegitimate. On this regard, a secular government also needs to be democratic, keeping equal distance from all religious beliefs and faiths. Yet, the state does not tolerate any Kurds who express that they don't exist within the Hanafi Sunni paradigm.[780]

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[776] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[777] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013. He also added: "In terms of the freedom to practice religion, we cannot really make a distinction between the Turkish and Kurdish experiences. Kurds [for are either Shafi'i or Alevi] experience as much problems as the non-Sunni Turks."

[778] Kevin Boyle and Juliet Sheen, eds. *Freedom of Religion and Belief: A World Report*, (London: Routledge, 1997), 392 & Orhan Kemal Cengiz, "Who Owns Turkey's Mosques?" *Al-Monitor,* May 20, 2013, accessed August 23, 2014, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/05/turkey-mosque-ownership.html#

[779] In Sunni Islam, there are four schools of jurisprudence: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali. Most Turks are Hanafi and most Kurds are Shafi'i although there are a great deal of Alevi Kurds who are neither Sunni nor Shia).

[780] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

In the words of another Kurdish respondent, Turkey's mosques and their imams have become an "instrument of state assimilation," where the imams deliver politically charged sermons at religious gatherings, and preach the teachings of Sunni Islam.[781] In April 2011, hundreds of Kurds, frustrated by Turkish imams leading congregational services, gathered at an "alternative" site for the Friday prayer service (*jumu'ah*) in Diyarbakir. Since then, thousands of Kurds have met and prayed in "empty lots, construction sites, and in courtyards near mosques."[782] The police responses to these gatherings have not been friendly, often including intimidation, tear gas and water cannons, to disperse the crowd.[783]

These alternative Friday prayers (or the "civil *jumu'ah*" as the local Kurds name it) emerged out of, what a Kurdish professor calls, "the ethnic susceptibility."[784] Led by Kurdish imams in Kurdish, Friday prayer service has become a symbol of Kurdish resistance against Turkish imams leading public services and preaching in Turkish. "We don't want to pray behind imams appointed by the Directorate for Religious Affairs. We don't want to listen to sermons determined by the state," explained a Kurdish professor.[785] "The alternative prayers are a concrete form of our demands for congregational services to be conducted in Kurdish," a Kurdish

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[781] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[782] Aliza Marcus, "The Kurds' Evolving Strategy: The Struggle Goes Political in Turkey," *World Affairs,* November/December 2012, accessed August 24, 2014, http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/kurds%E2%80%99-evolving-strategy-struggle-goes-political-turkey

[783] On police intimidation during Friday prayers, another responded said, "People prayed in the shadow of guns." Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013 &

Yuksekova Haber Gazetesi [Yuksekova Newspaper], "Gaz Bombali 'Sivil Cuma Namazi [Civil Friday Prayer Accompanied with Tear Gas]," November 9, 2012, Web Clip, accessed August 24, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXhkgaR5jOo

[784] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.

[785] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.

politician further elaborated. They emerged as a protest against the "politicization of religion. The state brought politics into mosques, and damned those who stood up against its ideology," he illuminated. "According to Islam, if an imam brings instigation into the mosque, the believer can longer follow his lead. Therefore, we couldn't go to mosques. Ours was a response, an act of civil disobedience."[786]

Kurds expressed similar sentiments of discontent on the issue of Kurdish language. There have been a number of improvements under the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) rule over the past decade. In 2008, a state-run channel (TRT SES) started broadcasting in Kurdish as the country's first national Kurdish television channel. In 2012, Kurdish was offered as an elective in secondary education for the first time.[787] Perhaps, most importantly, in 2011, an entire academic department was established and dedicated to Kurdish studies at a state university: The Living Tongues Institute (or Yasayan Diller in Turkish). These changes were indeed a "historic step."[788] They initially raised hopes that they "will take the country a step further on the path of democratization."[789] However, all of the respondents reported various social and political dynamics against the use of Kurdish in contemporary Turkey: Kurds are still being discouraged, through a coordinated plan, from using their own language in public institutions. A Kurdish professor noted:

> There is prejudice against Kurds speaking Kurdish in public institutions. I witnessed this firsthand at a police station. A woman was complaining in

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[786] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[787] BBC, "Kurdish can be taught in Turkey's Schools, Erdogan Says," June 12, 2012, accessed August 28, 214, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18410596

[788] Specifically, Prime Minister Erdogan called the offering of Kurdish as an elective in schools as a historical step. ibid.

[789] Today's Zaman, "NGOs of Southeast Say Offering Kurdish as Elective a Step Forward," June 17, 2012, accessed August 24, 2014, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_openPrintPage.action?newsId=283741

Kurdish and a police officer was insulting her, "Do not speak in Kurdish. Speak in Turkish. I don't understand you." Kurds still have the negative perception and fear associated with speaking Kurdish in public. Kurdish names are still being banned in public spaces.[790]

There are significant challenges against the inclusion of Kurdish letters into the political domain in post 2000s. In local municipalities, "banners [including Kurdish letters] are recalled, and garbage containers [with Kurdish letters] are recollected or repainted. Yet, TRT SES can use these letters while broadcasting."[791] These changes granted "de facto recognition of Kurdish. It is as if Kurdish was forbidden to Kurds," explained a Kurdish physician.[792] The social and political space to express one's religion, language and ethnic identity should be guaranteed under constitutional protections. This is inextricably interwoven with the core elements of democracy. However, the foundation of the free use of Kurdish language is built on muddy grounds. A Kurdish politician elucidates:

> It is a basic right for a nation to speak their language, and receive education in their mother tongue. Kurds still cannot give their children Kurdish names because they contain the banned Kurdish letters, W, Q, and X. Xazal becomes Hazal, Welat becomes Velat. This is an insult to a nation.[793]

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[790] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[791] Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[792] Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.

[793] Interview with BDP Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013. There is a recent case concerning the name of a 10th century Armenian Church in Lake Van. The church was originally named as the Holy Cross Akhtamar Church. Later, the "Holy Cross" was dropped from its name and Akhtamar was replaced with its Turkish equivalent – "Akdamar." The Turkish state remains adamant about the name change. Peter Balakian describes this situation as "the perpetrator culture's disdain for the Christian symbol, Armenian identity, and indeed the entire region's history." I would argue that it is an excellent illustration of Turkish nationalism, in general, and how it translates into state practices. Peter Balakian, "Raphael Lemkin, Cultural Destruction, and the Armenian Genocide," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 73.

Although the creation of The Living Tongues Institute might seem like a positive step toward the official recognition of Kurdish language, there are two inherently problematic issues here. First, the Institute is established in Mardin. Although Kurds inhabit some parts of the city, it is predominantly known for its Arab population. The formation of a Kurdish institute in a pre-dominantly Kurdish city, such as Diyarbakir, would have more symbolic value for the Kurds. Second, characterizing a Kurdish Institute as "The Living Tongues Institute" is a silent attack on Kurdish identity, and denial of its historical existence. According to several Kurdish respondents, it is "shameful," it is an "insult," and it is "a huge contradiction."[794]

In all of the state practices elaborated above, we can observe a form of "symbolic violence," "gentle, invisible violence…in which those to be dominated are encouraged to participate in their domination by performing an act of 'misrecognition' rather than challenging the arbitrary imposition of the dominant worldview."[795] The Kurdish experiences and what happens to those who advocate for the advancement of Kurdish rights clearly elaborate on the political discourse produced within a culture of fear. In such a discourse, the parameters of supporting

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[794] In order: Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013; Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013 & Interview with Human Rights Association Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013. Another problem here is that there is "a new trend in Turkey on the idea that Zaza Kurds are different from the rest of the Kurds. They are in fact two separate nations." Based on such popular myth, the Zaza Studies were transferred from The Living Tongues Institute to another university in Bingol. A respondent explained: "Kurds have two main denominations: Shafi'ism and Alevism. For many years, [the state] tried to separate the unity between the Shafi'i and Alevi Kurds. Kurds were divided into two categories, and they were antagonized against each other. Now, they [the state] want to do the same thing with Zaza Kurds." Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.

[795] Andrew Woolford, "Note on Society: Negotiating Affirmative Repair: Symbolic Violence in the British Columbia Treaty Process," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2004):118.

Kurdish rights are drawn based on a dichotomy – state national security or terrorism. Such parameters does not allow for an alternative discussion on Kurdish issues, their grievances or the state practices toward minority groups. The narratives exhibit such culture in its clearest fashion. "Both of my children have been detained. My son has just been released. My daughter is still in prison. They both defended Kurdish national rights,"[796] said a Kurdish representative. On the social discourse buttressing the state assimilation policies and its attack on its cultural producers, another explained:

> I had to endure various social struggles due to my ethnic identity. I am a Sunni Kurd, but I have never brought my religious or ethnic identity to the forefront. I don't think it is right to practice identity politics. Despite my non-politicized identity, I have been exposed to the politics of discrimination. I was a finalist for the position of President of Dicle University. I did not get appointed due to my Kurdish identity although I had more faculty votes than the person ended up being appointed. At least, I did not get tortured or deported from my home."[797] [Article 13 of the Turkish Higher Education Law dictates that the President of Turkey is responsible for appointing the university president among the pool of candidates. The finalists are determined by a secret ballot held among the faculty members].[798]

An interview with a Kurdish Professor resonated with similar sentiments about the state attack on Kurdish intellectual identity. "I am an Alevi Kurd. My promotion to the rank of Professor has been denied for the past four years because in their[799] minds, being Kurdish and Alevi is a disadvantage."[800]

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[796] Interview with Education and Science Workers' Union Representative, Diyarbakir, May 2013.
[797] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.
[798] Suat Teker and Dilek Teker, "A Comparative Study for Appointment Procedures of University Presidents," *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 2, no. 8 (November 2013): 127.
[799] Dicle University is a state-owned university. Here, the respondent refers to the mind of the state and state officials.
[800] Interview with Professor at Dicle University, May 2013.

