Kurdish Identity

Human Rights and Political Status

Edited by Charles G. MacDonald
and Carole A. O'Leary

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Acronyms

ANAP	Motherland Party
APD	Accession Partnership Document
ASALA	Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
BLF	Baluchistan Liberation Front
CHP	Republican People's Party
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DBP	Democracy and Peace Party
DDKD	Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations
DDKO	Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East
DEP	Democracy Party
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DKP	Democratic Mass Party
DLP	Democratic Left Party
DSP	Democratic Left Party
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EP	European Parliament
ERNK	Kurdistan Liberation Front
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FP	Virtue Party
GAP	Southeastern Anatolia Project
HADEP	People's Democracy Party
IBDA-C	Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDPs	internally displaced persons
IGC	Iraqi Governing Council
IMK	Islamic Movement of Kurdistan
INA	Iraqi National Accord
INC	Iraqi National Congress
ITF	Iraqi Turkoman Front
ITJEC	Iranian-Turkish Joint Economic Commission
ITU	International Telecommunications Union

KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KDPI	Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan)
KHRP	Kurdish Human Rights Project
KNA	Kurdistan National Assembly
KNK	Kurdish National Congress
KPRP	Kurdistan People's Revolutionary Party
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MHP	National Action Party
MHP	National Movement Party
MIT	Turkey's National Intelligence Agency
MP	Motherland Party
NGOs	nongovernmental organizations
OFDA	United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHAL	Regional State of Emergency governorate
OIC	Organization of Islamic Congress
OPC	Operation Provide Comfort
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party (Partia-Kakaren Kurdistan)
PSK	Socialist Party of Kurdistan
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RCC	Revolutionary Command Council
SAIRI	Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution in Iraq
SCIRI	Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TAL	Transitional Administration Law
UNCHS	UN Center for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat)
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNESCO	UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNGCI	United Nations Guards Contingent in Iraq
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIRCU	United Nations Iraq Relief Coordination Unit
UNOHCI	UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq
UNOPS	UN Office of Project Services
UNSCOM	UN Special Commission on Iraq
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

Preface

This book seeks to provide the reader with a basic understanding of the significance of the concept of Kurdish identity as it exists in the Middle East and elsewhere. It is about how the Kurds see themselves and about how others see them. The Kurdish identity is also a function of how the Kurds interact. It goes beyond cultural awareness to human rights issues and political status. The Kurds are crucial to questions of peace and stability in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. They are at the nexus of such Middle East issues as genocide, ethnic and religious conflict, the war against terrorism, and the search for democracy. The book project grew out of an international conference on the Kurdish identity held in April 2000 at American University in Washington, D.C., and sponsored by American University's Center for Global Peace in conjunction with the Mustafa Barzani Scholar of Global Kurdish Studies. This conference brought together statesmen, scholars, and international relations practitioners who have dealt with Kurdish issues. The book seeks to weigh and consider the Kurdish experience from multiple perspectives with a view to having the reader better understand the complex and dynamic nature of the Kurdish identity in its various national settings.

The book is aimed at government officials, scholars, students, and all those other individuals who would like to understand the nature of ethnic conflict and replace it with the building of civil society.

A special thanks is due to Jane MacDonald for reading the various drafts of the book and for her gracious and helpful copyediting. The support of the American University's Center for Global Studies and the Mustafa Barzani Scholar of Global Kurdish Studies has been invaluable. To the many Kurds, Arabs, Turks, Iranians, and others who have contributed to this project with their struggle for freedom, democracy, and human dignity, thank you.

Part I

Introduction

1

Kurdish Identity

An Introduction

CHARLES G. MACDONALD

The Kurdish identity in what was once termed the "arc of crises" is a key piece of an ever-evolving puzzle of domestic stability, regional conflict, and global power projection. The Kurdish-populated lands of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and parts of Armenia and Azerbaijan are known historically as Greater Kurdistan. The Kurdish lands have been caught in the throes of conflict between empires, between states, and between ethnic groups for about five centuries, and today they remain at the nexus of conflict and political change. On the one hand, the world's move toward democratization has made the Kurdish populations of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran important political players in states trying to address such issues as personal identity, minority rights, human rights, democracy, federalism, and civil society. On the other hand, the excesses of ideological, religious, national, and ethnic passions in the Middle East have made the Kurds pawns on a chessboard of power politics and resource competition. They represent an ethnic irredenta who could threaten regional stability. The rise and fall of communism, the pursuit of oil and water as vital Middle East resources, and the expansion of political Islam have significantly impacted Kurdish areas and have frustrated the Kurdish pursuit of national self-determination as well as Middle Eastern moves toward democratization in general. It is within this complex mix of power and passion that the Kurdish identity became central to the changing and unsettled political landscape in the Middle East today.

The Kurdish identity warrants an objective scholarly investigation, not only as it impacts crucial political developments within states, but also as Kurds interact with regional and global players moving to reconstruct the political boundaries of the Middle East. This study, facing a timeless continuity of a dynamic mosaic of peoples and religions, seeks to understand the nature of the Kurdish identity amid the dramatic changes taking place in the Middle East. Principally conceived before the second Gulf war—before the removal of Saddam Hussein—it brings together the ideas of statesmen and scholars who explore the significance of the Kurdish identity in today's troubled Middle East.

The study is intended to offer insights into a politically significant geographical region that is complicated by great contrasts in political perceptions and the not so subtle nuances of hatred, intolerance, and genocide. It explores the difficult situation that Kurds face in their homeland, as refuge peoples, refugees, displaced people, foreign workers, victims, revolutionaries, and common people trying to find respect and civil society amid the vicissitudes of today's world.

This study addresses the Kurdish identity in five parts. It includes work of academics and nonacademics. It seeks to appreciate the firsthand experience of Kurds and those working with Kurds as well as the scholarly perspectives of many academicians who have worked for careers on the Middle East in general and on ethnic and religious issues in particular. Moreover, the insights of statesmen and other international practitioners, such as human rights and refugee specialists, make contributions that are necessary to understanding the working perceptions of the Kurdish identity in its respective settings. In the first part, statesmen and scholars explore perspectives on the Kurdish identity, sometimes in a nonacademic style. First, Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani of the Kurdistan Regional Government places the Kurdish people in historic perspective and views the efforts of Mustafa Barzani for all Kurds. He also reviews the challenges of Kurdish unity and reconciliation efforts. Next, Michael Van Dusen, the deputy director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, gives his views on the Kurdish identity. Drawing from his years of public service in the United States, Van Dusen emphasizes that Kurds must use law to pursue their just political and economic rights while moving toward reconciliation. The minister of humanitarian assistance and cooperation of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Shafiq Qazzaz, sees the Kurdish question as a national one. He maintains that host states have used violence to marginalize the Kurds, but that the past three decades have taught Kurds that they do not have to accept things as they are. Professor Abdul Aziz Said, the director of the Center for Global Peace at American University, makes a plea for the establishment of Kurdish studies. Seeing scholarship as being sharply divided between "uncritical lovers or unloving critics" of one side or the other, Professor Said calls for a new focus on humanity in Kurdish studies and a need for vision and a sense of mutual responsibility in the Kurdish search for identity. In addition, Professor Said sees the need to move to the concept of "peoplehood" rather than "statehood" to appreciate and nurture the Kurdish identity in the emerging pluralistic societies of today.

Kurdish Identity in History

The Kurds represent the largest national group in the Middle East without a state. Many people fail to distinguish Kurds from Arabs, Persians, Turks, and others. The Kurds, however, are an Indo-European people believed to be descendants of the ancient Medes.[1] The Kurdish language is an Iranian language. The Kurdish relationship with Persia predates Islam, but the Kurds were distinct from the Persians.[2] The initial creation of modern satellite Kurdish television, MED–TV, acknowledged the link to the ancient Medes. A significant portion of the Kurdish population inhabits a half-moon shaped area known as Greater Kurdistan. It has been divided by history into parts of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. History's arbitrary division of Greater Kurdistan and "the impact of the separate development under modern territorial states based upon the European system, effectively divided the national energies of the Kurds and directed them to seek national goals based on the Kurdish experience within each host state."[3] Since the Kurds were only partially assimilated into their host states, they were treated as though they had a status apart from the host state, yet the host state denied Kurdish efforts to achieve self-determination. In some cases, the host states denied the very existence of or threatened the survival of Kurdish culture. This created an ambiguous situation in which Kurds variously saw themselves as nationals of their host states or as Kurds or as both. Significant Kurdish nationalist movements arose in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria to assert Kurdish national interests and to protect Kurds from mistreatment by the host states.

The Kurdish Identity in Turkey

Part 2 focuses on the Kurdish community in Turkey, the largest Kurdish population in what was Greater Kurdistan. The southeastern portion of Turkey is predominately Kurdish. Turkish scholars will often point out, however, that more Kurds now live in major Turkish urban centers than in the southeast. This does not detract from the significant Kurdish cultural dominance in southeastern Turkey.

The identity of Kurds in Turkey offers food for thought and is an integral part of the Turkey body politic. Turkey, as created by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, has aspired to unity, but at a historical cost of denying the richness of diversity. Kurds in Turkey were officially defined as Mountain Turks. A great importance was attached to building a single Turkish Republic. In Turkey, it was believed essential that everyone see themselves as Turks. Everyone had equal protection under the law, but not a right to a cultural diversity and certainly no right to national self-determination. The very use of the word *Kurd* was considered

a threat to the Turkish state and was outlawed until the 1990s. The use of the Kurdish language was also restricted in the press and media. It was not until August 2002 that the Turkish Grand National Assembly approved the rights of minorities to teach and to broadcast in their own languages. Some would argue, however, that this was more a function of Turkey attempting to meet the requirements of European Union membership than an appreciation or even toleration of Kurdish culture.

Turkish efforts to deconstruct the Kurdish identity in Turkey created a complex political situation in which Kurdish political parties were banned and the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) emerged seeking self-determination by armed struggle. Torture and human rights abuses were widespread and systematic. The Kurdish identity in Turkey was denied by the state, but was ever present. The PKK was identified as being Marxist, separatist, and terrorist. It initially sought to establish a Kurdish state, but later called for federation. The armed struggle essentially ended or at least was significantly transformed following the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in February 1999, but the Kurds continue to face human rights abuses and torture.

The Kurdish identity was also associated with various aspects of Turkish or Ottoman culture that transcended the modern Turkish state. The Kurds in Turkey promise to be a stabilizing force, as they tend to participate within the Turkish political system. Although the potential for an uprising has declined since Öcalan's capture, the Kurds remain active. They also have the identity of a repressed people whose human rights are violated and who are eager to have a greater role in their own future. The Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) has used the law effectively to create hope and resolve among the Kurds as Turkey is brought to the European Court of Human Rights to answer for its transgressions against the Kurds.

In part 2, Michael Gunter focuses on the capture of Abdullah Öcalan and the ongoing efforts of the Turkish state to join the European Union. He sees both as opening new possibilities for the Kurds, with the desire of Turkey to be a member of the European Union being the primary catalyst. He argues that resolving the Kurdish question is a necessary part of clearing Turkey's path to the European Union, but that it will remain a long and difficult process.

Next, Hakan Yavuz explores the nature of the Kurdish identity in Turkey in five historical stages. He sees the first stage of Kurdish identity emerging from a response to the centralization efforts of the Ottoman state, 1878–1924. The second stage was the reaction of the Kurds to the nation-building efforts of Mustafa Kemal, 1925–1961. The third stage developed in the context of the development of the Kurdish identity amid the leftist influences in Turkey, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. The fourth stage was marked by the armed struggle of the PKK in the 1980s and 1990s, culminating in the arrest of Abdul-

lah Öcalan. The still emerging fifth state, according to Yavuz, includes the "Europeanization" of the Kurdish question as Turkey and the Kurds move toward accommodation. He argues that the Kurdish problem lends itself to external criticism and thus must be addressed.

Gülistan Gürbey places the Kurdish question in Turkey in the context of the global challenge of increasing ethnopolitical conflicts. She focuses on perspectives of conflict resolution and reconciliation between competing ethnic groups. She anticipates that granting minority rights and autonomy could contribute to a peaceful resolution, and envisions the solution as an "institutional recognition of Kurdish identity and culture." She suggests both political and legal measures to provide for integration and political representation of the Kurds. Gürbey sees the need for a change in atmosphere from a state of emergency to general amnesty. This could lead to cultural autonomy based on "language, cultural life and the media, education and teaching, freedom of association, political representation, and self-administration." This would not endanger the Turkish state, but could lead to building upon common interests between the Turks and Kurds.

Robert Olson examines the transnational dimension of the Kurdish identity and the impact of the Kurdish question on Turkish foreign policy toward its neighbors, in particular Iran. He explores the relationship between internal threats and foreign policy and envisions that omni-balancing is necessary to view the internal Kurdish problem and the broader cross-boundary Kurdish question.

The Kurdish Identity in Iraq

Part 3 deals with the Kurdish question in Iraq, which has fluctuated more dramatically and at times more tragically than in Turkey and Iran. Nevertheless, Fortuna contributed to the creation of two Kurdish regional governments in the north of Iraq and the de facto experience of Kurdish self-rule for more than a decade. The culmination of the Kurdish play in the Iraqi political system after Saddam led to a dramatic showing for the Kurds in the first post-Saddam elections and the emergence of Kurds in key positions in the post-Saddam Iraqi government. Moreover, the subsequent negotiations resulted, inter alia, in the selection of a Kurdish president for Iraq. The elections held under United States aegis have led to a new enthusiasm for democracy in Iraq—the age-old dream and often stated political goal of the Kurds. Nevertheless, the reality of the Kurdish identity in Iraq remains a matter of history. The factors and forces influencing the Kurdish identity have gone through some dramatic changes, but they remain, to a degree, unchanged. The underlying ethnic rivalries between the Kurds and the Arabs, as well as the recurring internecine conflicts,

remain a sobering reminder that the Kurdish question in Iraq will remain as long as the Iraqi state continues.[4]

The Kurdish question in Iraq is tied to the creation of the Iraqi state by European powers out of three provinces of the Ottoman Empire—the provinces of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. The provinces essentially consist of Kurds, Sunni Arabs, and Shi'a Arabs, respectively. The Kurds in the north were promised autonomy and protected minority rights upon the creation of Iraq, but have struggled with the central government and have experienced ethnic conflict, and at times even genocide, as in the Anfal campaign. Mustafa Barzani led a nationalist charge for self-determination—for autonomy and democracy. The Kurds reached various agreements with the Iraqi central government, but only with conflict to follow again. The Kurds in Iraq were supported by outside parties such as Iran, Israel, and the United States, only to be reminded that the "Kurds have no friends." The 1975 Algiers Agreement between Saddam and the shah enabled Iraq to stop support to the Kurdish struggle and crush the Kurds. Similarly, after the Iran-Iraq War resulted in a cease-fire, Iraq again moved against the Kurds. After the first Gulf war, the United States called for the Kurds to rise up against Saddam. When they did, they did not receive the anticipated support from the United States. Saddam's forces again moved. This led to a tragic exodus of millions of Kurds fleeing death from Saddam's forces. Operation Provide Comfort marked the beginning of a Kurdish sanctuary. This sanctuary, however, saw internal conflict erupt among the Kurds. Eventually, peace was realized with outside assistance. Iraqi Kurds came to cooperate with purpose in the post-Saddam elections and have now assumed a key role in attempting to build a new Iraq. Old realities remain just under the surface, as neighboring Turkey and Iran fear too many successes for the Iraqi Kurds.

In part 3, various aspects of the complex Kurdish situation in Iraq are considered as they impact on the nature of the Iraqi Kurdish identity. First, David Mack, a former U.S. State Department official, remembers the past history of (Kurdish) illusions, disappointment, and distrust toward the United States. He argues that the U.S. policy concerns the states where the Kurds live, not the Kurds themselves. In Iraq's case, the United States supports the principle of territorial integrity. While the United States supports the human rights of the Kurds, Mack argues it would be wrong to support Kurdish nationalism or the right for Kurds to establish a state because of the geopolitical realities that the Kurds face.

Hanna Freij contends that the "garrison state" of Iraq is a failed state and that significant change and reconciliation are necessary. Freij identifies in detail the political opposition of the Baath regime and the vicissitudes of the relationships between the Baath and both the Shi'a and the Kurds, as well as

Sunni and other opposition groups. In the post-Saddam Iraq, his solution is "to restructure the state and revitalize the society in order to be free of fear and persecution" and to "establish institutions under which Arab, Kurd, Turkomen, Shi'a, Sunni, Christian, and Yazidi could all live in harmony."

Rend Rahim Francke considers the impact of the sanctions and the protection of the Kurdish region in Iraq. She concludes that the Kurdish status apart will have a far-reaching impact on the Kurdish community in the north. In particular, she suggests it will be more difficult for the Kurds to integrate with the rest of Iraq even though the Kurds will have greater knowledge and experience. She writes, "The question will arise in the future as to whether an overarching Iraqi identity can evolve and coexist in harmony alongside other identities of Kurd, Arab, Assyrian, or Turkomen. Ultimately, it will be very difficult to reverse or erase the Kurdish experience that has developed under the system of sanctions without major conflict." Thus, any future Iraqi government must offer constitutional guarantees advantageous to the Kurds. At the same time, the Kurdish experience in democracy will provide a significant foundation for democratization in Iraq amid the thrust of pluralistic politics.

Nouri Talibani focuses on the ethnic dimension of Iraq and its darker side with the ethnic cleansing that has taken place in Kirkuk. He underscores the impact on the Iraqi Kurdish identity of the Kurds expelled from their homes in Kirkuk. Their burning desire to return to Kirkuk promises to remain an issue for the future of Kirkuk, especially against the backdrop of the historical interest in the region's oil. The new democratic Iraq government's desire to achieve stability cannot avoid the Kirkuk question in the future.

Stafford Clarry describes the humanitarian support provided to the Kurds after they fled in the aftermath of the first Gulf war. They essentially became refugees. Clarry illustrates the positive impact of Security Council Resolution 986 and efforts of the international community to support the rehabilitation of the Iraqi Kurds. Operation Provide Comfort and other iterations of the sanctuary made the North off-limits to Iraqi planes and other military forces. The financial and development benefits of the Oil-for-Food Program administered jointly by the United Nations and the regional governments proved especially beneficial to the Kurds.

The separation of the Kurdish region from Iraq provided the opportunity for the Kurds to realize de facto autonomy and democracy. Moreover, as the late Ali Babakhan pointed out, the Kurds have been developing a sophisticated concept of federalism to encompass their democratic relationship within Iraq. He argued that such federalism would clarify the Kurdish experience in Iraq and make it more acceptable to Turkey and Iran.

Nouri Talabani incorporates the federalism ideal in a draft constitution further illustrating the relationship of the Kurdish identity to the Iraqi state.

Moreover, the federalism concept has become one of the red lines for the Iraqi Kurds as they pursue a post-Saddam democratic Iraq. Carol O'Leary further develops the federalism concept applicable to Iraq by exploring communalism and the concept of collective identities in Iraq. She illustrates how the federal model would be perhaps the best model to protect the interests of all communities in Iraq. Ernest Tucker draws from the historical Ottoman experience of granting autonomy to key constituents within the Ottoman Empire. He emphasizes the pragmatism of the Ottomans contributed to a workable federalism and would be applicable to managing diverse constituencies in a federal Iraq today.

On the whole, the Kurdish identity in Iraq is twofold. It is nationalistic and has developed, in part, in response to suffering and ethnic conflict. It is also associated with the Kurds being an integral part of a democratic Iraq—a part protected in a federal structure that would guarantee the rights of all of Iraq's various regional communities.

The Kurdish Identity in Iran

In contrast to the developing Kurdish identities in Turkey and Iraq, the Kurdish identity that is emerging in Iran has paralleled some developments in Turkey and Iraq, but it also has significant differences. The early division of historic Greater Kurdistan in 1514 set the Kurdish community in Iran apart. The separate development was nevertheless similar in some ways to the Kurdish experience in Turkey and in some ways to the Kurdish experience in Iraq. The part of Greater Kurdistan that lies within Iran's borders provided the Kurds a physical separation from the other ethnic groups. Subsequent economic problems in the Kurdish areas and some specific Iranian policies also contributed to large numbers of Kurds migrating to Iran's larger cities.

The aftermath of World War II and the lingering presence of Soviet troops in Iran resulted in the creation of the semi-autonomous republics of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. Although the Azerbaijan experience was different essentially because the puppet government was set up by outsiders from the Soviet Union, the so-called Kurdish Republic of Mahabad was an Iranian Kurdish government that was more autonomous than independent. In fact, it envisioned itself as part of a federal Iran, governing itself locally but depending on Iran's central government for defense, foreign policy, and economic policy. The Iranian Kurdish experiment in autonomy was abruptly ended by Iran's central government following the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The Kurdish nationalist organization, the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI), remained a reality that sought to use armed struggle to support the Kurdish goals of au-

tonomy and democracy. In the chaos following Iran's Islamic revolution, the Kurds again seized the Kurdish cities, only to be put down brutally by Iranian government forces. The assassination of two key Iranian Kurdish leaders weakened the KDPI and ended armed struggle as a strategy.

In part 4, Charles G. MacDonald explores the Kurdish identity in Iran as it changes from one associated with a nationalist armed struggle to one pursuing human rights, self-administration, and economic justice. Why is the Kurdish region of Iran so poor? Is it poor by chance or by design? Either way the government of the Islamic Republic faces the challenge of improving the Kurdish situation in Iran.

Nader Entessar considers the opportunities and constraints on the Kurdish minority in Iran. He sees the goal of Kurdish autonomy as a "disguised attempt at succession (and thus treason)." This has prevented a meaningful dialogue between the central government and the Kurds. Even Iranian reformers whom the Kurds firmly supported in elections were suspect of Kurdish intentions; many opportunities for dialogue to improve the Kurdish situation have been lost. Entessar also points out that the Kurdish demands for autonomy often have run counter to the rights of other minorities in the same provinces. Thus the problem of defining the Kurdish region has remained a political problem in Iran as it has in Iraq. Entessar concludes that long-term stability in Iran remains a function of how successful Iran is in addressing the rights of all its inhabitants.

Elahé Sharifpour Hicks and Neil Hicks focus on the impact of the political struggle between Iran's central government and the Kurdish nationalist organization as it relates to both the human rights of the Kurds and the failed economy of the Kurdish regions. The Hicks identify shortcomings in Iranian law. These contribute to the lack of appropriate legal mechanisms to protect Kurdish rights. While envisioning a shared interest between Kurds and reformers for addressing human rights, the Hicks argue that legal channels hold the best opportunities for improving the status of Kurds. In other words, human rights activists using Iranian law are likely to replace the nationalists using armed struggle and calling for political change. Farideh Koohi-Kamali also addresses the improvement of the status of Kurds in Iran. She links economic development to the development of nationalism.

The Kurds in a Global Setting

The identity of Kurds outside the Kurdish regions adds an additional perspective. Michael Collins Dunn focuses on the perception of the Kurds in the Arab world. He argues that the Arabs remain firm on ensuring that the boundaries

of Arab states are not threatened. Accordingly, they remain suspect of Kurdish intentions and would be opposed to any perceived move toward self-determination or autonomy that would threaten Arab lands.

Kendal Nezan of the Kurdish Institute in Paris explains the European approach to the Kurds. He believes that a compromise on the Kurdish identity and cultural survival with the security interests of the Kurds' neighbors and the interests of their western allies is possible. He also believes that U.S. participation in such a compromise is essential.

Francis J. Ricciardone, an American diplomat, presents U.S. policy (or the lack thereof) on the Kurds. He argues that there is no U.S. policy toward the Kurds in general. He does, however, underscore the role of the Kurds in the emergence of a free (democratic) Iraq.

The Kurdish identity is both separate from and a part of the states in which the Kurds live. The preservation of Kurdish cultural and human rights transcends politics, but is an integral part of the pursuit of peace and stability in the Middle East.

Part II

Perspectives on Kurdish Identity

2

Perspective of Nechirvan Barzani, Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government

NECHIRVAN BARZANI

Mustafa Barzani's struggle represented the fight for freedom and democracy for all Kurds. He saw a country in which people of all religious backgrounds, all ethnic groups, all political parties could participate and be recognized. He never felt that the use of terror was an acceptable way of solving the Kurdish problem. The Kurdish struggle to him was not a fight between Kurds and Arabs but a fight for freedom. He was a man who sought peace and opposed repressive governments. Arabs respected him as a peace-loving leader.

The Kurdish question originates from the fact that an ancient people have been wronged for centuries. The world recognizes the Kurds as a nation having its own national, cultural, and linguistic characteristics. History shows that the name *Kurd* appeared in Sumerian records and that they settled long ago in their present land, Kurdistan. In the writings of Greeks and various classical sources the name *Kurd* appears. Within the second millennium, various Kurdish principalities appeared and, judged by the standards of their time, could be recognized as states.

The Kurds have contributed to Middle East civilization. Individuals of great renown and learning have been part of the creation of civilizations in Mesopotamia and Persia. In the Islamic, the Arabic, and the Ottoman empires, Kurds have enriched the region's culture with their science and art. Saladin was known for his chivalry, and Karim Khani Zand was noted for his justice. For more than fifty years, Mustafa Barzani was a just and chivalrous leader. These are only a few examples that indicate, when given the opportunity, Kurdish ability and excellence will assert themselves.

Kurdish history has experienced many ups and downs. Kurdish land has been used as a battle ground by neighboring nations; some World War I battles were fought in Kurdistan. During the 1980s, Iran and Iraq fought a bitter war that involved many Kurds when they brought the fight into Kurdistan. The end of the 1991 Gulf war also brought great tragedy to Kurdistan, which the world witnessed on television. Each of these battles violated Kurdish rights, destroyed Kurdish homes, and killed Kurdish citizens.

The post–World War II years have not been good for the Kurds. In 1945, Barzani's revolution was attacked. The Republic of Mahabad, a Kurdish republic, was established for one short year, but it was dissolved in 1947 under intense international pressure. Between 1961 and 1975, Barzani led the Ailul Revolution in Iraq. The international community withdrew its support in 1975, and the revolution failed.

One must not forget that World War I was fought to divide the world market. As a consequence, the British, the French, the Americans, and other powers divided Kurds and other nations. The real cause of Kurdistan's division in World War I was the dispute over oil. As a national resource of Kurdistan, oil has brought death and destruction, rather than progress and well-being, to the Kurds.

Today the dispute is also over water, many sources of which originate in Kurdistan. The Tigris River runs through the heart of Kurdish land. Should not the world protest when the people of Kurdistan are made victims of their own oil wealth? Perhaps this time the Kurds will be spared the fate of drowning in their own water.

Hostility against the Kurds was not a series of random acts of violence. Countries with vested interests in our resources signed agreements and carefully laid out plans for Kurdish suppression and division. One example of this is the agreement signed by Great Britain, France, and the countries of the region under their influence at the time, which authorized the division of Kurdistan against Kurdish will. In order to maintain this division, agreements such as the Saadabad and Baghdad Pacts were signed. In more recent times, a most damaging accord was signed in 1975 in Algeria. In this accord the United States, Iraq, Iran, and some other countries participated. It is important to understand that the division of Kurdistan has always been carried out with the help of international agreements.

The Kurdish question is in essence the issue of an oppressed people to which until recently the world community remained distant. We may even say that, directly or indirectly, the world has been a party to the misfortune. Had the international community addressed the Kurdish question after World War I, many tragedies could have been avoided. It is an international disgrace that the Kurdish question has not been addressed. However, the time is right and the conditions are ripe for a fair and equitable solution. The Kurds want the international community to accept that Kurdish demands for fair and just treatment are deserving and to take the necessary action to put the Kurdish situation right. While Kurds are not a vindictive people, they will not back away from their responsibility to establish the necessary legal framework to ensure the Kurdish national future.

Had the Kurdish struggle not been suppressed in 1975, the Iran–Iraq War

might have been avoided. Had the world not remained silent on the crimes of Halabja, the Anfal operations, and the use of chemical weapons in other parts of Kurdistan, maybe the second Gulf war could have been avoided. That is why Kurds say that deep down the Kurds feel that a great injustice has been committed against them. Today Kurds are demanding recompense.

In the aftermath of the Gulf war, circumstances for the Kurdish uprising developed within Iraq. In 1991, following the uprising, the United States closed its eyes to the millions of Iraqi Kurds on the move. Iraqi Kurdistan became the target for suppression. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people fled their villages and cities, and the tragedy that followed was captured visually on international television. Pressure from the international community to deal with the tragedy resulted in the United Nations' passing Security Council Resolution 688. Later a British-sponsored proposal, efforts by the late Turkish president Turgot Özal, and an active role by the United States led to the establishment of a safe haven in Kurdistan, covering a large part of the Kurdish region in Iraq. A no-fly zone subsequently followed.

In the context of a humanitarian campaign by the United Nations and various international nongovernmental organizations, the Security Council passed Resolution 986, setting up the Oil-for-Food Program to help the Iraqi people. Thirteen percent of the revenues were allocated to the Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The Kurdish people, under the difficult circumstances that have prevailed for the last decade, have managed to carry out parliamentary elections and establish regional government. A source of calm and reason to the people, this body has tried to ease everyday economic problems in the areas of education, health, and culture. But the "Kurdish question" remains unresolved. In 1992, the Kurdish parliament, supported by members of all political parties and groups, elected to remain part of Iraq. This served to safeguard the independence and unity of the Iraqi state. The Kurdish parliament further decided to conduct its relationship with the central government of Iraq in a federalist manner.

Kurds see the present situation in Kurdistan as a democratic experiment in which Kurds have tried to safeguard freedom of opinion, democratic rights, a multiparty system, and the religious and ethnic pluralism that exists in Kurdish society. Kurds, however, see no clear future for their democratic experiment because at the international level, the Kurdish situation is still largely viewed as a humanitarian one. Although Kurds are grateful for what has been accomplished through humanitarian aid, Kurds are seeking a political answer. For that reason, Kurds look to the international community in general, and to the United Nations in particular, to see that the Kurdish question is dealt with in accordance with international legal standards.

These issues always weigh heavily on the minds of the Kurdish people because, until the issues are fully addressed, Kurds will not be able to plan for the future and for generations to come. Kurds want appropriate and realistic policies established that acknowledge respect for human rights and the right of national self-determination. The policies must administer to the needs of the Kurds, a dispossessed people. Kurds want a just solution for the Kurdish question.

Kurds must also bring to the world's attention the historical truth that the Iraqi government made an agreement with Mustafa Barzani in 1970 that recognized the national existence of the Kurds and granted autonomy to the Kurds. The agreement was a legal document. Although the agreement has its shortcomings, it nonetheless constitutes a legal document, which in the twentieth century has been issued to the central government of a state and legal obligations are explicit. Kurds therefore demand that Arabization policies and measures be rescinded; that demographic changes effected by the Iraqi central government in the Kurdish areas of Kirkuk, Khanikeen, Sinjar, Zammar, Mandali, and Sheikhan be reversed; and deported Kurds be allowed to return to their cities, their land, and their homes. Kurds want their national right to federalism and the preservation of all the areas within the Kurdish region to be made a part of the Iraqi constitution. Kurds want to see, within a federal parliamentary democratic Iraq, the freedoms of belief and a multiparty political system. Kurds want pluralism of culture and language to be preserved.

Time has come for the Kurdish people to shed their negative outlook. Today's generation needs to begin to view the future in a more positive way. Kurds need to learn to give more weight to positive thinking in the world. Efforts are being made to institutionalize human rights, democratic freedoms, and rights of oppressed nations. Within all this there is a place for the Kurds.

Kurds know that they have started late. They carry some heavy burdens: the consequences of years of subjugation, backwardness, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, problems of housing and land, and obstacles of old traditions. Kurds need to find solutions. On top of all this, Kurds need a solution to the Kurdish national political question. Furthermore, Kurds are facing a significant economic issue—the revitalization of agriculture and animal husbandry. Kurds also have to revive and revitalize local industries and to develop Kurdish human resources. Protection of the environment while rehabilitating cities and rebuilding villages is another significant issue.

Once free, Kurds can look after themselves. Within the last decade, Kurds have managed to establish their own administration and have shown significant progress. In the past five years, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 986, 13 percent of the revenues from the sale of Iraqi oil has been allocated

to three governorates in Iraqi Kurdistan. These revenues have made a difference, helping to maintain peace and carry out the rehabilitation of Kurdistan.

Kurds should also note that one day the provisions of Security Council Resolution 986 must come to an end and that the present policy vis-à-vis Iraq cannot and will not be maintained forever. Kurds believe that the securing of 13 percent of Iraq's revenue for the life and rehabilitation has to be worked on now. This is the duty and responsibility of the United Nations, the United States and its allies, and the international community. Action should be taken now by the United Nations to purchase, with the appropriate oil monies, the products of Kurdistan's farmers. These products should not be imported. More efforts should be made to spend the Security Council Resolution 986 funding within Kurdistan. The people of Kurdistan are rather apprehensive about the future. Kurds deserve better. Kurds should know that the international community supports them with clear policies so that the Kurdish people can anticipate a better future and feel that they will benefit from hard work and that the challenges facing them will be addressed.

Kurds do assert that peace in the Middle East will not truly prevail unless there is a solution to the Kurdish question. The solution must be peaceful, based on democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights, as a method of solving the issue in other parts, each according to its own circumstances. Kurds feel that the efforts to identify the Kurdish people's rights are being asserted everywhere. The Kurdish question will not recede into obscurity.

The people of Kurdistan are responsible for their own present as well as their own future. They must consolidate internal peace and national unity, and they must seek strength from their own resources before looking to the international community.

The democratic experiment in Iraqi Kurdistan would have fared much better and would have brought bigger gains to the Kurdish people if we could have preserved our unity. Unfortunately, in the mid-1990s, the people of Kurdistan became embroiled in an internal war. From the outset, political issues should have been resolved through dialogue rather than by force.

To achieve reconciliation, internal and external efforts have been made. Some resulted in agreement, the last of which has been the Washington Agreement of 17 September 1998. Fortunately, progress has been made within this framework, and Kurds have managed to maintain peace. Peaceful efforts continue to implement the Washington Agreement. Kurds renew their commitment to that agreement and hope to overcome the difficulties that remain so that permanent peace can prevail throughout Kurdistan.

The neighboring countries that include parts of Kurdistan have agreed to subdue the Kurds in the past. For the first time, the Kurdish people are asking these countries to cooperate among themselves, not at the expense of the

Kurds but to the benefit of all to live in peace. Thus peace can flourish in Kurdistan, too. Kurds are asking for the pages of history to be turned. It is time to begin anew. Kurdistan can become an island of peace and security in the region. This is the Kurdish message of friendship and peace for all the nations of the Middle East and for all the governments of the world.

3

Perspective of Michael Van Dusen, Deputy Director, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

MICHAEL VAN DUSEN

In July 1970, Mustafa Barzani said, "I am asking you to take up the arms of science and education and exert all your efforts to liberate your people from the bondage of illiteracy and shoulder the burdens of promoting your nation to the level of developing nations in the near future." The scientific community is the closest approximation we have to a truly international community sharing certain fundamental interests, values, standards, and a spirit of inquiry about the nature of matter, life, behavior, and the universe. The shared quest for understanding has overcome the distorting effects of national boundaries, inherent prejudices, imposed ethnocentrism, and barriers of the free exchange of ideas and information. One of the greatest challenges for scientists and the broader scholarly community is to pursue a much deeper understanding of the nature and sources of human conflict. Above all, the world must develop effective ways of resolving conflicts before they turn violent. Mustafa Barzani had the right vision.

The end of the cold war changed the world. The whole process of globalization, the weakening of many central governments, and the drive of people everywhere for greater economic opportunity and political participation unleashed new and powerful forces in many countries, including powerful ethnic and nationalistic forces. New instant communication, cell phones, and computers have eroded the ability of governments to control lives and the flow of information. Likewise, national sovereignty has been eroded. Some governments adjust to the new environment better than others.

Kurds suffer economic, social, and political deprivation in every country in which they live. There is a vicious cycle. Deprivation fuels frustrations and resentments. Frustrations and resentments fuel conflict. Conflict fuels hatred and resurgent nationalism. Peace and stability will come if the Kurds have a greater ability to determine their own affairs. Wherever they live, Kurds should have some form of local autonomy or federal unit. They also need greater control of their economic destiny. The best and most durable solution in the present environment of the Kurds is not a separate state but the ability to run their

own affairs. The territorial integrity of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq will be far more threatened if the legitimate economic and political rights of the Kurds are denied.

The greatest misfortune for the Kurds is a function of the region in which they reside. Kurds face a slowness of political and economic reform and a limited appreciation of the potential fruits of pluralism. In the early 1960s, Asia and the Middle East had comparable per capita incomes. By the mid-1990s, the per capita income of Asia had quadrupled, and the per capita income of the Middle East, with all its oil, hardly doubled.

Demographically, close to 70 percent of the population in most of the Middle East is under 25 years old. It is imperative to open economic opportunities to young people. Economic deprivation falls hardest on minorities and on the rural and urban poor. Kurds cannot take for granted food, water, shelter, and other necessities. The slippery slope of degradation leads to growing risks of conflict, including civil war, terrorism, and humanitarian catastrophes. People are often able to tolerate economic hardship and disparity in the short term if effective governments will work to create conditions that allow them to improve their living standards. Not so in the Middle East. To escape the trap, governments in the region must take actions to ensure widespread economic growth and opportunities. Peace and stability are most commonly found where economic opportunities are distributed across the population.