The narratives provide a compelling account on the state assimilationist attempts. The "ontological destruction"[801] of Kurdish populations in Turkey offers insights on the normative social structures aimed at confining the Kurdish language, religion, cultural producers and how they are intimately connected to the process of group destruction. Robert van Krieken, using Australia's "stolen generations" has gone as far as building a link between genocide and homogenizing practices of nation-state building. From the matrix of van Krieken's thought, genocide can be explained as a consequence of that process. The result is the "fading away" of a group and destruction of the genos.[802]

The Kurdish case illustrates group destruction on a continuum. At the extreme end of the spectrum, there is a case of outright physical annihilation, such as what happened during the Anfal operations. At the other end of the spectrum, there is a case of "fading away," symbolic violence, a form of subdued, internalized oppression, such as the current predicament of Kurdish populations in Turkey. In the middle of it, there is cultural genocide, which I argue is a liminal category. Cultural genocide can refer to both genocidal and non-genocidal phenomena, thus ambiguously straddling the semantic boundary of what should or should not technically qualify as genocide. While such ambiguity may be debilitating in jurisprudential or political terms, it sociologically illuminates the non-exceptional,

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[801] Rather than focusing on physical or cultural destruction, Andrew Woolford offers a third way. He focuses on "ontological destruction," the view that the process of genocide should be opened up for discussion in order to understand group destruction from the perspective of the victims based on their "culturally specific meaning systems." Andrew Woolford, "Ontological Destruction: Genocide and Canadian Aboriginal Peoples," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 81-97.

[802] Robert van Krieken, "Cultural Genocide in Australia."

indeed, normative processes, structures and relations which give rise to genocide. The particular issue of symbolic violence, cultural genocide or genocide has remained critical in genocide studies. The paradox here is that the Kurdish genocide cannot be reduced to "a single episode of mass murder."[803] Trapped between artificial political boundaries created by the Treaty of Sevres, the politics of denial, forced assimilation, violence and in some cases, genocide have characterized the Kurdish status in Turkey and Iraq for the past one hundred years. The Kurdish genocide must be examined in terms of its broader processes, state interests and political structures. The Anfal campaign is just an episode of a larger process of destruction, physically and culturally – it is an episode of coordinated state measures of violence, oppression and the ethnic discrimination aimed at eradicating Kurdish social life from its living presence. Without addressing the conditions present in Turkey and Iraq, genocide, in all of its forms, is still possible.

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[803] Mark Levene, "The Meaning of Genocide, 26.

CONCLUSION:
ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COSMOPOLITAN CHOICE
AS A FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY

In his *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1978), Octavio Paz famously wrote:

> What sets worlds in motion is the interplay of differences, their attractions and repulsions. Life is plurality, death is uniformity. By suppressing differences and peculiarities, by eliminating different civilizations and cultures, progress weakens life and favors death. The idea of a single civilization for everyone, implicit in the cult of progress and technique, impoverishes and mutilates us. Every view of the world that becomes extinct, every culture that disappears, diminishes a possibility of life.[804]

Paz revealed the dimensions of solitude, destruction, thus the Mexican identity and thought in his short stories. He exposed injustice and moved his readers by a degree of commitment to emancipation, liberation and the cosmopolitan character of the global society. Like the *Labyrinth of Solitude,* this research was conducted with a genuine commitment to cosmopolitanism. Unfortunately, there is no single coherent and comprehensive solution to the great ideological struggles of cosmopolitan politics and the Kurdish predicament in the Middle East. There are different perspectives in the literature for a solution.

Philip S. Hadji calls for a secession of the Kurdish population based on their legal right to self-determination by pointing out to the recent examples in history, in Montenegro, Kosovo and Northern Ireland. Shane Donovan reminds us of the novelties of Hadji's romantic approach that the host countries would never agree to the loss of any of their territories.[805] Michael Gunter also recognizes the practical challenges to Kurdish independence and its grave dangers for the region's stability. A federal structure modeled after Quebec, legally protecting the minority's cultural,

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[804] Octovia Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude,* (London, UK: Penguin Press, 1967).

[805] Shane Donovan, "Kurdistan: The Elusive Quest for Sovereignty," *Harvard International Review* 28 no.3 (Fall 2006): 8.

political and linguistic rights, is a more promising alternative, Gunter argues.[806] The

realities Kurds face are indeed complex and dire. But how do we solve the problem?

How can philosophy be merged with practical concerns of politics in the Kurdish

case?

Theoretically, framing the Kurdish issue based on the Gunterian security

concerns cannot be taken as a given. A genuine solution requires the application of

the *weltbürgerrecht* right to the Kurdish predicament. Based on the Kantian universal

basis for morality and politics, Kurds, as distinct members of a nation, just like the

Sudanese, the Irish, the English, the Americans are entitled to their basic right to self-

determination. A cosmopolitan foreign policy cannot be based on principles that are

arbitrarily applicable to some. The United States and the West have a moral

responsibility to grant the Kurds their formal recognition of ethnic heritage, and

cultural, social and political rights.

Practically, this research calls for a solution within current borders. The

solution for the Kurdish predicament and ending the long-dormant suffering of the

Kurdish populations could serve as an engine and an anchor for the democratic

development of the Middle East, where the state does not mistreat its citizens and

citizens do not struggle with each other. Kurdish independence is hampered by

serious practical challenges, but ensuring the Kurds' well-being within their host

states can define a new relationship, reconfigure the state-society dichotomy in

Muslim politics and pave the way for legally recognized minority rights.

The recognition of legitimate minority rights can develop a humane path to

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[806] Michael Gunter, *Kurds Ascending*, 21-23.

produce a society that is more diverse and less plural in Iraq and Turkey. For that, the basic needs and rights of Kurds must be protected to maintain their secure existence within borders. The weight of the responsibility to reframe the Kurdish issue as an issue of human rights and democratization is heavy, both for the host states and the Kurdish populations as a group. At the political level, the states must protect the basic needs and rights of their Kurdish minorities and secure their existence within their borders. The allocation of state military expenditure to fight against PJAK/PKK terrorism can instead be used to fight with the Kurdish populations to find a long-term answer on how to end the violence. A genuine solution only becomes possible with the enactment of laws and regulations against the intimidation, imprisonment and execution of Kurdish journalists, writers and thinkers. On the other hand, it is absolutely vital for the Kurdish movement to have a clear message on its demands through a singular voice. Enacting legal reforms amidst the public's emotional reactions to PJAK and PKK violence is tough, thus, a resolution of the issue requires, from the Kurdish side, the pursuit of trust, conviction and confidence in the other.

A new critical political philosophy is required for understanding the identity of the "other." The struggle for liberty has been always been the struggle for recognition by "ordinary people" who do not occupy the highest rung on the ladder, writes Stephen Bronner, "all of them have suffered discrimination that was buttressed by prejudice."[807] Reversing the social, political and cultural dimensions of the stereotypical images of the Kurds makes it imperative to deconstruct the social and

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[807] Stephen Eric Bronner, "The Bigot," 53.

political discourse of how Kurds are seen. Unfortunately, such discourse has been tightly embedded in the hundred years of Turkish, Iraqi and Iranian history. Confronting it involves a genuine commitment to cosmopolitanism and liberal democracy. Only through cosmopolitan education, can citizens be exposed to a multiplicity of cultures, identities, customs, traditions and ideologies, necessitating an engagement with cosmopolitan education. A new form of solidarity is needed to engage with the subaltern groups, to learn from them and to be exposed to the conflicting traditions, stereotypes and idiosyncrasies of one's own culture. For Baldwin, "the reason why white people should learn from black people is because that is the way in which they can learn something about themselves."[808] In the words of a Kurdish representative from Baghdad, "what we have is not just a Kurdish problem. This is a democratic problem."[809]

The Kurd industry and its myths laid out in this research remains incredibly intertwined with the matters of ideology: the norms, values and imperial interests shape our understanding and that of our communities on how we think about ethics, foreign policy and human rights. The prevailing superstructure of the global order is marked by imperial ambitions and national interests. It would be imprudent to think that the ideological struggles of cosmopolitan politics will end anytime soon. What remains important, however, is the pursuit of cosmopolitan duty and cosmopolitanism as a deliberate choice in our foreign policy strategy. That will remain as the greatest struggle of politics of cosmopolitanism in the twenty-first

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[808] ibid, 181-182.
[809] Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute Representative, Erbil, June 2013.

century.