There are no more fundamental political rights than the right to say how one is governed. Effective participatory government and the rule of law reduce the need for people to take matters into their own hands to resolve differences through violence. For society to progress, people need to believe that real opportunities exist to influence their future through the political process. Participatory governance is the key, and open governance remains the only means by which those who favor violence and separation will be isolated.

Participatory governance is one key stratagem for authoritarian regimes to deal with international dissonance and ethnic conflict, but a legitimate reconciliation process is also critical. Reconciliation mechanisms are needed between both Kurds and other members of society, as well as within the Kurdish community itself. A single, strong voice will increase the leverage of Kurds in societies in which they live. Kurdish unity will deflect efforts to control by means of divide and conquer. Alliances, including international alliances, can also promote respect and contribute to a party being seen as a legitimate entity with which to negotiate.

Reconciliation can be a slow and difficult process, but it is essential to prospects for a peaceful future. Reconciliation takes empathy, patience, and willingness to place the common good above personal gain. It requires an ability to stop impugning another's intentions. Third parties, as well as nongovernmen-

tal organizations, can facilitate reconciliation. "Track II" diplomacy and the use of non-official actors can also be beneficial. Interstate violence can result from active insurgency, political terrorism, and organized crime.

A regime seeking to promote internal stability needs four essential elements: (1) a corpus of laws that is legitimately derived, widely promulgated, and understood throughout society; (2) a consistent, fair, visible, and active network of police authority to enforce laws, especially at the local level; (3) an independent, equitable, and accessible grievance system, supported by an impartial judicial system; and (4) a fair penal system that is prudent in meting out punishment. These elements would make a regime more responsive to the vicissitudes of ethnic conflict. These essential elements, though vital, are difficult to achieve where democracy, pluralism, and civil society are absent. These four elements are only in their formative stages in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, where serious deficiencies have made internal stability elusive.

In conclusion, Kurds must continue in earnest to follow a path of reconciliation, while using available legal remedies and, in some cases, pressing for political and judicial reform to achieve their legitimate political and economic rights. Kurdish nationalist interests must be pursued within the limits of national and international law. Only then will the sustained support of the international community be available to address Kurdish problems.

4

Perspective of Shafiq Qazzaz, Minister of Humanitarian Assistance and Cooperation, Kurdistan Regional Government

SHAFIQ QAZZAZ

The Kurdish question is a national, rather than ideological or purely political, issue. As such, it has a national Kurdistani dimension that bears directly upon the political future of the Kurdish people as a whole.[1] A sad commentary on the state of relations between the Kurds and the states ruling them is that they have had to focus either inwardly among themselves or outwardly to find common cause with outside forces rather than to deal with the capitals of the states dividing them. In most cases, states' policies have aimed at marginalizing the Kurds. Kurdish reaction has come either in the form of costly, one-sided alliances with one or more states or seeking outside help that has often proved to be detrimental.

Kurds seek to enhance their political identity not because all Kurds are politically oriented or are active nationalists but because they are aware that their persecution is primarily due to the fact that they are Kurds. Hence they have often been targeted as a people. Saddam's intended policy was to reduce the Kurds to a status of a nonpeople.

One can find an element of Kurdish identity in a variety of sources. For the Kurds, the uprising of the spring of 1991 and what followed has been a threshold event with unparalleled consequences. It notably affected the dynamics of Kurdish politics in its domestic, regional, and international dimensions.

Regardless of what triggered it and how it was led, the 1991 uprising shook the Kurds out of their trauma caused by the violence inflicted upon them in the late 1980s. As a result, the Kurds have gone through their own process of self-discovery. From this they have determined that things do not have to be the way they are. As an identity group, the Kurds have discovered that they no longer have to endure intolerable forms of government, especially as they have increasingly become accustomed to a government of their own. Their

attributes of nationalism, ethnicity, religion, and regionalism are increasingly used to express resentment.

As a peripheral and marginalized group in the states dividing Kurdistan, Kurds search for new sources of identity and loyalty other than those offered by the states. The uprising of 1991 also demonstrated the Kurds' profound political stance in the face of tremendous odds and unfulfilled promises. What was equally remarkable is that the people of Kurdistan managed to give true legitimacy to that political act. The Iraqi Kurdistan Front endeavored not only to fill the vacuum left by the Iraqi government's withdrawal of its administration, but also to arrange for popular parliamentary elections and the establishment of a Kurdish government.

The Kurds see their present identity mostly in terms of what has happened in the last two or three decades. They therefore see Kurdish identity through persecution and suffering: Arabization, Halabja, and Anfal operations. It is rather curious that the conclusion and signing of the 11 March 1970 agreement received only a fraction of the media attention garnered by the exodus of some two million civilians to the borders of Turkey and Iran in the spring of 1991. Part of that identity may emerge through the weight of responsibility, the legacy of 1991, and the need to care for an abandoned people and territory. (Perhaps such identity could also be seen in a change of status of which one political analyst says, "For the first time in modern history, control over the Kurdish problem has slipped out of the grasp of the regional parties as Kurdish politics has taken a momentum of its own.")

Kurds have neither abandoned nor forgotten our right of self-determination. But at this point in history, we need to be in pursuit of a unique and important experiment in democracy, which bears directly on the present well-being and political future of the Kurdish people. Kurds therefore seek identity in the survival of a newly established entity in a part of Kurdistan and in the promotion of that persistently threatened democratic experience. Kurds are in an ambiguous de facto zone of autonomy set up to shield them from Saddam Hussein and are protected by an international force. The composition of the entity is ambiguous, as is the commitment to its survival. With all this in mind, Kurds are constantly reminded that it is the territorial integrity of the state involved that is of paramount consideration in any approach to the Kurdish case. In this context, one must distinguish between maintaining the physical unity of a country and perpetuating a central political system whose policies jeopardize the interests of the people as well as its territorial integrity. As the Kurdish political parties have the declared aim of remaining within Iraq, present Kurdish demands cannot be construed as such a threat. In reality, it is Iraq's own political conduct that is primarily responsible for the country's weakened position and that causes concern over its unity and territorial in-

tegrity. In fact, the Kurds have more than once taken the moral high ground, refraining from moving against a central government facing foreign enemies and entanglements.

The transformation of the Kurdish struggle from armed resistance to pursuit of Kurdish political goals must, on the part of the states involved, be reciprocated by abandoning violence and political coercion as a means of dispute settlement. Political coercion must no longer define the relationship between Kurds and the sovereign identity of any state. Within the democratic and pluralistic framework that may exist in some of the states (as much as it applies to the Kurds), political means and peaceful dialogue should replace force and arbitrary measures.

When some states indulge in the fantasy of perceiving a threat to themselves from a nascent Kurdish administration, they need to be reminded to take a closer look at their own internal state of affairs. Those states cannot continue to portray the Kurdish question as a scapegoat for their own repressive policies and human rights violations nor for the pressures they feel from the lessening international tolerance for the absence of democracy.

The establishment of democracy in a state that rules over the Kurds seems less realistic when judged by the record. Experience indicates that concern for political survival for some of those regimes and extreme nationalist and fundamentalist assertions of others rule out the development of a democratic atmosphere. Some conclude that often the revolutionary chauvinism of a ruling elite encompasses the cultural and social life as well as the political life of the country. This posture precludes the meaningful and democratic participation of such elements as the Kurds, and it does not allow them to pass judgment upon its character or to shape its policy orientation.

The establishment of democratic rule also has a direct link with the balance of power among the political forces within a state. This presupposes the idea that the Kurds, for example, should be as strong as any other force within a coalition, including the ruling party. It also assumes that a Kurdish settlement can and will be endorsed by all major political groups within the coalition and thus will lessen the chances of the ruling party's arbitrary disavowal of responsibility later. The peripheral status of the Kurds within the states ruling over them and their general lack of access to power within the larger central political system seem to rule against the possibility of the Kurds dictating or even strongly influencing decisions in their favor.

Solidarity with the Kurds is one form of alliance that could be aimed at establishing democracy and extending equal rights of self-determination to the various nationalities of a pluralist country. These alliances will facilitate the uninhibited expression of a will to separate or an obligation to continue a harmonious association. As much as this concerns the neighboring peoples

with whom the Kurds presently exist, the advocacy of "brotherhood" and "solidarity" must transcend mere political slogans. The Kurds, in return, must offer straightforward proposals for cooperation and goal fulfillment. Initiating a peaceful and sensible dialogue with others requires that Kurds agree and adopt a common agenda themselves.

In Iraq, for example, Kurds must cooperate with the Iraqi opposition on the basis of a common denominator and mutual agreement.[2] They also need to pursue the self-interests of the Kurdish administration that they themselves have created and that the international community has sanctioned. These interests need to be clearly articulated to the outside world. Those who believe that Saddam's downfall alone will automatically result in the creation of a "democratic and egalitarian" Iraq have a greatly oversimplified view of that country's present political realities. (It is in this connection that one political analyst notes, "Notwithstanding the liberal democratic and reformist philosophies, which such groups may espouse, a future viable Iraq cannot be built and maintained by Iraqi-Arab power alone.")

Kurds cannot prevent others from having selective vision as to Kurdish aspirations and the political future. We must, however, be careful in our political behavior and pronouncements not to encourage that tendency. The changing complexion of the Kurdish question in the last two decades might be said to entail "objective possibilities" for Kurds in one or more of the countries in the Middle East to achieve a certain degree of success. There is some agreement that in spite of hardships that the Kurds have suffered in the last two decades, Kurdish political evolution has taken on a new dimension.

The regional and international ramifications of the Kurdish questions have changed, and Kurdish leaders have slowly become more aware of the ways of the outside world. They now realize that the role of nations is decided beyond the confines of the Middle East. Demonstrating this new awareness is the Kurds' increasing demand for international guarantees in any agreement with a central government. The Iraqi Kurds' emphasis on the United Nations' distinct role in implementing Security Council Resolution 986 and seeking a substitute formula for the Kurds' 13 percent share of the Oil-for-Food Program revenues in a post-986 situation are further evidence of that awareness.

Economic assurances must accompany any political security. Kurds in southern Iraqi Kurdistan seek part of their present identity and much of the region's economic security from the implementation of the Oil-for-Food Program. As a people of the United Nations, the Kurds acknowledge with gratitude those United Nations staff members, both local and international, who have put our people's interests first. Kurds believe these precious few have upheld the highest spirit of the United Nations and are grateful for their service. Under Security Council Resolution 986, the relationship between the

Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the United Nations has been one of attempted partnership, working together to serve the people of Kurdistan.

Kurds also remember and acknowledge the tremendous accomplishments of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), both international and local, in helping thousands of our families to return to their original villages. Before the implementation of Security Council Resolution 986, NGOs were the leaders in reconstructing rural Kurdistan. More than 2,000 villages were reconstructed and more than 50,000 families resettled.

With respect to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 986, it is now time to take a closer look at not only the amount and kinds of goods that have been delivered and the buildings that have been constructed but also the impact of the program's expenditures in the lives of the Kurdish people. Do all of the Kurdish people have more clean water? Has the incidence of disease caused by inadequate or unclean water been reduced? Are children attending school; has the quality of learning improved? Do our families have a regular electrical supply, if only for a few hours? Have all our children been properly vaccinated? Are all patients receiving the medicines and quality medical attention they need? Does every family have at least two adequate rooms with access to clean water and sanitation facilities?

Progress, or lack thereof, on these and other indicators is measurable. Kurds feel that the Security Council Resolution 986 resources available during the past three years, along with the ready availability of goods and services in the international market, could have made a more dramatic impact on the quality of life among the Kurdish population. To implement Security Council Resolution 986 responsibly and responsively, Kurds believe the Kurdistan Regional Government and the United Nations should work more closely. This is required under the terms of the resolution and the Memorandum of Understanding. It is also important that government structures be rehabilitated for sustainable service post-986. Both the Kurdistan Regional Government and the United Nations must pursue capacity building in the present and address sustainability for the future. Security Council Resolution 986 is not a permanent program, but the services being provided are permanent. The Kurdistan Regional Government is the permanent governmental structure responsible for the future of the people of Kurdistan.

Kurds know that the concept of an independent Kurdish state of any kind has not been an internationally acceptable one. But perhaps Kurds should also recognize that recent events have driven home the idea that, although the international system does not welcome the breakup of existing states, it will, sooner or later, accept the consequences of such a breakup, once it has taken place. This dichotomy of autonomy versus independence will no doubt continue to loom large in current and future political thinking as Kurds appraise

the status of their present relationship and hence the chances for future association with states dividing them.

This dichotomy will make the search for a Kurdish identity somewhat less conclusive. For the present, to give impetus to stagnant situations in more than one part of Kurdistan, some attention should be given to usable and measurable Kurdish identity, usable in the sense that it can interact with an actual course of action. The act of formulating this kind of identity will require measurable input from the Kurds as well as others. In other words, this usable identity would have to be partly conferred and partly reconstructed by the Kurds themselves.

The identity would be conferred in the sense that the states ruling over Kurdistan need to work out a common denominator as to how they envision future coexistence between themselves and their Kurdish populations. Others who have been in the role of peacemakers see a possible reconciliation of Kurdish and states' interests that might serve to guarantee or at least enhance the possibility of peaceful coexistence—a coexistence that will provide a meaningful definition of the relationship between the Kurdish and sovereign identities of those states.

5

Perspective of Abdul Aziz Said, Director, Center for Global Peace, American University

ABDUL AZIZ SAID

Much of the literature about Kurds seems to be written by uncritical lovers or unloving critics. Information about Kurds is insufficient and incomplete. It needs to reflect their humanity. The following points clearly require renewed focus.

There is ambiguity between what the governments of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran say about Kurds and their actions toward Kurds. These governments promise one thing but do something else. This ambiguity is also seen in the ways Kurds talk about their aspirations and the ways they wage their struggle for identity. When the future is not obvious or clear, there is a need for sustainable dialogue and the skills of active listening as well as advocacy.

Human rights organizations constantly promote reconciliation with the Kurds. What can we do? What is the limit? What are future possibilities? The PKK is defeated. Militarily, the Turkish government is unbeatable, but politically the situation is not winnable. There is always a small group opposed to reconciliation. We have seen that with the Basque and Spain. Spain offered the Basques many concessions, but small Basque groups continue their struggle. Giving people what they say they want does not necessarily end the cycle of violence. Social scientists need to look for alternatives to encourage reconciliation.

As long as the Kurds battle each other, no one can do anything for them. External forces will continue to manipulate events. As long as the Iraqi question is not settled—an outcome that affects everyone—Kurds will be manipulated. Something has to happen in Iraq. Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani need one another. They should write a position paper together on reconciliation. What is the possibility of integration in areas where the Kurdish standard of living is on the rise? Who wants independence? Who wants autonomy? What forces support these positions? How can they negotiate their interdependence? There has to be a serious study made about Kurdish resistance movements. We need to find out who will negotiate the matters of autonomy and independence.

There is an unsolvable problem: Who are the Kurds? Then one must ask additional questions. What do the Kurds want for their future? Who defines the Kurds? In this context, another series of problems exists. What plans do governments in the region have for the Kurds? Are plans short term? There is a need for more detailed plans. Governments in the region face instability and need to improve democratically. How can these governments deal with Kurds creatively?

There is a need for vision to deal with the Kurdish search for identity. Why is vision needed? Drift and self-centeredness must be avoided. The best imagination and energy for leaders and followers alike must be encouraged. A sense of mutual responsibility must be increased. External players should stop complicating the situation. The Kurds should stop contemplating their own navels and look beyond themselves to learn from the experiences of others. They must anticipate a favorable solution for the Kurds and work toward that solution.

To approach a broader understanding of the Kurdish identity, Kurdish studies should be encouraged at all levels. The United Nations should do scientific studies about the Kurds. The United States should support the establishment of centers of Kurdish studies. A documentation center should be established to gather and preserve historic documents on the Kurdish people. A Kurdish Endowment for Peace should be established.

A sustained dialogue between the Kurds and governments in the region is needed, as is a sustained dialogue among the Kurds themselves. The dialogue should include an appreciation of engaging to reach agreement, mapping out relationships, exploring dynamics of relationships, building scenarios of cooperation, and acting together to develop a dynamic implementation strategy.

Given the inadequacy of the so-called nation-state today, the international community needs to explore moving away from the conceptual regime of "statehood" to "peoplehood" and from states' rights to human rights. Cultural differences need to be appreciated by all. New visions of pluralistic societies beyond the nation-state are needed. Globalization and supernationalism must provide for the survival of pluralistic societies. The collapse of distance has resulted in the domestication of international politics and the internationalization of domestic politics. These changing conditions underscore the value of pluralism, mutual tolerance, and ultimately appreciation of diversity. What is needed is valuing the other's identity at the group level as well as at the individual level. The politics of identity have become more complex. Unity is plurality, the global one, and the cultural many.

Part III

The State, Kurds, and the Pursuit of Democratic Values in Turkey

6

Öcalan's Capture as a Catalyst for Democracy and Turkey's Candidacy for Accession to the European Union

MICHAEL M. GUNTER

In February 1999, Turkey's dramatic capture of Abdullah "Apo" Öcalan, the longtime leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), ironically opened new possibilities for solving its continuing Kurdish problem. The catalyst was Turkey's desire for admission into the European Union (EU).[1]

Despite his earlier reputation as a murderous terrorist, Öcalan, in retrospect, has done more to reestablish a sense of Kurdish self-esteem and nationalism in Turkey (and possibly elsewhere) than any other Kurdish leader in recent years. This was aptly illustrated by the dismay displayed by most Kurds and their supporters upon hearing of Öcalan's apprehension by Turkish authorities. In the process Öcalan once again illustrated the old adage that one person's freedom fighter is another's terrorist. To most Turks Öcalan seemed bent on destroying Turkey's territorial integrity through terrorist methods.

The Turkish authorities argue that their citizens of Kurdish ethnic heritage (probably as much as 20 percent of Turkey) enjoy full rights as Turkish citizens and that there is no Kurdish problem in Turkey, only a terrorist problem. Since the mid-1970s, however, an increasingly significant portion of Turkey's Kurds actively demanded cultural, linguistic, and political rights. The government has ruthlessly suppressed these demands for fear they would lead to the breakup of the state itself. This official refusal to brook any moderate Kurdish opposition helped encourage extremism. In August 1984, Öcalan launched his insurgency, and by the end of 1999 it had resulted in more than 31,000 deaths, as many as 3,000 villages destroyed, and some 3,000,000 people internally displaced.

Domestically, the Kurdish problem impedes the implementation of democratic and human rights reforms, while its expenses impact negatively upon the economy. The Kurdish problem also limits Turkish foreign policy by giving foreign states a powerful opening with which to pressure Turkey and by alienating the democratic West and the European Union, which Turkey has long

aspired to join. Arguably, the Kurdish problem has become the main source of political instability in Turkey and the biggest challenge to its very future.

In the early 1990s, Öcalan actually seemed close to achieving a certain degree of military success. In the end, however, he overextended himself, while the Turkish military spared no expense in containing him. Slowly but steadily, the Turks marginalized the PKK's military threat. Öcalan's ill-advised decision in August 1995 to attack Massoud Barzani's Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan in northern Iraq (because of its relationship with Turkey) further sapped his strength. The final blow came when Turkey threatened to go to war against Syria in October 1998 unless Damascus expelled Öcalan from his extended sanctuary in that country.

After a short, surreptitious stay in Russia, Öcalan landed in Italy on 12 November 1998. For a brief period it looked as if he might be able to turn his military defeat into political victory by having the European Union try him and Turkey. But in the end U.S. pressure on behalf of Turkey forced Italy and others to reject Öcalan as a terrorist undeserving of political asylum or negotiation. Indeed, for years the United States had given Turkey intelligence training and weapons to battle against what it saw as the "bad" Kurds of Turkey while supporting the "good" Kurds of Iraq against Saddam Hussein.

Forced out of Italy on 16 January 1999, Öcalan became not only a man without a country but also one lacking a place to land. During his final hours of freedom, Russia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland all rejected him. Rather pathetically, Öcalan had become like the "Flying Dutchman" of legend, whose ship was condemned to sail the seas until Judgment Day. Desperate, Öcalan finally allowed the Greeks to take him to their embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, where American intelligence agents had inundated the country following the bombing of the American embassy there the previous summer. The United States then reportedly provided Turkey with the technical intelligence to pinpoint Öcalan's whereabouts and capture him.[2]

During these final hours, the United States stood by Turkey, in part because the United States needs Turkey as a runway for its planes to bomb Iraq. The United States had to give its NATO ally something tangible like Öcalan, because at that very moment Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, was in Turkey in a futile attempt to turn Turkey away from the United States. Given Öcalan's fate, the Iraqi Kurds must now wonder how much longer the United States will continue to support them now that Saddam Hussein has been eliminated. Öcalan's final hours of freedom illustrated again an old Kurdish maxim: "Kurds have no friends."

Initial Violence

Against a backdrop of Turkish national pride, Öcalan's capture initially led to a wide spasm of Kurdish violence in Turkey and in Europe. Öcalan's younger brother, Osman, a senior PKK commander in his own right, called upon Kurds throughout the world to "extract a heavy price from the Turkish state for the conspiracy it has engaged in against our leadership. Let no representative of the Turkish state have peace at home."[3] The PKK's sixth congress authorized its military arm, the People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan, "to wage a fight against this plot in the true spirit of an Apo fedayee . . . by attacking all kinds of enemy elements . . . to wage a war that will make the enemy tremble . . . [and to] proceed incessantly with the *serhildan* [Kurdish intifada] . . . by merging it with the guerrillas."[4]

In Berlin, Israeli guards killed three Kurds and wounded another sixteen when they tried to storm the Israeli consulate. A group calling itself the Revenge Hawks of Apo killed thirteen people when it set fire to a crowded department store in Istanbul. Further protests occurred in London, Paris, Marseilles, Brussels, Copenhagen, The Hague, Amsterdam, Strasbourg, Stockholm, Cologne, Bonn, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Hanover, Dusseldorf, Bern, Geneva, Milan, Vienna, Leipzig, Moscow, and Yerevan, among other locations.

Despite various reports of a power struggle between "the PKK's mountain cadres in the Middle East and its European wing,[5] and a leadership struggle between Cemil Bayik, Osman Öcalan, and Mustafa Karasu,[6] the PKK quickly reconfirmed Abdullah Öcalan as its president or general secretary. It named a temporary ten-member presidential council to act for him: Cemil Bayik, Osman Öcalan, Halil Atac, Mustafa Karasu, Riza Altun, Duran Kalkan, Necmettin Tas, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Murat Karayilan, and Necmettin Ucan.[7] Although all ten appeared to be militants based in the Middle East, the tenuous nature of such a large leadership group was evident. Also uncertain was the allegiance of PKK members in Europe to a leadership group based solely in the Middle East. Indeed, subsequent reports suggested (erroneously, as it turned out) that such high-ranking leaders as Kani Yilmaz might even have been executed by the organization for having failed to find sanctuary for Öcalan while he was in Europe.[8] These problems and Öcalan's subsequent calls to abandon the armed struggle and seek a democratic republic notwithstanding, the PKK has maintained some semblance of unity.

Turkish National Elections, April 1999

Apparently benefiting from the nationalist pride in Öcalan's capture, ultranationalist parties made a strong showing in Turkey's national parliamentary

elections held on 18 April 1999. Bülent Ecevit's nationalist but leftist Democratic Left Party (DSP) ran first with 22.6 percent of the vote, but it was closely followed by Devlet Bahçeli's extreme right National Action Party (MHP), which came in second with a surprising 18.6 percent of the vote. In previous elections, the MHP had never won enough votes to enter parliament. The MHP in coalition with Ecevit's DSP formed the core of the new Turkish government. At that time, the Islamist Virtue Party and the center right Motherland Party of Mesut Yilmaz and the True Path Party of Tansu Ciller all saw significant declines in their vote totals. The result signaled an ultranationalist government with an apparent mandate to try Öcalan quickly, execute him, and end the PKK's existence. Instead, a completely different scenario emerged.

Violence Ends

When first captured, Öcalan, to the consternation of his followers, declared: "I really love Turkey and the Turkish people. My mother was Turkish. Sincerely, I will do all I can to be of service."[9] As he awaited trial in his prison cell on the island of Imrali near Istanbul, Öcalan next averred: "A solution based on the unity and independence of Turkey, which would guarantee peace and real democracy, . . . is also our innermost wish."[10] He also called upon his followers to refrain from violence in the run up to the Turkish parliamentary elections in April 1999. Despite the attitude of many (including some Kurds) that Öcalan was trying to save his own neck and that he had shown himself a coward, the initial violence that followed his capture stopped abruptly.

While the imprisoned Öcalan had begun calling for a democratic solution to the Kurdish problem, Ahmed Necdet Sezer, the chief justice of the Turkish Constitutional Court, openly criticized the Turkish constitution for the restrictions it placed on basic freedoms. Sezer specifically mentioned the necessity to defend freedom of speech and to eliminate what some have called "thought crimes," the imprisonment as terrorists of those who called for Kurdish cultural rights. He also lashed out at the restrictions still existing against the use of the Kurdish language. He insisted on the need to conform to the universal standards of human rights and called for the appropriate revision of the Turkish constitution.[11] One year later, largely on the basis of these comments, Sezer was elected president of Turkey.

In September 1999 Sami Selcuk, the chief justice of the Turkish Supreme Court of Appeals, made similar pleas to democratize the Turkish constitution. Indeed, Selcuk went so far as to assert that the present Turkish constitution (1982) was illegitimate because it was dictated by the military, and no serious debate against it had been allowed. Specifically, he argued that the constitution limits personal freedom, rather than the power of the state, and thus makes

Turkey a state with a constitution but not a constitutional state.[12] The similarities between Öcalan's recommendations for democracy to solve the Kurdish problem and the proposals of these two eminent Turkish jurists were striking. Indeed, the PKK responded that "we, as a party and a people, are ready to live with pride in Turkey, on the essential lines drawn by the chief of the appeals court."[13]

Öcalan's Evolution

When interviewed in March 1998, Öcalan admitted he had used some terrorist methods, but argued that if you looked at the historical record honestly, you would see that Turkey was the real terrorist.[14] Indeed, since its creation in the 1920s, Turkey has tried to obliterate the very existence of the Kurds by assimilating them, claiming they were just "Mountain Turks," and legally banning their language, culture, and geographical place-names. During the 1960s, Turkish president Cemal Gürsel praised a book that claimed that the Kurds were Turkish in origin, and he helped to popularize the slogan "Spit in the face of him who calls you a Kurd" as a way to make the very word *Kurd* an insult.[15] Peaceful democratic attempts to protest against such policies landed one in prison or worse. By pursuing such actions, Turkey itself radicalized its ethnic Kurdish population and contributed to Öcalan's rise in influence.

Öcalan began his struggle as a violent Marxist committed to the establishment of an independent pan-Kurdish state for more than 25 million Kurds in the Middle East (half of whom live in Turkey) who constitute the largest nation in the world without its own independent state. Over the years his ideas evolved, so that by the early 1990s Öcalan was asking for only Kurdish political and cultural rights within the preexisting Turkish borders. In part, he had mellowed in the face of the hard realities imposed by the Turkish military and an outside world hostile to an independent Kurdish state that might destabilize the volatile Middle East. The Turkish state, however, saw Öcalan as insincere and felt that if it relented even slightly in its anti-Kurdish stance, the situation would escalate into the eventual breakup of Turkey itself, as had happened to its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire.[16]

Many who really know Öcalan understand how he has come to believe that both the Turks and the Kurds would be better off living together in a Turkey that has become fully democratic. When he declared a unilateral cease-fire in March 1993, for example, Öcalan stated, "Turkish-Kurd brotherhood is about 1,000 years old, and we do not accept separation from Turkey." Rather, the Kurds in Turkey "want peace, dialogue, and free political action within the framework of a democratic Turkish state."[17] Complete democracy would not only serve the Kurdish problem within Turkey but also fulfill the ultimate goal

of Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic, for a modern democratic Turkey that would be accepted as a member of Europe.

The key to Turkey's future is to resolve the Kurdish problem democratically. From a zero-sum game that pitted the Turks against the Kurds, Öcalan's struggle, it might be argued, developed into a win-win proposition for both. Given Turkey's paucity of able political leaders, Öcalan, who after all was born in Turkey and spoke Turkish better than Kurdish, ironically might be better seen as a catalyst for democratic change in Turkey—a bridge to link Kurds and Turks.

During his trial, Öcalan repeated his offer "to serve the Turkish state" by ending the Kurdish insurgency, in return for real and complete democracy. If Turkey would spare his life, he argued, he could then accomplish this goal. Here was a clear strategy to achieve a just democratic peace for everyone within the existing Turkish borders. After all, the Kurds were not the only ones suffering from the lack of Turkish democracy and justice.

The Susurluk scandal in 1996, for example, demonstrated how Turkish authorities hired right-wing criminals on the lam to murder hundreds of perceived civilian enemies of the state in return for turning a blind eye to their drug trafficking.[18] In 1999 Oral Calislar, a leading Turkish journalist, was sentenced to prison as a terrorist because of a critical interview with Öcalan published more than five years earlier. Akin Birdal, the president of the Human Rights Association in Turkey, was shot more than ten times and nearly killed by ultra-Turkish nationalists in 1998. He was sentenced to prison in 1999 for calling for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem. The state claimed Birdal was guilty of "inciting people to hatred on the basis of class, race, or regional differences." Merve Kavakçi, a female member of the Islamist Virtue Party, was expelled from her newly won seat in the Turkish Parliament in 1999 for wearing a head scarf into that governmental body. Supposedly, her actions demonstrated a desire to overthrow the secular Turkish Republic and establish a religious dictatorship. She also was stripped of her Turkish citizenship on the grounds that she had illegally obtained United States citizenship.

Öcalan's Call for Democracy

Instead of issuing a hard-line appeal for renewed struggle during his trial for treason, Öcalan issued a remarkable statement that called for the implementation of true democracy to solve the Kurdish problem within the existing borders of a unitary Turkey. Öcalan's trial ended 29 June 1999 with a sentence of death. Öcalan's call for democracy, however, fulfills Ataturk's ultimate hopes for a strong, united, and democratic Turkey. Such a Turkey could conceivably be invited to join the European Union.

As the centerpiece of his new attempt to reach a peaceful settlement of Turkey's Kurdish problem, Öcalan's statement should be carefully analyzed. Öcalan stated: "The historical conclusion I have arrived at is that the solution for this [Kurdish] problem which has grown so big is democratic union with the democratic, secular Republic. . . . The democratic option . . . is the only alternative in solving the Kurdish question. Separation is neither possible nor necessary." Throughout what is actually his defense against charges of treason and separatism, Öcalan appeals to a higher, more equitable natural law over what he sees as the narrow, positive or man-made law of the Turkish state. "I am not concerned with a legalistic defense for myself" because the laws of the Turkish state "have become an obstacle before society. . . . Needless to say, . . . legally speaking, [my] punishment is called for." However, "the real dishonesty and the real treason here is not to see what is right and not to undertake any effort towards such ends. . . . The narrow articles of criminal law . . . expose . . . the need for a democratic constitutional law. . . . Therefore, we can talk about its [the PKK's] moral and political legitimacy even if it was illegal. . . . It should not be seen as a flaw or a dilemma that I have tried to arrive at and . . . [I] see them [political values] as a solution rather than delivering a defense in a legal sense of the word. . . . In spite of my conviction . . . , I have no doubt that I will be acquitted morally and politically by history."

Early in his exposition, Öcalan declared that Leslie Lipson's 1964 book *The Democratic Civilization* had "contributed to my understanding." Lipson analyzes how such multiethnic states that are truly democratic, such as Switzerland, can transcend narrow ethnonationalism and achieve peace, justice, and prosperity for all their citizens. Öcalan cited long passages from Lipson to illustrate why he now believed that "the right of nations for self-determination . . . which in practical terms meant establishing a separate state, was, in fact, a blind alley in the case of Kurdistan." Independence, federalism, and autonomy are "backward and sometimes even obstructive in comparison to the rich mode of solutions democracy offered. . . . The idea of setting up a nation-state . . . employed . . . mainly armed struggle and national wars of liberation." The struggle that is currently going on in the Balkans clearly shows what a diseased approach that is."

In this argument, Öcalan freely admitted that he had been mightily impressed with the cold war victory of the United States and the West over communism. "Victory belongs to democracy. . . . This is clear when one looks at the way the U.S. and Great Britain lead and shape the world. . . . Democracy led to the supremacy of the West. Western civilization can, in this sense, be termed democratic civilization. . . . It seems that the democratic system has insured its victory into the 2000s and cannot be stopped spreading in depth to all societies."

Öcalan also readily admitted to having made costly errors: “Many mistakes have been made by us, by myself. They have caused great pain. . . . I find that my principle [*sic*] shortcoming was during the cease-fire episode [presumably March–May 1993] in not seeing and evaluating the preparations the state was making and therefore missing an historic opportunity. . . . In its program and its practice as well [the PKK] bears the marks of the dogmatic and ideological approach of the radical youth movement of those [cold war] years. . . . Especially in 1997, under the name of an offensive against village guards, there were attacks on civilians, among them women and children, that should never have been the target of military attacks.”

Öcalan even praised Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, who was the Turkish leader most often identified with the policy of trying to obliterate the Kurds. “Some primitive Kurdish intellectuals . . . could not share their program with Mustafa Kemal [Ataturk] and became narrow-minded separatists. . . . They ended up participating in the [Sheikh Sa'id] uprising of 1925, . . . a weak affair, without a program, disorganized and leaderless.” Öcalan argued that it was “well known” that the Kurdish feudal lords “were not really acting out of nationalist fervor but were interested in achieving local dominance for their tribe. . . . One cannot ascribe to Ataturk either a particular opposition to democracy or to Kurds. . . . The acceptance of Turkish as the official language and its development were only natural.” However, “imposing a ban on the Kurdish language until 1992 . . . is not consistent with Ataturkism. . . . If Ataturk were alive today, he would take the most appropriate stand, the one that supports a democratic union with the Republic.”

Finally, the PKK leader praised the Turkish army. “The army is more sensitive than the most seemingly democratic parties. . . . The army has taken upon itself to be the protector of democratic norms. . . . Today the army is not a threat to democracy, but on the contrary a force that guarantees that democracy will move on to the next stage in a healthy manner.”

Originally a child of socialism and Marxism, Öcalan spent considerable time musing philosophically over their practical failures. “Socialists were prey to vapid generalizations and were slipshod in practice. . . . Coupled with a dogmatic outlook, Marxism lessened the chance of a creative approach to the challenges which faced us.” He still felt, however, that “this of course does not mean that socialism left no positive legacy,” since “the socialist experiment . . . left a great experience behind it . . . and will form a synthesis between its achievements and what it has to achieve.” Indeed, Marxist thought patterns are clear, as Öcalan explained how “a new synthesis will be born out of the thesis and antithesis. The State-PKK opposition will lead to a synthesis of a Democratic Republic.”

Öcalan maintained, however, that “the PKK’s rebellion using its own meth-

ods and leading the movement as a military force was legitimate. . . . Nowadays everybody talks about the radicalism of the methods of the PKK without actually seeing how the rulers behaved historically and politically. . . . The legitimacy of uprising against any system of repression as extensive as the 'language ban' of the 1982 constitution should be kept in mind when discussing this illegal movement. . . . There was a struggle to legitimately live like human beings and . . . many sacrifices were made for a more democratic society and republic. . . . History will demonstrate that this movement [the PKK] did not target the founder of the republic, but was a movement aiming at curing a decaying, sick entity. . . . We oppose[d] the oligarchic, undemocratic, feudal values and structures in Turkish society. . . . The existing legal system and constitution are an impediment to democratic rights." As for blame, "everybody from the highest organs of the state to the most backward, stupid, cruel persons are all of us responsible."

How then did Öcalan now see the Kurdish problem, and what did he seek? "If the obstacles to the use of the Kurdish language and culture [are removed], . . . integration of the Kurdish people with the state will occur. Negative perceptions and distrust of the state will change to positive perceptions and trust. The basis for rebellion and confrontation will be furnished." Such a "solution will bring wealth, unity, and peace. . . . To win the Kurds as a people is to win the Middle East" and "a Turkey that has solved its internal problems in this manner will be a Turkey that has won the capacity to emerge as an internationally powerful force."

Öcalan himself readily admitted that his analysis was "repetitious at times." This is especially true of his concept of a democratic solution to the Kurdish problem. Although he complained that in writing his declarations he had not had sufficient access to research materials, others might remark on the liberality of the Turkish state in allowing him to write anything, let alone publish it. Indeed, some have argued that since Öcalan has been incarcerated by the Turkish authorities, anything he now says is suspect. To alleviate this problem, these critics suggest that the PKK should have declared that the moment Öcalan was captured, he was no longer in a position to speak for the organization.