Policy Implications

This research opens a dialogue on the contested meaning and shape of human rights, and enables a new avenue to think about foreign policy — ethically and politically. It concerns an analysis of human rights and cosmopolitanism by discussing how Kurdish issues are shaped by the political landscape of the twenty first-century.[810] These issues are studied within the context of democratization, minority rights and a global hierarchy of power in the name of security. An integral part of developing a strong democratic foundation in the Middle East is the promotion of rights for ethnic, religious and other minorities. The role of minority rights in democratic transitions is indicative of the many social, economic and political challenges for the Kurds. Bridging the theory of democratic ethos and the practice of establishing a functioning democracy requires going beyond the artificial calculation that equates democracy to the concept of a multiparty electoral system. It entails a political system characterized not only by free and open elections but also by human rights, equality and liberalism.

As the radical group ISIS has progressed and a self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) gained control of northern Iraq, 40,000 Iraqi Yazidis and Christians have found

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[810] "The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. Therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory." This quotation formed the basis of Edward Said's personal motivation to conduct a study to illuminate the social and political culture Orientalism created in the Near East. During my graduate studies, the same quotation also encouraged me to reevaluate the policies imposed on the Kurdish populations of the Middle East. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1979), 25-26.

themselves trapped on Mount Sinjar. Considering the reports on the group's beheadings of non-Muslim religious minorities and the most recent execution of the 1,700 "Shi'a members of the [Iraqi] army" in Tikrit, the lives of those in Sinjar under imminent risk of genocide.[811] Yazidis, a small group of about 400,000 Zoroastrian Kurds, have faced oppression and extermination throughout Iraqi history. Their label as "devil worshippers" makes them particularly vulnerable.[812] "We are talking about a very real, immediate threat that an entire, ethno-national religious group is wiped off the face of the earth," explained David Romano in an interview.[813] President Obama used the word "genocide" in a *New York Times* interview with Thomas L. Friedman to describe the current Yazidi condition.[814] Sinjar is not the only site under the rising Islamist militant threat. In July, nearly all of Christians of Mosul, a community that have resided there for nearly 2,000 years, had to flee the city.[815] The ethnic and sectarian schisms between Sunnis, Shia and Kurds contribute to the Iraqi army's inability to stop the progression of the security crisis, a grave danger for the regional and American national security. The KRG is the most stable part of Iraq.

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[811] Human Rights Watch, "Iraq: ISIS Execution Site Located," June 27, 2014, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/26/iraq-isis-execution-site-located

[812] Yazidis worship to Angel Tawwus, a fallen angel that was admitted back into heaven. This gives them their "undeserved reputation." According to Baba Sheikh, a Yazidi spiritual leader, 70,000 Yazidis have already escaped the country. Raja Jalabi, "Who Are the Yazidis and Why is ISIS Hunting Them?" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2014, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/07/who-yazidi-isis-iraq-religion-ethnicity-mountains

[813] Jennifer Davidson, *KSMU Ozarks Public Radio*, August 11, 2014, accessed August 14, 2014, http://ksmu.org/post/msu-professor-gives-primer-isis-yezidis-and-americas-options-iraq

[814] "When you have a unique circumstance in which genocide is threatened…you have a strong international consensus that these people need to be protected." Thomas L. Friedman, "Obama on the World," *The New York Times,* August 8, 2014, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/09/opinion/president-obama-thomas-l-friedman-iraq-and-world-affairs.html?_r=0

[815] Cameron Hudson, "Saving the Yazidi: An Obama Doctrine for Genocide Prevention?" *New Republic,* August 11, 2014, accessed August 14, 2014, http://www.newrepublic.com/article/119047/saving-yazidi-obama-doctrine-genocide-prevention

With its rich oil reserves, it is also an attractive site for many American companies, including ExxonMobil and Chevron. However, KRG has only one downfall: "it is not a state."[816] Kurds, and their referendum on independence, remains an important issue. Paradoxically, with their military power, they are the most powerful actor that can stand against ISIS and decelerate the progression of the threat. Limited air strikes and humanitarian aid are needed: a long-term solution necessitates arming the Kurds more heavily.

The ISIS crisis highlights the Kurdish struggles toward independence and the U.S.'s unwillingness to support the Kurds, even against a dreadful force such as ISIS. This study's ability to bridge political theory with practice and reveal those policy implications supports its significance. Policy makers and scholars can learn the lessons from the Kurdish case and apply them to the current crisis in Iraq and Syria. The tension between ethics and politics is a one-dimensional problem impacting multi-dimensional geo-spaces in the world. Many nations today cannot have their independence because their right to self-determination is stuck somewhere in between political calculations and interests. The successful transformation of the Kurdish experience is essential not only for the meaningful democratization processes of the host countries, but also to the region and international society as a whole.

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[816] Steve Coll, "Oil and Erbil."

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Kurdish Lands (1992)

Figure 2: Kurdish Areas in the Middle East and the Soviet Union (1986)
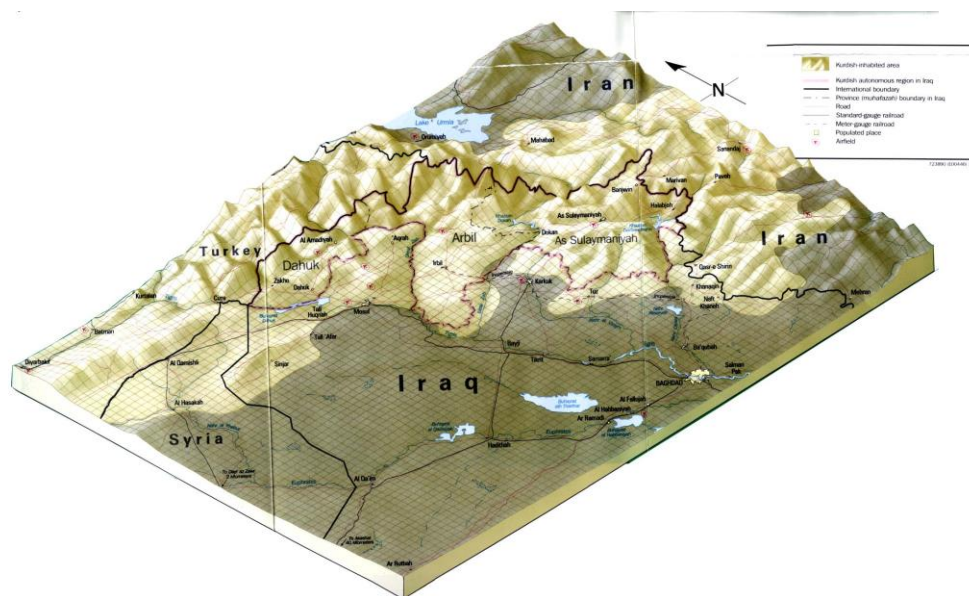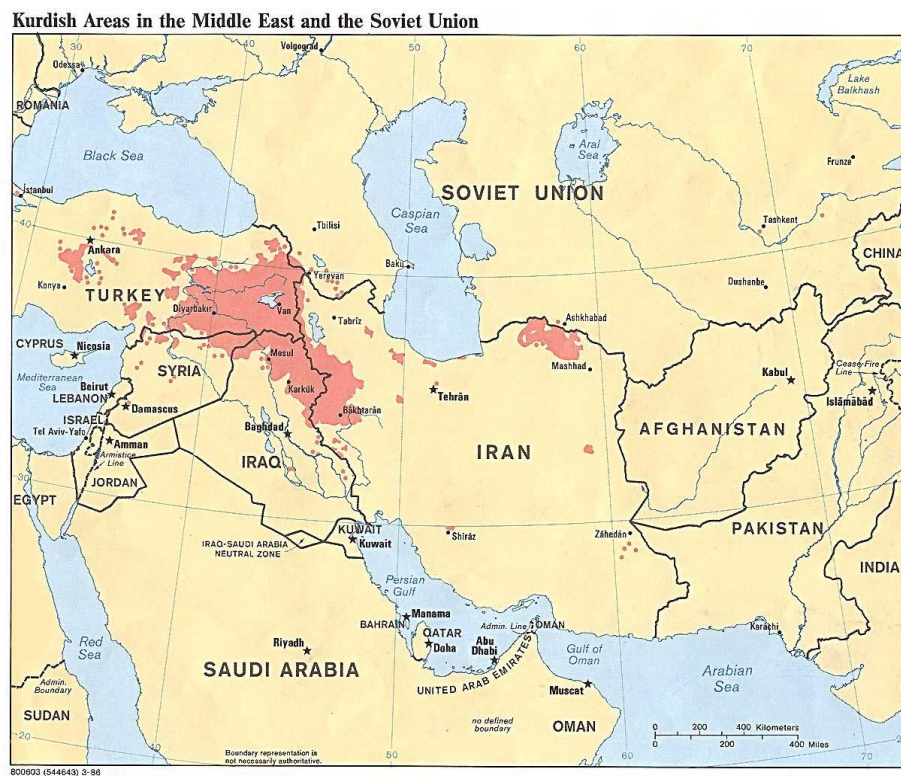

Kurdish Areas in the Middle East and the Soviet Union

Figure 3: Kurdish-Inhabited Areas (1992)

Figure 4: Kurdish Areas of Northern Iraq (2003)

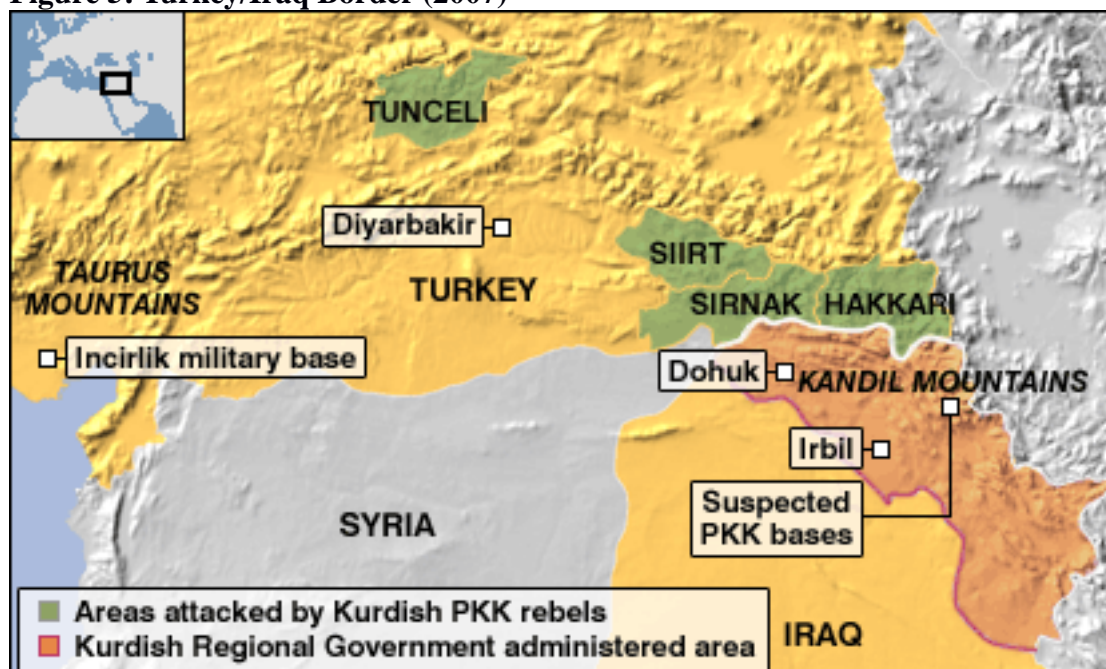**Figure 5: Turkey/Iraq Border (2007)**

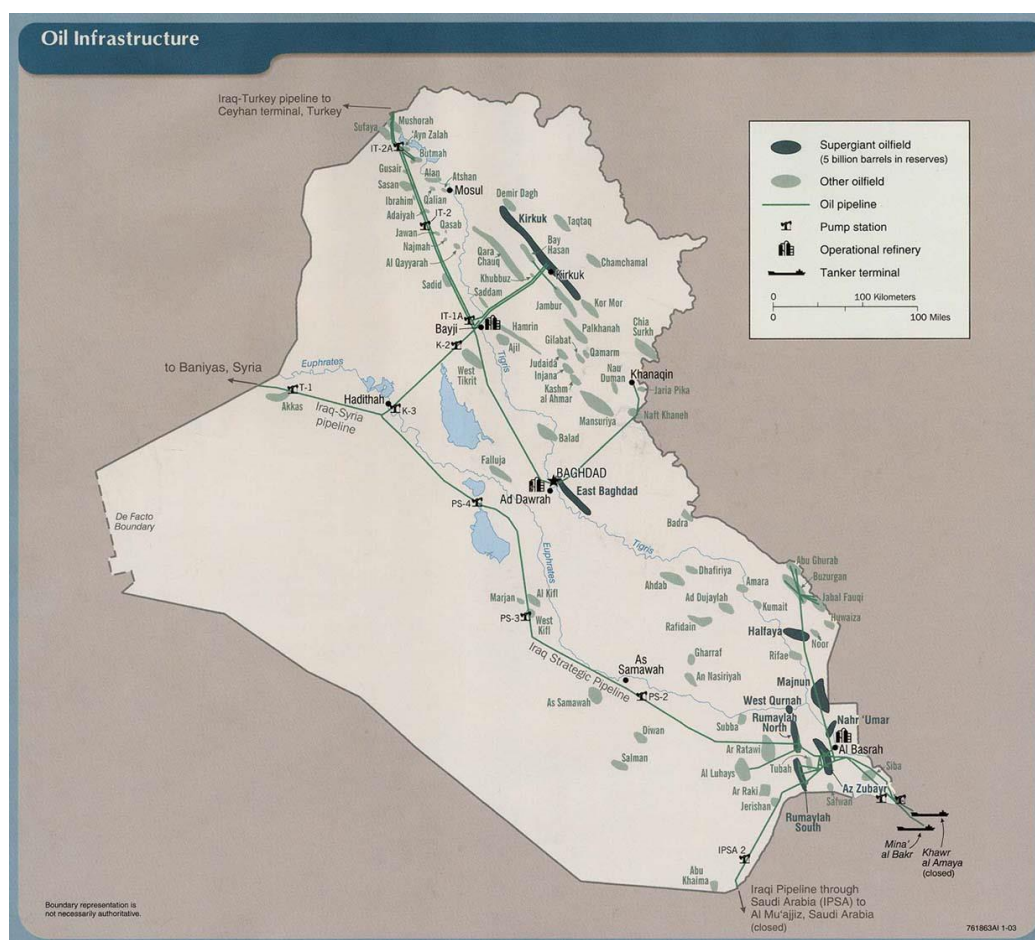**Figure 6: Iraq Oil Infrastructure (2003)**

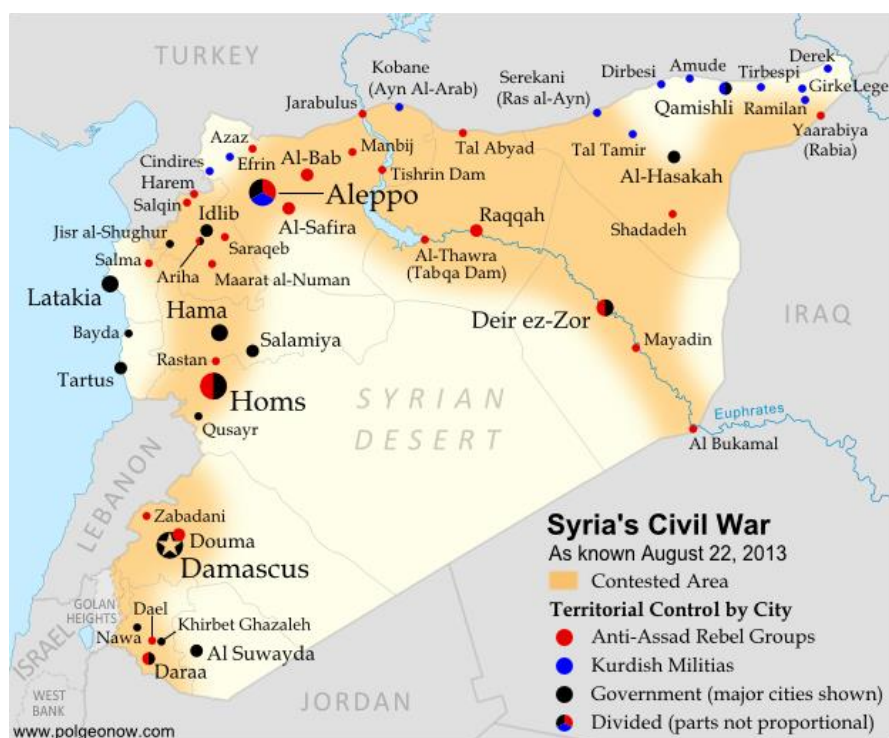**Figure 7: Syria Civil War Rebel Control (2013)**

Figure 8: ISIS and Kurdish areas of control (as of June 14, 2014)

Table 2: A collection of Al-Rafidayn newspaper articles, (May 16, 2013- January 17, 2010)

Key words:

Kurd:	كرد / الأكراد
Kurdish:	كردي/ كردية
Kurdistan:	كردستان

Number	Dates	Headlines	Translation
1	May 16, 2013	حكومة إقليم كردستان تنأى بنفسها عن انسحاب عناصر الكردستاني إلى الأراضي العراقية	KRG distance itself from the withdrawal of the elements of the Iraqi Kurdistan to Iraqi lands
2	May 15, 2013	تركيا تنضم لكردستان العراق واكسون في التنقيب عن النفط	Turkey to join Iraqi Kurdistan and Exxon in oil exploration
3	May 11, 2013	فايننشال تايمز : حكومة اقليم كردستان العراق تدرّب أكراد سوريا لمواجهة المتطرفين	Financial Times: Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government trained Syrian Kurds to confront extremists
4	May 09, 2013	مهاجمون انتحاريون يستهدفون أكرادا عراقيين في مناطق متنازع عليها	Suicide bombers targeted Iraqi Kurds in disputed areas
5	May 07, 2013	المالكي يزور اربيل قريبا - الحكومة تنفي منح الاكراد 9 مليارات دولار	Maliki visiting Arbil soon - the government denies granting Kurds 9 billion dollars
6	April 30, 2013	مصادر: شركة تركية تبرم اتفاقا لتصدير الكهرباء لكردستان العراق	Sources: Turkish company entered into an agreement to export electricity to Iraqi Kurdistan
7	April 28, 2013	قوات كردية في محيط كركوك والمالكي يربط "الفتنة الطائفية" في العراق باحداث سوريا	Kurdish forces in the vicinity of Kirkuk, and al-Al-Maliki connects "sectarian strife" in Iraq with the events of Syria
8	April 24, 2013	كردستان العراق تضاعف صادراتها النفطية وتتجاهل بغداد	Iraqi Kurdistan has doubled its oil exports and ignores Baghdad
9	April 08, 2013	المالكي يمنح الوزراء الكرد إجازة ويكلف بدلاء بالوكالة	Al-Maliki gives the Kurds' ministers vacation and appointed others to run the agency