Replying to skeptics, Öcalan maintained that his declaration "is neither a tactical attempt to save the day nor an unprincipled turn-around. . . . My effort to end the armed conflict is not an attempt to save my skin." Indeed, his arguments were not wholly new. He did discuss most of them in a more embryonic form with the present author in an interview in March 1998, eleven months before the Turkish authorities captured him. As early as 1991, Öcalan was wondering whether independence was an inappropriate solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Öcalan hoped that his declaration "will leave for

future [generations] a very precious legacy of solving problems," and he avers that "if I am given the opportunity, I will direct all my efforts toward attaining and representing the democratic union of free citizens and peoples with the republic, in peace and fraternity."[19]

Surely Turkey is strong and wise enough to take up Öcalan's offer. Yasir Arafat, Nelson Mandela, Yitzhak Shamir, and Gerry Adams were once reviled as terrorists, but came to be called statesmen. Not executing Öcalan is in Turkey's national interest. Alive, Öcalan might just be able to take steps that will end the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey. If he is executed, however, it is likely that Turkey will simply buy for itself another generation of embittered Kurds and a challenge to its very political, social, and economic foundations. Not executing Öcalan would probably contribute to Turkey's long-cherished dream of admission into the European Union, as well as help the long-suffering Turkish economy escape further damage from a never-ending guerrilla struggle.

In addition, Turkey should recall that the Kurds sit on a great deal of the Middle East's water and oil resources and have become increasingly conscious of their nationality. As the Arab-Israeli dispute continues, the Kurds could be yet another destabilizing element in the unsettled Middle East, unless some simple but basic reforms are taken now. It would behoove Turkey's friends, such as the United States, to discreetly advise the Turks along these lines and encourage Turkey to institute some long overdue cultural reforms that might appear magnanimous and satisfy the legitimate demands of most of Turkey's Kurds.

Implicit Bargaining

Öcalan's death sentence began a process of implicit bargaining between the state and the PKK that in truth had already begun. It will be recalled that Öcalan told his captors on the flight back to Turkey that he wanted to be of service to the state. A few days later, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit declared that the state would consider changing its policies toward the Kurds if the PKK would lay down its arms: "If and when conditions become more conducive to solving certain problems, then new approaches may prevail. A substantial decrease in terrorism would be conducive to improvements and reforms in the social, economic, and political life of the country."[20]

This process of implicit bargaining continued once Öcalan's trial actually began, and the PKK leader set forward his vision of a "democratic republic." The PKK presidential council declared that Öcalan "has made all-embracing statements concerning . . . the solution of the Kurdish Question in a spirit of peace. . . . His approach is mature, respectful, and responsible. Great warriors also know how to be great peacemakers and how to take realistic initiatives."

The council also claimed that Öcalan "behaves respectfully toward the Turkish people," but "we have suffered the greater devastation."[21]

Öcalan's death sentence on 29 June 1999 met with a restrained reaction from Kurds. In contrast to the fury his initial capture in February had elicited, the Kurds realized that the court's action was just an initial step in what was going to be a continuing process of implicit bargaining. The PKK presidential council noted, however, that "this decision will never be acceptable to our people and our party," and warned "that this dangerous verdict has potential consequences that could ignite an area far wider than that of Turkey and Kurdistan." The council, however, only called for "restrained protests."[22] A week later, another statement from the PKK council declared that "the death sentence . . . is a . . . continuation of the conflict between the Turks and Kurds into the dawn of the 21st century," claimed that it "will not serve the Turkish nation but will only benefit forces who trade in war," and maintained that "Öcalan, despite all the difficulties, is trying to open doors to the resolution of the Kurdish Question."[23] In a wide-ranging interview, Duran Kalkan, a member of the PKK's presidential council, concluded that "each positive step" from the Turkish side "will be answered with a positive step from our side."[24]

Surveying the situation, the prominent Turkish journalist Mehmet Ali Birand wrote, "Turkish public opinion is changing dramatically in the wake of the Abdullah Öcalan trial." Birand argued that "the most important sign of this change was evidenced when Ertugrul Ozkok, the editor-in-chief of *Hurriyet*, Turkey's highest-circulation daily and a champion of pro-government opinions, urged that the death sentence be met with circumspection." Birand added, "Another sign of change is that some prominent people known to be close to the state are loudly declaring that the Kurdish identity must be recognized."[25]

Shortly after his conviction, in a statement announced by his lawyers, Öcalan ordered his guerrillas to evacuate Turkey by the end of the year and declared that this indicated his sincerity in regard to ending the conflict. He called "upon the PKK to end the armed struggle and withdraw their forces outside the borders of Turkey, for the sake of peace, from 1 September 1999."[26] Although responding that "the Turkish side will never negotiate with anyone or any organization [on the Kurdish problem]," Prime Minister Ecevit implicitly did so anyway when he added, "To end separatist terrorism everyone who cares for Turkey must contribute. We do not know how much will be achieved. Time will tell."[27] Analyzing the developing process, *Briefing*, which describes itself as a Turkish "weekly inside perspective on Turkish political, economic, and business affairs," concluded that "whether the state likes it, admits it, or even realizes it, it is now, in an indirect fashion, sitting down to the negotiating table with Abdullah Öcalan."[28]

At almost the exact time, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights, and labor, Harold Hongju Koh, visited Turkey. Although recognizing Turkey's right to defend itself against the PKK, he upset many Turkish officials with his strong and eloquent recommendations concerning some of the very themes Öcalan was now broaching.[29] Koh argued, for example, that "one can oppose terrorism and still support human rights." He added that "most Kurds in Turkey . . . want to remain Turkish citizens, while enjoying the basic human rights guaranteed to all people under international law, including freedom to express one's language and culture, and freedom to organize political parties that represent their interests." He maintained that "far from hurting Turkey's territorial integrity, an inclusive policy that acknowledged these rights would strengthen the Turkish state by giving the Kurdish community a genuine stake in their country's future." In other words, Koh seemed to be saying that now that Öcalan had been captured and had offered to withdraw his fighters from Turkey, Turkey had no further excuses not to move forward on human rights and democratization. It was time for Turkey to reconcile with its citizens of Kurdish ethnic heritage by recognizing their linguistic, cultural, and political identity.

Surveying the scene, one could not help but notice that where once any quotation printed from Öcalan or another PKK fighter might have left a journalist open to prosecution on the grounds that he was aiding an illegal organization, now none of the media seemed to fear quoting Öcalan at length. This even included his denials that recent violence in southeastern Turkey was the PKK's work. Rather, Öcalan explained it as the work of "provocateurs" and declared through his attorneys that this was one reason he had called on his fighters to withdraw from Turkey. Once this was accomplished, it would become clear who the true provocateurs were, and they would no longer be able to play the state off against the PKK.[30]

August 1999 saw yet another event that signaled a new, softer attitude on the state's part. President Süleyman Demirel received seven HADEP mayors in the presidential palace in Ankara and engaged them in broad discussions. HADEP (the People's Democracy Party) had been founded in 1994 as a legal Kurdish party after its predecessor, DEP (the Democracy Party), had been closed and several of its members of parliament, including Leyla Zana, had been imprisoned for supposedly supporting the PKK. Although it had not received enough votes in the April 1999 national elections to enter the Turkish parliament, it had elected numerous mayors in the local elections. By receiving some of these mayors in Ankara, Demirel was sending a clear signal that the state was now willing to recognize openly the legitimacy of certain forms of Kurdish political activity.[31]

Ironically creating an even greater impression, especially on the Turkish

public, which had always held the state and its institutions in reverent respect, was the devastating earthquake that struck the western part of the country on 17 August 1999. As many as 20,000 persons perished, mostly due to substandard buildings that corrupt officials had allowed to be constructed and that collapsed like sand castles. The universal outrage and indescribable grief were then compounded when the state seemed virtually paralyzed in its lack of response, while often reviled foreigners, such as the Greeks, quickly responded with aid that saved thousands. For the first time ever, the average Turk seemed to question the sanctity of the so-called Devlet Baba, or Daddy State. One unspoken lesson here was that maybe the Kurds had legitimate grievances against the state if average Turks themselves now were questioning it. From his prison cell on Imrali, Öcalan announced that to show its sympathy for the victims of the earthquake, the PKK would begin its withdrawal from Turkey immediately.

Kivrikoğlu's Statement

At the beginning of September 1999, General Hüseyin Kivrikoğlu, the chief of the Turkish general staff, seemingly furthered the process of implicit bargaining with his comments on the PKK's partial withdrawal from Turkey. During an interview with a select group of journalists, he said, "The leader of the terrorists [Öcalan] admitted the terrorists have realized they will get nowhere with the use of arms. Now they are contemplating a solution through political means."[32] The PKK "do not want federation, either. What they want are cultural rights," and "some of these rights have already been given to them. Kurdish newspapers and cassettes are free. Despite the fact that it is banned, radio and television stations are operating in Kurdish in eastern and southeastern Turkey." Kivrikoğlu also noted that "HADEP controls the municipalities in 37 cities and major townships. . . . No one challenged their election. As long as they do a decent job and serve the people, no one will raise any objections. Turkey has already given them [the Kurds] many rights." Kivrikoğlu also refrained from calling for Öcalan's execution: "The army should remain silent. We are a party to the conflict. And when our opinion is sought, we might respond emotionally."

Öcalan welcomed Kivrikoğlu's statement as a "positive step in developing cultural freedom and democratization."[33] Cemil Bayik, long seen as the PKK's number two man, declared that "in recognition of our positive steps, the Turkish General Staff has now made a gesture in this direction, too." He added that the general's words "are in a sense an answer to our party's declaration. We see them as such and follow them very attentively."[34]

Given the resulting speculation that it was implicitly bargaining with Öca-

lan and the PKK, however, the general staff quickly backed off: "It is out of the question that the general staff accept the PKK terrorist organization as an interlocutor, discuss its suggestions, or make any concessions." The military declared that "what they really must do is surrender their weapons . . . and turn themselves in."[35] Shortly afterward, the army further dismissed the PKK's peace offers as "propaganda spread by the terrorist organization in order to maneuver itself out of the dead end it has reached" and declared that "for this reason the Turkish armed forces are determined to continue the battle until the last terrorist has been neutralized."[36]

In reply, the PKK presidential council stated, "While we are making great sacrifices for peace and democracy, we reject capitulation." It declared, "We expect positive contributions to peace and democracy from the civil institutions of the state and especially from the Turkish Armed Forces."[37] For his part, Ecevit peevishly declared, "Scarcely we have a day without a statement from Abdullah Öcalan. He has almost become one of our mainstream politicians. This is a little bit too much."[38]

Token Surrenders

To restart the process of implicit bargaining, Öcalan next called on a small group of his militants to surrender to Turkish authorities. The move coincided with Ecevit's visit to Washington to meet with President Bill Clinton at the end of September 1999, and it was intended to win the PKK publicity as the bearer of peace, democracy, and human rights before a full complement of the local and foreign press. The Turkish authorities refused to play the game, however. Only a reduced group of eight militants led by Ali Sapin, the former PKK spokesman in Europe, surrendered on 1 October after crossing the border into southeastern Turkey from northern Iraq. On 29 October 1999, a second eight-member group flew in from Vienna and surrendered in Istanbul.

Although Ecevit was quoted as saying, "If the armed militants in the mountains deliver themselves to justice, we would regard that as a positive development,"[39] the state largely chose to ignore the token surrenders. Silence, after all, can be an effective tactic. What is more, the state apparently saw itself in a win-win situation. It could simply ignore Öcalan's moves toward dismantling his military struggle while sitting back and watching the PKK itself possibly fall into internal fighting over the tactics of its imprisoned leader.

The so-called Peace and Democratic Solution Group, which turned itself in to the Turkish authorities on 1 October 1999, carried letters addressed to Demirel, Ecevit, Kivrikoğlu, and Yildirim Akbulut, the speaker of the parliament. Given the bitterness of its long struggle against the state, the content of these letters demonstrated how far the PKK now claimed its position had

changed. The PKK declared that it wished to contribute to "the 150 years of democratic people's struggle by the people of Turkey," and owned that "whatever its rights and wrongs, the PKK serves the same purposes as part of the Turkish people's struggle to achieve a contemporary society." Continuing, the PKK argued, "Our party realized that it could not isolate itself from these developments. Therefore, it decided to change its cold war-inspired political strategy."

After promising that "this change of strategy will be officially approved at its extraordinary [seventh] congress," the PKK declared that "our president [Öcalan] has been aware since 1993 that continuing the armed struggle is meaningless and expressed the view of uniting with Turkey within the framework of democracy." Attempting to put the best possible face on its diminished position, the PKK wrote that "this could not be achieved until our president was brought back to Turkey. We believe that now that our president is closer to the Turkish state and its people, something good will come from it. As the Turkish saying goes, 'There is something good in every incident.'"

After praising Demirel for having met with HADEP mayors and recognizing the "Kurdish reality" in 1992, the PKK suggested that "a general amnesty as part of the democratization of Turkey will help remove the protracted tension. Also, it is obvious that any legal changes conceding cultural and language freedom will assist." Returning to its process of implicit bargaining, the PKK asserted that "we are aware that the armed struggle and sufferings have created a problem of confidence" but that "our current approach and steps have brought a positive development to this issue. There are many examples where, after long wars and conflicts, people have managed to live together in peace after the conflict ended." In closing, the PKK letter averred that "the Kurdish and Turkish people are like flesh and blood and are inseparable," wished Demirel well, and was signed "with respect and sincere feelings."[40]

Europe

Ever since Ataturk himself proclaimed modern Turkey's goal to be the achievement of the level of contemporary civilization, Turkey has sought to join the West. In recent decades this has ultimately meant membership in what has now become the European Union. For many years this seemed to be the impossible dream. Öcalan's capture and subsequent proposals for a democratic republic in which the Kurdish problem would be solved, however, suddenly made this vision a possibility.

Istanbul hosted the final major conference of the twentieth century on 18–19 November 1999 when the representatives of more than fifty states gathered for a summit meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in

Europe (OSCE). Although the Kurdish problem was not officially broached, it was certainly on the minds of many. After all, eleven of the fifteen members of the European Union were currently being ruled by leftist governments that regarded the Kurdish problem as a moral cause akin to that of Kosovo for which NATO had waged war. Until Turkey successfully implemented the Copenhagen criteria, including minority rights for its Kurdish population and broad human rights reforms as required by the European Union, Turkey could not hope to break through the European Union's membership logjam. In short, Turkish membership in the European Union depended, inter alia, on solving its Kurdish problem to the satisfaction of Europe. And if the truth be told, this was largely another way of declaring that Turkey's accession to the European Union depended to an ironic degree on Öcalan.

Öcalan and his associates were certainly aware of this situation. Thus the PKK presidential council sent a long letter to the OSCE leaders gathering in Istanbul. "It is no more than an illusion to expect the democratization of Turkey without a resolution of the Kurdish problem. . . . Countries which have not resolved the Kurdish problem have inevitably had to shape their laws and institutions in an anti-democratic manner in order to keep the Kurds under control. This has meant that these countries, and primarily Turkey, have remained authoritarian and oppressive regimes." If Turkey could solve its Kurdish problem, however, there would "no longer be a need for such anti-democratic laws and institutions."[41] From his prison cell, Öcalan concurred: "Again, I wish to reiterate my conviction that solving the Kurdish question and creating the grounds for democracy in Turkey will be a guarantee for peace in the Middle East and far beyond."[42]

On 25 November 1999, however, the Turkish Court of Appeals rejected Öcalan's appeal of his death sentence. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) quickly issued interim measures asking Turkey to suspend the execution until it could rule on his appeal, a process that would likely take years. At this point, the Turkish candidacy for European Union membership entered the picture as the organization gathered in Helsinki to consider new members. On 11 December 1999 Turkey was accepted as a candidate for membership. It was clear, however, that Turkey's candidacy hinged on the satisfactory solution of its Kurdish problem and specifically its suspension of Öcalan's death sentence. As the German ambassador to Turkey, Hans Joachim Vergau, declared, "If you execute Öcalan, you can forget Helsinki."[43]

The PKK presidential council was quick to claim some of the credit. "The acceptance of Turkey's candidacy is the result of a process initiated by our president, Abdullah Öcalan, . . . [and] was implemented with the intense efforts of our party." The PKK argued that "our push for a democratic solution of Turkey's problems played a key role in creating a climate that was conducive

for the recent EU decision. . . . Kurdish diplomacy was mobilized to make Turkey's candidacy to the EU membership a reality, and EU countries overcame their doubts concerning Turkey largely as a result of such Kurdish efforts."[44]

Mesut Yilmaz, the former prime minister and the head of one of three parties that formed the Ecevit coalition government, seemed to agree with this assessment of the importance of the Kurds for Turkey's EU future when he declared that "the road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir." Sounding much like Öcalan himself, Yilmaz asserted, "First of all we have to strengthen democracy, not only in its form but in its substance as well," and he stressed that "his party does not see the broadening of rights and freedoms as a danger that threatens the state . . . that this would, on the contrary, strengthen the state apparatus."[45]

Although Ecevit himself was more cautious, his foreign minister, Ismail Cem, seemingly seconded Öcalan by declaring that Kurdish broadcasting should be allowed: "Everyone should have the right to speak on television in their native language, just as I am sitting here today speaking in my own native tongue."[46] When a private citizen petitioned an Ankara state security court to try Cem for breaching article 8 of the antiterror law prohibiting separatist propaganda, the complaint was dismissed on the grounds that in a democracy such topics were open to discussion. At the same time President Demirel continued the confidence-building process by now inviting a group of prominent human rights activists from the southeast to the presidential palace. There some of the activists made speeches that would have landed them in jail had they been uttered a few years earlier.

On the other hand, someone ordered the police to raid the offices of HADEP in Diyarbakir and four smaller cities. Police arrested eleven party leaders and seized documents and cassettes. Laws that limited free debate of the Kurdish problem remained in effect. *Ozgur Bakis,* the largest pro-Kurdish daily in Turkey, was still banned in the five provinces under emergency rule, while the distribution of two Kurdish magazines was also recently halted. Kanal 21, a television station in Diyarbakir, remained shut down for broadcasting music deemed to incite Kurdish separation.

Nevertheless, the process of implicit bargaining now continued with a new sense of importance. Murat Karayilan, a member of the PKK presidential council, declared, "This is a big chance for Turkey," but warned Öcalan's "execution means the execution of the Kurdish people . . . a revival of the armed conflict . . . and it would mean to prevent Turkey from entering the European Union." He further argued, "It would be a fatal error to think that the PKK has been defeated. . . . We also have the power to escalate the war."[47] Ertugrul Ozkok, a leading Turkish journalist, also spoke out against executing Öcalan: "The three hanging incidents in our history have brought no happiness to our

country. . . . Would it be too much if we just once tried to attain this [happiness and tranquility] by not hanging?"[48] General Kivrikoğlu owned that fighting in the Kurdish region had declined "by 90 percent"[49] after Öcalan had ordered his guerrillas to begin withdrawing the previous summer.

Ismet Berkan, a leftist journalist, elaborated on the subject of domestic peace when he asserted, "This problem has nothing to do with Europe. It is mostly to do with internal politics." He claimed that "the agencies providing reports to the government on this issue do not quote European reaction at the top of their concerns." Instead, "it is felt strongly that Öcalan's execution would undermine the domestic peace . . . [and] rekindle terrorism."[50] President Demirel also urged postponement of the execution in deference to "Turkey's higher interests."[51]

Others argued that executing Öcalan would hurt the Turkish economy by refueling galloping inflation and calling into question the government's very stability, seen as necessary to maintain the economy's fragile recovery. The allusion to the government's stability referred to the open disagreement between Ecevit, who was against execution, and his deputy prime minister, Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the ultranationalist MHP, who favored it.

Finally, in a seven-hour coalition summit meeting on 12 January 2000, the government agreed to comply with the ECHR's request for a stay of execution until it ruled on the case. Ecevit warned, however, "We have agreed that if the terrorist organization and its supporters attempt to use this decision against the highest interests of Turkey, the suspension will end and the execution process will immediately begin."[52] Although this warning partially appeased Bahçeli, he had clearly compromised a great deal, given his original hard-line position, which had carried him to such political prominence during the April 1999 national elections. The process of implicit bargaining had reached a new degree.

Öcalan described the conditional stay of his execution as "important" and "historic." Boldly, he asserted, "If they execute me, the EU candidacy, the economy, and peace will all go down. . . . These depend on my staying alive. I am a synthesis of values, not just a person. I represent democracy."[53] However, he then adopted a more modest position: "Let us be humble. Let us display a change of heart and mentality," and he promised that "if the government and state officials adopt a correct attitude, we shall not take any wrong steps." He declared, "Now that this summit is over, the most important task awaiting Turkey and needed is carrying out the reforms that will also fulfill the requirements of EU membership." He explained that "there is a need for general amnesty" and "because everyone has suffered . . . the healing must be done all together."

The PKK central committee termed the government's action a "decision

of the century" that "comforted and created more hope for peace among the two peoples of Turkey." Responding to the government's warning that it would restart the execution process if the PKK would "use the decision against the highest interests of Turkey," the central committee affirmed: "Turkish leaders with common sense, democratic forces, and nationalists can be sure that our party will not tolerate any force to weaken Turkey . . . or harm its interests."[54] The central committee also moved quickly to further the implicit bargaining process toward Öcalan's eventual release by declaring that "free and healthy environments need to be created for Öcalan so he can work for a Democratic Turkey and solve the Kurdish issue in a peaceful way."

Obviously irritated and not yet willing to grant Öcalan any legitimacy, Ecevit responded, "Öcalan and his supporters are trying to dictate to the Turkish government, and they are making statements with this aim. This is unacceptable. It would be to his advantage to keep quiet. . . . We cannot allow Öcalan to use Imrali as a political pulpit."[55] Nevertheless, this is exactly what Öcalan was doing, while Ecevit's warnings were largely his responses in the evolving process of implicit bargaining. Although the ultranationalists and Islamists still called for Öcalan's execution, most observers such as Sedat Ergin, a prominent journalist writing in *Hurriyet*, concluded, "Thus Öcalan has been turned into a strategic card with which . . . to discourage the PKK from action."[56]

Conclusion

Öcalan's sudden and dramatic capture by Turkish commandos in February 1999 has led to a process of continuing implicit bargaining between the Turkish government and the PKK that holds out the hope of a win-win result for all the parties involved. If handled skillfully and sincerely, it could not only result in an end to the long and bloody PKK insurgency but also lead to a healthier economy and much needed democratization of Turkish politics that would satisfy the requirements for admission into the EU. Once this is achieved, Turkey's Kurdish problem would also become the EU's problem and responsibility. In addition, EU admission would help guarantee Turkey's territorial integrity, the very point that has always prevented the government from initiating the steps that would solve its Kurdish problem.

Much, of course, remains to be accomplished, and it is uncertain what paths the continuing process of implicit bargaining will take. Ahmet Turan Demir, the general chairman of HADEP, has suggested, "First of all, general amnesty should be declared." Then "a new constitution with a consensus in accordance with today's universal standards [and] the democratization of all laws, primarily criminal law, will be the issues that we will pursue." Specifics "include the recognition of the Kurdish identity, practicing cultural rights, and the right to

have education in Kurdish."[57] Other goals involve the right of Kurds to return to their villages, the lifting of Emergency Rule and the village guard system, and changes in the electoral system that will permit every political party to be represented in the parliament according to the vote it received. This latter provision would mean rescinding the 10 percent rule that eliminated parties such as HADEP from receiving any representation at all. At its extraordinary seventh party congress in January 2000, the PKK adopted a "Peace Project" that incorporated several of these points.[58] Other main points announced by the PKK included securing the life and freedom of Öcalan, increasing investment in the southeast, and preserving historic and environmental treasures threatened by the Ilisu Dam project in the southeast.

The Turkish government, of course, will pursue its own agenda. Unfortunately, there are still powerful forces in Turkey that do not seek further democratization or even an end to what for them continues to be a profitable war. On 19 February 2000, for example, three main HADEP majors were suddenly arrested and accused of supporting the PKK: Feridun Celik of Diyarbakir, Selim Ozalp of Siirt, and Feyzullah Karaaslan, mayor of Bingol. Although they were quickly released and allowed to return to their jobs, their trial began two months later. Daniel Cohn- Bendit, the co-chairman of the Turkey–EU Parliamentary Commission, was initially denied permission to visit the imprisoned Leyla Zana, a decision subsequently reversed. The CNN affiliate in Turkey was ordered off the air for twenty-four hours because it asked whether history might one day regard Öcalan as a Turkish version of Nelson Mandela. Öcalan himself was no longer permitted to make statements to the press, and access to his lawyers was reduced. Ecevit continued to argue that Kurdish was not a language, only a dialect, and that there was no Kurdish ethnic problem in Turkey, only a question of economic development in the southeast. Despite the PKK's abandonment of the guerrilla struggle, emergency rule in several southeastern provinces continued, and the village guards have not been disbanded. Indeed, the Turkish military continued to make periodic attacks against the PKK units that have been withdrawn into northern Iraq. In addition, it appeared that there would be no peace dividend, as the Turkish military planned to increase spending on modernization and the purchase of tanks and helicopters.

Furthermore, the March 2000 celebration of the Kurdish holiday Newroz in Istanbul was banned by Governor Erol Cakir because the application for permission used the non-Turkish letter *w* in the word *Newroz,* instead of the preferred Turkish spelling *Nevroz.* Ludicrously, of course, the letter *w* appeared on the door of virtually every public toilet in Turkey. Crude threats led to prominent Turkish sociologist Serif Mardin deciding not to participate in an international conference on the Kurds sponsored by the American University in Washington, D.C., on 17 April 2000. And in May 2000, State Minister

Mehmet Ali İrtemçelik, who had been instrumental in obtaining Turkey's EU candidacy the previous December, resigned, citing deep differences in the understanding of democracy between himself and Ecevit.

On the other hand, the unexpected decision by the Turkish parliament in April 2000 not to extend President Demirel's term for another five years, despite the Turkish military's clear preference for him, might be seen as implementing one of the most critical of the Copenhagen criteria required for EU membership—civilian control of the military. It also demonstrated a willingness to move on from Demirel's tired old platitudes in search of bolder approaches. This became clear when the Turkish parliament elected the chief justice of the Turkish Constitution Court, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, president of Turkey in May 2000. Sezer had come to the attention of the Turkish public by criticizing the Turkish constitution for restrictions it placed on basic freedoms, including use of the Kurdish language, and advocating greater constitutionally protected freedom of thought and expression.

In his first two years in office, Sezer has supported democratic reforms aimed at facilitating Turkey's EU candidacy, but he possesses only limited power. Moreover, Turkey's sudden economic collapse in February 2001 and the resulting unpopularity of the Ecevit coalition government appeared to delay initiatives toward the EU. The military remains the ultimate arbitrator in Turkey, but its positions on the EU and Kurdish rights have been problematic. Hard-liners continue to press for Öcalan's execution, HADEP's closing, and the continuation of the ban on education in the Kurdish language. Solving the Kurdish question and clearing Turkey's road to EU membership, although a painstakingly slow process, remain crucial to Turkey's future.

7

Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey

M. HAKAN YAVUZ

The construction and politicization of Kurdish ethnonationalism in Turkey evolved in five stages.[1] The state's policies are the determining factors in the evolution and modulation of the Kurdish ethnonationalism. The major reason for the politicization of Kurdish cultural identity is the shift from multiethnic, multicultural realities of the Ottoman Empire to the nation-state model. The old sources of legitimacy—Islam and the caliphate—were destroyed. The new order of forced homogenizing nationalism has been the major source of conflict in Turkey. The current waves of identity claims are a reflection of a deeper search for legitimacy and meaning in the post-Ottoman system. The politicization of ethnic identity in the Ottoman domain took place in the nineteenth century when the Ottoman Empire decided to govern, not rule anymore.[2] The sultan ruled some urban centers, but he lacked the administrative means of bureaucracy and information to offer regularized and centralized administration throughout the empire. The centralization attempts brought the question of governance, and this in turn created a conflict between local power structures and the state.

The relatively successful modernization project of Mustafa Kemal in education, urbanization, and communication created not only regional differences but also a conscious Kurdish ethnic elite. The interpretation of this regional difference and the formation of a new Kurdish elite are the very reasons for the mobilization of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey.[3] The overlap between the regional economic disparity and particular ethnic (Kurdish) identity is translated into Kurdish nationalism. The Kemalist reforms, which attempted to civilize the people of Turkey and to create a secular nation-state, resulted in the construction of Kurdish ethnonationalism. Modern communication technology and political liberalization in the 1980s have played special roles as catalysts in the political articulation of Kurdish identity. Ethnically politicized Kurdish intellectuals functioned as ethnic entrepreneurs in Turkey by interpreting all past and present events in terms of historicizing and legitimizing Kurdish nationalism.[4]

I have divided the evolution of Kurdish identity into five historical stages. First I examine the impact of the centralization policies of the Ottoman state in the nineteenth century. In response to these centralization policies and the penetration of European capitalism, local Islamic networks were politicized and mobilized. The Naksibendi and Kadiri orders became vehicles of resistance against the centralization of the Ottoman state and means of identity formation (1878–1924).[5] Then I examine the sociopolitical consequences of the transformation from a multiethnic Ottoman entity to a new nation-state and the reaction of the Kurdish tribes to the nation-building project of Mustafa Kemal (1925–61). These anticentralization rebels demanded the maintenance of autonomous tribal structures, which helped in the articulation of Kurdish protonationalism. The discourse of the new republican ideology of Mustafa Kemal either denied the existence of the Kurds or reconstructed a political language to talk about the issue without pronouncing the word *Kurds.* As part of the radical nation-building reforms, Kurdish traditional notions of identity and culture were constructed as "reactionary," "tribal," and an outcome of regional "backwardness." In the third stage (1962–83), the secularization of Kurdish identity arises within the framework of the broader leftist movement in Turkey (1962–83). I consider the fourth stage to be the PKK-led violent insurgency (1983–98). The arrest of Abdullah Öcalan, the head of the PKK in 1999, has put Turkey on the cusp of a still-emerging fifth stage where some accommodation is possible between divergent Turkish and Kurdish aspirations. It should be noted that divisions among the Turks on the roles of culture and identity are as serious as those among the Kurds in Turkey. The final stage started with the candidate status of Turkey and the Europeanization of the Kurdish question in Turkey. As long as the Kurdish problem exists, Turkey will be crippled both inside and out—doomed to live with the wear and tear of constant international criticism.

Fragmentation of Kurdish Identity

There is a growing tendency to analyze Kurdish nationalism as a "natural" force.[6] We need to remind policymakers and ourselves that nationalism, whether Turkish or Kurdish, is always instructed by identity entrepreneurs and shaped by political context. The major difference between Turkish and Kurdish nationalism is the presence of the state. It is the modernizing nation-state that formed Turkish nationalism and stressed the civic aspect of the nation. Since Kurdish nationalism in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran evolved in response to modernizing nation-states, it constantly stresses its ethnic difference, sometimes even evoking racism to historicize itself. According to Anthony Smith, *ethnie* (collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history and culture,

a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity) is necessary for the formation of a nation. There is a Kurdish *ethnie* as the precursor to the modern Kurdish nationalism, which contains ethnic roots, myths, and collective memories and values. Kurdish nationalism is an outcome of the fusion of culture and politics.

Although Kurdish ethnic entrepreneurs tend to identify Turks as their other in the construction of Kurdish nationalism, there are major tribal, linguistic, religious, alphabetical, and regional fissures within Kurdish identity itself. The sources of these divisions are sociohistorical, and they prevent the emergence of a full-fledged Kurdish identity. Kurdish life was tribally structured and based on tightly knit rural communities under a tribal or religious leader, known as *ağa*, *şeyh*, *seyyid*, or *molla*.[7] The tribes, also known as *asiret* in Turkish, are kinship based, territorially oriented, and religiously shaped solidarity groups. Naksibendi or Kadiri Sufi orders, which are led by *şeyh,* have been utilized to integrate different Turkish or Arab groups into larger *asirets*. In many cases, since ağa is also the head of the Sufi order, he exercises authority over his tribe. This tribal structure played a dual role: it prevented the formation of a Kurdish unity by keeping them fragmented, and it preserved a heightened Kurdish particularism vis-à-vis the Turks, Persians, and Arabs. Tribal structure constituted the core depository of Kurdish identity, facilitated mobilization against centralizing governments, and also prevented the formation of a modern conception of nationalism until the mid-twentieth century. In other words, allegiances among the Kurdish tribes are more fluid, but division itself is the constant future. The Turkish state pursued three competing policies: (a) a policy of assimilation by breaking down tribal structure, which usually resulted in armed rebellion; (b) a policy of co-optation of tribal leaders with the purpose of controlling these unruly regions; and (c) a policy of divide and rule (using one tribe against another).

In addition to tribal structure, another source of fragmentation of Kurdish identity is geography. The Kurds are a nation in formation at the crossroads of the Persian, Arab, and Turkish worlds. Border characteristics allowed the Kurdish tribes a high degree of autonomy. There was a loose connection among the Kurdish tribes and between the center and subregional system of this borderland between the Persian and Ottoman empires. Most of the Kurds live in extremely rugged, mountainous terrain, and this, in turn, separates each community from the other and also from the Arabs, Persians, and Turks. These rugged geographic conditions have been major factors hampering the formation of Kurdish unity. Due to tribal structure and geographic conditions, diverse Kurdish dialects dominate the regions, and subethnic identities are more powerful than Kurdish consciousness. No clans have ever wanted to see rival clans succeed in leading Kurdish movements, and the central govern-

ments have never hesitated to use one tribe against another. Even the *Anfal* of Saddam Hussein, for instance, did not overcome the fragmentation of the Kurds in northern Iraq.[8] Due to centralization policies of the Ottoman state and the reforms of Mustafa Kemal, the least tribal and more politicized Kurds are those who live in Turkey. However, even in the case of Turkey, religious Sunni vs. Alevi, linguistic Kurmanji vs. Zaza, regional western vs. eastern, and class identities compete with a larger Kurdish identity.[9]

In the formation of modern Kurdish identity in Turkey, the confrontation between religious and secular forces plays an important role. Religious loyalties used to be more powerful among the Sunni Kurds.[10] For instance, some tribal chiefs claim to be seyyids, genealogy traced to the family of the prophet Muhammed, to justify their worldly power with religious qualifications. Islam has been both a unifying and dividing force among the Kurds. The religious divide between the Sunni and Alevi Kurds has played a key role in the division of the Kurdish unity. This religious cultural divide became the basis of different political trends within the Kurdish movement. For instance, Alevi Kurds strongly supported the reforms of Mustafa Kemal and became the incubator of leftist ideology in Turkey, whereas the Sunni Kurds supported the anti-Kemalist Islamic movement of Necmettin Erbakan. The gradual emancipation of the Alevis became a reality as a result of the reforms of Mustafa Kemal. By examining the evolution and politicization of Kurdish ethnonationalism in Turkey, I stress the sociopolitical process of de-linking Islam and Kurdish nationalism and the social forces that simultaneously unify and fragment the Kurdish identity.

Five Stages of Kurdish Nationalism

Anticentralization Revolts and the Politicization of Islamic Identity

During the Ottoman period, ethnic identity had very little political significance. Religious identity shaped one's political loyalty. Attempts at centralization during the nineteenth century politicized peripheral ethnic and religious identities. Most of the Kurdish tribal revolts against the central government resulted from tribal reaction to the intrusive and centralizing policies of the modernization policies of the Ottoman state and the Republic of Turkey. These centralizing policies in terms of monopolizing violence and education threatened the tribal autonomy and the interests of the ağa or seyyid. Some of these tribes resisted the extension of the rule of law in this region because it aimed at ending their feudal tyranny over local people. Thus we need to be extremely cautious when speaking about the nationalization of these anticentralizing revolts by Kurdish nationalists.

The centralization of the Ottoman Empire was expected to destroy tribal ties and coalitions. This, in turn, empowered and reactivated Naksibendi and Kadiri Sufi orders along with the emergence of the seyh as an integrative personality and a conflict manager between diverse Kurdish tribes and even between the centralizing state and the tribal networks. In other words, the erosion of tribal ties enhanced Sufi networks and politicized Islamic identity. Kurdish ethnic awareness evolved within the framework of Islamic consciousness. In the anticentralization movements, Naksibendi Sufi networks not only replaced more aristocratic Kadiri orders but also played a pivotal role. The first proto-religio-ethnic rebellion took place in 1880 under Seyh Ubeydullah (d. 1883), a local religious leader, in reaction to the centralizing policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1878–1909). After putting this religiotribal rebellion down, Sultan Abdulhamid II formed the Hamidiye Regiments from various Kurdish tribes to counter Russian-backed Armenian nationalism in eastern Anatolia.

The close ties between Islam and Kurdish nationalism did not develop as the close ties between Islam and Turkish nationalism continued. Islam has always played an important role in the vernacularization of Turkish nationalism, and the nationalists, in turn, redefined Islam as an integral part of national identity. Turkish nationalism is essentially based on the cosmology of Islam and its conception of community. Although Turkey is a national and secular state, religion lies at the core of its identity debate and political landscape. The patterns of collective action, the meaning of justice, and the organization networks in Turkey are very much formed by Islamic practices and organizations. In the nineteenth century, the centralization policies of the Ottoman regime succeeded in the weakening of tribal structure but did not eliminate them. These policies resulted in the politicization of Islamic networks.

National Secularization (1925–61)

Ethnolinguistic groups in the Ottoman state were classified on the basis not of ethnicity but of religion. Within the religious groups, diverse ethnolinguistic communities existed. The loss of this cosmopolitan character of the empire, together with vast chunks of territory in the Balkans and the Middle East, left its imprint on Turkish political culture. The way in which the Ottoman Empire was weakened and partitioned by the European colonial powers left deep scars on the collective memory of Turks. After World War I, Kurdish cultural committees were formed in major Kurdish cities. (As a result of this political mobilization and the British support for an independent Kurdish state, Serif Pasa presented the Kurdish case in subsequent international conferences.) The 1920 Treaty of Sevres, which constitutes the Kemalist state discourse to identify internal and external enemies, created “local autonomy for the land where the Kurd element predominates” (articles 62–64). Although never put into

practice, the Treaty of Sevres remains in the collective memory of the Turkish state. Fear of partition still haunts Turkish society and breeds continuing suspicion of foreigners and their sinister domestic collaborators.

Before World War I, many European powers became the defenders of certain minorities and used minority rights to get more concessions from the state. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire was partitioned, and the heartland of the empire, Anatolia and Rumelia, was occupied. As a result of World War I and then the Turko-Greek War, which lasted from 1919 to 1922, there were few non-Muslim peoples left in Anatolia. The majority of Turkey's Armenians were deported to Syria and Mesopotamia in 1915, so that they would not side with advancing Russian troops and declare independence in the eastern part of the empire. The remaining Orthodox Greeks who had not fled after the Turko-Greek War were exchanged for Muslims in Greece according to the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. The transition from a multicultural cosmopolitan Ottoman empire to a republican Turkey resulted in the promotion of a homogeneous secular nationalism that did not tolerate diversity and insisted that all inhabitants become Turks.

Due to the Ottoman legacy, Turkey embodies an irresolvable paradox in the foundation of the Republic in the 1920s. On the one hand, the state that formed as a result of demographic Islamization of the country used Islam to unify diverse ethnolinguistic groups. On the other hand, it defined its "progressive" civilizing ideology, known as Kemalism, in opposition to Islam. It called upon the men and women of Turkey to participate in a jihad against the occupying European armies to liberate their homeland and caliphate. In the Treaty of Lausanne, it stressed the common religious identity of Turks and Muslims and referred to non-Muslims as a "minority."[11] By refusing to accept ethnicity as the basis of its national identity, Turkey based its identity on religioterritorial identity. Islamic identity (which consists of religious devotion, ritual practices, and a set of historically structured sociopolitical roles and schematic frames to signify and punctuate events, experiences, and objects) was the integrative glue in the establishment of the Turkish republic. Turkish national identity was modeled on the Islamic concept of community and disseminated through Islamic terms. By incorporating religious vocabulary, such as a *millet* (referring to a religious community in the Ottoman Empire, appropriated by the republic to mean nation), *vatan* (homeland), *gazi* (referring to those who fought in the name of Islam, it became the title of Mustafa Kemal), *sehid* (those who die for the protection and dissemination of Islam), into the nationalist vocabulary to vernacularize and disseminate national identity, Islamic identity was nationalized. Islam remained imbedded both within and outside and continued to provide the hidden identity of the Turkish state.

After the 1925 Sheikh Sa'id Rebellion against the new republic, the nation-

building process was intensified.[12] Again, the caliphate, which was abolished in 1924, represented union sanctioned by Islam of multiethnic groups, and it recognized ethnic diversity without assigning any political role. In other words, the caliphate was the symbol of a multiethnic polity and authority; it symbolized the unity of Muslims as a faith-based community and allowed space for diverse loyalties and local autonomy for the periphery. The aim of the 1925 rebellion was to preserve this religiously sanctioned religiotribal structure of the religion. The rebellion used Islamic networks and frames to expand its social base to receive support from other antisecularist Sunni Turks.

Sheikh Sa'id of the Naksibendi order was initially successful, and he even controlled the surrounding cities of Diyarbakir and Elazig. Tribal rivalry and religious divisions, however, prevented full Kurdish participation. Although the Turkish army captured Sheikh Sa'id and hanged him in Diyarbakir in 1925, his rebellion, the first ethnoreligious uprising, made the Turkish republic very suspicious of any form of Kurdish activities. In October 1927, a group of Kurdish tribal leaders formed the Kurdish National League (Hoyboun) under the leadership of Ishan Nuri Pasa of Bitlis, a successful Ottoman general. This group organized the revolt of Mount Agri (Ararat) in 1930–31. The Turkish army had difficulty putting the rebellion down in its early stages due to the improved arms that the rebels had received from outside. The Turkish military defeated the Kurdish rebellion, and Ihsan Pasa took refuge in Iran. In order to establish law and order in the region, a 1934 law organized a selective deportation and exiled some Kurdish tribal chiefs to western Turkey. The assimilationist policies and external involvement triggered a new revolt in and around the mountainous areas of Dersim inhabited mostly by the Alevi Kurds, known as Zazas, in 1937–38.[13] After suppressing the rebellion, which attacked several key military posts and killed hundreds of soldiers, the Turkish state erased Dersim from the map and renamed it Tunceli.

These three rebellions against the young and inexperienced republic created a cumulative image of the people in the region as socially tribal, religiously fanatical, economically backward, and a threat to the national integrity of the Republic of Turkey. The way in which the state framed the Kurdish resistance sought to legitimize Turkish claims and justify Turkish domination. In other words, the Kemalist state discourse on the Kurdish issue evolved as a result of these rebellions, and the state became more sensitive about its policies of creating a secular Turkish nation. Thus one needs to take these rebellions into account to explain the representation of the Kurdish question by the state. The republic did not deny the existence of the Kurds but developed a new discourse to speak about them without pronouncing the word *Kurd* in the ethnonational sense. By constructing the Kurdish tribal structure as reactionary, backward, and dangerous, the Turkish republic constructed itself as modern, secular, and

progressive. After the rebellions, politicized Sunni Islam evolved as a surrogate Kurdish identity in southeastern Anatolia. For instance, the Islamist National Outlook Movement of Necmettin Erbakan remained a powerful force among the Sunni Kurds until the 1995 elections.[14]

After 1925, multiple identities that had prevailed during the Ottoman period officially coalesced into secular ethnic Turkish nationalism. The historians of the Kemalist period and the official Turkish Historical and Language Society redefined identity in terms of ethnicity and language. The state used the army, education, media, and art to consolidate Turkish national identity and attempted to diminish the role of Islam and its Ottoman legacy. Nevertheless, during the formative Kemalist period (1922–50), two versions of nationalism actually competed: secular linguistic nationalism and ethnoreligious communal nationalism.

Nationalism and secularism constituted the core of the Kemalist ideology in Turkey. The Kemalist project of secularism tried to civilize cultural and social domains of the nation. Although nationalism presupposes the creation of an ethnically homogeneous society at the expense of other identities, race never became a constituting element of being a Turk; rather, "being a citizen of the Republic of Turkey (*civicness*) was the foundation of the nationalism." The 1924 constitution says, "Without religious and ethnic difference, every person of the people of Turkey who is a citizen is regarded as Turk."[15] Being a Turk is defined in terms of legal ties with the state. This definition reflected the legacy of the Ottoman empire. Everyone with Ottoman citizenship was also regarded as Ottoman. The 1961 constitution gets rid of the "people of Turkey" (*Turkiye ahalisi*) and says every citizen is "accepted as Turk regardless of ethnic and religious identity." One sees the gradual ethnification of the term *Turk* in the 1961 and 1982 constitutions. Under article 66 of the 1982 constitution, everyone who is related to the Republic of Turkey with citizenship is a Turk. In modern Turkey, the term *Turkish nation* includes all Turkish citizens whatever their ethnic roots. Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin are a new concept that has been put into use in response to European pressures.

Secularization of the Kurdish Question through Socialism (1961–83)

The secularization and transformation of Kurdish identity took place within the broader leftist movement in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s. This secularization of Kurdish identity took place as a result of interaction with socialist ideology. Alevi Kurds played a critical role in this process of secularization. With the spread of universal education and the sociopolitical liberalization as a result of the 1961 constitution, new modern intellectuals rather than tribal and religious leaders started to shape Kurdish identity. Under the 1961 constitution, Kurdish intellectuals expressed Kurdish concern and grievances in

socialist idioms to promote the self-determination of the Kurds. The Kurds, particularly the Alevi Kurds, dominated Turkey's left-wing movement in the 1970s. Between 1965 and 1968, the bilingual Turkish-Kurdish *Dicle-Firat* and *Deng* magazines were published. In the late 1960s, the Kurdish identity question was expressed in terms of regional economic inequalities and suggested a socialist solution.[16] At its fourth national congress, the Labor Party of Turkey passed a resolution that "there is a Kurdish people in the east of Turkey." The goal of this statement was to carve a socialist base for the Labor Party by using the ethnic card. In the 1970s, leftist groups and identities were used to challenge the "central political authority" in Ankara. Criticism of the center was the major unifying force of the leftist movement.

Another major development was the establishment of the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKO is its Turkish acronym) in 1969, the first organizational attempt to raise the consciousness of the Kurdish population by stressing the uneven economic development within regions of the country. The leftist movement in Turkey always tried to expand its base by stressing the Alevi and Kurdish issues. Between 1969 and 1971, the DDKO organized regular teach-ins to raise the Kurdish consciousness throughout Turkey. Abdullah Öcalan took part in DDKO activities and established connections with other students when he was in Istanbul in 1970.[17] The DDKO blended Marxism and Kurdish nationalism to mobilize the youth in the name of social justice and identity.[18] Some leaders of the DDKO were active members of the Turkish Labor Party. With the 1971 coup, the Labor Party was outlawed along with the DDKO. Although ex-members of DDKO tried to revive the outlawed DDKO in 1974 under a Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Association (DDKD), they were not successful in creating a unified Kurdish organization due to ideological, regional, and personal rivalries. In the 1970s, the Kurdish nationalists started to challenge the Kemalist view, and in 1979 a cabinet minister, Serafettin Elci, caused a scandal by openly declaring himself a Kurd. After the 1980 coup, the state identified Kurdish nationalism, along with radical Islam and the Left, as a divisive force and banned all forms of cultural expression.

One of the key goals of the 1980 coup was the control of the centrifugal forces of Kurdish and religious movements.[19] The coup used oppressive measures and destroyed the organizational power of Kurdish networks within Turkey. It jailed many Kurdish activists, and some of them took refuge in Europe, where they formed the core of a transnational Kurdish activism. In short, the oppression of the 1980 coup had the opposite impact by further politicizing and strengthening the Kurdish sense of identity, and this, in turn, was used by the PKK. The policies of the Turkish military and the regional developments in Iraq and Iran further consolidated Kurdish separatism, and the PKK launched an armed uprising to defeat the Turkish state in 1984. No Kurdish organization

captured the mind and resources of the Kurds as much as the PKK. Yet there is no single sociological study of this organization.[20] Peasant tribes and religious Kurds were the least ethnic conscious sector of the population and reflected instead an *umma* (religious community) view of the state-society relations. They established a sense of difference from Ankara by utilizing the Safai idiom of Islam. Tribes stress Islam because Islam does not negate tribal identities and offers a common space for communication and interaction. Only the newly created suburbs of Diyarbakir, Istanbul, and Ankara, where peasants were cut off from traditional ties, became centers of Kurdish nationalism.

In the late 1990s, Kurdish nationalism was still "in formation," composed of different heterogeneous groups. In the formation of this new politicized Kurdish identity, class questions have been perceived in national (Kurdish) terms. Kurdish nationalism offered a space within which class and regional differences could be suppressed. In short, it was the PKK that ended the mutually constitutive relationship between Islam, tribe, and nationalism in favor of the latter.

Emergence of the PKK (1983–99)

Kurdish nationalists have employed repertoires of violence, ranging from the PKK-led terror campaign to the establishment of mainly Kurdish parties, to the struggle for cultural and political rights. Many Turks feel that exclusion and racism are problems of individual bigotry and hatred, while the Kurds often understand it as an intricate web of individual attitudes and cultural messages about marginalized Kurds. The Kurdish perception of Turkey's sociopolitical realities is filtered through this new Kurdish nationalism. The PKK played a critical role in raising Kurdish political consciousness, by establishing a web of networks in and out of Turkey to recruit militants; undermining the religiotribal structure of the region by presenting new opportunities for the middle class and urbanized Kurdish youth, and popularizing and consolidating Turkish nationalism. One of the unexpected outcomes of the PKK campaign was the deepening and politicization of Turkish nationalism. As a result of the PKK terror campaign against all walks of Turkish life, Turkish nationalism has been popularized and articulated in almost all public gatherings. The PKK activities encouraged Kurds to criticize not the "political authority" in Ankara but Turkish nationalism as a construct and to legitimize their own separatist nationalism. This new twist from being critical of the state power to being critical of Turkish nationalism has represented a turning point in the separation of Kurdish nationalism and the leftist movement in Turkey.

As a result of a centralized education system, urbanization, and population displacement, Kurdish youth have come to major cities to study and work. This became the movement of the first-generation Kurdish university students, who

had doubts about finding jobs and encountered a new socioeconomic life in the cities with very little means to benefit and join. The PKK targeted these "displaced" and "semi-intellectual university students" in terms of offering identity (Kurdish nationalism) and commitment to justice (socialist economic order). During this disintegration of the social fabric as a result of major social transformation in the 1970s, the PKK presented itself as a "liberation movement" and voiced the desire to restore Kurdish identity and justice by violent means. The 1980 coup and its oppressiveness helped to create a siege mentality among the Kurds, compelling them to think that their future was constrained and contained by the Turkish state. They had two options: move to Europe as a political refugee and search for a new life or join the PKK to fight against the Turkish state. The PKK became more popular as the oppression of the military coup increased.

The PKK remained under the autocratic leadership of Abdullah Öcalan. The son of an impoverished Kurdish farmer, Öcalan was born in 1948 in a village in Urfa and eventually studied political science at the prestigious Faculty of Political Science in Ankara University in 1971. Due to his involvement in an underground leftist movement, he was arrested in 1972 and spent seven months in Mamak military jail in Ankara. He did not graduate from the university. By 1973 he had organized a Marxist group—which initially included Kurdish as well as Turkish militants—whose goal was socialist revolution in Turkey. After years of recruiting and indoctrinating followers, the PKK was established on 27 November 1978. Öcalan's personality was strongly shaped by his childhood experiences and the sociopolitical conditions of southeastern Turkey. He developed a deep animosity against the traditional structure of the Kurdish society in which his family had no standing. This aversion extended to the Turkish state. His main goal was to destroy the traditional Kurdish societal structure and create a socialist pan-Kurdish state.

Öcalan's PKK engaged in a campaign of terror against the officials of the Turkish state. Its main goal was to destabilize Turkey and create an independent Kurdish state with the support of some foreign countries, like Syria, Greece, and Russia. For more than two decades, Öcalan operated from Syria and occupied Lebanon. The PKK is responsible for the indiscriminate killing of moderate Turkish Kurds both in Turkey and in Europe. It consistently targeted the educational infrastructure in the region, branding the public schools "instruments of Ankara's assimilation policy." The PKK reportedly killed 200 teachers and destroyed 150 schools to "stop assimilation." It blew up bridges and hospitals and slaughtered "collaborators." It killed Kurds and Turks alike so long as the victims were perceived as pro-state. The PKK and its leadership never tolerated dissent from the party line and considered assimilated Kurds as the "biggest enemy." In his interview with Mehmet Ali Birand, Öcalan gave

a number of examples of how he punished what he perceived as disloyal acts.[21] The PKK failed to generate popular support among many Kurds yet politicized their consciousness. The PKK even forced families to give up a son or daughter to serve the PKK.

According to German intelligence sources, the PKK has 10,000 supporters among the half million Kurds in Germany. It also managed to mobilize 20,000 Kurds for political campaigns. Although PKK militants are in a minority, they are well organized and violent.[22] Since the PKK dominated heroin (and illegal alien) traffic throughout western Europe, it has developed lucrative investments to support its activities. It supported a London-based television station (MED-TV), an extensive Internet presence, and funding of Kurdish organizations in Europe and North America. The PKK carried out its political activities in Europe by using the ERNK (Kurdistan Liberation Front), and in recent months ex-PKK activists who were part of the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile formed the Kurdish National Congress (KNK).

In order to contain and repress the PKK-led activities, the Turkish state pursued a number of policies. One of the major social costs of the PKK vs. the state conflict was the securitization of normal life in heavily Kurdish provinces. The Kurdish zone of southeastern Anatolia has been under Regional State of Emergency governorate (known as OHAL) as of 1987. The fight against the PKK was carried out under the martial law before OHAL was introduced in 1987. The OHAL region included Bingol, Diyarbakir, Elazig, Hakkari, Mardin, Siirt, Tunceli, and Van and subsequently expanded to Adiyaman, Bitlis, and Mus. In 1990, the number of provinces in the OHAL region included Batman and Sirnak as well. First, Elazig and Adiyaman were removed from the OHAL region. OHAL regions are subject to special decrees of the government, and these decrees are not subject to the supervision of the constitutional court. The OHAL region has been subjected to a different legal and administrative rule from the rest of the country. This different legal and administrative rule has further consolidated Kurdish nationalism.

According to state statistics, between 1984 and 1999, 4,302 civil servants, 5,018 soldiers, 4,400 civilians, and 23,279 PKK terrorists were killed in the region and thousands wounded. Many Kurdish families lost their sons. Recruited from the ages of fifteen to forty by the PKK to fight for a separate state, many Kurdish young men were wounded on the front lines of the separatist war. There is no neighborhood that does not carry the scars of the war.[23] An entire generation of youth was born and socialized into this bloody and violent culture. Thousands of Kurds left the country in search of security and peace. The social and political milieu was torn apart, and sociocultural fault lines were politicized. This, in turn, politicized the Kurdish consciousness and radicalized ethnic nationalism. The human cost of PKK terror also included a new genera-

tion whose image is shaped by the OHAL conditions. Sources of livelihood in the region, stockbreeding and agriculture, were destroyed. During the conflict, the government displaced and vacated 4,000 villages and other hamlets, and approximately 1 million people were relocated to big cities for security reasons.[24] These people who were forced out of their villages constitute a major source of the problems in large cities. Crime in big cities has increased, and most of the criminals are purportedly Kurdish youth who are jobless and have little hope for the future. These new urban settlers are less likely to return to their villages, which are in ruins. This region is practically not a part of Turkey as a result of OHAL, and the government needs to end this emergency rule to unify the country.

The conflict has eroded the rule of law, and the state has used the ultra rightist gangsters and religious fanatics to fight against Kurdish nationalists. For instance, Hizbollah, a fundamental religious organization, used weapons that were imported by the governor of Batman.[25] Salih Salman, governor of Batman in the mid-1990s, was instrumental in the formation of Hizbollah, a terrorist group believed to have killed suspected members of the PKK. Young Hizbollah assassins operated in broad daylight in mainly Kurdish provinces and targeted anyone who opposed the Islamic Republic of Kurdistan. The Turkish state was involved in a no-holds-barred war against the PKK militants and remained deaf to allegations that its security services were working together with Hizbollah assassins. Hizbollah members are usually first-generation Kurds from major urban centers. Its aim was to establish an Islamic Republic of Kurdistan by overthrowing the secular system in Turkey.

The Post-Helsinki Situation

Despite the PKK's attacks on civilians, the majority of Turks trust the military officials and have not given in to fear. The PKK has targeted teachers, doctors, journalists, businessmen, police, and army officers. Since the 1983 insurrection, the Kurds have grown accustomed to being despised and rejected. Even in some larger cities, the conflict has turned into a Kurdish-Turkish one. In order to prevent the further polarization of society along ethnic lines, the military decided to use all means to stop PKK activities.

On 16 September 1998, on an inspection tour on the Syrian border, the commander of the Turkish army, General Atilla Ates, issued the following statement: "Some of our neighbors, especially Syria, are misinterpreting our efforts and goodwill for having good ties. By supporting the bandit Apo, they have helped plunge Turkey in the trouble of terrorism. . . . Our patience is exhausted." After this statement, President Süleyman Demirel issued a sharper statement condemning Syria and indicated Turkey's readiness to retaliate

against Syria. As a result of Egyptian mediation, Turkey and Syria signed the Adana memorandum on 20 October 1998. Syria committed to stop supporting the PKK terror and worked closely with Turkey to remove Öcalan from Lebanon. The key reason that Syria caved in to Turkish pressures was its isolation as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Syria was deprived of the Soviet Union's military support. Its army could not even find spare parts for its Soviet-made weaponry. The second reason Turkey pursued a confrontational policy against Syria in 1998 had to do with Turkey's close ties to Israel and the United States. The Turkish army knew that Syria's ability to wage war was limited, and so it did not hesitate to apply pressure. Moreover, between 1983 and 1994, the Turkish army shifted its traditional and confused strategy to a more flexible doctrine of low-intensity conflict. In order to be more flexible and mobile, the army restructured itself from division to brigade lines. The Turkish armed forces evolved from being an overgrown and sluggish giant into an alert, effective organization of command, control, and communications. The delegation of power to local command played an important role in defeating the PKK terror.

In response to Turkey's determined position, the Syrian government forced Öcalan to leave for Moscow. Then he took refuge in Rome. The Turkish military brought him back from Nairobi, Kenya, on 16 February 1999.[26] After his arrest, Öcalan told journalists, "I really love Turkey and the Turkish people. My mother is Turkish. Sincerely, I will do all I can to be of service to the Turkish state."[27] His brother Osman Öcalan, who was the second in command, called on all Kurds to attack the Turkish state. He said that Kurds throughout the world should "extract a heavy price from the Turkish state for the conspiracy it has engaged in against our leadership." The sixth PKK congress authorized its military arm, the People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan, "to wage a war that will make the Turkish state tremble" and called for a *serhildan* [Turkish intifada].[28]

The PKK tried to use all means against the Turkish state, but their call for mass violence did not materialize. The worst attack took place in Istanbul, when a group calling itself the Revenge Hawks of Apo attacked a shopping mall and killed thirteen people in Kadikoy. The arrest of Öcalan and the defeat of the PKK shattered the common myth of its image as a heroic and undefeatable nationalist organization among the Kurds. The arrest of Öcalan helps overcome the appealing image of the PKK, but it does not address the violence-ridden culture and reliance on force to solve social conflicts. For instance, there are more Kurdish youth in jail in Germany than Turks, even though the Kurds are only one-fifth of the population.

The PKK-led protracted insurgency was ended by the Turkish military. After his arrest, Öcalan revealed PKK ties with Greece and Russia. He was tried

at the state security court between 31 May and 29 June 1999. During his trial, Öcalan offered "to serve the Turkish state" and declared that "the democratic option . . . is the only alternative in solving the Kurdish question. Separation is neither possible nor necessary."[29] He praised Ataturk's attempt to create a secular and European state and sharply criticized "the Şeyh Sa'id uprising of 1925 and traditional system which promoted landlords—ağas."

The court found him guilty of separatist treason and sentenced him to death. The court of appeals upheld his sentence on 25 November 1999. His lawyers took the case to the European Court of Human Rights, to which Turkey belongs. The European court issued an interim measure asking Ankara to suspend the execution until it could rule on the appeal. The Turkish government agreed to wait for the final decision of the court.[30] After his arrest, Öcalan, without hope of continuing his terror activities to defeat the Turkish state, gave up the armed struggle and pursued a policy of internationalizing the Kurdish question. In response to Öcalan's call to give up arms, eight PKK members, under the leadership of Ali Sapan, the former PKK spokesman in Europe, surrendered themselves to the Turkish police on 1 October 1999. The second wave of surrender took place on 29 October 1999, as more PKK activists flew from Vienna and surrendered in Istanbul. At the seventh extraordinary congress of the PKK in northern Iraq on 7 February 2000, PKK leaders decided to give up armed struggle for a democratic one. Öcalan's arrest robs the PKK of a charismatic yet brutal leader, but allows it to refashion itself in a more civilized, democratic, and peaceful manner.

The Helsinki Summit on 10–11 December 1999 declared that Turkey "is a candidate state destined to join the Union based on the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states." The European Union's Copenhagen criteria require full implementation of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the protection of minorities.[31] On the basis of the Copenhagen criteria, the EU asked Ankara to reform its legal system and solve the southeast problem with peaceful means. This represents a turning point in the ties between Turkey and the European Union and has created an optimistic environment to end the seventeen-year conflict, which resulted in 30,000 deaths and a cost of more than $100 billion. Mesut Yilmaz of the Motherland Party reflected on EU requirements on the Kurdish problem by saying, "The road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir. Democracy is the right of both the Turk and the Kurd."[32] On 12 December 1999, during an interview with CNN-Turk, Foreign Minister Ismail Cem aired his views that "broadcasting in other mother tongues should be allowed." Prime Minister Ecevit distanced himself from Cem by saying that those were "Cem's views, not the government's."[33] Moreover, Cumhur Asparuk, general secretary of the National Security Council, told the media that Turkey could not allow either education or broadcasting in Kurdish because

this would "tear apart the mosaic of Turkish society."[34] Süleyman Demirel was the first Turkish politician to publicly recognize the existence of the Kurds in Turkey, stating, "We recognize the Kurdish reality" in a speech in Diyarbakir just after the November 1991 elections. He also toyed with the idea of constitutional citizenship, nationality defined not by ethnic factors but by the sharing of equal citizenship rights and obligations.

Decentralization and the Recognition of Cultural Rights

Turkey needs to recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds by lifting the bans on Kurdish broadcasting, allowing education in Kurdish, and forming a pro-Kurdish political party. The EU might function as an intermediary between Kurdish aspirations and the Turkish state. Turkish Kurds are divided on the question of Europe's role. The extreme nationalists regard the European integration as an obstacle to the achievement of its goal of a united pan-Kurdistan. By contrast, Serafettin Elci and others have enthusiastically supported the notion of a Europe of regions capable of providing the context for political accommodation between the Republic of Turkey and the Kurds.

The Kurdish question represents an abrupt and lethal injection of Turkish-European relations. Those Europeans who would like to build a cultural boundary between Turkey and the EU present the Kurdish question as a minority problem by knowing that Turkey cannot treat the Kurds as a "minority." Given the impact of the Ottoman collapse and the utilization of minority rights against the Ottoman state, Turkey will not grant minority status to the Kurds' collective group rights.[35] The best hope for lasting peace in Turkey is to divorce ethnic identity and political access. As a result of EU pressures, Turkey is likely to devolve central power to municipalities and recognize individual cultural and political rights of the Kurds within the territorial boundaries of Turkey.

When Guenter Verheugen, EU commissioner for enlargement, visited Ankara in July 2000 and submitted a draft Accession Partnership Document (APD) listing legal reforms that would have to be implemented before membership, it created a major uproar in the Turkish media due to the inclusion of the word *minority.* The APD included broadcasting and education rights for the Kurds, abolition of the death penalty, greater freedom of expression, and reform of the military-dominated National Security Council. The APD has identified a road map to Turkey's full membership. The APD stressed democratization of Turkey and recognition of the cultural mosaic in Turkey without presenting the Kurdish question as a minority problem.

After the EU report, the divisions within the state became clearer. For instance, Turkey's National Intelligence Agency (MIT) chief, Senkal Atasagun,

started the debate within the state by airing his views on the PKK. In his published interviews, Atasagun argued that it would be against Turkish interests to hang Öcalan, and he favored ending a ban on Kurdish language broadcasting and setting up a state-controlled television channel in Kurdish.[36] Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit has spoken out in favor of comments made by Atasagun.[37] The major opposition to the APD stems from the military and the National Movement Party (MHP), a partner in a tripartite coalition government that is against multiculturalism and that supports the homogenizing policies of the state. Its ardent statism in public limits democratic debate in the country. Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of MHP, reacted to the APD on several grounds. By refusing any reference to the cultural diversity of Turkey, Bahçeli argues, "It is impossible for Turkey to look favorably upon 'cultural' and 'ethnic rights' which will only serve to fan the flames of ethnic conflict and discrimination. In addition, attempts to gloss over these kinds of expressions in the document will not alter the facts of the matter."[38]

Bahçeli very much expressed the concerns of the Turkish military. The army has also voiced concern that allowing Kurdish language broadcasts in the country as required to join the European Union could damage the integrity of the state. The MHP is firmly against introducing Kurdish education, removing the death penalty, and scrapping article 312 of the penal code, which limits freedom of expression.[39] The army has defined EU membership as a geostrategic necessity, but it remains very suspicious about the unexpected consequences of the Copenhagen criteria, which requires restructuring Turkey's defunct legal and administrative system. In response to the APD call to liberalize education in different languages, Aslan Güner, the secretary-general of the general staff, told the Anatolia news agency that "the concern of the military is that it may disrupt Turkey's unitary structure. We cannot remain strong if divided."[40] When Ecevit was in Nice to attend the EU meeting, the military issued a harsh warning on the liberalization of the Kurdish question. The general staff statement contained warnings along the following lines:

> Certain attempts made in recent days—especially those involving Kurdish education and broadcasting—reflect the outlawed PKK's efforts to gain a political character. Certain European Union member countries have provided the PKK with support—overtly or otherwise. These countries are the sole factor enabling the PKK to survive. The PKK is now ostensibly issuing calls for peace in the country, but in reality it is planning to create a pure separatist political movement. The PKK aims to get organized through certain legal organizations to create and develop a political separatist movement based on ethnic nationalism.[41]

Due to opposition from the military, pro-EU forces within the state seek to liberalize the legal system by signing international treaties and presenting legal changes in law as a requirement of international obligations rather than responding to Kurdish pressures.[42] For instance, Turkey has signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in August 2000. After signing these documents, Serafettin Elci, the former chairman of the banned Democratic Mass Party (DKP), called on Ankara to "grant everybody the right to freely use his or her own language in educating and broadcasting in Kurdish" as a requirement of these new UN conventions.[43] Today, there are twenty-eight Kurdish radio stations, five Kurdish television stations, and a multitude of Kurdish newspapers and magazines in Turkey.

On 19 March 2001, the government of Turkey declared the national program (NP). On the Kurdish issue, which has been a major source of contention, the program did not commit itself to allow education in Kurdish. The NP stresses that "the official language and the formal education language of the Republic of Turkey is Turkish. This, however, does not prohibit the free usage of different languages, dialects, and tongues by Turkish citizens in their daily lives. This freedom may not be abused for the purposes of separatism and division."[44] The terms *Kurdish* or *education in the mother tongue* do not appear in the program. It is clear from NP that the military commanders and an ultranationalistic MHP are resisting many of those conditions on which the EU has been insisting. The EU wanted to see full civilian control over the military by weakening the National Security Council. The program did not make a radical change in the National Security Council because the military wants to preserve what, in effect, is a veto over government decisions. The program stops short of offering full linguistic rights to the Kurds, civilian control over the military, or withdrawal of Turkish troops from the divided island of Cyprus. The program is less likely to meet the expectations of Europeans and Turkish society. It is another strategy of the nationalistic front in Turkey to gain time. This program does not indicate any will to be the member of the EU but rather seeks to postpone it. The nationalistic front has invented its own authoritarian values on national democracy, national human rights, and national secularism to postpone the process. The program indicated that it was formulated by those who are hostage to their own short-term interests.

In addition to legal and political changes, Turkey is also seeking to address economic problems of the region. Relative deprivation of the Kurdish regions is interpreted as discrimination by the nationalist Kurds and the source of Kurdish radicalism by the state. Indeed, Gurr's seminar study indicates that relative deprivation politicizes ethnic identities.[45] Regional inequalities are

interpreted along ethnic lines in Turkey. The Kurdish left has been the most active force to present the regional inequality as the manifestation of Turkish "discrimination" against the Kurds. The Kurdish regions are among the poorest in Turkey. The Turkish state has introduced a number of economic initiatives to tackle the Kurdish question. Destruction is the price of progress in southeast Anatolia. Turkey is involved in the $32 billion Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), a network of twenty-two dams and nineteen hydroelectric plants, which is the key to the economic development of Upper Mesopotamia. It will irrigate 2,500 square miles of land and affect the lives of 6.5 million people in this region. The government of Turkey sees this project as a way of addressing the Kurdish problem, though the Kurdish question extends beyond poverty to issues of cultural and political rights. For instance, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit believes that "there is no Kurdish problem in Turkey but the problem of feudalism and economic backwardness." Indeed, the socioeconomic structure of the region played an important role in the formation of Kurdish ethnonationalism. However, one needs to take political and cultural factors into account as well.

At the core of the contemporary crisis in Turkey lie three sociopolitical consequences of Kemalism: (1) its uncritical modernization ideology prevents open discussion that would lead to a new inclusive social contract and would recognize the cultural diversity of Turkey; (2) it does not tolerate the articulation of different identities and lifestyles in the public sphere, since they undermine the Kemalist vision of an ideal society; and (3) it treats politics as a process of guiding political development and engineering a new society.[46] Kemalism does not see social, cultural, and political differences as an integral part of democracy but rather treats sociopolitical "difference" as a source of instability and a threat to national unity. The current ethnic (Kurdish) and religious (Sunni Islamic and Alevi) movements seek to redefine themselves as "Muslims," "Kurds," and "Alevis" through the means provided by globalization. These identity and justice-seeking social movements are in direct conflict with the Kemalist project. Turkey needs a new social contract. The founding principles of this contract should include the Anglo-Saxon concept of secularism, the rule of law, and recognition of the multicultural nature of Turkey. Both Kurds and Turks need to be involved in this search for a new social contract. Turkey needs to accommodate the demands of the Kurdish nationalist movement.[47]

The Kurdish Search for Solution

There are a number of initiatives in Turkey to find a just and durable solution to the Kurdish problem. None of the civil Kurdish movements have managed

to build a broad coalition of nonstate actors to pressure the Turkish state for resolution of their demands. The Kurdish movement's contribution to the process of political change is limited. It helped expand the boundaries of public debate over identity and the state and society relations, and its use of terrorist tactics promoted the secularization of social life and forced larger sectors of Turkish society to support the state. Its separatist language and constant attempt to link itself with outside forces (even some hostile countries) delegitimized Kurdish demands in the eyes of many Turks. Instead of trying to develop a language of politics, the Kurdish movements always stressed their difference. For instance, neither the PKK nor HADEP has managed to combine identity, modernity, and democracy to construct a new social contract.

The Initiative Commission for Unity, a group formed by the Democracy and Peace Party (DBP), and the Initiative Commission for a New Political Formation, representing the Free Democrats, have decided to act together to lay the groundwork for a new political platform. Many Kurdish intellectuals and politicians (including Free Democrats member Abdülmelik Firat, the grandson of Şeyh Sa'id, who was the leader of the largest rebel movement during the 1920s; former Mus deputy Mehmet Emin Sever; Republican People's Party (CHP) Ferda Cemiloğlu; Rasim Firat; former Bingol mayor Selahattin Kaya; İbrahim Güclü; DBP chairman Yilmaz Camlibel; and deputy chairman Fehmi Demir) attended the meeting held at Genel-Is labor union headquarters on 26 August 2000. Although Serafettin Elci was a part of this initiative, he quit meetings due to his opposition to Abdülmelik Firat. The new initiative is critical of the democratic republic strategy of Öcalan and the submissive and unimaginative strategy of HADEP. In September 2000 the new group released a statement that read:

> We observed that the "Democratic Republic" strategy, designed to contribute to a solution to the Kurdish issue and express loyalty to the official ideology without serving the interests of the Kurdish people, has not been abolished, but on the contrary, efforts to promote it have intensified. Those attending the meeting committed themselves to opposing this project and undertaking necessary efforts to convince components of this strategy to renounce it.

In addition to these domestic initiatives, the PKK has been trying to internationalize itself by forming the Kurdish National Congress (KNK) as a pan-Kurdish movement. At the second regular meeting of the General Council, which took place in August 2000 in the Belgian village of Bilzen, forty new members were accepted to the KNK. Its main goal is to organize and coordinate anti-Turkish activities throughout Europe. Although the number of KNK members has expanded from 176 when it was formed in Holland on 24 May

1999 to 216, the new members are picked by the PKK representative, Riza Erdoğan. Erdoğan spoke at the meeting and called on the Congress to be more active against the policies of the Turkish state. Due to PKK control over the Congress, the Iraqi Kurdish leadership of Jalal Talibani and Massoud Barzani refused to join the KNK.[48] The PKK has tried to transform itself by seeking to become a part of mainstream politics. For instance, in September 2000 at the HADEP convention in Istanbul, Öcalan's lawyer Dogan Erbas (who has direct access to Öcalan) was elected as the head of HADEP's Istanbul organization.[49] He aired Öcalan's views and became his mouthpiece with HADEP. This also indicates close organic ties between the PKK and HADEP. Some worry that Kurdish leaders, now that they are shedding their revolutionary and violent cloak, are turning out to be unreconstructed provincial tribal chiefs who may not be sincere in defending democratic values but may use them as tools to destroy the Republic. The fourth HADEP convention on 26 November 2000 in Ankara did not overcome the distrust of many liberal Turks about the intentions of the party.