10	April 06, 2013	اقليم كردستان العراقي يبيع أول شحنة من النفط الخام في السوق الدولية	Iraqi Kurdistan sell the first shipment of crude oil in the international market
11	April 03, 2013	اشتباكات بأسلحة متوسطة وخفيفة بين أكراد وشبك في قريتين متجاورتين شرق الموصل	Clashes with medium and light weapons between the Kurds and the kink in two neighboring villages east of Mosul
12	March 13, 2013	الجعفري يؤكد بعد لقاءه المالكي والحكيم على "العلاقات الاستراتيجية" مع الكرد والعراقية	Jaafari confirmed after his meeting with al-Maliki and al-Hakim "strategic relations" with the Iraqi Kurds
13	March 13, 2013	زيباري: الوزراء الأكراد مستعدون للانسحاب من الحكومة العراقية إذا أمر البارزاني بذلك	Zebari: Minister Kurds are ready to withdraw from the Iraqi government if Barzani ordered it
14	March 05, 2013	انفجار سيارة بإقليم كردستان العراق يعكر هدوءا نسبيا مستمر منذ سنوات	A car bombing in Kurdistan Region of Iraq disturbs the relative calm that has been going on for years
15	March 04, 2013	غياب الرئيس العراقي سيخل المعادلة السياسية للأكراد	The absence of the Iraqi president would cause prejudice the political equation for the Kurds
16	February 27, 2013	وكالة: جازبروم نفت الروسية توقع اتفاقا نفطيا في كردستان	Agency: Russia's Gazprom Neft signed an oil deal in Kurdistan
17	February 26, 2013	وزير عراقي: تركيا ترفض مد خط أنابيب كردي	Iraqi minister: Turkey rejects the pipeline Kurd
18	February 24, 2013	السليمانية: مقتل رئيس عشيرة غواره الكردية	Sulaymaniyah: the killing of the head of the Kurdish Guarh clan
19	February 20, 2013	وكالة: رئيس إقليم كردستان يعلن توقيع اتفاقات جديدة مع جازبروم نفت	Agency: President of Kurdistan Region announces the signing of new agreements with Gazprom Neft
20	February 16, 2013	معركة ميزانية العراق تفتح جبهة جديدة في الصراع مع الأكراد	Iraq's budget battle to open a new front in the conflict with the Kurds
21	February 14, 2013	«هيومن رايتس» تتحدث عن «أيام مظلمة» لصحافة كردستان	'Human Rights' talk about the 'dark days' of Kurdistan journalism
22	February 11, 2011	دولة القانون: البرلمان لن يقر الموازنة اليوم والكرد أدخلوها	State law: Parliament will not approve the budget today and Kurds entered it

		نفق التوافقات والكردستاني يتهمه بالتنصل	of the tunnel and the Kurdistan consensus accuse him of shirking
23	February 08, 2011	أكراد العراق يمضون قدما في أنبوب نفط إلى تركيا رغم مخاوف أمريكية	Iraq's Kurds they move forward in an oil pipeline to Turkey, despite U.S. concerns
24	January 17, 2011	نائب رئيس اقليم كردستان يزور كركوك لبحث ملابسات التدهور الامني الذي شهدته المدينة	Vice President of the Kurdistan region to visit Kirkuk to discuss the circumstances of the deterioration of security experienced by the city
25	January 17, 2011	العراق يعتزم اتخاذ اجراءات قوية ضد كردستان وشركات نفط	Iraq plans to take strong measures against the Kurdistan oil companies
26	January 08, 2011	الوزراء السنة والاكراد بالعراق يقاطعون جلسة الحكومة	Minister Sunnis and Kurds in Iraq are boycotting the cabinet meeting
27	January 08, 2011	كردستان العراق تبدأ تصدير النفط الخام بشكل مستقل	Iraq's Kurdistan starts exporting crude oil independently
28	January 06, 2011	الكردستاني يكشف عن قبول طروحات وزارة الدفاع بشأن المناطق المتنازع عليها	Kurdistan reveals to accept the proposals of the Ministry of Defense on the disputed areas
29	January 02, 2011	كركوك: تظاهرة عربية تدعو لاطلاق سراح المعتقلين بسجون كردستان	Kirkuk: demonstration Arab calls for the release of detainees in Kurdistan jails
30	December 30, 2012	دولة القانون: بارزاني يجند قادة الحرس الجمهوري المالكي يتهم تركيا بمحاولة تقسيم العراق عبر صفقات "بائسة" مع إقليم كردستان	Maliki accused Turkey of trying to divide Iraq through deals "miserable" with the Kurdistan region
31	December 27, 2012	صادرات نفط كردستان العراق تتراجع بشكل حاد بسبب الخلاف المالي البيشمركة وتصعيده لإجهاض خفض موازنة كردستان إلى 12 %	Iraqi Kurdistan's oil exports fall sharply due to dispute Almalia the Peshmerga and escalate to abort the Kurdistan budget cut to 12%
32	December 22, 2012	العراق يقول انه يحجب مدفوعات مقابل صادرات نفط كردية	Iraq says it obscures payments for Kurdish oil exports
33	December 16, 2012	كردستان ترد على اميركا: لن نتخلى عن عقود النفط مع تركيا	Kurdistan respond to America: We will not give up on oil contracts with

		وسنصل لمليون برميل يوميا في 2015	Turkey and we will reach one million barrels per day in 2015
34	December 13, 2012	مصادر: العراق يحظر مشاركة ترافيجورا في المناقصات لشرائها نفطا كرديا	Sources: Iraq is Prohibits Trafigura's participation in tenders to buy Kurdish oil
35	December 10, 2012	طالباني: الكردي العاقل لايريد الانفصال	Talabani: Kurdish sapiens did not want separation
36	December 4, 2012	المالكي يحذّر من مخاطر لا تحمد عقباها على خلفية تحريك قوات كردية في مناطق متنازع عليها	Maliki warns of ominous risks against the backdrop of moving the Kurdish forces in disputed areas
37	December 3, 2012	البرلمان يخفق بتمرير قانون الاتصالات والمعلوماتية بعد انسحاب نواب العراقية والكردستاني	Parliament fails to pass the Telecommunications and Information Law after the withdrawal of Iraqi and Kurdish deputies
38	December 1, 2012	اقليم كردستان العراق يعلن فشل المفاوضات مع بغداد لانهاء التوتر الامني	Iraq's Kurdistan region announced the failure of negotiations with Baghdad to end the security tension
39	November 27, 2012	منظمة كردية تطلق حملةً لحذف اسم (العراق) من لوحات سيارات إقليم كردستان	Kurdish organization launches campaign to delete the name of the (Iraq) from the cars' plates of the Kurdistan region
40	November 26, 2012	البارزاني: أزمة الأقليم وحكومة بغداد جزء من مشكلة العراقيين معها ويجب حلها جذريا	Barzani: the crisis of the region and the government in Baghdad is part of the Iraqi problem and must be solved radically
41	November 25, 2012	الاكراد العراقيون يرسلون مزيدا من القوات الى مواجهة مع الجيش العراقي	Iraqi Kurds send more troops to face the Iraqi army
42	November 24, 2012	تعثر محادثات لانهاء مواجهة بين القوات العراقية وقوات كردية	Stalled talks to end the confrontation between Iraqi forces and Kurdish forces
43	October 31, 2012	كاتب كردي يحذر نجيرفان بارزاني من (ربيع) ويصف مبادرته لتوحيد (الأمن) بالدكتاتورية	Kurdish writer warns Nechirvan Barzani of the (spring) and describes the initiative to unite the (Security) dictatorship
44	October 28, 2012	(دولة القانون) : قادة كردستان يعتبرون الجيش العراقي عدواً	(State law): Kurdish leaders considered the Iraqi army an enemy