Conclusion

The collapse of the multiethnic Ottoman Empire and the formation of ethnically based nationalist regimes are the root causes of the politicization and radicalization of Kurdish identity. Successful Turkish modernization, increased communication, and high degrees of mobility heightened ethnic Kurdish consciousness. This radicalized Kurdish nationalism, and it politicized and popularized Turkish nationalism. Today there is a heightened Kurdish consciousness but very little unity due to competing loyalties. The Kurds need to recognize that there is no territorial or political room in the Middle East for an independent state of Kurdistan. Turkey also must recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds and search for a new social contract in which the cultural mosaic of Turkey can flourish. The Kurdish problem impedes legal reforms and the implementation of democratic and human rights in Turkey. The Kurdish problem has seriously constrained Turkey's foreign policy by giving foreign states a powerful opening with which to pressure Ankara and has become the main obstacle in Turkey's drive for full membership in EU.

8

Perspectives on Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation

GÜLISTAN GÜRBEY

Today, our world faces the challenge of bringing about harmony, keeping the peace, and maintaining people's right to self-determination. An increase in ethnopolitical conflicts confronts the international community with the question of how to satisfy the claims of ethnonationalistic groups for self-determination within existing borders. Solutions of autonomy and minority rights as an instrument for conflict prevention have been the focus of recent debates. The international community has often viewed the right to self-determination as a disruptive factor because this right is superficially linked all too often to the right to secession. What is needed is a conflict settlement that implements people's right to self-determination and consolidates international stability. Granting minority rights and autonomy could accomplish this goal.[1]

Until today the Kurdish conflict in the Middle East (which is not confined to Turkey but also includes Syria, Iran, and Iraq) has not been matched with a peaceful solution accommodating all parties' aspirations. The conflict arises from the Kurdish craving for self-determination, the denial thereof, and the oppression by the respective resident countries. The issue confronts these countries as well as the international community with the fundamental problem of how to put the right to self-determination into practice within existing borders.

This article deals with the internal perspectives and external ways of exerting influence for peaceful settlement of Turkey's Kurdish conflict. It also treats the means and problems of implementing the right to self-determination through minority rights (granting cultural rights and independence in administration) below the level of secession.

Internal Perspectives: The Absence of a Turkish Policy of Recognition of Kurds and the Limited Turkish Debate on Kurds

Although Turkey scored a decisive strategic victory by arresting and sentencing Öcalan, the Turkish state has not used its strong position for a political

reorientation and concessions to the Kurds. Hence the pivotal issue will remain on the political agenda and await settlement: Is the Turkish elite ready to put flesh on the bones of what was called the "recognition of the Kurdish reality" in December 1991? In political and legal terms, will Turkey accommodate the historically grown Kurdish aspirations for autonomy? Is the Turkish state elite willing to embark on a new road in the Kurdish policy and settle the conflict by political means now because of the strategic victory? A short glance at the internal balance of power shows that today Turkey adheres unwaveringly to ideological dogma and halfhearted attempts at liberalization. The slight liberalization starting in the late Özal era has not yet been achieved. The inseparable unity of Turkish nationalism and its state still stands in the way of an institutional recognition of Kurdish national identity. The ethnic and cultural homogenization of the past still means a policy of forced assimilation (Turkification) for the Kurds. Taboos, bans, political and legal persecution, military and state repression, and measures to drive people off their land are still the instruments of this policy.[2] These are flanked by attempts to prevent the legalization of historically grown Kurdish autonomy efforts. Highlights are the bans on the pro-Kurdish parties HEP/DEP (and possibly also HADEP) and the arrest and sentencing to long prison terms of elected Kurdish members of parliament.[3]

The Kurdish resistance to Turkish supremacy and its policies did not begin with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). It dates back to the late phase of the Ottoman Empire. Before 1930 there were no less than twenty-seven uprisings in which Turkish nationalism collided with the newly awakened Kurdish national awareness. In order to thwart the upheavals once and for all, the Turkish state pursued a comprehensive program for forced assimilation of the Kurds. In the course of resistance to the imposition of Turkish identity, the Kurds' national identity developed and matured.

The hard-line Kemalist elite's concept of the nation still prevails. It is seen in the charges brought against HADEP in the trial on 29 January 1999: "There is only one identity in Turkey, i.e., the Turkish identity. Demands for a recognition of the Kurdish identity are but the first step of a devious attempt to divide the country."[4] These words illustrate that, to the Kemalist hard-liners, recognizing Kurdish identity by granting cultural rights would inevitably lead to demands for political rights and a division of the country. This is the crux of the Turkish elite's phobia. The Kemalist national consensus is, above all, supported and protected by the military and an elitist circle of Turkish politicians and bureaucrats (including the top echelons of the legal system) who believe that Turkey must remain a united state with a single national identity. Still, the ethnic and national dimension of the conflict is being refused.[5] It is the understanding of the elite that the conflict boils down to a problem of terrorism

and separatism, or a socioeconomic problem, or one of instigation by foreign powers.

So far, the democratic and liberal forces in society have not been able to assert themselves against the hard-line military and Kemalist core of Turkish society. This is because parties, the civil society, and media all reflect the same comprehensive ideological position. The liberal forces are represented by the human rights organizations and are still a minority that is unable to achieve a breakthrough against the silent majority of the Turkish population. Furthermore, it is not always possible to understand the official politics because the state controls the opinion-forming processes. Reporting in the press and on TV is tremendously restricted. It is limited by censorship and self-censorship. Therefore, a comprehensive and correct picture of the struggle is not being painted. The official opinion prevails. The Turkish public debate on the Kurdish issue also has its limits, and not everyone can speak about the subject without problems at any given time. As a rule it is not really public and does not include all parties involved. The accusation of separatism still serves its purpose, and the established parties have not seriously dealt with the issue. Although all major parties put together reports on the so-called southeast problem, they have not started a broad discussion within their parties nor have they drawn any consequences for their programs. Occasionally remarks come from their ranks about measures to be taken by the state, such as stronger decentralization, comprehensive administrative reform, or the introduction of radio and TV programs in the Kurdish language. However, they all remain unbinding political remarks.

The position of the state has prevented the growing awareness of the Kurdish identity from being turned into a lasting and accepted organizational form. Kurdish national endeavors are equated with separatist terror. This conception persists, preventing a legal and organized opportunity for finding political expression. On the other hand, the great readiness of the people in the regions to vote for parties that give priority to the Kurdish national efforts in their activities is a clear sign of a consolidation of the Kurdish national awareness in the Kurdish regions. During the elections of 18 April 1999, HADEP won a majority in eleven Kurdish provinces and was able to staff mayoral positions in more than thirty provinces including Diyarbakir.[6] The tough position taken by the Turkish state caused the Kurdish nationalists to resist and vice versa. So the issue can best be described as a catch-22 situation of mutual denial. Efforts to break out of this situation have hardly been attempted. The ways out have been discussed in Turkey for quite some time. A series of positive signals from President Turgut Özal (who died in 1993) and the unilateral PKK truce (in the spring of 1993) brought hope for an end to the war and a peaceful settlement of the conflict. After the sudden death of Özal, adversaries to peace on both

sides destroyed these hopes quickly. It was from that point that the PKK under Öcalan took pains to change from a guerrilla organization into a more political actor, though not without problems and contradictions, and to present the PKK on the political stage, especially in Europe. In the course of these efforts, the PKK issued a number of signals to indicate it was interested in a political solution within the Turkish state. Among other things came the unilateral cease-fires. These rather positive signals were not only rejected by the Turkish leadership but also fought by all military means. In addition, these positive elements were not considered seriously by the outside world, let alone supported. In the mid-1990s when the military weakness of the PKK was apparent, the Turkish government changed tactics and (a) prevented any attempt at political participation by Kurdish actors by all means at their disposal and (b) expanded and intensified the war and publicly endorsed the military option as the only one possible.

Today's PKK leadership remains loyal to Öcalan and still qualifies his words and appeals as historic.[7] The state elite is reserved. So far it adheres to the status quo or classical policy on Kurds (the state and military see to it that the Kurds assimilate as a precondition for being recognized as full-fledged Turkish citizens). Public announcements for programs to develop the region economically and socially are aimed at further consolidating the status quo.[8] The government's new argument is indicative of an intransigent official policy rather than a fundamental change: more cultural rights were absolutely unnecessary because the Kurdish language was being used in journals and on the radio. Existing restrictions would have to be removed to attain an equal application of legal regulations for all.[9]

If the Turkish state, thinking it has triumphed over Kurdish separatism, sticks to its present policy, it will sow the seeds of another Kurdish uprising. The more intransigent the Turkish state appears, the more stubborn will be Kurdish national resistance. Only a change in Turkish politics will bring about a solution. However, that requires a change of thinking among the representatives of the Kemalist state, the top of which is formed by the military leadership.

Few Turkish politicians, industrialists, intellectuals, and political opinion makers have understood this.[10] They plead for a change of politics that initially focuses on easing tension and finding a solution to the issue of a limited Kurdish autonomy.[11] The appeals from this circle addressed to the Turkish leadership have clearly increased since Öcalan's arrest, the termination of the armed struggle, and the PKK structural changes initiated by Öcalan and consistently carried out by the PKK leadership council.[12] It is obvious that Turkish leaders are put more and more on the spot. On the eve of Turkey's final acceptance for EU membership, candidate efforts for democratization at home

have increased (such as discussions on a constitutional reform, an amnesty and repentance act, the reformation of the state machine, and the assumption of dialogue with organizations of the civil society). It remains to be seen whether these efforts are of a cosmetic nature or an expression of their political will and not just a means to an end. All in all, it looks as if the Turkish leadership will only take small steps toward recognizing the Kurdish reality in the short or medium term.

Some Starting Points for a Rapprochement between the Opponents

Fundamentally diverging interests are characteristic of the way that conflicting parties see themselves.[13] The Turkish government has refused regulations to grant minority rights or autonomy, as it perceives the conflict as a threat to the national and territorial integrity of the state. There are only hints of a relaxing in the cultural field and extension of competencies in local administration. This rudimentary liberalization of the policy on Kurds, which has been carefully expressed by various political decision makers (with the exception of the National Action Party and the military), dates back to the time of Özal with his far-reaching ideas and concepts.[14] The rejection of the autonomy regulations and of granting minority rights is nourished by fear of secession.

Among the Kurdish actors in Turkey one can perceive two camps: the traditional and conservative tribes, who desire cultural rights and categorically reject any autonomy regulation because they fear a clear weakening of their local power as a result, and the national Kurdish organizations and parties (PKK, HADEP, and Socialist Party of Kurdistan [PSK]), which regard the conflict as a national issue because the Kurds have been forced to live in a number of countries against their will. The borders made them artificial minorities, although the conflict itself is not a minority issue. According to this view, the solution is granting the right of self-determination. This is not understood as a unilateral claim for the foundation of a Kurdish nation-state. The creation of a Kurdish nation-state is regarded as an unrealistic option due to the political constellation of interests and power in the region. Therefore, demands for the implementation of the right of self-determination are restricted to within existing borders. The demand for autonomy is the political consensus of the national Kurdish groups, including the PKK.[15] The form of autonomy has not been specified. Ideas range from cultural rights via territorial autonomy to confederate models.

Despite diverging interests, there are points of intersection, and if there were external support from international organizations and allies, they could possibly lead to a rapprochement between the opponents. On the Turkish side those points include liberalization tendencies in the cultural field and at the

level of local administration, the call for ending the war, democratization, and the implementation of cultural rights for the Kurds at society level. On the Kurdish side there are concrete demands for an immediate termination of the war and cultural autonomy. Using this point of intersection, it is up to the state to pave the way for a political solution through concrete measures. Renunciation of force and a cease-fire are still prerequisites for military de-escalation. A policy on the Kurds combined with demilitarization of the Kurdish region (lifting of the state of emergency and all other military and police measures, resettlement of former inhabitants, and a general amnesty), a comprehensive safeguarding of the democratic human and civil rights, and cultural autonomy would be the first steps toward a lasting political solution.

Granting minority rights and autonomy regulations could be the response to the great craving of the Kurds for recognition and self-determination. These steps would form the basis of a new modus vivendi for peaceful coexistence.[16] The strengthening of the Kurdish national movements that can no longer be suppressed by force is a prime argument against the status quo option. The periodic resurgence of militant resistance is an indication that war and unrest must be reckoned with in the future. A conjoint political solution must be found. On the other hand, democratization of the state is welcome and positive, but not enough in terms of structure to solve the ethnonational conflict alone. The centralist, united nation-state with its equality postulate is just as incapable of settling the ethnonational conflict, since it is this state that causes the conflict by denying the Kurds rights.

External Ways of Exerting Influence: Modern Protection of Minorities as a General Basic Condition

It is the basic objective of modern protection of minorities to safeguard and secure the existence and identity of all peoples.[17] The individual human rights approach still prevails. Regularization efforts tend to be focused on the individual rights of minority group members. They—not the group—must preserve their culture, practice their religion, and use their language. Although the protection of minorities has been advanced, it still has its shortcomings. For example, no agreement has so far been reached on a definition of the term *minority* that would be binding under international law. Regardless of this definitional flaw, existing international legal instruments regard the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious features of a minority as meriting protection. This circumstance has led to a situation where each state decides which group of citizens it regards as a minority. As a result, some states deny the existence of minorities as they pursue the concept of a unitary nation without respect for ethnicity, an example being Turkey. Finally, it should be emphasized that

there is no ingenious solution to minority regulations. What matters are case-by-case solutions.

Article 27 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 comments on the minority issue.[18] While it does not stipulate any far-reaching group rights, it does contain some relevant contractual obligations for states under international law. States are only obligated to warrant members of their minority groups the assertion of language, religious, and cultural rights. Article 27 does not prescribe, however, how minority rights should be warranted. Some states escape article 27 stipulations by simply denying the existence of minorities on their national territory, such as Turkey and France. Turkey has not signed the covenant. The UN Minority Declaration of 1992 called on states to create favorable conditions permitting minorities to develop their culture, language, and religion. The declaration generally accepts that action is necessary to support minorities. Nevertheless, the declaration lacks legally binding effect and more concrete drafting.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities adopted by the Council of Europe (effective since February 1998) obligates states to translate the principles it lays down into national law and to take action that protects personal liberties of minority group members: the freedom of assembly and association, speech, religion, and conscience.[19] The states party to the convention must promote the conditions necessary to preserve and develop culture and safeguard the identity of national minorities. This includes provisions for the areas of language, education, and teaching. In these respects, too, the Framework Convention leaves it to the states to define the scope of application. The absence of a definition of the term *minority* means that the states are free to determine which group is regarded as a minority. They have great discretion in enforcing this instrument. Besides the Framework Convention, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, adopted by the Council of Europe and enforced in March 1998, deals with the protection of minorities.[20] Turkey has so far signed neither of these documents. On the other hand, the Committee for Compliance with the Obligations and Undertakings of the Council of Europe Member States noted in its report on Turkey in January 1999 that the point at issue was that Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin should be given the opportunity and resources to practice and preserve their own language and cultural habits in an open environment. They must honor the conditions that have been clearly and adequately defined by the two above-mentioned conventions of the Council of Europe. The EU Commission also emphasized this point in its 1999 report on Turkey.[21]

The Copenhagen Document of 29 June 1990 as adopted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) describes the minority issue in its essential dimensions and calls for minority rights and for protection

of minorities against discrimination.[22] This document stands for the development of common European standards in protecting minorities. Demands put forward include the safeguarding of minority languages, the establishment of educational, cultural, and religious institutions, the principle of self-administration and autonomy, and specific parliamentary representation rights. The states party is obligated to protect minority rights, to obey the principle of equality and nondiscrimination, and to establish appropriate local and autonomous administrative authorities that answer the needs of the specific historical and territorial circumstances of each minority. Nevertheless, the Copenhagen Document also emphasizes that these rights only relate to state-loyal activities and do not present a contradiction to the principle of territorial integrity of the states. The Paris Charter for a New Europe mentions the right of national minorities to freely admit to their identity without any discrimination and to develop it further.[23] The Copenhagen Document, a breakthrough in the field of minorities' rights, highlights autonomy as a means of protecting minorities. OSCE states have not conceded autonomy a status that would grant minorities a legal claim to it. The document says the states must take notice of the efforts to protect the cultural, linguistic, and religious identity of certain national minorities and to establish the conditions necessary for their promotion, by establishing, as one way of achieving these aims, appropriate local or autonomous administrative authorities that respond to the needs of the specific historical and territorial situation of these minorities while being in line with the policies of the respective state. It is important to note in this context that this possibility is expressly underlined, although there is no consensus on the adequacy of such solutions.

To sum up, it should be noted that a network of rules, dovetailed with the mechanisms for protection of human and minority rights under international law, is already in place that allows for the assertion of the right to self-determination within a state. There is, however, no effective legal protection of minorities' rights. Enforcement mechanisms are weak. Any enforcement of treaties and political agreements will require the states' willingness to cooperate. The enforcement of rules of law depends on the political will of the states. Nevertheless, politically obligatory documents, the national policies, and effective diplomacy must be regarded as important instruments of minority protection. The dispute about the question of individual or group rights for a minority is important. The difficulty arises from the strong dislike of some states to group rights. While the state is expected to take a passive stance in regard to individual rights, states should not interfere with personal freedom. Minority protection calls above all for a proactive role of the state. It is a specific feature of minority rights that they can only be achieved through measures promot-

ing a minority. Yet it is clear that certain rights can only unfold in a group, for example, the rights of using a language and practicing a religion.

Attempts to regulate ethnopolitical conflicts by applying principles and rules under international law have not been very successful. This is due to the state of tension that exists between the principles of national state sovereignty and territorial integrity under international law and the right of peoples to self-determination with required protection of minorities. It is this state of tension, prevailing in the agreements on the protection of minorities adopted by the UN, OSCE, and the Council of Europe that represent regulation short of secession, which has permitted Turkey to exempt itself from the binding effect of these stipulations. Nevertheless, Turkey has submitted to a joint system of values and action that it has undertaken as a member of each organization. With its reservation, Turkey makes the classical Turkish case that, in a legal sense, there are no minorities except for those covered by the scope of the Lausanne Treaty. With a view to today's ethnonational challenges, it is a general necessity to improve the protection of minorities, particularly as the traditional concept of majority rule in democracies is not sufficient to settle central ethnonational disputes. This is the challenge for the OSCE, the United Nations, and the Council of Europe to formulate specific principles and rules of law for the protection of minorities and to agree to suitable rules and procedures for enforcement (international monitoring, sanctions).

EU, OSCE, and UN Contributions to Peaceful Conflict Settlement

Initial steps taken by the United Nations, OSCE, and EU toward a constructive impact reorientation of Turkey's Kurdish policy have not been consistently activated. Without permanent and concerted external influence, there is hardly a chance Turkey will change its policy on the Kurds and will arrive at a peaceful conflict settlement. Against the background of the Turkish victory over the PKK and the termination of armed struggle on the one hand, and the PKK's peace efforts on the other, a packet of consistent peace initiatives put together by external actors is necessary.

One of the levers to be used for gaining influence and providing support is the issue of Turkey's membership in the EU. It will be necessary for the EU to show more than an ad hoc approach to the issue and to develop a comprehensive strategy for how European politics should treat the Kurdish problem. Only a European strategy that holds out a clear and attractive prospect for Turkey's accession to the EU and links it to the latter's readiness to settle the conflict peacefully, and to take concrete steps toward the protection of human rights of minorities will lead to success.[24] This requires a detailed road map

for the accession process. It must define both sides' criteria and obligations. It must link progress to the degree to which obligations have been met. The EU must refine the Copenhagen criteria and their fulfillment by Ankara. It must break them down and work out a schedule. For the job of coordinating a comprehensive policy on Kurds, the EU should establish a permanent Kurds contact group and initiate an intense exchange of ideas with Washington. With regard to the good U.S.–Turkish relationship, it will be necessary to coordinate activities with the United States in order to exert pressure and ensure a unified approach.

The OSCE and the UN should increase their availability for mediation and confidence-building by sending UN observers, permanent fact-finding missions, and long-term OSCE missions into this region. An OSCE commissioner is necessary for peaceful conflict settlement. There must be increased dialogue promoting civil, social, and democratic forces.

Conclusion

Institutional recognition of Kurdish identity and culture is a condition sine qua non in the process of peaceful settlement of Turkey's Kurdish conflict. A more flexible policy concerning Kurds will mean the initiation of political and legal steps, the political representation and integration of Kurds, a free and open discussion of lifting the state of emergency and all related measures instigated by the military and police, resettlement of former inhabitants, a general amnesty, and cultural autonomy with regard to language, cultural life, the media, education and teaching, freedom of association, political representation, and self-administration. Granting such rights would not affect the frontiers of the national state or the unitary state structure. It would do no more than legalize the existing Kurdish culture and build upon existing congruencies between Kurds and Turks with regard to culture and local administration.

By abducting and sentencing Öcalan, Turkey scored a decisive victory over the PKK. However, even a completely weakened and disbanded PKK, the execution of Öcalan, and his renunciation of the use of force will not constitute a final victory of the state unless a change of politics on the Kurdish issue is effected. The Kurdish population is too big. The international revival of ethnonational politics is too comprehensive. The internationalization of the Kurdish conflict has gone too far for the Turkish state to be able to ignore Kurdish national political currents. The latent hot spot will continue to exist in Turkey and will constitute a lasting element of instability and a source of future Kurdish revolts.

9

Turkey-Iran Relations and the Kurdish Question, 1997–2000

ROBERT W. OLSON

This essay deals with the effect of the Kurdish problem and the Kurdish question on the foreign policy relationship between Turkey and Iran from the ouster of Necmettin Erbakan as prime minister of Turkey (in June 1997) and the accession to power of Mohammed Khatami as president of Iran (in August 1997) until June 2001. The Kurdish problem refers to the domestic challenge of Kurdish nationalism to each state. The Kurdish question refers to the trans-state aspects of the issue as it affects the geopolitical and geostrategic concerns of both countries.

Since its establishment as a republic in 1923, Turkey has been challenged by Kurdish nationalism and its potentially close alignment with Islamist parties and organizations.[1] The challenge became greater with the creation of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or Partia-Kakaren Kurdistan (PKK), in the late 1970s and its first armed attack on the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) in 1984. From 1984 onward, the major objective of the TAF was to destroy the PKK and its infrastructure in Europe and throughout the Middle East, Russia, and the other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). After the 1991 Gulf war, the TAF's objective of extirpating Kurdish nationalism was extended to northern Iraq.[2] The capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan by Turkish commandos in February 1999 and his trial, his death sentence in June 1999, and his subsequent incarceration have lessened the immediate challenge of militant Kurdish nationalism to the Turkish state. Nevertheless, the broader Kurdish nationalist movements remain Turkey's principal problem.

The Kurdish problem and the Kurdish question have been more of a concern for Turkey than for Iran. There are several reasons for this. First, the Kurds played less of a role in the Safavid Empire (1501–1724) and the Qajar Empire (1795–1925) than in the Ottoman Empire (1354–1923). The suppressions of Kurdish rebellions and nationalist movements in post–World War I Iran were less frequent and of lesser scope than in Turkey, where there was nearly constant warfare between the Turks and the Kurds from 1925 to 1938.[3] A third major reason for a weaker Kurdish problem in Iran was a less ag-

gressive nationalist ideology. Iranian nationalist discourse, especially in the interwar period, was more inclusive in tone than Turkey's. The fact that Iran remained a monarchy ensured greater continuity between imperial and nationalist discourse than was the case in Turkey. Iran's Kurdish population was generally less than 5 percent of the total population, whereas Turkey's rose as high as 10 percent. One of the ironies of Kurdish history is that the first and only independent Kurdish state, the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad, existed in Iran in 1946. Most scholars now agree that the Mahabad Republic was a bona fide nationalist state, even though it developed in the midst of intense cold war rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. In spite of its harsh suppression by the Iranian government with the support of the United States, Great Britain, and the USSR, it has served as a symbol of Kurdish nationalism and of Kurds' desire for an independent state. The creation of the first and only independent Kurdish state in Iran should not obfuscate, however, that the threat of Kurdish nationalism and its potential alignment with other political forces was much greater in Turkey than in Iran. This has meant that the trans-state Kurdish question has played a lesser role in the geopolitical and geostrategic concerns of Iran.[4]

There is no international relations theory that adequately addresses the functioning of either Turkey or Iran in the world political systems. One of the most suitable theories is that of "omni-balancing."[5] Omni-balancing incorporates the essential elements of balance of power theories of the neorealist school. Omni-balancing differs in emphasizing that third world states, and especially leaders of such states, would rather deal cooperatively with secondary adversaries so they can focus their resources on adversaries they deem more threatening. This theory fits the relationship between Turkey and the PKK-led Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey. Ankara determined that the internal threat of Kurdish nationalism (especially the militant nature of the PKK) and the external threat of nationalism emanating from the Kurdish organizations in northern Iraq (the Kurdistan Democratic Party led by Massoud Barzani and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan led by Jalal Talabani) and from the PKK forces that became ensconced in northern Iraq after the Gulf war were the major threats to the Kemalist elite, who have led the Turkish state since 1923. This policy compelled Ankara to deal somewhat cooperatively with Iran on a range of other interests. The omni-balancing theory postulates that third world states seek to split alignments against them and to appease the international allies of their domestic opponents. Both Turkey and Iran (especially Turkey) have sought to persuade international human rights organizations, the European Parliament (EP), and the European Union (EU) that they are trying to abide by international human rights legislation. The essential aspect of omni-balancing

is the role of internal threats to the leadership. Turkey represents an example of this aspect. In the following analysis, the omni-balancing model functions with the exception that in the case of Turkey and Iran the states themselves, rather than simply the leaders, should be the focus of the alignment structures. The most salient aspect of omni-balancing is that, unlike realist and neorealist schools, it concentrates on internal threats to the regime.[6] This aspect of omni-balancing explains the internal threat that Kurdish nationalism represents to Kemalism, the zealous Turkish nationalist ideology implemented by the Turkish state and its armed forces.

The theory of omni-balancing postulates that third world countries reproduce rather than provide havens from the anarchy of international politics. Third world politics are a microcosm of international politics. Balancing is as critical for groups within states as it is between states. Unlike balance of power theories, omni-balancing suggests that third world states construct their alignments based on their perceptions of how best to protect themselves from threats they face, whether internal or external. This aspect of omni-balancing helps explain Iranian and Turkish foreign policies, especially Turkey's. The safe haven established for the Kurds by Allied forces after the 1991 Gulf war is a good example of anarchy reproduced by third world states and produced by international politics.

Omni-balancing again differs from balance of power theory, which holds "states that are driven by internal threats are likely to be weak, in which case they will not affect the global balance of power anyway."[7] Turkey and Iran are not weak states, and their inability to contain the Kurdish nationalist movement, especially the creation of an independent Kurdish state, would greatly affect the Middle Eastern regional balance of power and thereby the global balance of power.

The Ouster of Erbakan and Election of Khatami: Reestablishing Diplomatic Links

There was a certain irony in Turkish-Iranian relations during the one-year administration of the Welfare Party: although both Necmettin Erbakan and Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani realized that warmer relations between their countries would strengthen their administrations domestically, events were not to allow it. Erbakan's government proved too dangerous to the Kemalist elite. His overtures to the Islamic nations, his somewhat cooler attitude toward the United States and Israel, his encouragement and dependence on the growth of the Islamist movement, and his dependence on the Welfare Party's Kurdish constituency became increasingly alarming to the TAF.[8] On 18 June 1997 he

was ousted from power and replaced as prime minister by Mesut Yilmaz, who had stated, "If it can be proven that Iran supplied the missiles that shot down two Turkish helicopters on 4 June, it is the number one enemy of Turkey."[9]

Turkish-Iranian relations remained cool from the Sincan affair in early February until the ouster of Erbakan on 18 June. The Sincan affair refers to a small conservative town on the outskirts of Ankara that hosted a "Jerusalem Memorial Night" on the weekend of 31 January–2 February. The Iranian ambassador, Mohammed Bagheri, and a representative of the PLO were both present. Bagheri and several other Iranian officials were subsequently expelled from Turkey for inciting "reactionism." The TAF used the occasion to announce the "28 February Agenda," which emphasized that *irticacilik* (or reactionism) had replaced "terrorist separatism" (the PKK insurgency) as the nation's primary national security risk. It is important to note that the word *irticacilik* does not mean Islamic fundamentalism, as it is often translated in English or other western languages, but conservative traditionalism or backwardness. Hence it is understood by Turks and Kurds to include Kurdish nationalism. Turkey's May incursion into northern Iraq and its threat to pursue fleeing PKK into Iran exacerbated tensions. But the election of reformist Mohammed Khatami as president of Iran in April and his inauguration on 4 August seemed to suggest that relations would improve.

The first thing on the agenda of the new Iranian government and its foreign minister, Kemal Kharrazi, was to restore ambassadorial relations. Less than two months after assuming office, while attending meetings of the UN in New York, Kharrazi and Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem agreed that ambassadors would be returned to their posts as soon as possible. From his initial appointment as foreign minister in August through the end of 1997, Kharrazi continued to call for better relations with Turkey. Tehran, however, criticized Ankara's increasingly bitter rhetoric against Syria, the Israeli-Turkish alliance, and the joint naval maneuvers carried out in January 1998 by Turkey, Israel, and the United States.

The one-year ambassadorial hiatus emphasized to the Turks and Iranians that in spite of a wide range of differences, their wider geopolitical and geostrategic interests demanded cooperation. Protection of their geopolitical jockeying space in northern Iraq was their most pressing concern.

On 9 January Turkey announced the appointment of Sencar Özsoy, former ambassador to Argentina, as its new ambassador to Iran. Tehran confirmed on 21 January 1998 that Mohammed Hussein Lavasani, former Iranian ambassador to Canada and a close advisor to Kharrazi, would be Iran's ambassador to Turkey.

The Reconciliation Continues

The restoration of ambassadors in March 1998 suggested continued attempts to reconcile differences on the part of Ankara and Tehran. The flap over the Organization of Islamic Congress (OIC) condemnation of Turkey of the previous December abated. Another indication of the desire for improved relations was Turkey's response to the Iraqi crisis of February 1998. In February, the United States and Britain threatened to bomb Iraq intensively if Baghdad did not permit the UN Special Commission on Iraq arms inspectors to inspect eight presidential sites suspected of harboring chemical, biological, and/or nuclear weapons. The world seemed on the verge of another Gulf conflict reminiscent of the 1991 Gulf war. This war would consist of intensive bombing of Iraq's military and weapons of mass destruction building sites. War was averted at the last moment by intensive negotiations between UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Tariq Aziz, deputy prime minister of Iraq.

The Iraqi crisis and the threatened U.S. bombing, aimed at disabling or collapsing the Baghdad regime, heightened fears in Ankara and Tehran of the possible fragmentation of Iraq. Ankara and Tehran feared that a weakened Iraq would diminish its ability to restrain the Kurds. Ankara also feared that a weakened Iraq would increase the strength of the PKK in northern Iraq. For its part, Tehran feared that a more weakened Iraq would result in a still greater Turkish military presence there. Turkey's presence, if increased further, had the potential to affect Iran's geostrategic interests in the Gulf.

These fears caused a flurry of activity in both capitals. On 15 February Korkmaz Haktanir, Turkish Foreign Ministry undersecretary, visited Tehran and met his counterpart, Muhsin Aminzade. He was also received by President Khatami and Foreign Minister Kharrazi. Haktanir and the Iranian officials emphasized that the two countries "attributed great importance to protection of the territorial integrity of Iraq" and that they were concerned by the use of military force, "which will cause harm to the people of Iraq and the region." Both countries stressed, however, that UN Security Council resolutions should be fully implemented. Khatami told Haktanir that Iran attributed great importance to Turkey's wishes to cooperate with Iran in all fields. Khatami also stressed that "the interests of Turkey and Iran are linked to each other."[10]

The visit of Turkish officials, including Foreign Minister Ismail Cem, to Iran was impelled by Turkey's fears that the United States and Britain would attempt to create a Kurdish state in Iraq. During the crisis Bülent Ecevit, deputy prime minister and leader of the Democratic Left Party, which was the main coalition partner of the Motherland Party headed by Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, charged that the United States intended to "create an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq and to control the oil fields of Iraq. The United

States has no Iraq policy."[11] Yilmaz seemed to agree with Ecevit. It took a raft of high-ranking U.S. officials, including Marc Grossman, deputy secretary of state and former ambassador to Turkey, to assure Ecevit and the Turks that creating an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq was not the intention of the United States. But Ankara seemed unmollified. The Iraqi crisis of February and its potentially undesirable consequences gave impetus to a slightly warmer Tehran-Ankara dialogue.

Even charges that Iran was once again interfering in Turkish domestic politics did not deter the rapprochement. On 5 March, the chief inspector of the Department of Religious Affairs, Abdulkadir Sezgin, filed a report in the state courts charging that Iran was paying the salaries of Caferi (Shi'a imams in the region of Igdir, a region just east of Mt. Ararat and predominantly Kurdish). "This represents the wind of Iran in Turkey," charged Sezgin.[12] The chief inspector claimed that some 300 imams who had been educated in religious schools in Qom in Iran, and in Najaf in Iraq were preaching in an estimated 300 mosques in the Igdir region. He further asserted that they received the bulk of their salaries from Iran. Sezgin's charge was denied by Hüseyin Yesil, the leader of the imams of Igdir. Yesil retorted that the fact that the imams had been educated in Iran did not mean that they received support from Iran. Yesil claimed the 200 mosques (100 less than the official estimate) in Igdir province were supported entirely by donations. Yesil complained that the Shi'a imams had requested for years that the theological (Ilahiyat) faculty create a department for the Caferi school of Islam, but their requests had been ignored. Yesil charged that "there was no institution in Turkey where one could obtain a Shi'a education. For this reason our young people were compelled to go to Iran or Iraq for their education. We are people who feel pride in our Turkish citizenship, and we tried several times to create religious institutions in our country, but we were unsuccessful. The Department of Religious Affairs considers our religious practices as nothing [Diyanet, bizleri adeta yok sayiyor]."[13]

In response to Yesil's criticism, Sezgin recommended that a department devoted to the study of the Caferi school (mezhep) be opened in the Department of Theology at Ankara University. If this were done, said Sezgin, many of the Shi'as among the Turkoman of northern Iraq and the republic of Azerbaijan, the Azeris of Iran, and other Turks living outside of Turkey would return to study, "increasing their trust and connection (baglilar) with Turkey." Sezgin commented further, "In the Caferi (Shi'a) religion every subject is tied to the belief in a muctahit (religious jurisprudent). Every kind of practice such as ablution, prayer, marriage, and alms is done in the name of a muctahit. Even after a student graduates, until he reaches the rank of muctahit, indeed, he must remain tied to another muctahit. Until such a muctahit can be educated in Ankara, it is necessary to select a muctahit who carries the title of an Aya-

tollah-i Uzma (Grand Ayatollah) from among the members of the Faculty of Theology at Ankara University."[14]

The growth of the 12er Shi'a population in eastern Turkey, particularly among the Kurds, was a major concern to Ankara. In April 1989, the expulsion of Iran's ambassador to Turkey, Manushehr Motaki, was partially due to the same concerns. Motaki had been expelled for his (and Iran's) dissatisfaction with Turkey's tolerance for the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* and his support for the right of Turkish women to wear the hijab and chador. Turkey was also upset with Iran's consul in Erzurum, Asghar Shafi'i, who allegedly had distributed copies of Ayatollah Khomeini's death threat against Rushdie to the muftis (religious jurisprudents) in eastern Turkey for dissemination among the Kurdish and Alevi population.[15] The Alevi population in the region was largely Kurdish but included some Turks. Iran's alleged activities in eastern Turkey were of definite concern.

In spite of everything, Ankara welcomed on 14 March Iran's newly appointed ambassador, Mohammed Hussein Lavasani. Upon his arrival, Lavasani announced at a news conference that he had come to Turkey "to strengthen the many common interests between the two countries. Our trade volume reached $3 billion in the past. We have to reach that figure again. I will launch efforts to eliminate the weak points that exist in our relations. One of these weak points is the instability in the region" (an obvious reference to the PKK).[16]

Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem responded with alacrity to Lavasani's offer. On 16 March, while attending the meeting of the foreign ministers of the OIC in Doha, Qatar, Cem and Kharrazi resolved to take allied action against the PKK "terrorist" organization. The two foreign ministers agreed that the Joint Security Protocol mechanisms between the two countries that had been inapplicable for some time would be reinstated.