45	October 22, 2012	المالكي يلتقي وفداً كردياً رفيعاً ويدعوه الى وضع مصلحة العراق فوق كل اعتبار	Maliki meets with a delegation of senior Kurdish and invite them to put the interests of Iraq above all
	October 3, 2012	العراق يطلب من تركيا وقف ملاحقة المتمردين الاكراد عبر الحدود	Iraq asks Turkey to stop pursuing Kurdish rebels across the border
46	September 25, 2012	نائب عن دولة القانون: تجاوز الخلافات مع علاوي غير ممكن وحل المشاكل ليس بيد الطالباني	Deputy for the rule of law: overcoming differences with Allawi is not possible and solving problems is not in the hand of Talabani
47	September 12, 2012	استئناف محاكمة صحافي كردي في اربيل بتهمة المساس بأمن وسيادة الاقليم	Resuming trial of Kurdish journalist in Arbil on charges of compromising the security and sovereignty of the province
48	September 6, 2012	رئاسة اقليم كردستان تعلن رفضها قرار الحكومة العراقية بشأن زيارة داوود أوغلو لكركوك	Presidency of the Kurdistan region declares its rejection of the Iraqi government's decision on Davutoglu's visit to Kirkuk
49	September 1, 2012	مسؤول: كردستان العراق مستعد للتفاوض لانهاء الخلاف بشأن قانون النفط	Official: Iraqi Kurdistan is ready to negotiate to end a dispute over oil law
50	August 29, 2012	كردستان العراق تهدد بوقف تصدير النفط مجددا	Iraqi Kurdistan threatens to halt oil exports again
51	August 16, 2012	الطائرات التركية تقصف مواقع على المرتفعات الحدودية في إقليم كردستان العراق	Turkish planes bombed sites on the highlands border in the Kurdistan region of Iraq
52	August 7, 2012	تشكيل لجنة في كردستان العراق للحوار مع حكومة بغداد حول الملفات العالقة	Forming a committee in the Iraqi Kurdistan for dialogue with the government of Baghdad on outstanding issues
53	August 1, 2012	مسؤول كردي: اكراد سوريون تدربوا في كردستان العراق (لملء الفراغ بعد سقوط النظام)	Kurdish official: Syrian Kurds were trained in Iraqi Kurdistan (to fill the vacuum after the fall of the regime)
54	July 21, 2012	العراق يتلقى ردا (إيجابيا) من أوباما بشأن عقود اكسون في كردستان	Iraq receives a positive response from Obama on Contracts for Exxon in Kurdistan

55	July 18, 2012	رئاسة اقليم كردستان العراق تتهم المالكي بالسعي الى (عسكرة المجتمع واشاعة العنف)	Presidency of the Kurdistan region of Iraq accuses al-Maliki of seeking (the militarization of society and spreading violence)
56	July 10, 2012	البارزاني يعلن عن تشكيل مجلس للأمن الوطني باقليم كردستان العراق	Barzani announced the formation of the National Security Council in Kurdistan Region of Iraq
57	July 1, 2012	كردستان العراق يبدأ تصدير نفطه الى تركيا من دون موافقة بغداد	Iraq's Kurdistan starts exporting oil to Turkey without Baghdad's approval
58	Jun 24 2012	الشهرستاني: ليس لي عداء مع الكرد وخلافي معهم لا يتعدى العقود النفطية	Shahristani: I do not have a feud with the Kurds and my disagreement with them does not exceed the oil contracts
59	Jun 12, 2012	خمسة آلاف لاجيء سوري في كردستان العراق	Five thousand Syrian refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan
60	Jun 6, 2012	تأجيل انتخابات مجالس المحافظات في اقليم كردستان العراق	Postponement of provincial elections in the Kurdistan region of Iraq
61	Jun 5, 2012	كردستان العراق تتوقع نمو انتاج النفط لمليوني ب/ي بحلول 2019	Iraqi Kurdistan expects oil production to grow to two million by 2019
62	May 29, 2012	الامم المتحدة: عدد النازحين السوريين في كردستان العراق بلغ أكثر من أربعة آلاف شخص	United Nations: Number of displaced Syrians in Iraq's Kurdistan amounted to more than four thousand people
63	May 28, 2012	اكراد العراق يحذرون من (عقلية فاشية) قد تدفع نحو استهدافهم من جديد	Iraqi Kurds warn of (the fascist mentality) may push towards targeting them again
64	May 17, 2012	رئاسة كردستان: لن نقف ضد ترشيح الجعفري بديلا عن المالكي	Presidency of Kurdistan: We will not stand against Jaafari substitute for Maliki
65	May 21, 2012	البارزاني ينفي تهريب النفط من كردستان العراق الى الخارج	Barzani denies smuggling of oil from Iraq's Kurdistan to abroad
66	April 28, 2012	الشهرستاني.. النزاع بين بغداد وكردستان شأن داخلي	Shahristani, The dispute between Baghdad and Kurdistan is an internal affair

67	April 11 , 2012	برلمان كردستان يصادق على قانون العفو العام	Kurdish parliament approves amnesty law
68	April 6 , 2012	برلمان كردستان العراق يمنح الثقة لحكومة جديدة برئاسة نيجيرفان بارزاني	Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament gives confidence to the new government headed by Barzani
69	April 2 , 2012	نائب رئيس الوزراء العراقي يؤكد ان النفط يهرب من اقليم كردستان الى ايران	Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister confirms that the oil escapes from the Kurdistan region to Iran
70	March 27 , 2012	حكومة كردستان العراق تلوح بوقف صادرات النفط	The Government of Kurdistan of Iraq waving to halt oil exports
71	March 21 , 2012	البارزاني يهاجم المالكي بعنف من دون أن يسميه ويلمح إلى إعلان الدولة الكردية في الوقت المناسب	Barzani violently attacking al-Maliki without naming him, and alludes the declaration of a Kurdish state in a timely manner
72	March 17 , 2012	الأكراد يقولون اكسون مازالت تعمل في شمال العراق	Kurds say Exxon still working in northern Iraq
73	March 5 , 2012	العراق يطالب الأكراد بتسليم الهاشمي لمحاكمته	Iraq demands Kurds hand over al-Hashemi for trial
74	February 16 , 2012	مجلس القضاء الاعلى في العراق يطالب سلطات اقليم كردستان بتسليم الهاشمي	Supreme Judicial Council in Iraq, demanding the authorities of the Kurdistan region to hand over al-Hashemi
75	February 26, 2012	اقليم كردستان يتسلم 5 طائرات هليكوبتر نمساوية لاستخدامها في تنظيم المرور	Kurdistan receives 5 Austrian helicopters to be used in traffic control
76	February 16, 2012	برلمان اقليم كردستان العراق يسمي نيجيرفان بارزاني لتشكيل حكومة محلية جديدة	Parliament of the Kurdistan region of Iraq called Barzani to form a new local government
77	February 16, 2012	مجلس القضاء الاعلى في العراق يطالب سلطات اقليم كردستان بتسليم الهاشمي	Supreme Judicial Council in Iraq, demanding the authorities of the Kurdistan region to hand over al-Hashemi
78	February 15, 2012	العراقية تعد بعدم التشدد في القضايا الخلافية.. والكردستاني متفائل بنتائج اجتماع اليوم	Iraq is not militancy in controversial issues. Kurdistan and optimistic about the outcome of today's meeting
79	February 14, 2012	حكومة اقليم كردستان العراق تتهم حزب العمال الكردستاني باعدام مواطن	Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government accuses the PKK death citizen

80	February 16, 2012	الشهرستاني: لا يحق لتوتال توقيع اتفاقات مع كردستان	Shahristani: Total no right to sign agreements with the Kurdistan
81	February 11, 2012	العراق يسمح لشركة كورية بالمشاركة في جولة تراخيص بعد بيع حصة كردية	Iraq allows Korean companies to participate in the licensing round after the sale of a stake Kurdish
82	February 08, 2012	العراقية والكردستاني متمّسكان باتفاقية أربيل.. والتحالف يطرح ورقة جديدة	Iraqi Kurdistan and adhere to the Convention on Arbil. Alliance raises new paper
83	February 04, 2012	توتر الشرق الأوسط يؤدي إلى تقارب بين تركيا وأكراد العراق	The tension in the Middle East leads to a rapprochement between Turkey and Iraqi Kurds
84	February 04, 2012	مقاتلات تركية تغير على أهداف لحزب العمال الكردستاني في شمال العراق	Turkish fighter jets change on the goals of the PKK in northern Iraq
85	January 31 , 2012	نص رسالة نوشيروان مصطفى الى أعضاء كتلة التغيير في برلمان كوردستان	Message text Nushirwan Mustafa members to block change in the Kurdistan Parliament
86	January 29 , 2012	صحيفة: توتال تقترب من اتفاق بشأن حقوق تنقيب في كردستان	Newspaper: Total nearing agreement on exploration rights in Kurdistan
87	January 29 , 2012	البارزاني يدعو اكراد سوريا الى التوحد كشرط لدعمهم	Barzani calls for Syria's Kurds to unite as a condition to support them
88	January 23 , 2012	دولة القانون: مجلس القضاء الاعلى يفاوض اقليم كردستان على تسليم الهاشمي ونرجح الانفراج قريبا	State law: the Supreme Judicial Council to negotiate the Kurdistan region to hand over al-Hashemi and expect a breakthrough soon
89	January 12, 2012	حكومة كردستان العراق: اتفاق اكسون يسير في طريقه ولا عوائق	KRG: Exxon deal walking in its way without obstacles
90	January 11 , 2012	رئيس إقليم كردستان العراق لن يشارك في المؤتمر الوطني في حال عقده في بغداد	President of the Kurdistan region of Iraq will not participate in the national conference if held in Baghdad
91	January 09 , 2012	أطراف في (العراقية) تتهم الاكراد باستغلال دور الوساطة	Parties to the (Iraqi) Kurds accused of using