The foreign ministers held to their word. Less than two months later, when Turkish ambassador Özsoy met with Natek Nuri, speaker of Iran's Islamic Assembly, he stressed that "cooperation between Tehran and Ankara should be developed in all areas. The friendship between the two countries plays an active role in the establishment of peace and stability in the region." Özsoy pointed out that "ambassadors play an important role in the development of bilateral relations. Regional and international conditions necessitate the improvement of political, economic, and cultural relations between Turkey and Iran."[17]

On 11 May Presidents Süleyman Demirel and Khatami met again in Almaty, Kazakhstan, during a meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization.[18] They reportedly discussed the proposed transit routes for Azerbaijan oil and gas and Iran's support for the PKK. Demirel reiterated that Turkey "protected" the territorial integrity of Iraq even as "Europe launched efforts to set up a Kurdish state in northern Iraq." Demirel also stressed that the Turkish-Israeli

military alliance was no threat to any third country" (presumably meaning Iran).[19]

In spite of their critical geostrategic competition over the routes of energy pipelines and Iran's strong disapproval of Ankara's alliance with Jerusalem, the two countries continued to cooperate on "security" issues. On 17 June, the two countries signed a Memorandum on Cooperation in Security. Yahya Gur, Turkish undersecretary of the Interior Ministry, stated that "Turkey and Iran had reached consensus on all issues of security." Gholan Hussein Bolanian, Iranian deputy minister of interior, told the Turks,

> We have shown that we are against terrorist activities by returning the terrorist PKK militants to Turkey. We also expect Turkey to show her good will as usual concerning the organizations that act against Iran. Mr. Prime Minister Yilmaz said that cooperation between the two countries in the field of security plays a key role. We also share these views. We regard the PKK as a terrorist group. We have increased our security measures at our borders in order to control the activities of this organization.[20]

In short, a goodly portion of the security protocol dealt with Turkey's demands that Iran not shelter or give succor to the PKK and that Turkey not support the mojahedin-e khalq.

In spite of the new security measures directed against the PKK, Turkey still tried to make propaganda of fortuitous circumstances. On 27 June the Turkish press alleged that PKK guerrillas in the pay of Iran had murdered eight members of the Kurdistan People's Revolutionary Party opposed to the Islamic republic. Ankara was no doubt pleased that the murders depicted Iran as the villain trying to use the PKK to create friction between Kurdish groups. The Kurdistan Leadership Committee announced that the murders represented the "backward and terrorist policies that the Iran Islamic Republic pursues in northern Iraq."[21]

The murders did not affect the newly signed security agreements. On 21 June the security subcommittee headed by Abdulkadir Sari, governor of Van province, and Ismail Kerimzade, governor of Khoy province in Iran, met in Van. Sari stated that the two countries were determined "to fight the 'separatist' PKK organization and against the Hizbollah organization. Simultaneous operations will be carried out within this framework. We will reciprocally analyze the information gathered."[22] Kerimzade's reference to the Hizbollah concerned a right-wing organization that was killing Kurdish nationalists in eastern and southeastern Turkey.

For its part, Iran seemed to implement the security measures agreed upon in June. With help from the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Turkey staged

a 5,000-troop operation against the PKK in early June. Large numbers of PKK fled to Iran, where they found sanctuary. It was not reported whether Iranian authorities returned any of the PKK to Turkey as stipulated in the June security accords.[23] Ankara did continue to complain that Tehran was cooperating with Athens in supporting and training PKK guerrillas. In particular, Ankara charged that Iran permitted Greek officers to train PKK members in the use of heavy artillery at eleven camps in Iran. Tehran denied the charges.[24]

While meetings, summits, and security measures were negotiated and implemented during the summer of 1998, the two countries also increased the tempo of trade negotiations. The Iranian-Turkish Joint Economic Commission (ITJEC) convened on 8 June. It decided to remove fees assessed on Turkish vehicles entering Iran. Consensus was also reached on mutual participation of companies in the Izmir International Fair and the Tehran International Fair. It was agreed that representatives of the Iranian automotive industry would soon visit Turkey.[25]

Another reason for better cooperation between Turkey and Iran in the late summer and autumn of 1998 was the increased tension between Iran and the Taliban government of Afghanistan. As a result, Iran mobilized some 250,000 troops near its border with Afghanistan. The immediate cause of tension and of Iran's military buildup was the killing of nine Iranian diplomats and one journalist in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif on 8 August. Tehran immediately sought the support of Turkey in case it should have to embark on a war against the Taliban. On 24 August, Ambassador Lavasani met with Deputy Prime Minister Ecevit. Both men stressed that Ankara and Tehran had the "same view on Afghanistan." Apparently this message was to convey that both governments opposed the Taliban and supported opposition leader General Abdul Rashid Dostum. During 1998 and early 1999, Dostum had made several visits to Turkey. In late August 1998, in Ankara, Dostum solicited more Turkish aid for his war against the Taliban.[26] On 6 September, President Demirel also received Burhanuddin Rabbani, the ousted president of Afghanistan. Rabbani used his talks with Demirel to call for international measures against the Taliban. The former Afghan president made a special point of stating, "Taliban is turning Afghanistan into a capital of terrorism, and this poses a threat for the whole world."[27] Rabbani's remarks and his Turkish hosts' warm response indicated approval of the recent American bombing of Osama bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan.[28]

By the time Ismail Cem arrived in Tehran on 14 September, Iran had mobilized some 250,000 troops on the Afghan border with substantial military hardware. The main reason for Cem's visit to Tehran was the possibility that Iran might make a military incursion into Afghanistan much like the numerous incursions that Turkey makes into northern Iraq.[29]

Cem emphasized, "I share the sorrow of the Iranian people and express condolences for the martyrs of the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Turkey knows the sorrow as many of our diplomats have been killed by terrorism. We are now working for the establishment of a world where there is no terrorism." Cem stressed further that the security commissions that had been created to control the PKK during the March meetings between Turkish and Iranian officials had already met seven times. He pointed out that both Turkey and Iran thought that "PKK terrorism, aimed at Turkey, uses the territories of our neighbors. We plan to take joint measures against this." Cem stated that the two countries had established regular consultation mechanisms against the PKK that would be worked out during Kharrazi's next visit to Turkey. Both foreign ministers said that the Afghan issue had been discussed in detail as well as the Cyprus question. During Cem's meeting with Khatami, the Iranian president told him, "Your security is our security."[30] The Iranians seemed to have immediately implemented the last part of the September "understanding." In mid-October the Turkish press reported that twenty-one PKK and ERNK (PKK) camps located in the Urmiya region had been moved closer to Tehran.[31]

By August 1998, based on the omni-balancing theory, Iran had plenty of reasons to meet Turkey's demands for stronger measures against PKK activities in Iran. Afghanistan had become Iran's greatest external threat and had to be addressed first. Primary among Iran's concerns was that (1) the Taliban government would provide bases for the mojahedin-e khalq; (2) the Taliban would allow an even greater presence of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and United States in Afghanistan; (3) many refugees from Afghanistan would again flee to Iran where some 2.5 million Afghan refugees remained; (4) the Taliban would present an increasing "Islamist" ideological challenge to the Islamic Republic of Iran and would delegitimize Iran's own Islamic revolution; (5) the Taliban would continue to depend on the drug trade in and through Iran as a source of revenue; (6) the Taliban would support the Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF) in southeastern Iran; and (7) the Taliban would give substantial concessions to international oil and gas companies to build pipelines through Afghanistan, further curtailing Iran's chances of becoming a major passage for the oil and gas pipelines from the Caspian Sea region.[32]

The murder of the nine Iranian diplomats immediately became a major factor in Iran's tumultuous domestic politics limiting any stronger foreign policy, including the use of the Kurdish card, that Tehran might have wanted to employ against Turkey. The Khatami government obviously wanted no war with the Taliban, but it did want to exhibit a firm stance against the killing of the nine diplomats and to maintain credibility and support. But the "war crisis" of Iran with the Taliban occurred at the same time as Turkey's "war crisis" with Syria. Iran was in no position to encourage, let alone help, Syria militarily in

this confrontation with Turkey. Ankara seemed to have perceived this. Almost immediately after Cem's return from Tehran, Turkey ratcheted up its "undeclared war" with Syria. It is unclear whether Syria would have taken a more determined stance against Turkey in October 1998 if Iran could have offered more political support.

Developments during 1998 emphasized that both countries would try to solve their differences with regard to the trans-state Kurdish question in Iraqi Kurdistan. By the end of 1998 Iran's position in northern Iraq was weaker than at any time since the Drogheda Conference in 1995. Throughout 1997 and 1998 the KDP strengthened its position vis-à-vis the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The KDP remained in control of Erbil, which it had seized from the PUK in September 1996. It continued to control the revenues resulting from the cross-border trade with Turkey, which by the summer of 1998 were reaching upward of nearly $250,000 per day. The ports with Turkey were the major transit routes for all goods entering northern Iraq from multiple nongovernmental organizations. The KDP was cooperating closely with the TAF against the PKK and on matters of security. The KDP was instrumental (despite denials) in Turkish commandos' capture of Semdin Sakik. By the summer of 1998, the KDP was welcoming investments by Turkish businessmen in northern Iraq. Moreover, it was clear that the United States was even more supportive of the KDP than it had been in the past. In a series of delegations, the United States sought to assure the KDP and PUK that it would not abandon them to a takeover by Baghdad. By advocating such a policy, the United States hoped to enlist the two Kurdish groups' cooperation in a serious effort to topple Saddam Hussein from power. From 1998 until 2000, the KDP and PUK were still balking at such action.

Tehran did not exercise the same leverage in northern Iraq in 1998 as it had in 1996 and 1997. The Kurdish faction it supported, the PUK, did not have access to cross-border transit revenues of the KDP. There were also fewer NGOs and other international organizations in PUK-controlled territory. The PUK was unable to regain Erbil after it was seized by the KDP in early September 1996. Iran, too, did not have the intense need to control adjacent Kurdish areas in Iraq as did Turkey. Iran did not need the cooperation of the PUK to the same extent that Turkey needed that of the KDP. The PKK in PUK-controlled territories did not pose the threat to Iran or to Kurdistan in Iran that the PKK in the KDP-controlled region of Iraqi Kurdistan posed to Turkey and to Kurdish Turkey.

The inability of the Khatami government to consolidate its power after coming to office in August 1997 indicated that it would continue to be preoccupied with domestic and international concerns much more pressing than the Kurdish question. It seemed likely that Tehran would be compelled to allow

the continued political and infrastructural development of the KDP in the portion of northern Iraq that it controlled. It also seemed that Iran would have to acquiesce in a negotiated settlement between the KDP and PUK if the United States were able to broker a deal between the two quarreling factions. If such a settlement were to be negotiated, it seemed likely that most of the port border revenues would remain in the hands of the KDP. If such developments were to materialize, it would mean that Iran's ability to challenge Turkey in northern Iraq would be weakened. After the expulsion of Öcalan from Syria, Iran had to face the possibility that the Kurdish question would remain an important factor between Ankara and Tehran in dealing not only with northern Iraq (as PKK cadres sought to strengthen their position there) but also along the borders between Turkey and Iran. The two countries seemed ready to repeat a scenario from the days before Öcalan's expulsion in October 1998.

Turkey's increased pressure on Iran to stop its support of the PKK and Turkey's alleged support for the reformist movement in Iran dominated the two countries' relations through the rest of 1998. Turkey's pressure tactics on Iran with regard to the PKK commenced with its "undeclared war" against Syria in October 1998. On 26 September, Deputy Prime Minister Ecevit attacked Iran for instigating the PKK. He implored Iran to "let go of Turkey's collar. Even when Turkey was at its weakest in the 1920s, the world's strongest power could not destroy it. Iran will get nowhere by harboring criminals."[33] Ecevit accused Iran of supporting sixteen PKK camps and allowing the PKK to operate communications centers in Mashhad, Qom, Ahvaz, Urmiya, and Bandar-e Bushehr. While Ecevit attacked Iran, Foreign Minister Cem joined the fray. During his visit to Tehran on 14 September, he voiced his opposition to the Tripartite Agreement of Cooperation of Iran, Greece, and Armenia. Cem accused Greek Foreign Minister Theodore Panaglos of trying to organize another Holy Crusade against Turkey and this time trying to enlist Muslim soldiers for the task. Cem noted that while Iran seemed eager to join the two Christian countries in their assaults on Turkey, it said nothing about Armenia's occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan, a Muslim country.[34] In spite of the two countries' foreign policy squabbles, they continued to strengthen trade relations. During the first part of October, Rifat Serdaroğlu, minister of state and the co-president of the Turkey-Iran Joint Economic Commission, visited Tehran to participate in that city's 214th International Trade Fair. While touring the fair, the trade minister stated that Turkey and Iran's Joint Transportation Commission had passed several measures, one of which was the easing of transit restrictions on Turkish trucks.

In January Hikmet Cetin, speaker of the Turkish parliament and an ethnic Kurd, paid a three-day visit to Iran that purportedly dealt largely with improving trade relations between the two countries. On 31 January Cetin visited

Tabriz and met with Yahya Mohammadzade, governor of the East Azerbaijan province, who suggested that the two countries set up a joint chamber of industry between Tabriz and Izmir. Cetin replied that his government would seriously consider this proposal. Just before Cetin's visit, top Iranian foreign ministry officials had met with Morteza Askaev, speaker of the Azerbaijan parliament, and stressed that Azerbaijan should improve its relations with Iran and abandon its relations with Israel. This was an action that Baku did not want to take.

1999: The PKK Again and More Unrest

The first big explosion in Turkey-Iran relations occurred in May over what became known as the Kavakçi affair, which was intimately tied to the head scarf (hijab) issue in Turkey. The Kavakçi affair occurred as Turkey was preparing its legal case against Öcalan and continued into June while Öcalan was being tried. Merve Kavakçi is a young Islamist woman who was elected to parliament as a member of the Virtue Party (FP) who vowed to wear a head scarf to the swearing-in ceremony for MPs. She was roundly booed and exposed to a good deal of verbal abuse upon entering the parliament chamber and compelled to withdraw. The "affair" raged for several weeks. The issue subsided somewhat in June when it was revealed that Kavakçi also held American citizenship, which disbarred her from being an MP. What most of the media, both Turkish and western, did not report was the belief held in some circles that the Turkish government "sees" men behind the head scarf and that the faces of these men are Kurdish. The almost simultaneous occurrence of both Öcalan's trial and the Kavakçi affair emphasized how closely connected both "problems" are. Both had to be crushed and preferably at the same time. The Kavakçi affair created a rift between Turkey and Iran. Bülent Ecevit, the new Turkish prime minister, once again went on the attack against Iran. He accused Iran of "continuing its efforts to export its revolution and of supporting the PKK," in spite of the recent border security agreements.[35] Iran, he charged, was taking over Syria's role as the main supporter of the PKK. He noted that Iran had hosted the sixth annual Congress of the PKK. The two countries' TV and radio media engaged in a war of bombast for the next two weeks. In response, Kemal Kharrazi stated bluntly that "Iran did not like Turkey's secular policies." He added that "respecting peoples' values and beliefs was required to establish democracy."[36]

Ankara did not forget the PKK. The TAF announced that Osman Öcalan, the brother of Abdullah, had been given sanctuary in Iran, along with several other PKK commanders. Turkish media showed several PKK guerrillas confessing that they had been trained in Iran. On 22 May, the Iranian media claimed that Turkish border soldiers had killed nine Iranians out of a group

of forty-five who had been trying to cross into Turkey and then dumped their bodies next to a border fence. Necmettin Kalkan, deputy governor of eastern Van province, stated that the border crossers had unfortunately walked into the middle of a TAF sweep against the PKK. Both countries seemed determined to implement their recent border security agreements and let their respective military authorities sort out the border killings.

The Turkish generals obviously wanted to take advantage of Iran's support of Kavakçi to ratchet up demands that Tehran abandon support for the PKK along the lines they had used against Syria the previous October. The generals did this knowing that much of Iran's support for Kavakçi was an effort to strengthen its own failing Islamist legitimacy—a failure increasingly realized by both the anti- and pro-Khatami forces. But for Turkey, the primary problem was still the PKK.

Turkey alleged that, in spite of the recent border security agreements, Iran was unwilling to give up the PKK card, a card that Iran obviously felt it needed in order to increase its position vis-à-vis Turkey in northern Iraq. There seems to be credible evidence for Turkey's charges that Iran did increase its support of the PKK after Öcalan's expulsion from Syria; that Iran did allow the PKK to hold its sixth annual congress in Urmiya in February 1999; and that Iranian intelligence did cooperate with the PKK in recruiting local Kurds to carry out terrorist attacks against targets within Turkey. Öcalan's admission, whether compelled or not, that Iran supplied the PKK with weapons transferred via Armenia and Russia and that Tehran pressed Jalal Talabani to allow his territory to be used by the PKK to stage raids into northern Iraq increased Turkey's ire. The latter activity threatened Turkey's KDP allies. In many ways the Kavakçi affair was enmeshed firmly in the tug of war between the two countries concerning the geopolitical role that each hoped to play in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Ratcheting Up to Conflict?

Iran's allegations that Turkish fighter aircraft bombed several sites in Iranian territory dominated relations between the two countries in July. On 18 July Iran reported that Turkish bombs had killed five people. The bombing raid occurred a little over a week after Iran witnessed the largest antigovernment demonstrations since the Islamic revolution in 1979. Once again the Kurdish question was tied to domestic political legitimacy. The demonstrations commencing on 8 July were, at first, largely run by students. Demonstrators gathered in numbers of 200–300, but in the next two days the number rose to 10,000, and then crowds of up to 100,000 were reported.[37] The demonstrators demanded more freedom of expression, of assembly, and of attire. But the demonstrations quickly became part of the infighting between the pro- and

anti-reformist forces in Iran. Several days after the first demonstrations, large counterdemonstrations were organized by conservatives loyal to the Supreme Guide, veliyat-e faqih, Ali Khamenei, and the concept of the Supreme Guide. Reformist demonstrators demanded a lessening of oppression and the resignation of top police officials and of the Supreme Guide himself. The mid-July demonstrations were clearly a major struggle to determine the direction of the Islamist government in Iran. The initial demonstrations were clearly a challenge to both the conservative and reformist Islamist politics of the Islamic regime.[38] The extent of the opposition became clear in mid-September when the Iranian government announced that 1,500 people had been taken into custody of whom 200 were held for interrogation. Forty-five of the 200 people detained were fined and imprisoned. Twenty were acquitted, and four were sentenced to death. The status of the remaining thirty-one was unclear.

Iranian Kurdish nationalists were quick to point out that the youth demonstrations in July had been encouraged by the Kurdish demonstrations throughout Iranian Kurdistan in February protesting the capture of Öcalan. They stated that the subsequent crackdown on the demonstrations was reminiscent of the harshness used against the Kurds in February: "The demonstrations in Kurdistan and murder of the demonstrators can be seen as a catalyst to the riot events in Tehran and the instability caused by them. The February demonstrations by Kurds motivated and encouraged the students of Tehran, instead of being a lesson for non-Kurds not to demonstrate."[39]

Turkey waded into Iran's domestic political fray on the side of the demonstrators. Prime Minister Ecevit noted that the violence was a "natural reaction" of the Iranian people to an "oppressive regime." "The Iranian people," stated Ecevit, "are a people with a rich historical and cultural background. They could not be expected to bear the outdated regime of oppression for a long time."[40]

The Kemalist Turkish media could hardly contain its glee regarding the tumult in Iran. They gave quid pro quo for the arrogance with which the Iranian media had treated the Kavakçi affair just two months previously. Now Iranian women were demanding the right to throw off the chador, just as Turkish women who opposed Kavakçi were demanding the end of the head scarf. As far as the Kemalist government officials and media were concerned, the demonstrations against the Islamic regime vindicated their own onslaught against "reactionism."

As the repercussions of the mid-July turmoil continued, Iran accused Turkey of bombing Piranshahr, a city about forty miles south of the triangle where the borders of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq meet. Ironically, the site was close to Qotur, an area that Iran had received from Turkey in 1932 when the two countries signed the Turkey-Iran Frontier Treaty. This treaty delimited the border between the two countries. Iran had received the portion of territory around

Qotur in exchange for granting Turkey the right to the eastern slopes of Mt. Ararat from which Kurds had staged a rebellion in 1930. The bombing raid of July 1999 raised this old history, and all of it was connected to the Kurdish question. Contrary to Turkey's claims, Iran said there were no PKK camps in the region and that Turkey had purposely attacked its border forces. Furthermore, along with Israel, Turkey was behind the demonstrations in Tehran. Iranian officials pointed out that the bombing raid took place just a few days after President Demirel's July 14–16 visit to Israel. "We reserve the right to retaliate," said foreign ministry officials. The Iranians asserted they would not return two captured Turkish soldiers until Turkey paid compensation. For its part, Turkey rejected and ridiculed all of Iran's claims that Turkey had "invaded" Iran. "If we had intended to invade Iran, we would not have done so with two soldiers," replied Ecevit. Turkey's top general, Hüseyin Kivrikoğlu, responded to Iran's charges, stating, "Turkey has not bombed territory in Iran; rather, it was in Iraq; further, it is impossible for Turkish pilots to miss or mistake a target because all targets and their coordinates are programmed with accurate maps into a computer. It is impossible to make a mistake."[41]

Kivrikoğlu admitted that it was possible that Iranian soldiers had entered this region of Iraq and been caught in the bombing raid. At any rate the area bombed, wherever it was, was a base for the PKK. When pressed by journalists as to what the real intentions of Iran might be, the general replied, "Iran's intentions have never changed [niyetleri hic degismedi]. From 1639 there has not been a war between us, but Iran has never wanted a strong Turkey. It seems clear that Iran's intention is to show Turkey as an aggressive country." When asked about Iranian claims that U.S. troops were about to be sent to northern Iraq, the general replied that the claim was "completely false." When asked if the tension between Turkey and Iran resembled that between Turkey and Syria of the previous October, President Demirel answered, "The time is different, conditions are different, and the situation is different. Channels are open between the two countries, and talks are being held."[42]

Iran was not of the same mind as Turkey regarding its assessment of the real intentions of the bombing raid. Bahman Akhavar, a member of the Commission for Defense Affairs of Iran's parliament (Majlis), said, "Turkey's attack was a new strategy and scenario based on analysis by the foreign media that a new revolution is taking place in Iran. Considering the recent visit of the U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen to the Middle East and the visit of the Turkish president to Occupied Palestine, this move by Turkey cannot be taken as a marginal bombing raid."[43]

Iran was even more sensitive than usual to the suspected machinations of Israel and American Jews and hence the U.S. government. All three were waging a relentless media campaign against Iran over the arrest of thirteen Jews

in June on charges of spying for the United States. The ensuing international campaign to compel Iran to release the thirteen was at its height during the July demonstrations and Turkey's alleged bombing of Iran's territory.[44] During their trial in June 2000 in Shiraz, nine of the thirteen Jews reportedly "confessed" to spying and passing information to Israel. Israel, United States, European countries, and their respective Jewish communities were making strenuous efforts to have the Jews released.[45]

As both President Demirel and General Kivrikoğlu stated, there were obviously many compelling geopolitical and geostrategic reasons why Turkey and Iran had not gone to war for some 360 years. By 1 August, both countries had sent large military delegations to the bombed sites. Turkey admitted that a few of its bombs might have inadvertently struck Iranian soil. For its part, Iran was willing to acknowledge that the bombing had been a mistake. By such acknowledgments, it was clear that both countries thought it was no longer in their interests to pursue the matter much further. On 9 August Iran turned over the two captured soldiers to Turkey. On 10 August, Iranian Deputy Interior Minister Gholan Hussein Bolanian, in Ankara as head of the Iranian delegation to discuss the results of the bombing, commented, "I want the whole world to know that Turkish-Iranian ties are gradually growing. The temporary dispute has ended."[46] On 9 August Iran turned over the two captured soldiers to Turkey. On 11 August the Turks and Iranians signed another border security cooperation agreement.

One week after the bombing raid dispute was settled, an earthquake struck Turkey. Some 20,000 people were killed, leading to a cessation of the propaganda wars between the two countries. It was noted in the Turkish press, however, that although Iran had sent substantial relief to Turkey, Tehran did go ahead with air and ground military maneuvers just a few days after the earthquake, as if, noted the Turkish media, it were in retaliation for the 18 July bombing raid. By early March 2000 the bombing raid no longer received press coverage, and it was never acknowledged whether or not Turkey had paid Iran the promised compensation.

Since the 11 August security and cooperation understanding against "terrorist groups" and the 17 August earthquake, there have been no major flare-ups between the two countries other than the usual accusations from Turkish officials that Iran has continued to support the PKK. Turkey took advantage of the appointment of a new ambassador to Iran, Turan Morali, to announce that "certain misunderstandings" should not prevent the two countries from playing an "essential role in guaranteeing a stable and prosperous region." President Khatami replied, "Many countries do not want Iran and Turkey to have good relations and try to prevent the strengthening of ties between the Islamic Republic and Turkey."[47] There were signs of trouble ahead, however.

On 20 October Turkish police arrested ninety-two members of the Hizbollah, a Kurdish-led Islamist counter-PKK organization, many of whom (claimed the Turkish press) were trained in Iran.[48]

Ahmet Taner Kislali, a professor and journalist devoted to secularism and Kemalism, was assassinated by car bomb on 21 October. This led to blistering attacks in the press that Tehran supported not only the PKK but also the deadly Islamist Hizbollah, who had advocated an Islamist-Kurdish state in southeast Turkey throughout the 1990s. Just one day after Kislali's assassination, three Iranians were detained at the Istanbul airport while allegedly trying to flee the country.[49]

Kislali's murder was immediately compared to that of Ugur Mumcu, another journalist and Kemalist, on 14 January 1993. Iran had also been implicated in this case. Kislali's assassination raised the passions of the secularist-Islamist partisans to new heights. Iran's old nemesis, Mesut Yilmaz, head of the Motherland Party (MP) and one of the three leaders of the governing coalition, declared, "It is now becoming clear that the organizers of this crime were Iranians and that Kislali's murder has been carried out by the Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front (IBDA-C)."[50]

Iran responded that it had nothing to do with Kislali's murder. Its restrained response was also probably due to its preoccupation with President Khatami's visit to France (27–31 October). Tehran managed to note, however, that "the arrest of the three Iranians . . . indicates the influence of the pro-Zionist elements in some decision-making bodies in Turkey. Whenever there is a serious move to improve Iran-Turkey relations, certain circles try to undermine these attempts."[51] One can detect a certain amount of Iranian frustration. Whatever the degree of support that Iran had given to the PKK or even the Hizbollah (and this is unclear), it seems unlikely that Tehran would have had much interest in the assassination of Ahmet Kislali. In a news conference on 22 October, Prime Minister Ecevit was careful to make no accusations of Iran's involvement in the assassination.

In spite of the altercation over Kislali's murder, Ilnur Cevik, the influential editor of the *Turkish Daily News,* advocated strongly that Turkey give priority to its gas project with Iran and not the Blue Stream (Mavi Akim) project with Russia that seeks to bring gas to Turkey by pipeline under the Black Sea from Russia. He faulted Turkish officials for dragging their feet in not completing the project. For its part, Tehran announced that its portion of the pipeline would be finished sometime in mid-2000. Iran expected Turkey to finish its portion soon thereafter.[52]

The Hizbollah Affair

The relative quiet at the end of 1999 did not last long. In mid-January Turkish police and security forces staged several simultaneous attacks throughout Turkey on strongholds and hideouts of Hizbollah. A Kurdish-led Islamist organization, Hizbollah had been created by Turkish security and intelligence organizations to attack PKK leadership and assassinate its leaders and other Kurdish nationalists, especially in the southeast. Confessions of some of the captured leaders revealed that Hizbollah had killed scores of people and buried them in the basements, courtyards, and gardens of their various hideouts in Istanbul, Ankara, Konya, and Mersin. It was a grisly affair demonstrating to what depths the Turkish state had sunk in the 1990s in its efforts to eradicate the PKK and the Kurdish nationalist movement. The creation of the Hizbollah was similar to the state's cooperation with organized crime and international terrorists such as Abdullah Catli and Alaattin Cakici.[53] The charge by some politicians and journalists that Hizbollah was a creation of the TAF brought a sharp escalation between the Kemalists, TAF, and Islamists. Recai Kutan, the leader of the VT, asked, "Why did those who regulate the democratic balance run their tanks through Sincan instead of sending them against the Hizbollah? [Demokrasiye balans ayarcilar tanklari neden Sincan yerine Hizbullahçilar'in üzerine yürütmediler?]"[54] Did the TAF show any balance in their actions against reactionism?

Under such circumstances, it was only natural that many Turkish politicians and journalists held Iran responsible for supporting, funding, and training the Hizbollah. Kenan Evren, the former chief of the general staff and president of Turkey (1983–89), proclaimed that

> Hizbollah is the work of Iran [Hizbollah, Iran'in isi]. Iran has always been a problem for us. They have never helped us. From the time of Selim the Grim [Yavuz Selim] they have been against us. Hizbollah grew and became powerful in the 1980s. I warned of the danger, but the politicians were worried about votes, hence the Hizbollah grew, as did others.[55]

Other accusations than Evren's flew. Among the charges were that Hüseyin Velioğlu, one of the leaders of the group who was killed in a shootout with police in Istanbul, had received his military training in Iran. Some of the captured Hizbollah alleged that their highest-ranking leaders received political and military training from Pasdaran, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Command. After receiving their training near Tehran, they were transferred to Qom, where the Hizbollah was headed by Melle Enver, a Kurd from Silvan, a small town in the southeast of Turkey. Gokhan Aydiner, the super-governor of the southeast region under martial law (OHAL), charged that in addition to guer-

rilla warfare and killings, Hizbollah had also served as spies (casus) for Iran. Aydiner charged further that Hizbollah's operations, tactics, and methods resembled those that Iran had used. Hizbollah, said the governor, wanted to set up an Islamist regime similar to Iran's in Turkey. Kemal Iskender, director of security in Ankara, said that the Hizbollah leaders responsible for weapons procurement and operations in Ankara Inner Anatolia were all trained in Iran [Bu kisilerin Iran baglantasi var]. They went to Iran for their military and theoretical training. Iran's Secret Service is in the middle of this work."[56]
Iskender also suggested that the Hizbollah had been involved in the murder of Uğur Mumcu.

Iran was even more strongly implicated in the death of Konca Kuris, a young Turkish feminist and activist. Kuris had been a member of the Hizbollah for a short time when she visited Iran as a delegate from Turkey to attend the 1996 World's Muslim Women's Day. Ironically, it was after visiting Iran that Konca left the Hizbollah; her departure apparently led to her murder. At her funeral in Mersin, her father-in-law, Abdullah Kuris, blamed her feminist Islamist stridency on Iran: "If Konca had not gone to Iran, what happened would not have been so contagious."[57] The message of the Turkish press was clear: visiting Iran and following the example of Iranian women was the kiss of death not just for secular women but for Islamist women as well. The fate of Merve Kavakçi paled in comparison to that of Konca Kuris.

It was perhaps fortunate that Kemal Kharrazi was visiting Istanbul when the Hizbollah story broke in the Turkish press. He denied categorically that Hizbollah received any support whatsoever from Iran: "We, too, reject the PKK and absolutely do not accept what they did." When he was asked what measures Iran had taken against the "PKK terrorist organization," he replied, "Both countries want to eradicate [temizlenmesini] such a terror presence from its land. There are long borders between the two countries, and there are those who take advantage of this. The important thing is that the flow of information be strong." He acknowledged there were direct telephone connections and that in the event of any occurrence communication could be immediately established. The foreign minister also took the opportunity to once again criticize Turkey's military agreements with Israel. He stated that Israel was behind the plan to create a Kurdish state in northern Iraq. He also emphasized that the national gas project between the two countries had not stopped and that there was only a temporary delay because of Turkey's inability to find the revenue to complete it. He made a point of stressing that "natural gas will become a symbol of Turkey-Iran relations. This project will allow Turkey not to be dependent on one source."[58]

The Crisis of the Assassinations

In May 2000, yet another affair brought Turkey-Iran relations to a boil. At the beginning of May, while police operations against Hizbollah and the uncovering of their various burial grounds were still under way, Turkish media announced that the killers of at least seventeen Turkish journalists, politicians, professors, and other public figures had been apprehended. Those arrested "confessed" they had received training and support from operatives and agents of Iranian intelligence in the Jerusalem Warriors Organization (Kurds Mujahidin Orgutu), which was purportedly part of the Pasdaran. The revelations created a major crisis in Turkey-Iran relations. The "assassination crisis" was more serious than any others because the Turkish media considered them direct meddling, with criminal intent, in Turkey's internal affairs.

Turks were especially outraged by the alleged Iranian involvement in the bombing assassinations of Professor Bahriye Ucok (6 October 1990), Muammer Aksoy (31 January 1991), Ugur Mumcu (24 January 1993), and Professor Ahmet Taner Kislali (21 October 1999). Officials of the Interior Ministry announced that ballistics and laser tests had determined the origins of the weapons and bomb materials used in the assassinations. They also claimed the information leading to the arrests resulted from interrogation of Hizbollah members. Turkish officials were eager to make connections between the Hizbollah and the assassins. Islamist connections were also established when plastic explosives, timers, magnets, and other paraphernalia used in bombs were discovered in Sincan. Sincan was the suburb of Ankara where the "Jerusalem Night" celebrations had taken place on 31 January–2 February 1997. They had resulted in the expulsion of Iranian ambassador Mohammed Bagheri, because of his Islamist, anti-Israel speech, and Mohammed Reza Rashid and Sa'id Zare, Iran's consuls in Istanbul and Erzurm.[59] The TAF subsequently paraded a convoy of tanks through the main street of Sincan in a show of force to intimidate the "reactionaries."

Allegations of all kinds cascaded forth in the Turkish press. Media reported that the Tevhi Selam (Greeting to Oneness) organization, headquartered in Malatya, was behind the assassinations. Its newspaper, *Selam*, was created in 1979 after the Iranian revolution by Nurettin Sirin, an alleged supporter of the ideals of the Islamic revolution. Sirin was said to have been present at the Jerusalem Night celebrations in Sincan. Turkish media reported that Tevhi Selam and the "Jerusalem Warriors" purportedly carried out the assassinations and were part of an assassination brigade created within Iran's Pasdaran.[60] It was unclear from the media reports how many members of Tevhi Selam were Kurds. Since it was headquartered in Malatya, a heavily Kurdish area, one could assume that Kurds were among its members.

Turkish foreign ministry officials were much more circumspect than either the interior minister officials or the media. They stated that no assassination dossier would be forwarded to Tehran until all evidence was collected. One diplomat was quoted as saying, "If the foreign ministry is supplied with concrete evidence, then Tehran may be pressured to end its support for the PKK."[61] Media speculated that the TAF wanted "to finish off the PKK affiliation in all Turkey's neighboring countries before they would be able to address the profound problems of southeast Turkey."[62] Turkish media claimed that Iran still harbored some 1,500 PKK and 53 members of Hizbollah. Iran's support for the PKK remained the primary concern of Turkey.

The strongest criticism of Iran came from Prime Minister Ecevit, seemingly in disagreement with Foreign Minister Ismail Cem as to what attitude to take toward Iran. On 17 May, the same day that Ahmed Necdet Sezer was sworn in as the new president of Turkey, Ecevit stressed in a news conference that Iran for years "had provided shelter to separatist terrorists" and that Iran was still trying

> to export its revolution: opening one's arms to those who contributed to separatist terrorism in Turkey can actually be seen as interference in our domestic affairs. Unfortunately, certain separatist terrorists and fundamentalist organizations in Turkey have, in a way, benefited from Iranian hospitality and have exploited for their own benefit Iran's tendency to export its revolution.[63]

Ecevit did try, though, to adopt a conciliatory tone by drawing a distinction between the killers, their alleged supporters, and the Khatami government. Ilnur Cevik commented on Ecevit's remarks:

> Turkish authorities know the importance of maintaining good ties with Tehran. Iran is an important regional partner not only in the Middle East but also in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Not only can Iran block Turkey's plans to become a major energy supply route, but it can physically stall Turkey's access to Central Asia. Iran needs Turkey as much as Turkey needs Iran. Turkey, too, can hurt Iran's regional interests. If Iranian extremists have been involved in crimes in Turkey, the current regime is obliged to catch them and bring them to justice. Only then can the Khatami regime be taken seriously. But first we need to bring hard proof that Iranian extremists or agents actually participated in the assassination of prominent Turks.[64]

Another prominent editorialist, Mehmet Ali Birand, even made the case that, according to his sources, after the 1979 revolution Iran had been concerned about the anti-Islamist regime activities of some 400,000 to 500,000

Iranians who had taken refuge in Turkey and had engaged in anti-Iranian activities in concert with the rich anti-regime Iranians in Europe and the United States. In order to contain and intimidate the Iranians in Turkey, Tehran sent some 10,000 agents to Turkey. Most Iranians who were killed in Turkey were members or supporters of mojahedin-e khalq. Birand acknowledged that it was only with the May revelations that he realized the extent to which Iranian agents had solicited the aid of Turkish collaborators, hit men, and mafia.[65] Birand suggested that one way to control the agent traffic between Turkey and Iran was to require visas for Iranians. The downside of this was that undoubtedly Iran would retaliate by requiring visas of Turks. This in turn would result in the stopping of Turkish and international truck transport via Iran to the Gulf countries.

More critical media stated that Ankara condoned the existence of the Iranian agents and that over the past two decades more than 200 Iranian dissidents had been killed in Turkey and that "these murders have hardly been investigated." The *Radikal* alleged that Turkey condoned the assassination of Iranian dissidents in Turkey and Iran after extradition. Did Turkey hope for less Iranian support for the PKK in return? By revealing the assassinations in May 2000, did Turkey think the time was now appropriate (with the defeat of the PKK and the struggle for power in Iran) to put pressure on the Khatami government to finally end all aid to the PKK and its affiliates in Turkey as well as in Iran?

Tehran did not take Ecevit's remarks lying down. On 18 May Kemal Kharrazi responded that Ecevit's comments were an unacceptable interference in Iran's internal affairs. Iranian media stated that Ecevit of all people should realize that "the PKK's incentive for struggle is ethnic discrimination in that country [Turkey]. On the other hand, the growing trend of Islamist tendencies in Turkey has nothing to do with the Islamic revolution in Iran. Mr. Ecevit should not give in to the pressure of Zionist circles. Documents presented by some official Turkish organizations indicate that the alleged supporters of such an idea and such organizations as Hizbollah are fabrics of Turkey's intelligence agency."[66] A lead article in the 21 May *Tehran Times* opined that Iran did not understand why Turkey was making such a fuss about crimes committed some seven to ten years earlier: "Many observers believe that making a commotion about these murders and accusing Iran of involvement at this junction is due to the pressure from the Zionist regime, which is trying to divert the world's public attention from the trial of the Iranian Jews who have confessed to spying for the Zionist regime."

The crisis of the killings led not only to a diplomatic war and new tensions between Ankara and Tehran but also to a dilemma for new Turkish president Ahmet Necdet Sezer. On the very day of his inauguration, the new president

was asked whether or not, in light of Iranian involvement in the assassinations, he would attend the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) meeting on 10 June in Tehran. He replied, "I am thinking of not going [Gidecegimi dusunmuyorum]."[67] Whether Sezer would attend the ECO meeting was the subject of much speculation. Birand and Cevik were strongly in favor of his attendance. It was a surprise when it was announced on 7 June that Sezer would not be going to Tehran. The decision for the president not to attend the ECO appeared to be largely a symbolic gesture of Ankara's unhappiness with the revelations of the assassinations. Turkey did send a delegation led by Foreign Minister Cem.

Even as the media debated the pros and cons of Sezer's attendance of the ECO, it was announced at the end of May that Turkey and Iran had signed more trade agreements reducing the customs tax at their border crossings and that two of the most important crossings—Gürbulak and Bezergan—would be open day and night. Both countries would raise the customs at the border crossings in order to lessen smuggling. Their respective foreign trade banks would cooperate more closely, and both would try to turn the ECO into a common market (ortak Pazar).[68] The agreement was reached as a result of a Turkish trade delegation led by Foreign Trade Minister Kursad Tuzmen and composed of 120 prominent Turkish businessmen. Tuzmen stated that Turkey would continue its sensitive (hassas) policies toward Iran despite the recent revelations. His Iranian counterpart, Reza Shafei, pleaded that Turkey "should not compare us to the previous [Rafsanjani] government. President Khatami is not responsible for the legacy of the past. We want to open a new page with you."[69]

The announcement on 7 June that Sezer would not attend the ECO was a surprise given the newly signed trade agreements. This decision seems to have been influenced by still another revelation. Media, both Turkish and international, reported that Ahmad Behbahani, a purported coordinator of the terrorist activities carried on inside and outside Iran and the head of security for former president Rafsanjani, had turned himself over to MIT, the Turkish Intelligence Agency. Behbahani reportedly stated that he had killed Abdulrahman Qasemlou, the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI), in Vienna in 1989.[70] Media reports suggested that Behbahani had been working with Turkish security for some time and that his information had helped Turkish intelligence officials apprehend the killers involved in the various assassinations carried out in Turkey during the previous two decades. It was speculated that Behbahani would reveal to Turkish authorities the "many details and secrets of the Kurdish parties and groups which had close ties with Iran."[71] Iran characterized Behbahani as "a common crook, criminal, and mem-

ber of the mojahedin-e khalq."[72] Subsequently, Turkish Intelligence as well as the CIA, came to the conclusion that Behbahani was an imposter. On 5 June, Iran sent Deputy Foreign Minister Hussein Adeli to Ankara to request Sezer's attendance at the ECO, but the decision for him not to attend had already been made.

It is notable that the "dispute" over the bombing raid, Ecevit's remarks in support of the July demonstrations, the Hizbollah affair of January and February 2000, and the assassination crisis of May 2000 did not result in the expulsion of ambassadors or other high-ranking diplomatic officials. The expulsions of 1989 and 1997 had resulted from Turkey's assertions that Iran was interfering in its domestic politics by encouraging "reactionism," both Islamic fundamentalism and Kurdish nationalism. In spite of a similar situation in the Kavakçi and Hizbollah cases, ambassadors were not expelled. But Iranian Ambassador Lavasani's comments on the Kavakçi affair were much more guarded than those of his predecessor in Sincan. Furthermore, most of the accusations and counteraccusations in July 1999 were made by officials within the confines of their own country and not by representatives hosted in each other's country as had been the case in 1989 and 1997.

Turkey and Iran did not want to jeopardize their wider geopolitical and geostrategic interests by having their differences over Iraqi Kurdistan and their support for the respective Kurdish organizations that controlled it result in armed conflict.[73] I argued that Iraqi Kurdistan served as a political space in which the two countries could safely carry on their geopolitical rivalry without a great risk of war as long as their respective spheres were not jeopardized.

After the KDP, in collaboration with Iraqi forces, ousted the PUK from Erbil in August 1996, it became clear that the PUK had become the weaker of the two contending Kurdish nationalist parties in Iraqi Kurdistan. Since the PUK was more closely allied with Iran than the Turkish-backed KDP, Iran's geopolitical position in Iraqi Kurdistan had become weaker. Although the PUK, with Iranian help, managed to regain most of the territory it had lost to the KDP in August and September 1996, it never regained the city and governorate (muhafaza) of Erbil. After 1996, it became the center of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and from 1996 through 2001, Erbil became increasingly under KDP control. There were several reasons for the weakening of the PUK after 1996. First, the establishment of the KRG in Erbil split the PUK leadership between Erbil and Sulaimaniyya. Much of the resources for the running of the KRG came from the revenues that the KDP had collected at the Ibrahim Al-Khalil (Khabur) crossing between Turkey and KDP-controlled territory. In early 2000 it was estimated that the KDP had collected up to $250,000 per day in transient fees. Some of these revenues support the KRG in Erbil. PUK

members of the KRG in Erbil and in Sulaimaniyya are dependent on KDP revenues. This situation strengthens the support for the KDP. In addition, in PUK-controlled areas, ministers struggle to fund their programs. By 2000, Sulaimaniyya was losing importance as an administrative center to Erbil. Third, after 1996, the infighting among the PUK was greater than among the KDP. Fourth, since 1996 there has been rivalry between the PUK politicians originally from Erbil who had evacuated to Sulaimaniyya and the PUK politicians native to the city. Qusrat Rasul Ali, prime minister of the KRG in Sulaimaniyya, has stacked his staff with comrades from Erbil. Qusrat Ali contended for power in Sulaimaniyya with Jabbar Farman. Farman was the commander of the PUK peshmerga who had defeated the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK) in 1993–94 and humiliated the KDP who supported them. It was thought in late 2000 and early 2001 that Jalal Talabani wanted to balance Qusrat Ali and Farman and may have hoped to use Farman, who is Shi'a and has close ties with Iran, against Qusrat Ali.

Gareth Standsfield argued in December 1999 that "it is debatable if the Iranians had the ability to force Jalal Talabani to take such a decision. What is perhaps more likely is that Talabani used the Iranians as an example to warn Qusrat that his position within the PUK and Sulaimaniyya had not reached unassailable proportions and that he could be removed with little difficulty if he were to take a manipulative approach and exploit geopolitical perceptions."[74] Jabbar Farman's position was weakened in the summer of 1999 with the return from self-imposed exile in London of Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin, a former leader of the leftist Komala faction of the PUK, which formed the core of the PUK peshmerga in the 1980s. The reported differences between Qusrat Rasul Ali and Jabbar Farman were thought to contribute to enhancing the power of Amin. This chain of events seemed to be confirmed when on 1 June 2000 Jabbar Farman resigned from all of his party positions.[75] In short, the KDP and PUK both claimed to want to implement the Washington Accords of September 1999 (which sought to lessen, if not resolve, the differences between them). By mid-2000 the PUK, the major vehicle for the expansion of Iran's geopolitical presence in Kurdistan, had diminished in comparison with the KDP, backed by Turkey and the United States.

Conclusion

The major need of Turkey and Iran to manage their bilateral relations and the Kurdish question remains the great challenge to their wider geopolitical and geostrategic interests. This conclusion confirms the thesis that omni-bal-

ancing is the most appropriate international relations model to explain each country's foreign policy behavior as far as the intrastate Kurdish problem and trans-state Kurdish question are concerned. Omni-balancing emphasizes the priority of external threats so long as internal ones are manageable. Omni-balancing also suggests that when internal threats are more significant and external ones are less threatening, priorities tend toward coping with domestic politics. The threat of Kurdish nationalism represented the greatest threat to the Turkish regime. But unlike the posits of the omni-balancing theory, Kurdish nationalism was a challenge not just to the government in Turkey but to the state itself and the Turkish-based ethnic nationalism that has legitimized its dominance since its founding as a republic in 1923. Omni-balancing is also adequate for partially explaining Iran's foreign policy. (When internal threats are manageable, priorities shaping foreign policy tilt toward accommodating significant external threats.) Iran's foreign policy after 1983 was dominated by external forces, most notably the efforts of the United States to curtail and perhaps to topple the Islamic regime. Internal threats became dominant by the mid-1990s. The internal threats consisted of a different brand of Islamist regime (disputes between reformists and hard-line conservatives), but as the July 1999 demonstrations indicated, there were strong representations of secular and nonclerical forces participating as well. Furthermore, it is possible that the demonstrations in Kordestan in February protesting the capture of Abdullah Öcalan by Turkish commandos (and also protesting the Islamist regime) encouraged the July demonstrations in Tehran. This is a good illustration of an internal threat seeking precedence over external threats (the United States and Turkey).

Omni-balancing can be construed to include three international relations theories—the rational actor, the irrational actor, and the capital accumulator—in that they represent three implicit survival requisites that shape policy: geopolitically shaped national interests (ambitions) and external threats, domestic political and internal ideological legitimization needs, and economic needs. Two proponents of omni-balancing, Anushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, state, "In any given regime and at any given time, threats to one or the other may be dominant in decision-makers' calculations, although in the long run if any are neglected, regime stability is put to risk." This study validates these assertions. The two authors also suggest that "the notion of omni-balancing could also be extended by taking rationality [of the neorealist school] to mean attending not only to security threats [both internal and external] but also to capital accumulation and rent acquisition requisites. Since these various requisites of state-formation may conflict in any given situation, and no policy is therefore likely to appear fully rational from all points of view,

the highest rationality may be the ability to make a reasonable series of tradeoffs."[76]

Since 1980, Turkey and Iran have made a reasonable series of tradeoffs to preserve their wider geopolitical and geostrategic interests. It remains to be determined whether the KDP and PUK will continue to make the necessary "reasonable series of tradeoffs" to preserve their political control and power in Iraqi Kurdistan and in the wider Middle East region.

Part IV

Sanctions, Humanitarian Concerns, and the Emergence of Kurdish Democracy in Northern Iraq

10

The United States Policy and the Iraqi Kurds

DAVID L. MACK

When I was a State Department official dealing with Iraq, I inherited a history of illusions, deceit, and mistrust between the United States and Kurdish leaders. I felt it would have been immoral to mislead Iraqi Kurdish leaders regarding what they could expect of the United States. The best rule seemed to me then and seems to me now to offer honest advice rather than flattering rhetoric. As one Kurdish leader told the public after meeting with me in 1991, "Ambassador Mack received us warmly and gave us cold words." Fair enough! That was my intention.

Recently, an Iraqi Kurdish friend complained to me that the United States government needs a policy toward Kurdistan. I agreed that we do not have such a policy and are unlikely to adopt his suggestion. I explained that we have policies toward Iraq, Iran, and Turkey rather than policies toward regions of those countries. In the case of Iraq, we support the principle of Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. We also have policies of humanitarian support and protection for the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, policies that have saved thousands of lives and helped the diverse people of this region protect their cultural identity and improve their economic situation.

But it would be wrong to encourage notions of pan-Kurdish nationalism or a separate Kurdish state. It would be wrong for various reasons but most notably because it could lead to tragic results for the Kurdish people of Iraq. The United States must also respect the interests and consider the views of Iraq's neighbors, one of whom is our NATO ally (Turkey) and is critically important. Moreover, the ability of the United States to provide humanitarian assistance and a measure of protection to the people of Iraqi Kurdistan depends on the cooperation of Turkey. A point that we have repeatedly made to the Iraqi Kurdish leaders in the 1991 to 1993 period is that they should shun any relationships with the terrorist PKK organization.

Starting in 1991, we urged Iraqi Kurdish leaders to embrace political goals leading to a new government in Baghdad, a democratic government at peace with its own people and one in which Kurds shared power with other Iraqis. This is an ambitious but correct goal: a new government in Baghdad rather than an independent state in Erbil.

The relationship of central authorities in Baghdad with regional authorities can and probably should be a federal one. Federalism is something that the United States understands from our own history. But there is nothing automatic about the federal solution. It has required many adjustments to find the appropriate balance between the government in Washington and the powers of the states and local jurisdictions. In the mid-nineteenth century this search led to a tragic civil war, bloodier on a per capita basis than any of our foreign wars. We continue to make periodic adjustments in the balance within our federal union. Now we do so in the Supreme Court and in the halls of Congress, rather than on the battlefield.

Given the history of the Anfal operations, we understand why Iraqi Kurdish leaders fear and do not accept control by the current Iraqi government. Improvements in the economic and social situation of the Kurdish-controlled areas since 1991 (despite the United Nations sanctions and Baghdad's retaliatory economic measures) support arguments in favor of considerable local autonomy. Most dramatic is the improvement of health for children and other vulnerable members of the population. To quote from the State Department report of September 1999, "In northern Iraq, where the UN administers humanitarian assistance, child mortality rates have fallen below pre–Gulf war levels. Rates rose in the period before [the] Oil-for-Food [Program], but with the introduction of the program the trend reversed." The international community and the local administrators of economic and social programs in this part of Iraq can take pride in their achievements.

Without underestimating the potential danger that a ruthless regime in Baghdad poses to the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, I would suggest that the most immediate danger to their security and future development is the continuing failure of the two major Iraqi Kurdish factions to fulfill the promises of cooperation. The Kurdish people of Iraq are most vulnerable when their leaders are not united.

It is possible to find politicians and human rights activists in the United States who will argue that a formal declaration of independence from Baghdad would be a logical development from the experiences of the past nine years. To act on such advice would fly in the face of a longer historical view and of strategic reality. It would have tragic results for all the people of Iraq, including the Kurds.

11

The Iraqi State, the Opposition, and the Road to Reconciliation

HANNA Y. FREIJ

The collapse of socialist experiments in the eastern bloc countries at the end of the cold war forced many of the "garrison states" to try to reform themselves in response to demands for transparency and accountability. The Arab world has been either immune or sheltered from such a process as a result of its alliance with the United States and the importance of the region as a prime supplier of oil to the global economy. Iraq has been seen as both a garrison state and a failing state after Operation Desert Storm in 1991.[1] It was in need of reform, not only to save it from disintegration, but also to save its population from the daily denial of fundamental human rights. In a poignant piece published in *Az-zaman*, Nassif Al-Jabouri implored the Arab public who supported Saddam's defiance of the American bombing of Baghdad to take pity on the Iraqi people. He urged them not to encourage Saddam Hussein to confront the United States and Britain, because the only losers would be the Iraqi people. He added that Saddam's dictatorial regime had decimated Iraqi political institutions and civil society. It had plundered Iraq's oil wealth for generations in order to remain in power.[2] In spite of the suffering of the Iraqi people, not one Arab state has stepped forward to advance a formula to end the embargo, to alleviate the daily bombardment, or to allow the Iraqi people to rebuild their country. How could this saga be resolved?

The garrison state erected by Saddam Hussein after the Baath came to power in 1968 became entrenched through a system of security institutions, staffed mainly by Tikriti clan members, whose primary function was to ensure the survival and protection of the regime from internal and external threats.[3] Non-security state institutions were marginalized; society was brutalized into submission. Adding to the suffering of the Iraqi people, the United States and Britain insisted upon not lifting the United Nation's imposed sanctions until Saddam had been removed from office.[4] Dennis Halliday, former UN humanitarian coordinator in Iraq, stressed that the sanctions had caused 7,000 Iraqi children to die each month. "That [was] intentional; it [was] genocide."[5] With the human cost of the sanctions increasing, UN Secretary General Kofi An-

nan warned President George W. Bush that support for the sanctions regime was eroding.[6] With that possibility in mind, the Bush administration followed the Clinton strategy—bomb first and assert the right of the United States and Britain to defend themselves in the skies over Iraq—in violation of all conventions and treaties.[7] The broader aim of this routine bombardment was to signal American displeasure with the rehabilitation of Iraq in the region and U.S. unwillingness to remove the sanctions regime. More importantly, the United States wanted Saddam to know that it intended to pursue a tough policy and would not permit him to test its resolve.[8] Given this weakened, brutalized, and internally divided society, what kind of opposition and resistance were we likely to see from Saddam and his regime?

This essay is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the nature of the Iraqi state and how Saddam Hussein maintained control over the various sectarian communities in Iraq. Two communities, the Shi'a and the Kurds, have constituted the primary base of opposition to the Baath regime. The second part offers an analysis of the opposition to the regime since the end of the second Gulf war in 1991 and assesses its viability. The third section offers a formula for regional powers to start a process of reconciliation to put an end to the garrison state and to the sanctions against the Iraqi people, while maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq.[9]

The Garrison State and the Politics of Control

Ruling elites in the third world and in the Middle East have sought to design a hegemonic social order that resulted in the state's monopolization of coercion, economic development, and institutionalization of political power in the hands of a narrow elite intent on advancing its state-building project in spite of all forms of societal opposition.[10] Ruling elites used the process of state building to organize societal and interest groups through alliance formation with particular sectarian groups in support of state institutions and leaders. In Iraq this process included primarily the Sunni community and excluded all those who opposed the Baath state-building project. In Iraq, this included the Kurds and a significant segment of the Shi'a.[11] Given the strategic elite's desire to speed up the process of societal transformation, force against the excluded groups was often a means of imposing conformity. With periodic outbreaks of violence between the state and the excluded societal forces, the state was characterized by low degrees of what Kalevi Holsti calls "vertical legitimacy" where conformity with government policies was nonexistent.[12] In order to impose their authority, these elites sought to establish a "garrison state" where a mind-set of "universal fear" toward an ever-present enemy was instituted in order to control the population for the purpose of modern warfare. The citi-

zens' duty was "to obey, to serve, to work . . . [which were] cardinal virtues in the garrison state." The state elite uses both coercion and symbol manipulation in order to manage its project of state building. In fact, Harold Lasswell made it a point to underscore the importance of symbols and symbol manipulation "as an instrument of morale."[13] All of these practices were attempted by the Baath to secure its undisputed control over the state. In the post–Desert Storm era, such a process was no longer workable in Iraq as evident by the inability of the Baath to control different parts of the country. One may be tempted to call Iraq a "failed state," not at the level of Zaire or Somalia, but close enough.

Two political communities were targeted by the Baath for coercion and symbol manipulation: the Shi'a and the Kurds. The discussion of these two communities and the mode of their control illustrates policies pursued by the garrison state, depicts the nature of the political opposition, and illustrates what was needed to establish a more representative political entity. Focusing on the Shi'a and the Kurds does not mean that the Sunni community was spared these processes of coercion and symbol manipulation. This essay, however, focuses on the Shi'a, the Kurds, and the need to reconcile them in the body politic of Iraq.

The Shi'a

The Shi'a are the largest sectarian group in the country, but they have not demanded secession from Iraq. In 1979 Saddam declared himself head of state after pushing aside the ailing Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr. Saddam Hussein then initiated a process of "Sunnization" of the Iraqi decision-making elite.[14] A multitude of factors contributed to the process. The first perception of threat came from Iran in the aftermath of the revolution of 1979 and heightened the need for Saddam to exclude members of the Shi'a community from the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) ruling elite. He excepted Sa'doun Hammadi, a lifelong Baathist.[15] Given their large numbers and lack of representation, the Shi'a population found their leadership with Mohammed Baqr al-Sadr, who advocated universalism during the 1960s. Al-Sadr had formed Al-Da'wa Movement between 1968 and 1969. This movement flourished in the southern and largely Shi'a cities of Najaf, Karbala, and Kazimiyah and attracted members from the younger and poorer classes of the population in those cities. The Da'wa began spreading its ideas in the mosques of these cities. It also gave considerable attention to the vast crowds that took part there annually in the ceremonial processions commemorating the martyrdom of Husayn and hoped to attract these people to its ideological conclusions.[16]

As the Sunnization process intensified, Al-Sadr and his followers intensified their demands for political representation. Religious celebrations became

a primary venue where they voiced their opposition to the regime, especially to Saddam Hussein and his repressive policies. Chibli Mallat noted that during the 1974 and 1977 religious celebrations of 'Ashura, political slogans were shouted" that "revealed not only dismay at Baath rule, but also the Shi'a character of the grievances."[17] As the regime intensified its subjugation of the southern Shi'a, the movement grew even bolder in its challenges. The Iranian Revolution gave the Da'wa the boldness to transform itself from a street political protest movement during holy celebrations into an underground guerrilla organization that attempted to challenge the Baathist regime as had their counterparts in Iran.[18] The Da'wa carried out an unsuccessful assassination attempt in 1980 on Tariq Aziz, a member of the RCC. The Baath's reaction was swift and deadly. Al-Sadr, the leader of the movement, was arrested, as was his sister.[19] Soon after the 1980 outbreak of the war with Iran, Saddam ordered the execution of Al-Sadr, his sister, and "five hundred of the best men of Iraq . . . including eight other 'ulama.'"[20]

Coercion was not the only mode of control that Baath leadership applied. Once the tide of the war turned in Iran's favor, the regime sought to gain the loyalty of the noncommissioned officers and the soldiers in the Iraqi army by dispatching senior Baath officials to the Shi'a holy sites and by restoring these shrines in the cities of Karbala and Najaf. Saddam also sought to appease the Shi'a by declaring the birthday of Ali bin Abi Talib, cousin of the prophet Mohammed and the Fourth Caliph, a national holiday. Saddam was often photographed praying in the Shi'a holy shrines.[21] The Baath regime tried to strike a balance between its hard-line Arab nationalist worldview and its rhetoric while seeking to engage in state/nation building and emphasizing local state identity, *wataniyya*. This process was put into action through the manipulation of local Mesopotamian-inspired culture and art.[22] More importantly, all such social activities were governmentalized. This led to the weakening and at times the disappearance of independent associations and civil institutions, most of which were subsumed by the state. Nonetheless, the Baath leadership remained fearful and vulnerable due to their narrow base of support. To augment their legitimacy, they borrowed from the ideas of a former Iraqi teacher and prime minister, Abdel Rahman al-Bazzaz, who had acknowledged the role pre-Islamic heritage played in shaping both the Arab nation and Iraq in particular. Al-Bazzaz noted,

> In Egypt, Mesopotamia and Syria . . . there arose mighty civilizations, including the civilizations of the ancient Egyptians . . . the Akkadians and Babylonians . . . it would not harm our Arab nationalism to take pride in them . . . but when we do take pride in them . . . let us not for a single

> moment forget our Arabism, to which our first affiliation must [belong]. For an Iraqi must not forget, when taking pride in the grandeur of the Babylonians and Assyrians; he is an Arab, in every sense of Arabism: in his language, in his culture and his living, active history.[23]

While trying to manipulate the identity symbols of the territorial state to generate a present sense of community and patriotism among its populace, the Iraqi regime never abandoned their Arab nationalist aspirations. The Baathists were hoping that by cultivating the folklore of the sectarian and ethnic groups, the regime would gain the allegiance of the Iraqi public. Baram illustrated the Baath's aims as

> first . . . to bring home to the public the unity underlying the variegated assortment of ethnic communities which compose the Iraqi political entity. A second aim was to illustrate the existence of a popular Iraqi tradition both rich and unique, which deserved to be preserved and fostered for the sake of heightened awareness of Iraq's uniqueness among the nations of the world and of the Arab world. A third aim was to point up the cultural and possibly the ethnic links connecting the Iraqi people of modern times with the peoples who dwelled in Iraq in antiquity.[24]

In fact, the Baath were quite successful in manipulating these symbols and were supported in their efforts by Iraqi Communists who were coaxed by the Soviet Union to cooperate with the leadership.[25] Baram also pointed out that Islamic groups, like the traditional Shi'a leaders, did not come out openly against such symbol manipulation. This implied that the traditionalists noted and accepted this glory.[26] In 1982, when the war shifted to Iraqi territory,

> patriotic sentiment among Iraqis overcame all other considerations, desertions from the army declined, and the Shi'a fought as vigorously as the Sunnis. The conflicting sentiments of the mass of Shi'a toward the war arose from other considerations than their confessional affinity with Iran. Rather, the Shi'a believed the Iraqi regime had launched a needless and devastating war for the sole purpose of its own aggrandizement.[27]

This might help explain why the Iraqi Shi'a population did not totally reject the patriotic symbols. This, however, does not imply that coercive instruments were not utilized. Hanna Batatu, in his examination of Saddam's dilemma with the Shi'a population of his country, put it quite well:

> It is true that few Shi'is hold crucial threads in his regime, but this is less a result of sectarian influences than the fact that, by dint of the relative thinness of his domestic base and the repressive character of his govern-

> ment, he has been driven to lean more and more heavily on his kinsmen, or members of his own clan, or old companions from his underground days.[28]

The Shi'a, as a political community like the Kurds, need to be granted their rightful political position in a reconstituted Iraqi state. Many members of this community, who were exiled in Iran, either through fear or through willful expulsion by the regime, need to be guaranteed a safe return to their homeland to participate in the process of reconciliation and reconstruction. The Kurds have been afforded protection by the international community through their semi-autonomous region and have been given an advantage in the process of rebuilding their community and political institutions.

The Kurds

A great deal has been written about the relationship of the Kurds to the Iraqi state and the suffering that they have endured through the years both in their relationship with the Baath regime and in the failure of the revolt of 1975.[29] Between 1968 and 1975, Baath leaders pursued a dual policy. One was to manipulate the divisions between the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and the various tribal leaders in order to ensure a degree of control and leverage against any unity within the Kurdish population. The second policy was to use coercion to assert state control in the garrison state and to discourage all other dissent within Iraq. After Mullah Mustafa Barzani's revolt was crushed in 1975, the Iraqi leadership embarked on policies aimed at further reducing the power of the guerrilla movement and undermining the movement's popular support. The first policy was to establish a nominally autonomous Kurdish region and favor it with economic and social projects as well as a road system that would give the government easier access into the area. This policy was implemented after the defeat of the revolt and, coupled with the manipulation of cultural symbols of the Kurdish people, generated little loyalty to the state.

The second policy was to minimize the threat of future foreign intervention in the conflict. Saddam created a corridor of ten to twenty kilometers between Iraq and neighboring states with Kurdish populations. Villages were destroyed, and the inhabitants were forced to live in areas near large cities. Some were directed to the south where the climate was different from that of northern Iraq. This repression was indiscriminate and was levied equally against Kurdish tribes that had fought beside government forces and against those Kurds who had supported Barzani. Those who were deported included Kurds who had lived in areas with Arab and Turkoman populations, such as Kirkuk, and

the villages along the Iranian border. The regime used the threat of deportation as well as actual deportation. The government also gave supportive tribes and individuals large sums of money to ensure their cooperation and loyalty. Nonetheless, Baath policies did not go unchallenged by the younger generation of Kurds. In Sulaimaniyya, Kurdish students joined the peasants in attacking army units sent to destroy their villages.[30]

To further strengthen its hold on the Kurdish region, the regime carried out a policy of "Arabization" of regions considered to be of strategic economic significance. The chief focus of this "Arabization" was Kirkuk with its oil fields.[31] The Kurdish leadership had wanted Kirkuk to lie within the autonomous region, but the Iraqi government again refused. With the defeat of the Barzani rebellion, the Iraqi government strengthened its bargaining leverage by resettling Iraqi Arabs in Kirkuk and by forbidding the use of the Kurdish language in schools.

To give their efforts at autonomy further credence, the Baath leadership set out to enlarge the political participation of Kurdish groups loyal to them. The leadership of these pro-government Kurdish groups was hand selected by the Baath.

> One group, led by 'Aziz 'Aqrawi, . . . Hisham 'Aqrawi, and Isma'il 'Aziz, formed a new "KDP," another, headed by 'Abd al-Sattar Tahir Sharif, formed the Kurdish Revolutionary Party; a third, led by 'Abd Allah Isma'il Ahmed, constituted the Progressive Kurdish Movement. There is little evidence that any of the three had widespread support among the Kurds, but they gave the Baath the Kurdish apparatus needed to put its own autonomy plan into effect.[32]

During the whole period of the Iran-Iraq War, 1980–88, the Kurdish movement was riddled with factionalism, primarily between the PUK, led by Talabani, and the KDP, then led by Massoud Barzani. The difference between these two groups was illustrated in the support given by the KDP to the Iraqi government, while the PUK joined with the Iranian KDP in their fight against the shah's forces.[33] Barzani's faction controlled the Iraqi border near the Turkish region. This enabled them to make cross-border attacks into Turkish Kurdistan and forced the Iraqi and Turkish governments to sign an agreement allowing for hot pursuit into each other's territory.[34] This agreement had the end result of encouraging the Kurds to close ranks, since it was perceived as a threat against the Kurdish movement in general, not only against the Barzani faction. Talabani, Barzani's KDP, and other smaller factions were also joined by Al-Da'wa groups from the Shi'a opposition who were fighting the regime as well.[35]

The regime continued to use all means possible to fight the Kurds. They allowed Turkish troops to enter Iraqi territory when Iraqi forces were facing serious defeats in the Fao peninsula. Kurdish fighters in Iraq were well aware that Turkey would get more involved in its support of the Iraqi regime if the Kurds scored huge successes that would have repercussions in Turkish Kurdistan. For this reason Kurdish guerrillas refrained from attacking two strategic links between Iraq and Turkey: the well-defended oil pipeline used for exporting oil, and the highway linking the two countries and used as a food-supply route. They reasoned that if the Iraqi public suffered too much due to Kurdish actions, the guerrillas' support against Saddam would erode. Furthermore, Iraq's oil supplied western nations, and should this source be cut, Kurds would lose European support as well. The Kurdish leadership was becoming aware that it could not defeat Saddam Hussein alone, but would need the support of the Iraqi public. Barzani stated, "We cannot overthrow it by ourselves. This must be done along with other sections of the Iraqi opposition and within a regional framework. We Kurds have a limited presence in the Iraqi army. This is a job for the Arab nationalists and the Islamic groups."[36]

The Nature of the Political Opposition in Iraq

In the case of a garrison state, one can identify several characteristics about the nature and strength of opposition. Since opposition is not allowed to operate within the institutional framework of the state, it becomes "extra-institutional." Thus it becomes violent and focused on overthrowing the regime, yet as a result of its divided nature and weakened position relative to the state, it is not strong enough to carry out its mission without external assistance.[37] In the case of Iraq, given its sectarian nature, the three forms of opposition can be identified. Michael Gunter accurately points out that "unity within the opposition proved difficult, it was consumed by disputes over who represents whom, what percentage and share each faction have in the organizations, and what each faction's voting rights are. By its own admission, the opposition suffered from the narcissism of parties that numbered in the dozens, each having no more than 10 or 20 members in most cases."[38]

When opposition materialized against the Iraqi garrison state, it essentially took three forms.[39] First, there was the "opposition to the ruler."[40] The Sunni community in general, and the military establishment in particular, opposed Saddam personally. They blamed him for the defeat of Iraq following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the resulting destruction of its military capability. The Iraqi National Accord (INA), which included former military and security officials who had deserted the regime, favored a palace coup from within the Baath. These Iraqi ex-officers were nationalists concerned about the territorial

unity of Iraq and less about establishing representative political institutions that would be inclusive of all Iraqis.[41]

Other Sunni elements like Isham Abdul Aziz, a representative of the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, a Sunni Muslim group, complained that the United States favored the Shi'a in the south and Kurdish groups like the KDP and PUK. He asserted that there "has not been enough attention from the United States to the Sunni" community in central Iraq. He continued, "If you always talk about the south, you will push the Sunni to be with Saddam Hussein."[42] Since the regime recruited from Sunni tribes to fill its military, this community continued to ally itself with Saddam for fear of a backlash from the Shi'a and the Kurds.

The Sunnis, like their counterparts in other communities, were not allowed to express any opposition to Saddam's regime. Many opposition figures in exile found themselves sudden celebrities in the West after Saddam ordered the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. After Iraq's defeat, the United States and its Gulf allies found it imperative to find a Sunni alternative to the regime in Iraq. The first Bush administration and then the Clinton administration favored a coup that would topple Saddam while ensuring that Iraq remained united, with no prospect of a Shi'a-dominated regime that could ally itself with Iran. This scenario did not materialize, and many Iraqis in exile claimed they could topple Saddam with foreign patronage.

The Sunni Arabs were divided themselves. Some like Sharif Ali bin al-Hussein sought to restore the monarchy that was overthrown in July 1958. Sharif Ali's aim was to unify the failed Iraqi state under a constitutional monarchy that would be "a symbol around which all parts of Iraq would be able to rally because we're not based on any single constituency, nor are we a political party."[43] Even the late King Hussein of Jordan contemplated this option and suggested that Iraq be divided into communal or ethnic regions and be joined to Jordan in a federation with him as the ruler. King Hussein was trying to reinvent the unified monarchy that existed before 1958 between Jordan and Iraq. Syria and the "pretender" to the Iraqi throne, Sharif Ali, opposed this option.[44]

Other Sunnis wanted to hold a dialogue with the regime. Dr. Sa'ad al-Rif'ai, deputy secretary general of the new Republican Party, called for a national unity government that would put an end to the monopoly of Baath power. He called for fundamental change in Iraq that would usher in a new constitutional and democratic order.[45] His party argued that the Iraqi regime with its vast capabilities and potential had remained entrenched in power after two wars, one in 1991 against a coalition of thirty-four allies. Those who favored dialogue with the regime argued that the Iraqi public had been politicized from the beginning of the last century and was weary of foreign influence. This argument

found sympathy with the INA. This faction of the Sunni opposition rejected external support to overthrow Saddam's regime. This position undermined the credibility of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), a collection of opposition forces nominally held together by Ahmed Chalabi, a Pentagon protégé. The INA and others were fearful that they might lose their legitimacy and nationalist credentials in the eyes of the people they were trying to mobilize against Saddam. After all, Saddam had held power for almost three decades and was perceived as a symbol in Iraq, in spite of his brutality. They added that during his tenure in office, Saddam had accomplished a great deal in terms of developing Iraq's infrastructure even during its involvement in the first Gulf war. Saddam had also developed Iraq's nuclear and military potential. He was the only Arab leader to have bombed Tel-Aviv. Furthermore, they argued that there was not a single foreign power that was really interested in supporting the Iraqi opposition. The United States and Britain preached about democracy and human rights, but they bombed the Iraqi people on a daily basis and imposed their will on the United Nations vis-à-vis the sanctions regime that harmed the Iraqi people most of all.[46]

The INC and others opposed dialogue with the Baath regime and argued that Saddam and his close associates should be brought to trial. The embargo would need to remain until the regime was toppled. They suggested that Saddam's thirty-year rule had undermined the basis of civil society and had destroyed the social fabric of Iraqi society. They added that over the years the regime had dealt brutally with its opponents by using all forms of torture and poison to eliminate them. The regime denied the public-at-large any opportunity to express their views. It used its secret service organizations to penetrate the Iraqi opposition and to foster the naive impression that it wanted to have dialogue. The Baath regime manipulated the idea of political openness and multiple political parties for local political consumption. In reality, those who returned to Iraq realized that the regime was not serious about liberalization and was simply replicating the Baath Party apparatus in an attempt to maintain its hold on power. The INC and its supporters stressed the futility of dialogue with Saddam. They wondered with whom dialogue would be held. They also questioned the basis of such dialogue and its eventual objectives.[47]

Chalabi and his camp argued that those opting for dialogue with the regime favored continued Sunni dominance and dismissed Shi'a and Kurdish appeals for serious political reforms. By highlighting the regime's "positive record," the pro-dialogue group swept aside the regime's past and continuing atrocities against its own citizens. Given the divisions in Sunni opposition, it was not difficult to realize that Iraq's military and the public had little faith in the opposition's effectiveness. The Sunni opposition continued to suffer from

fragmentation due to competing personalities and the lack of any serious mass following among Iraqi exiles.[48]

The second type of opposition condemned the regime's policies of exclusion. The Shi'a community formed this group's primary base of support, but excluded many other religious/sectarian and political groups. The Shi'a faced continuous military campaigns against the population in the south and lacked political representation in the decision-making structure. The regime pursued the Shi'a community in a variety of ways. Shi'a opposition was divided between the Islamists and the secularists. The Islamists were followers of Mohammed Baqr Al-Hakim, leader of the Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), also known as the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). He resided in Iran. However, many of the Shi'a were secularists who belonged to the Iraqi Communist Party and other groups.[49] Ahmed Chalabi, the head of the Iraqi National Congress, was Shi'a. Hence it is important not to perceive the Shi'a community as a monolith nor to perceive their opposition to the regime as simply sectarian.