		<u>في الأزمات السياسية لتحقيق المكاسب</u>	mediation role in the crisis for political gains
92	January 08 , 2012	<u>طلب رسمي بتسليم الهاشمي ومجلس قضاء كردستان العراق يرفض</u>	A formal request to hand over al-Hashemi and district council of Iraq's Kurdistan refuses
93	January 08 , 2012	<u>مساعد لبارزاني يطالب بإجراء استفتاء حول استقلال كردستان</u>	Barzani aide calls for a referendum on independence for Kurdistan
94	January 07 , 2012	<u>فرار 11 سجينا في كردستان العراق بعدما حفروا نفقا تحت السجن بطول 80 مترا</u>	Escape of 11 prisoners in Iraqi Kurdistan after they dug a tunnel under the prison length of 80 meters
95	January 05 , 2012	<u>البرزاني: الأكراد سيبقون بمنأى عن الخلافات الطائفية</u>	Barzani: Kurds will remain untouched by sectarian differences
96	January 05, 2012	<u>كانون الاول/ديسمبر شهر (اسود) للصحافة في كردستان العراق</u>	December is (Black) month for the press in Iraqi Kurdistan
97	January 04, 2012	<u>التحالف الكردستاني يعلن رفضه اقالة المطلك او سحب الثقة منه</u>	Kurdistan Alliance announces his refusal to dismiss Mutlaq or withdraw confidence from it

Table 5- Sample of Narratives Constructed Through Open Coding

"The Turkish Republic is built on the tradition of denial of the other. This tradition is a continuation from the Young Turk movement. It is based on the ideology of the single. One nation, one state, one religion, one language. It does not allow for any multiplicities a space to live. Such state mentality is imposed upon the society. It is carried into the education system. The textbooks portrays Turkey as the land of the Turks. No other ethnicities are recognized."	#2 Interview with Education and Science Workers' Union Representative, May 2013, Diyarbakir Turkey
"I am an Alevi Kurd. In Religion and Moral Education courses, Alevism was depicted in the textbooks and in the classroom as a deviant sect. I did not display any deviant behavior, but had to describe my religion as deviant. It was such a traumatic situation for a child." "Kurds have become the "other" due to their ethnic and political identities. In movies, they are portrayed comical characters who speak a weird language and who are always calculating, dishonest and primitive. It is always the "other" we laugh at. It is because of our collective memory and perception. Perception is unfortunately an important paradigm here. Whenever I attend medical conferences with my Turkish colleagues from the West, I recognize the same perception in their analysis – Kurds are separatist ungrateful people who betray the country that feed them."	#3 Interview with Diyarbakir Medical Association Representative, Diyarbakir, Turkey, May 2013.
"I am a Fayli Kurd from Baghdad. Socially, it is unacceptable to speak Kurdish in public places in Baghdad. "It is a shame to speak Kurdish in public," Arabs react. It is the same in the state institutions. The people with the same mentality are the same inside and outside of government institutions. It is not a clear pressure. It is not under the power and the gun. But it is not allowed socially. If you talk in Kurdish, they [Arabs] bother you. They don't leave you alone."	#16 Interview with Kurdish Human Rights Institute, Erbil, Iraq, June 2013.
"Under Saddam's regime, we [the Kurds] had to bribe the security officers at the checkpoints to leave Baghdad. Now, I can go to Baghdad and face no political discrimination due to my ethnicity. Sometimes, when someone speaks Kurdish inside the Parliament, others will react to it. But it is not about official discrimination against Kurds. It is about "everyone knows Arabic. Let's talk in Arabic."	#17 Interview with Journalist, Associated Press, Erbil, Iraq, June 2013.
"Kurds face obstacles at the political and societal level. Political obstacles are due to the status of the contested territories; Kirkuk, Mosul and Hanekin. The Kurds have always experienced discrimination. However, due to the new legislation and laws, Arabs can no longer discriminate against us at the legal level. Obstacles at the societal level are due to social hostility against Kurds. Arabs react against the use of Kurdish language. Although Kurdish is recognized as one of the official languages, we experience social difficulties. Last year, 8 members of the Parliament, representing the Goran movement, spoke Kurdish at the Parliament for the first time. Despite the initial reactions, the situation has become normalized over time. Today, there are Kurdish translators at the Parliament."	#18 Interview with Member of the Kurdish Parliament, Erbil, Iraq, June 2013.

APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1. FORMS AND TRANSLATIONS

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

May 14, 2014

P.I. Name: Haskollar
Protocol #: 13-638Mx

Elcin Haskollar
Division of Global Affairs
180 University Avenue Newark Campus

Dear Elcin Haskollar:

✓

(Initial / Amendment / Continuation / Continuation w/ Amendment)

Protocol Title: "The Kurd Industry: Understanding the Politics of Cosmopolitanism in the Twenty First Industry"

This is to advise you that the above-referenced study has been presented to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, and the following action was taken subject to the conditions and explanations provided below:

Approval Date: 5/7/2014   **Expiration Date:** 5/6/2015   **Expedited Category(s):** 8c
Approved # of Subject(s): Open   **Currently Enrolled:** 25

This approval is based on the assumption that the materials you submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) contain a complete and accurate description of the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research. The following conditions apply:

- **This Approval**-The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted. **This approval is valid ONLY for the dates listed above;**
- **Reporting**-ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications**-Any proposed changes MUST be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form(s)**-Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document, if you are using such documents in your research. The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;
- **Continuing Review**-You should receive a courtesy e-mail renewal notice for a Request for Continuing Review before the expiration of this project's approval. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that an application for continuing review has been submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the expiration date to extend the approval period;

Additional Notes: -Continuation Expedited Approval per 45 CFR 46.110;
-IRB Approval has been provided for data analysis only. PI is to contact the IRB prior to the recruitment of additional subjects or further interactions/interventions with subjects.

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.
Please note that the IRB has the authority to observe, or have a third party observe, the consent process or the research itself. The Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) number for the Rutgers University IRB is FWA00003913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Respectfully yours,

Michelle Hoffman

Acting For--
Dr. Beverly Tepper, Ph.D.
Professor
Chair, Rutgers University Institutional Review Board

cc: Stephen E. Bronner

(MW:bk)

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

April 26, 2013

P.I. Name: Haskollar
Protocol #: 13-638M

Elcin Haskollar
Division of Global Affairs
180 University Avenue
Newark Campus

Dear Elcin Haskollar:

(Initial / Amendment / Continuation / Continuation w/ Amendment)

Protocol Title: "The Kurd Industry: Understanding the Politics of Cosmopolitanism in the Twenty First Industry"

This is to advise you that the above-referenced study has been presented to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, and the following action was taken subject to the conditions and explanations provided below:

Approval Date:	3/28/2013	**Expiration Date:**	3/27/2014
Expedited Category(s):	7	**Approved # of Subject(s):**	30

This approval is based on the assumption that the materials you submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) contain a complete and accurate description of the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research. The following conditions apply:
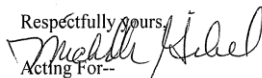
- **This Approval-**The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted. **This approval is valid ONLY for the dates listed above;**
- **Reporting-**ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications-**Any proposed changes MUST be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form(s)-**Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document, if you are using such documents in your research. The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;
- **Continuing Review-**You should receive a courtesy e-mail renewal notice for a Request for Continuing Review before the expiration of this project's approval. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that an application for continuing review has been submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the expiration date to extend the approval period;

Additional Notes: **Expedited Approval per 45 CFR 46.110**

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.
Please note that the IRB has the authority to observe, or have a third party observe, the consent process or the research itself. The Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) number for the Rutgers University IRB is FWA00003913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Respectfully yours,

Acting For--
Dr. Beverly Tepper, Ph.D.
Professor
Chair, Rutgers University Institutional Review Board

                              cc: Stephen E. Bronner

Attachment 5 – Oral Consent Form for Interview
(APPENDIX-C Interview Consent Statement Form)

You are invited to participate to this interview research developed by Elcin Haskollar, a Doctoral student from Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, USA. The purpose of this study is to understand the social, political and economic challenges facing the Kurdish populations. This study will help to broaden the scope of existing knowledge in the field of security studies and human rights.

Approximately 30 subjects, who are academics, intellectuals, politicians, and members of civil society organizations will participate in the study, and each individual's participation will last approximately 45 minutes. Participation means providing certain information about yourself: ethnicity, job title, birth country and place of residence and responding to semi-structured questions, which are related to the objectives of this research. Your oral consent grants the investigator named above permission to interview with you regarding the aforementioned subject matters.

All information will be confidential. Confidential means that I will keep this information confidential/private by limiting any individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University and I are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept until the research is officially approved by Rutgers University.

The risk of participation in this study is minimal. There is a risk of loss confidentiality, but I have taken specific measures and I will ensure to prevent that. You may not have any direct or indirect benefits from this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact me by email at elcin@pegasus.rutgers.edu or you can contact my study advisor Dr. Stephen E. Bronner by email at bronner@rci.rutgers.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator, at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 848 932 0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

EXPIRES

APPROVED

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MAR 28 2013

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Audiotape Addendum to Consent form

You have already agreed to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Elcin Haskollar, a Doctoral student from Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, USA. The purpose of this study is to understand the social, political and economic challenges facing the Kurdish populations. This study will help to broaden the scope of existing knowledge in the field of security studies and human rights.

You are asked for your permission to allow me to audiotape (sound), as part of that research study. You do not have to agree to be recorded in order to participate in the main part of the study. The recording will last approximately 45 minutes.

Participation means providing certain information about yourself: ethnicity, job title, birth country and place of residence and responding to semi-structured questions which are related to the objectives of this research.

All information will be confidential. Confidential means that I will keep this information confidential/private by limiting any individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University and I are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept until the research is officially approved by Rutgers University.

The risk of participation in this study is minimal. There is a risk of loss confidentiality, but I have taken specific measures and I will ensure to prevent that. You may not have any direct or indirect benefits from this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

The recording(s) will be used for analysis by the researcher. The recording(s) will be stored in a secure location and linked with a code to subjects' identity; and will be destroyed after three years of completion of this research.

Your oral consent grants the investigator named above permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced study. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

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Rutgers IRB

Tel: 848 932 0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

Bu formun bir nüshasi kayıtlarınız için size verilecektir.
The Turkish version of 'Audiotape Addendum to Consent Form':

Ses Kaydetme izin Formu

Rutgers Üniversitesi, New Jersey, ABD, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü Doktora Öğrencisi Elcin Haskollar tarafından gerçekleştirilen çalışmaya katılmayı kabul etmiş bulunmaktasınız. Bu calismanin amaci Kurt nufusunun karsilastigi sosyal, politik ve ekonomik zorluklari anlamaktir. Bu sekilde guvenlik calismalari ve insan haklari alanlarinda var olan bilgi veritabaninin zenginlestirilmesi amaclanmaktadir.

Araştırmacı olan şahsım tarafından sesli kayıt yapılması için izin talep etmekteyim. Araştırmada yer almak sesli kayıt izni vermek zorunda değilsiniz. Kayıt süresi yaklaşık olarak 45 dakika kadar sürecektir. Katiliminiz kendiniz hakkında etnik koken, mesleginiz, dogdugunuz ulke ve ikamet ettiginiz yer gibi bazi bilgiler vermeniz ve bu arastirmanin amaclarina hizmet edecek yari yapilanmis sorulari yanitlamaniz anlamina gelmektedir.

Bu çalışmadaki tüm bilgiler gizli tutulacaktır. Gizlilik şu manaya gelmektedir; araştırma dışındaki kişilerin bu bilgiye ulaşması sınırlandırılacak ve tüm bilgiler güvenli bir ortamda tutulacaktır. Yasal gereklilikler dışında, sadece Rutgers Üniversitesi Akademik İnceleme Bordu ve ben bu bilgileri görme yetkisine sahibim. Bu çalışmadaki bilgilerin akademik olarak yayınlanması veya konferansta sunulması durumunda sadece toplu sonuçlar sunulacaktır. Bütün çalışma bilgileri Rutgers Üniversitesi tarafından onaylanana kadar saklanacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katılmanın öngörülebilen riski minimum duzeydedir. Gizliligin kaybi riski vardir ama aldigim cok detayli onlemler sayesinde, benim disimdaki hicbir kimsenin bu arastirmaya ulasmasini engelleyecegim. Bu çalışmadan doğrudan veya dolaylı herhangi bir fayda elde edemeyebilirsiniz. Sizin bu çalışmaya katılımınız tamamiyle gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Katılmamayı seçebilir ve herhangi bir cezaya maruz kalmaksızın çalışma esnasında istediğiniz zaman çekilebilirsiniz. Hatta, kendizi rahat hissetmediğiniz soruları cevaplamamayı tercih edebilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmadaki kayıtlar araştırmacının çalışmaları için kullanılacaktır. Kayıtlar şahsın kimliğine atanan bir kod ismiyle linklendirilerek gizli olarak Rutgers üniversitesindeki bir dolapta saklanacaktır ve çalışmanın bitiminden itibaren üç yıl sonra imha edilecektir.

Sözlü onayınız yukarıda ismi yazılı şahsımın söz konusu yukarıda belirtilen çalışmayı sesli kayıt yapması için verilmiş izin olarak kabul edilecektir. Yazılı izniniz dışında araştırmacı kesinlikli söz konusu kayıtları bu formda belirtilen amaçlar dışında kullanmayacaktır.

Bu formun bir nüshasi kayıtlarınız için size verilecektir.

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Attachment 5 – Oral Consent Form for Interview (Translated Version)
The Turkish version of 'Interview Consent Statement Form':

(EK-C) – Mülakat İzin Formu

Rutgers Üniversitesi, ABD'de doktora calismalarinda bulunan Elcin Haskollar tarafından akademik bir çalışmaya katılmak için davet edilmiş bulunmaktasınız. Bu calismanin amaci Kurt nufusunun karsilastigi sosyal, politik ve ekonomik zorluklari anlamaktir. Bu sekilde guvenlik calismalari ve insan haklari alanlarinda var olan bilgi veritabaninin zenginlestirilmesi amaclanmaktadir.

Akademik, entellektuel, politik ve sivil toplum kurulusu cevrelerinden yaklasik 30 kisi bu calismada yer alacaktir ve her bir katilimcinin suresi ortalama 45 dakika olacaktir. Katiliminiz kendiniz hakkinda etnik koken, mesleginiz, dogdugunuz ulke ve ikamet ettiginiz yer gibi bazi bilgiler vermeniz ve bu arastirmanin amaclarina hizmet edecek yari yapilanmis sorulari yanitlamaniz anlamina gelmektedir. Sözlü olarak çalışmaya katılmayı kabul etmeniz yukarıda ismi belirtilen araştırmacıya sözkonusu çalışmayla ilgili çalışmayı gerçekleştirmeye yetki verecektir.

Bu çalışmadaki tüm bilgiler gizli tutulacaktır. Gizlilik şu manaya gelmektedir; araştırma dışındaki kişilerin bu bilgiye ulaşması sınırlandırılacak ve tüm bilgiler güvenli bir ortamda tutulacaktır. Yasal gereklilikler dışında, sadece Rutgers Üniversitesi Akademik İnceleme Bordu ve ben bu bilgileri görme yetkisine sahibim. Bu çalışmadaki bilgilerin akademik olarak yayınlanması veya konferansta sunulması durumunda sadece toplu sonuçlar sunulacaktır. Bütün çalışma bilgileri Rutgers Üniversitesi tarafından onaylanana kadar saklanacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katılmanın öngörülebilen riski minimum duzeydedir. Gizliliğin kaybı riski vardir ama aldigim cok detayli onlemler sayesinde, benim disimdaki hicbir kimsenin bu arastirmaya ulasmasini engelleyecegim.

Bu çalışmadan doğrudan veya dolaylı herhangi bir fayda elde edemeyebilirsiniz. Sizin bu çalışmaya katılımınız tamamiyle gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Katılmamayı seçebilir ve herhangi bir cezaya maruz kalmaksızın çalışma esnasında istediğiniz zaman çekilebilirsiniz. Hatta, kendizi rahat hissetmediğiniz soruları cevaplamamayı tercih edebilirsiniz.

Çalışma veya çalışma ilkeleri hakkında sorularınız olursa bana 973 873 8258 nolu telefondan veya elcin@pegasus.rutgers.edu e-posta adresinden ulaşabilirsiniz. Tez danışmanım olan Dr. Stephen E. Bronner'a bronner@rci.rutgers.edu e-posta adresinden ulaşabilirsiniz.

Araştırma bireyi olarak haklarınızla ilgili sorularınız olursa Rutgers Üniversitesi Akademik İnceleme Bordu ile 848 932 0150 nolu telefondan veya aşağıdaki irtitibat bilgilerinden ulaşabilirsiniz.

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB II, 3 Rutgers Plaza, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Date:
The City/Province:

Ethnicity:
Job title:
Birth country:
Place of residence:

1. Can the Kurds freely speak Kurdish at schools, businesses, government buildings, and public and private institutions in the Kurdish regions?

2. Are the Kurds free to practice their religion and customs?

3. Do Kurds face any social discrimination in the public?

4. Do Kurds face any deliberate political discrimination?

5. Do the Kurdish regions face any deliberate economic discrimination?

6. When it comes to the Kurdish issues, how would you evaluate the situation in post-2000?

7. How do you evaluate PKK/PJAK? How has the PKK/PJAK changed the Kurdish society and politics in post-2000s?

8. What is the future of the Kurds and how does that affect the Kurds in the region?

9. What would you recommend to resolve the Kurdish problem?

The Turkish Translation of "Interview Questions"

Tarih:
Sehir/ilce:

Etnik koken:
Meslek:
Dogum Yeri:
Ikamet Yeri:

1. Kurtler okullarda, is yerlerinde, kamuya ait binalarda veya diger kamu veya kamu disi kurumlarda Kurtce'yi ozgurce konusabiliyor mu?

2. Kurtler ibadet etmede ve geleneklerini surdurmede ozgurler mi?

3. Kurtler halk arasinda sosyal ayrimciliga maruz kaliyorlar mi?

4. Kurtler kasten herhangi bir siyasi ve/veya ekonomik ayrimciliga maruz kaliyorlar mi?

5. Kurt bolgeleri kasten herhangi bir ekonomik ayrimcliga maruz kaliyorlar mi?

6. Kurt sorununa bakacak olursak, 2000'den sonraki durumu nasil değerlendiriyorsunuz?

7. PKK/PJAK'i nasil goruyorsunuz? PKK/PJAK 2000'den sonra Kurt toplumunu ve politikasini nasil değiştirdi?

8. Kurtlerin gelecegi nedir ve cizdiginiz gelecek bolgedeki Kurtleri nasil etkileyecek?

9. Sizin Kurt sorununun cozumu icin tavsiyeleriniz nelerdir?

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