The religious faction of Shi'a opposition was based in Iran. The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq was not officially part of the Iraqi National Congress headed by Ahmed Chalabi. Members of the Islamic trend, Layth Kubbah, Muwaffaq Al-Rubay'i, Jihad Al-Wakil, and Mohammed Ali, unofficially represented them. Al-Rubay'i argued that being part of the INC would ensure that the Islamic movement could influence the INC from within.[50] Even though the Shi'a welcomed U.S. assistance, it appeared that each administration was leery of allowing the Shi'a to gain the upper hand in the INC or to take the lead in overthrowing Saddam's regime. The 1991 war galvanized the Shi'a to revolt and to seek the overthrow of Saddam. The first Bush administration opted not to assist them for fear that they would establish an Islamic government as Iran. The Clinton administration attempted a coup in 1995, but the attempt was aborted for fear the Shi'a involvement would bring about a scenario that remained unacceptable to the United States and its allies.[51] SCIRI had the Badr Corps similar to the Kurdish *peshmerga*. Following the crushing of the Shi'a and Kurdish revolt in 1991, the Shi'a faced the dilemma of how to present their case as a unified community and to integrate their grievances with the Sunni and Kurdish communities for an overall reform plan. The Shi'a needed to address the issue of Iran's influence. There was no doubt that the Iranian establishment would impact Shi'a demands. The extent of Iranian interference, however, would be determined by the amount of cooperation that the Shi'a leadership, Islamist and secular alike, received from the Sunni and military establishments. It is important to remember that the Shi'a in Iraq are Arabs, and they have resented Iranian domination of their faith.[52] Their own self-interest

dictated that they extradite themselves from Iranian influence. For that to take place, the Sunni and Kurdish leadership had to provide written guarantees and convincing institutional plans for the cessation of all forms of discrimination against the Shi'a. Without guarantees, Iran could play the Shi'a card, which could curtail the development of a fully independent Iraq.

Even though SCIRI had been able to carry out guerrilla attacks against the regime in the south, the draining of the southern marshes in Iraq deprived them of their operational and strategic hiding places. The SCIRI depended on the goodwill of the Iranian government to operate from its territory and to seek shelter there as well.

The third broad type of "opposition to the state" was opposition to the state's territorial integrity. The Kurds exemplified this opposition with their ultimate desire to secede.[53] The Kurdish opposition's success in achieving their ultimate goal of "secession" would be determined by the presence or lack of international support and the balance of interests between the Kurds and their foreign sponsors.[54] Their minimal demand was a federal state where the Kurds had real autonomy within the Kurdish region. Even though the Kurdish demand for federalism was just, Sunni Arab parties perceived it as equivalent to a demand for secession. Thus the Kurdish parties needed to reassure their Arab counterparts that they did not seek secession. Instead, they were advancing federalism as a means to preserve Kurdish national and cultural identity in a multiethnic Iraq.[55]

Two germane points need to be addressed regarding the Kurdish opposition. First, since the end of the Gulf war in 1991, the Kurdish region had benefited from U.S. and British protection, which enabled the Kurds to develop a semi-autonomous entity, with the capacity for political participation. Political divisions within the Kurdish nationalist movement and their alliances with regional and international powers hindered this experiment.[56] Second, the Kurdish opposition was by far the most effective given their autonomous status within Iraq and their ability to wage war against the regime. Their capability was a result of the historical grievances that the Kurds endured and their need to protect themselves against the Baath's genocidal policies.

The Kurds were the prime beneficiaries from Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, even though it came at great cost. By the middle of 1991, the Kurdish region was protected by U.S. and British planes in spite of an Iraqi incursion into the region in 1996 to help the KDP regain control of Erbil. Kurdish leadership was part of the INC and sought to work with political opposition to Saddam to ensure that a democratic and federal Iraq was established once the regime had been replaced. Nonetheless, the KDP and the PUK both had open lines of communication with the regime in Baghdad. KDP leader Massoud Barzani stressed that his organization was not part of the United States/Turkey/Israel

axis. His cooperation with Turkish authorities was part of an action plan to ensure the security of the Kurdish population and to establish stability in areas under his party's control. Such stability had been undermined in the past by actions and raids of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the Turkish military authorities. Barzani publicly took the position that any change had to come from within Iraq and needed to lead to a federal Iraq. He emphasized his opposition to unrealistic plans to overthrow the regime in Baghdad through a military coup. He added that dialogue would continue between the KDP and the authority in Baghdad.[57] For his part, the PUK leader, Jalal Talabani, opposed any outside bid to overthrow the regime in Baghdad by force. He added that his party favored dialogue with the regime and greater economic ties with Baghdad.[58] Officially Kurdish parties were little different from those in the Sunni community who wanted a dialogue with Iraqi leadership. The primary differences were that Kurdish leadership had gained a degree of credibility as a result of its being democratically elected, while other opposition parties were perceived as pawns in the hands of the United States, Britain, or Iran. Second, Kurdish autonomy, enforced by the no-fly zone, enabled the community in northern Iraq/southern Kurdistan to establish its first independent political institution in nearly fifty years.[59]

The Kurdish civil war between the KDP and PUK in 1996 resulted in the decimation of the INC operation base in northern Iraq and had a detrimental effect on the prospect of overthrowing Saddam Hussein and his regime by coup with outside help.[60] The KDP wanted to ensure that it established a model self-governing region with a decent standard of living and a vibrant civil society. Involvement in the adventures of a weak and disorganized INC would mean forsaking Kurdish achievements over the last decade.[61]

The Kurdish experience produced notable achievements for the rest of Iraq. First, the Kurdish elections demonstrated that Iraqis, who had been deprived of the democratic experience for five decades, could govern themselves through democratic means. Second, the Kurdish experience, though new to Iraq, could be carried out in other parts of the country if a plan were devised on the basis of Security Council Resolution 688, which provided protection from government intervention. If this process were applied to the southern region, the Shi'a and others in the area could elect their representatives properly. Third, the Kurdish experience demonstrated that opposition to the state could evolve into an opposition seeking reform from within rather than secession. Finally, the ability of Kurdish leaders to work with the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Syria by balancing regional interests with the preservation of Iraqi territorial unity, while still pursuing their own interests, demonstrated Kurdish diplomats as agents of change within a democratic Iraq. Their dialogue with the Turkish establishment, military and civilian, assured the Turks that the

Kurds were cognizant of Turkish security and territorial problems. In fact, the strength of the Kurdish position was best illustrated by their ability to withstand American pressure and continue their dialogue with the Iraqi regime. Nonetheless, the Kurdish position remained weak militarily. Iraqi forces could still inflict serious damage, if threatened.[62] Nonetheless, the prospect of a coup continued to be a priority for U.S. officials. The Bush administration offered to provide $100 million for guerrilla attacks against the Iraqi regime, with the hope of instigating a coup and assassination attempt on the Iraqi leader.[63] According to Hoshyar Zebari, a KDP member and INC representative, this scenario "would leave the country in safe, autocratic, Sunni hands, [for] fear . . . that the [Shi'a] would fall prey to fundamentalist, expansionist Iran."[64]

The Issue of Sanctions

In one of the most telling observations on the U.S. policy toward Iraq during the Clinton administration, Jim Hoagland called it a "Pretend Iraq Policy." He argued that Clinton aides sought to help the INC get its act together politically while continuing to "denigrate" it for its divisions.[65] The weakness of the INC was apparent to all and was not helped when Sharif Ali bin Al-Hussein, an INC member, called on the United States to bomb Iraqi ground forces in order to change the rules of engagement and bring about domestic change. The British responded by saying that it was "not our policy to work for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein."[66] What then was United States and British policy? It was revealed that the Clinton administration had failed to win support from Iraq's neighbors for bringing about change through "Hotel Revolutionaries." General Anthony Zinni, commander of U.S. forces in the Gulf region, urged the INC to try to win the support of the Arab world before Washington could. He added that many in the region did not want to see the opposition armed like the Afghan Mujahidin or to implicate the United States in a "Bay of Pigs" fiasco.[67] In reality the INC was nothing but an instrument in the hands of the United States to legitimize its policy of sanctions and bombardment of Iraq. The INC was window dressing for a failed policy in front of the international community. After the U.S. election, the INC needed to show credibility with the new Bush administration.

To punish Iraq for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations had imposed sanctions to force Saddam's regime to comply with all resolutions including the securing of human rights. The sanctions regime crumbled on a number of fronts. In late 2000 Iraq hosted an international trade fair attended by over 1,500 firms from three Security Council members—France, Russia, and China. These countries along with German, Belgian, Finnish, and Bra-

zilian firms competed for contracts with the Iraqi government.[68] A rift took place between the British and French governments because the French Foreign Ministry had allowed a number of "humanitarian flights" into Iraq. Foreign Office Minister Peter Hain called French policy "contemptible," causing a row among NATO members. Hain eventually issued a partial retraction.[69] British MP George Galloway, after visiting Iraq, declared that "the air embargo no longer exists" and that the British were blindly following the United States.[70] Subsequent to the 16 February 2001 attack on Baghdad, French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine challenged U.S. and British policy as having "no legal basis for this bombardment" and urged the Bush administration to change its policy; he added "We do not see the point of this action."[71]

By late 2000 Iraqi authorities had achieved success at the international level. At the meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference held in Qatar in November 2000, the final statement called on the United States and Britain to end their patrols over the no-fly zones.[72] The most important success of the Iraqi government had been its improved relations with the Arab world and its almost full reintegration into Arab politics. Countries like Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia signed free trade agreements with Iraq. Turkey upgraded its representatives to the level of ambassador in Baghdad. More importantly, Syria under Bashar Assad abandoned its enmity to Iraq and reopened the pipeline that carried Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean port of Baniyas. Iraqi leadership was able to sell its oil with virtually no United Nations supervision. Trade was only the first step to what has been called "long-term strategic cooperation" between the two countries according to Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Miro and Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan.[73] The political and commercial rapprochement between Iraq and Syria helped foster a new diplomatic initiative targeting Syria and Egypt in particular. The Baath leadership in Baghdad hoped this cooperation would provide regional legitimacy. Together with French and Russian efforts to lift the economic sanctions, Baghdad hoped to modify the most crippling aspects of the sanctions. This point of view was gaining credence with the harsh public criticism that many Arab countries had levied against the United States and Britain for the bombing of Baghdad.[74] Arab governments had been under a great deal of pressure from their public as a result of their failure to assist the "Palestinian Aqsa Intifada" and their apparent complicity in allowing the United States to continue to starve and exterminate the Iraqi people. Amr Mossa, the outspoken Egyptian foreign minister who had earned the ire of the Clinton administration, stressed that "the situation could not continue because Arab public opinion could no longer tolerate it."[75]

Regional Solution and Reintegration of Iraq

This chapter was written when the region was facing the possibility of war between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon threatened reprisal attacks against Syria and Lebanon because Hizbollah had attacked Israeli-occupied farms in southern Lebanon. There was a great deal of sympathy in the Arab world for both the Palestinians and for the Iraqi public, who were living through severe hardships because of the crippling sanctions. With the rise of satellite television stations like Al-Jazeera, the Arab public was seeing the unedited reality of the suffering of their fellows Arabs. Arab leaders called helplessly on the United States to rescue the peace process or lift sanctions on Iraq for humanitarian reasons. Adding insult to injury, the Arab world saw western leaders in Kuwait rejoicing in its "liberation" from Iraq ten years later in 2001, while listening and seeing the suffering of the Iraqi population.

The new Bush administration was laden with neoconservatives. Most important among them was Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz (known for his unmitigated support for Israel), the State Department's Richard Armitage, and Richard Haass of the policy planning staff. Most of these men argued for the establishment of a provisional government in Iraq, the enforcement of the no-fly zones, and the introduction of U.S. troops to help topple Saddam. At the other end of the political spectrum in the administration was Secretary of State Colin Powell, who favored the continued containment of Saddam's regime with an adjustment of the sanctions to focus on weapons of mass destruction and to reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people.[76] Arab leaders endorsed Powell's position publicly. They urged him to end or modify the sanctions during his first trip to the Middle East in late February 2001.[77] Since President Bush had come into office with a shaky mandate, the introduction of troops in Iraq was not initially a popular policy. Iraq's neighbors feared the country would face a bloodbath if Saddam were removed without a strong leader to take over the reins of power. They feared anarchy and a violent struggle for power among the various opposition contenders. A most obvious example was Afghanistan's chaotic state in the post-Soviet period. How could the Arab world fashion a solution that would ensure stability and reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people?

The Iraqi people had not had the option of voting for leadership or political institutions other than those of the Baath party since 1968. Giovanni Sartori argued that the likelihood for political change was gloomier in societies with "people who have never been offered alternatives. . . . Innumerable people cannot prefer something to something else because they have no 'else' in sight; they simply live with and encapsulated within the human (or inhumane) condition they find."[78] What was needed was an atmosphere that would provide

the Iraqi people with the option to choose their representatives freely. What was needed was "a relatively neutral, internationally supervised political environment . . . [that can] tolerate the inclusion [of the Iraqi regime's political representative] *in a limited and controlled way* in a [regional/UN] managed settlement process."[79]

One of the first steps needed was the formation of a regional consulting group from among Iraq's neighbors (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, and possibly Iran) led by Egypt's outgoing foreign minister in his new capacity as the head of the League of Arab States. These countries held a great stake in the Iraqi situation. They wanted to ensure that the country did not fragment. Furthermore, the economic embargo on Iraq had badly hurt the economies of Turkey and Jordan. Iran under then President Mohammed Khatami had been building bridges to the Gulf states and needed to be included. Furthermore, this regional grouping needed to create room for other parties. One approach would have been to enlist the help of the French, Russian, and Chinese to engage Iraq in a dialogue to open up the political process and allow internationally supervised elections. The regime in Baghdad would have had to agree to free elections in the various regions of the country under the supervision of international observers, such as the Carter Center in Atlanta. If Saddam had agreed to the elections, then the gradual lifting of economic sanctions could have taken effect. How could one have convinced the United States to deal with Saddam Hussein? This would not have been the first time the United States had dealt with someone who had committed genocide! During the negotiations to resolve the Cambodian quagmire in 1991, the United States for a considerable period of time was unofficially allied with the Khmer Rouge, who were Prince Sihanouk's partners in the Paris talks. At the time, the U.S. diplomacy had been led by James A. Baker, who supported the French-Indonesian initiative and who, along with other major powers, argued that the best way to contain the Khmer Rouge "was to give it some stake in a political process subject to international supervision."[80] The Bush administration was looking for a face-saving way out of the Iraqi situation. This could have been accomplished if the regional and Security Council powers had persuaded the Bush administration to include the Iraqi regime in the planned elections. If the United States had agreed, the British would have followed unquestioningly.

Details of the election plans could have been hammered out with the government of Iraq, the Kurdish factions, the Sunni opposition, and the Shi'a representatives. How then could a campaign be facilitated in a country that had not experienced democracy except in the Kurdish-administered region? A helpful approach would have been to ask Arab and non-Arab countries to send teams of experts to assist the Iraqi public. The United Nations might also have helped. This phase of the process should not have exceeded four to six

months. During this facilitation one could hope that the Iraqi military would have realized that their country's best interest did not depend on Saddam, and they would eliminate him and allow the elections to continue. It was plausible for the Iraqi military to take action because they had sensed the international community's interest in saving Iraq from Saddam's brutal regime.

If the elections had taken place, then a constitutional committee with international help could draft a constitution that would both guarantee the civil, ethnic, and political rights of all Iraqi citizens and establish a number of political institutions for this purpose.

Conclusion

Getting rid of Saddam's regime reached a stalemate and could not be achieved under the options represented by the INC or the occasional bombardment by the United States and Britain. Arab states could not afford to leave Iraq in a state of disarray under a crippling embargo. Cuba's forty-year embargo served as a reminder of American policy inertia tied to a certain status quo that served American hegemonic interests. Saddam had to be removed in a manner similar to the ousting of the former Yugoslav dictator Slobodan Milosevic.

Iraq's crisis was caused not only by Saddam but also by the garrison nature of the Iraqi state that Saddam and the Baath Party had created. The solution would be to restructure the state and revitalize the society in order to be free of fear and persecution. This process would require the opposition to operate legally and securely within Iraq, to campaign for changes in the country, and to establish institutions under which Arab, Kurd, Turkoman, Shi'a, Sunni, Christian, and Yazidi could all live in harmony.

12

Political Impact of Sanctions in Iraqi Kurdistan

REND RAHIM FRANCKE

Sanctions should be broadly interpreted to mean economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and political censure. The humanitarian program overseen by the United Nations emanated directly from the sanctions regime. Before the invasion of Iraq, people had assumed that when sanctions were lifted, the political ostracism and diplomatic isolation of Iraq as well as the humanitarian program would end. The impact of sanctions on the Iraqi Kurds has presented unprecedented opportunities and should be examined.

Economic and Humanitarian Impact

I first visited Iraqi Kurdistan in fall 1992. I had never been to this area of my native country before, but I knew that it had been developed in the 1980s as a resort area for Iraqis prohibited from foreign travel during the Iran-Iraq War. I was shocked at what I found. I found a region that was chronically underdeveloped, not merely impoverished by two years of sanctions. Its roads were inadequate; its buildings, even those designed for tourists, were shabbily constructed. Schools and universities were poorly built and short on facilities. The countryside was denuded of trees. It was evident that this was less a matter of deterioration over two years than of a region that had been neglected for decades by the central government in Baghdad.

Since January 1997, when the United Nations began implementing Security Council Resolution 986 and its successor, Resolution 1153, there has been tangible improvement in the humanitarian situation in Iraqi Kurdistan, compared with marginal or even negligible improvement in central and southern Iraq. The UN secretary general's reports to the Security Council, prepared twice a year, demonstrate the orderly and effective implementation of the Oil-for-Food Program in the north, compared with the inefficiency and chaos in the rest of Iraq. These reports should always be read in a compare-and-contrast method to understand the disparities between north and south and their underlying reasons and implications.

The primary reason for this gap in performance was the control of the United Nations over needs assessment, project identification, implementation,

and distribution in the north. In the rest of Iraq, the United Nations made recommendations to the government and monitors. It took little part in needs assessment, implementation, and distribution.

A second reason was the general environment of cooperation between the United Nations agencies in the north and the Kurdish authorities. The two Kurdish regional governments were not directly responsible for implementation; however, they were in a position, if they chose, to obstruct implementation or render it more difficult. By all accounts, the opposite was the case. Kurdish authorities genuinely wished to see the program succeed and were helpful to the United Nations.

Additionally, the fact that the United Nations was in full charge of the humanitarian program in the north and undertook its implementation gave the Sanctions Committee a much higher degree of confidence. As a result, the approval process for goods serving needs in Kurdistan was smoother, and contracts were not put on hold as frequently or as extensively as those serving the rest of Iraq. This means the programs in the north had an even and steady flow of supplies, and programs could be integrated, unlike the rest of the country.

United Nations agencies and NGOs had been working without interruption in Kurdistan since 1992. Before Security Council Resolution 986, the United Nations operated under a Memorandum of Understanding with the government of Iraq and used funds provided by donor nations. Donor nations generally allocated more funds to Iraqi Kurdistan than to the rest of the country, in part, because of the internal embargo imposed by the Iraqi regime on the Kurdish region, but also because there was a higher degree of confidence that the funds would be used effectively. Thus the United Nations and the Kurds built a tradition of uninterrupted humanitarian effort. This was not the case with the rest of Iraq where the environment was far less hospitable.

The following summary of the humanitarian situation in the north before the removal of Saddam Hussein was taken largely from the report of the United Nations secretary general of March 2000:

1. The United Nations has been able to identify and implement nutrition programs for vulnerable sectors of the population, especially children under five. As a result, child malnutrition has dropped from 3.1 percent in 1997 to 1.8 percent in 1999. By contrast, the report omits any mention of improvement in malnutrition in central and southern Iraq. Instead, the report repeatedly regrets the failure of the government in Iraq to adopt the suggestions proposed by the United Nations with regard to nutrition programs.

2. In the health sector, primary health centers are described as "fully functional." Services at hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies have been expanded. Most important, water and sanitation have improved substantially through the United Nations projects. The report states that 80 percent of the rural popu-

lation in northern Iraq has safe drinking water. This means that water-borne diseases, which are the worst killers of children, have been contained. In government-controlled areas, even the urban populations have no access to safe water, and water contamination continues to destroy the lives of children.

3. Agriculture and animal husbandry have improved, bringing more local produce into the food market and, therefore, helping prices drop. The agribusiness sector is now producing locally processed foods.

4. School rehabilitation and school provisions have moved forward. School enrollment is up.

5. Mine-clearing activities have also continued, despite protests from the Iraqi regime and one unsolved murder of a foreign national working in demining. Previously mined areas have been restored to farmland, pastures, and orchards. Moreover, Iraqi Kurds are being trained in the skills of mine clearing and surveying for mines. Locally trained people now contribute to the workforce engaged in de-mining operations.

6. A big contribution to the humanitarian program in Kurdistan is the rehabilitation and care of internally displaced families. These are not only Kurdish families displaced by the regime in the 1980s but also those thrown out of their homes in Kirkuk and Mosul governorates after 1991, including Turkoman as well as Kurdish populations.

7. The two Kurdish regional governments have built roads, improved infrastructure, and provided services from internally generated funds.

8. The Iraqi dinar used in Kurdistan is worth about one hundred of the Xerox-copied dinars used in Iraq. One downside is the scarcity of currency in circulation in the north. This shortage is partially remedied by the growing use of the U.S. dollar, even in local transactions.

9. The United Nations has been able to use the so-called cash component in its operations in Kurdistan. This allows the United Nations to contract local Kurds for jobs and pay them in cash. This has increased the volume of money in circulation and enhanced the professional expertise of local businessmen.

This is not to say that the picture in 2000 was totally joyful. There was little economic activity, limited employment, and insufficient rotation of the economy in terms of trade and production to provide income for most people. Nevertheless, the humanitarian program arising from sanctions benefited the Kurdish region. For the first time in decades, Iraq's Kurdish citizens received a fair share of Iraq's revenue, after years of deliberate neglect at best and active persecution at worst. Moreover, the Oil-for-Food Program did for the Kurdish population what the Iraqi regime had never done and would never do. It de-mined areas where the regime had planted them. It provided safe water, where the regime had poisoned wells. It helped displaced persons at the same time that the regime continued to deport families internally and to leave thou-

sands of displaced people without care in southern Iraq. The United Nations program actually trained Kurds in a mode of passive resistance when it taught them to de-mine. The daily contact and working relations with United Nations agencies and international NGOs provided training in international standards and modes of operation that the regime had denied citizens in the rest of the country.

The argument before the removal of the regime had been that if sanctions were lifted, Iraq's Kurds would be thrown back at the mercy of the Iraqi central government. There was no reason to suppose that the Iraqi regime would offer even a fraction of its revenues to meet the humanitarian needs in the region, let alone the development requirements to rebuild its infrastructure. Indeed, those who were distressed by the humanitarian situation in the rest of Iraq should have examined the implications and advocated a role for the United Nations comparable to that in Kurdistan. If the United Nations had similar freedom and responsibility in central and southern Iraq, the results would have shown a similar improvement in living conditions.

Domestic Political Impact

The self-rule exercised by the Kurds since 1991 has strengthened Kurdish identity. This identity was reinforced by the use of the Kurdish language and culture in schools, universities, and the media; the formation of Kurdish civic groups; the Kurdish conduct of their own foreign affairs; and a Kurdish drawing on the skills of the Kurdish intelligentsia abroad. Success in administering the region further boosted confidence in the Kurdish identity. Thus it is not only ethnic and cultural identity that is growing but also the political identity of the Kurds as a people capable of managing their own affairs without the recourse to a non-Kurdish government.

The sanctions indirectly influenced the internal political situation as well. For the first time, the Iraqi Kurdish authorities have their own budgets and income generated principally from customs duties. Although this was income from breaking sanctions, it gave the two Kurdish authorities budgets with which to run their respective administrations in the region. Together, the two parties bore responsibility for 3.5 million people. They were able to develop an indigenous civil service that was not possible previously. They gained necessary experience in governance that augured well for the future.

The humanitarian program also helped to bring an element of political stability and a glimmer of democratization to Kurdistan. It was significant that the KDP and the PUK refrained from internecine warfare once the program went into effect. Although reconciliation was slow and bumpy, it clawed its way

forward. A resumption of fighting would have obstructed, or even stopped, the humanitarian program. The success of the humanitarian program made belligerence political suicide for either party, since it would destroy what the United Nations had achieved since 1997. Before the humanitarian program, there had been nothing to lose; afterward, there was much to lose.

The implementation of the humanitarian program and its relative success perhaps inadvertently brought a measure of democratic accountability to the KDP and the PUK. Whether out of a sincere commitment to democracy or not, the parties sought to enhance their credibility with the Kurdish people—their constituency—and bolster their legitimacy. Cooperating with United Nations agencies and facilitating their work proved to be sure ways for political parties to demonstrate responsible behavior and responsiveness to people's needs, and thereby to enhance their appeal and "approval rating." In the context of Iraq, where the regime in Baghdad was starving and murdering the population with total impunity, the attitude of Kurdish leaders was a significant improvement on the path to accountable government.

The Kurds and the Iraqi Political Scene

The economic and political sanctions imposed on the Iraqi regime allowed the Kurds to deal with Baghdad from a position of strength, unprecedented before the Gulf war. Sanctions allowed the Kurds to publicize their case against the Iraqi regime, while it considerably restricted the regime's publicity machine. The Iraqi Kurds used this opportunity to present their case forcefully and convincingly before the international community, while the regime in Baghdad continued to live with condemnation.

The Kurds achieved an autonomy that had been denied them for decades, and they persuaded world opinion that this autonomy was deserved and overdue. Under the sanctions regime and the implied political censure that underlay them, the Iraqi regime could do very little to reverse Kurdish self-rule. The entry of Iraqi government troops into Erbil in August 1996 might have been an ideal opportunity for the Iraqi regime to reinstate its authority in the north. Yet the regime found it expedient to withdraw its troops and content itself with lower profile relations with Kurdish parties because the international climate and balance of forces had changed radically.

From the mid-1990s the regime began actively wooing Kurdish parties and trying to bring them back into the fold. It promised full autonomy and even hinted that federalism was possible. The Kurds, based on ample past experiences, did not trust the regime regardless of the assurances it might offer in its moment of weakness. The Kurds shied away from any political commitment

to the Iraqi regime. In fact, Kurdish parties determined the extent and nature of their relations and cooperation with the Iraqi regime based on their reading of the international and regional indicators.

Sanctions and Iraq's political isolation allowed the Kurds in the early years after the Gulf war to take the lead in organizing opposition to the Iraqi regime. At that time Kurdistan opened its doors to opposition groups. The Kurdish leadership role in the Iraqi opposition was, at first, enthusiastically embraced by both Arabs and Kurds. For complex reasons, in the mid-1990s, the Kurds became less prepared to host the opposition in their territory and less prepared to take the lead in opposition activities. Their desire to maintain and safeguard the benefits derived from the humanitarian program was at least one of the reasons.

It was in the context of discussions within the Iraqi opposition circles that the concept of federation for the Kurds was promoted and accepted by a wide range of Iraqi opposition groups. The Iraqi National Congress at several meetings acknowledged the legitimacy of the demand for federation. The Kurds succeeded in elevating the concept of federation to an urgent topic of debate within Iraqi circles and the international arena.

The balance of forces between the Kurds and Baghdad swung in favor of the Kurds. What was unclear, however, was how long the Kurds could sustain the balance in their favor. What would happen if the sanctions were to be lifted without a change of regime? If sanctions had been lifted, would the Iraqi regime have tried to reverse the balance and restore its dominance—if not immediately, then by stages? The Kurds would definitely have resisted. To the extent that Baghdad followed its usual bullying methods, the resistance would have turned violent.

Today Kurds have been able to negotiate a deal favorable to their continued self-rule, through the establishment of a robust federal system in Iraq. The new constitution was ratified on 15 October 2005. An Iraqi pact between the Kurds and a new, inclusive government in Baghdad has a much better chance of survival, especially if it is backed by international endorsement. In any event, it is hard to see future control from Baghdad resembling pre–Gulf war, pre-sanctions dominance without a major and bloody conflict.

Kurdish Regional Relations

Sanctions forced the Kurds to practice diplomacy as never before, often very successfully. As a simple example, the United Nations missions and agencies listened to Kurdish emissaries as true representatives of their own people. The Kurds established de facto embassies in many western countries. Their greatest success has been with countries in the region. Kurdish representatives have

been regularly invited to Egypt; Egyptian institutions have held conferences on the Kurds. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have hosted Kurdish leaders and delegations. Relations with Syria have been good. Although relations with Turkey and Iran have been bumpy, they improved considerably for both parties in the late 1990s. Quite simply, the Kurds established their own foreign policy, restricted though it may have been.

On the other hand, the sanctions imposed on Iraq increased the dependence of the Kurds on neighboring countries, especially Iran and Turkey. Since the Kurds have no system of defense, their territory has been wide open to interference from outside powers, as repeated Turkish incursions into the region have shown. Less visible were the Turkish and Iranian involvement in Kurdistan and their competing influence on Kurdish domestic affairs.

In addition to the lack of defenses, sanctions made it absolutely necessary for the Kurds to rely on the goodwill of their neighbors. Turkey, Iran, and Syria have been the only points of entry and exit into the area, since Kurdish leaders and members of the parties would not use the Baghdad-Amman route when traveling abroad or returning to Kurdistan.

Limited by sanctions, the economy in the Kurdish area was heavily dependent on imports from Iran and Turkey. Turkish and Iranian consumer products and foreign goods bought in the Turkish and Iranian markets have proliferated in the Kurdish marketplace in the absence of local means of production and restrictions on legal imports. This trade provided for the needs of the population, and it replenished the treasuries of the two authorities through customs duties. The problem, however, was that the trade became one-directional. There was little that the Kurds could export to these countries. They had to pay for their imports with hard currency. Nevertheless, this trade was important for the Kurds. Should either Iran or Turkey have decided to restrict the flow of exports to Kurdistan, Kurdish markets would have been severely depleted.

Oil was the only commodity exported in any quantity from Iraq. The export of oil products through the KDP territory to Turkey supplied the KDP with a considerable income. Before the start of the Oil-for-Food Program in January 1997, trucks carrying oil products from Iraq traveled to Turkey via Dohuk and returned from Turkey with consumer goods for the Kurds or for the central government in Baghdad. The Kurds charged customs duties in both directions. Following the opening of the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline for legal export of oil from Iraq, the KDP again was in a position to benefit financially from the transit of the pipeline through its territories. Unfortunately, the PUK was not geographically in a position to benefit as much from this trade, and its income was significantly less.

The economic reliance of the Kurds on trade with Iran and Turkey and the necessity of preserving the goodwill of their neighbors restricted their ability

to make independent decisions. Relations among the Iraqi Kurdish parties, the Iraqi opposition, and the Baghdad authorities were to some extent determined by the interests of neighboring countries. Political and economic dependence on Turkey and Iran has also colored the relations of Iraqi Kurds with other Kurds in the region, principally the PKK and the Iranian KDP. For better or for worse, the decisions on inter-Kurdish relations were subject to various types of pressure from neighbors who had a stake in the Kurdish issue.

Outlook

The Kurds emerged from this prolonged period of sanctions significantly less damaged than other Iraqis. This is not to say that sanctions did not take their toll. On a relative scale, however, Kurds were better off than Iraqis living under the control of the central government. They had better knowledge and experience of the outside world. They were better educated; they enjoyed higher professional skills. On average, they were healthier than their Arab counterparts in the rest of the country. They had more confidence in their abilities and their achievements. In the context of a democratic and enlightened government in Baghdad, the Kurds can prove a boon to a newly emerging Iraqi polity. A responsible government can build on the strengths that the Kurds have acquired.

At the same time, this decadelong experience during which Kurds have sharpened their sense of identity, exercised self-rule, and generally improved their lot may also make it politically and psychologically more difficult for the Kurds to integrate into the rest of Iraq in the future, particularly with the current political turmoil in Baghdad and the security situation throughout much of the country. As the separation between Kurdistan and the rest of Iraq continues, there will be a generation of Kurdish children and young adults who have no "Iraqi experience," and the notion of reuniting with Iraq will seem at best irrelevant to their experience. The question will arise in the future as to whether an overarching Iraqi identity can evolve and coexist in harmony alongside other identities of Kurd, Arab, Assyrian, or Turkoman. Ultimately, it will be very difficult to reverse or erase the Kurdish experience that has developed under the system of sanctions without major conflict. A future Iraqi government must offer constitutional arrangements that will be advantageous to the Kurds.

13

Ethnic Cleansing in Iraqi Kurdistan

NOURI TALABANI

The issue of Kirkuk region in Iraqi Kurdistan, which is rich in oil fields and farmland, has been one of the principal obstacles to finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Iraq. The discovery of vast quantities of oil there after World War I provided the impetus for the annexation of the former Ottoman vilayet of Mosul (of which Kirkuk region is part) to the Iraqi kingdom established by the British in 1921. Successive Iraqi governments, especially after the coup d'état of July 1968 led by the Baath Party, have openly followed a policy designed to change ethnic character of this region. Among the measures taken were the expulsion of Kurdish civil servants, teachers, and employees of the oil company to the south of Iraq and their replacement by Arabs. Kurds were forbidden to sell their homes and properties under any circumstances. The city administration refused to grant the Kurds any "building permit" or "permit to renovate," even if their homes were badly in need of renovation, in order to force them to sell or to abandon them and then move out.

A major step in the process of the Arabization of the region was the settling of tens of thousands of Arab families, in successive waves, with guaranteed housing and jobs. At the same time, several complete residential sectors, with Arab names, were built in the city of Kirkuk for those new settlers. The name of the Kirkuk governorate itself was changed to the Arabic "Al-Ta'meen" (nationalization), and all sectors, streets, schools, and businesses were renamed in Arabic. Teaching in Kurdish was forbidden. In order to make the Kurds a minority there, four of the seven districts of the Kirkuk governorate were detached and attached to the neighboring governorates. From 1968 to 1989, 779 Kurdish villages and several Turkoman villages in the governorate of Kirkuk were destroyed; others were requisitioned for the Arab tribal settlers. The Kurdish inhabitants were forced to leave. In total, 37,726 families were sent to concentration camps controlled by the security services. These villages had contained 493 schools, 598 mosques, and 40 small clinics, all of which were destroyed.

The Anfal operation that began in 1988 was carried on mainly in this region. On a tape found among seventeen tons of Iraqi secret police files captured by the Kurds during the uprising of March 1991, Ali Hassan Al-Majid, cousin

of Saddam Hussein and the powerful secretary general of the Baath Party's Northern Bureau from 1988 to 1989, is heard to say, "As soon as we complete the deportations, we will start attacking them everywhere according to systematic military plan. I will not attack them with chemicals for just one day, but I will continue to attack them with chemicals for fifteen days." These files reveal the details of the Iraqi regime's campaigns against the Kurds and the full extent of the atrocities committed against them up to the time of the uprising. They are now lodged at the University of Colorado for safekeeping. During the uprising of March 1991, Ali Hassan Al-Majid, then Iraqi minister of defense, was directly responsible for the arrest of more than thirty thousand Kurds in the city of Kirkuk. They were kept without food and water for several days, and many died, particularly the elderly. He also ordered the destruction of more than two hundred homes in the city. Most of the Kurds who left the city as a result of the bombardment by helicopter gunships and artillery were later forbidden to return and repossess their homes.

Following the collapse of the uprising, the Kirkuk region, together with other parts of Kurdistan, remained under the control of the Iraqi regime, and increasing pressure was exerted to force the Kurds to leave. Among the measures taken was the confiscation of the homes of Kurdish families who had relatives living either outside Iraq or in the area controlled by the Kurds. Before the census of 1997, the Secret Service informed all Kurds that they would be expelled from the area unless they registered themselves as Arabs. They distributed a special form called "Changing National Identity," which stated that they had previously been incorrectly registered as Kurds. The names of all who refused to sign the document, and even some of those who complied with the instructions, were listed, and they were ordered to leave the region. The heads of the expelled families were given the choice of being expelled to the south of Iraq, in which case they would be permitted to take their belongings with them, or to the areas controlled by the Kurds, in which case all their property, including their identity papers, would be confiscated.

According to a report by a group from the Iraqi opposition, published in December 1999, the number of Kurds expelled from May 1991 until October 1999 to the Sulaimaniyya governorate was 15,615 families, that is 92,712 people, and 913 families, some 5,811 people, to the Erbil governorate, both controlled by the Kurds. Probably the same number were expelled to the south of Iraq. The same report gives names of the residential sectors constructed for the Arabs to be settled in Kirkuk. A report prepared by the U.S. State Department in September 1999 states,

> In northern Iraq, the government is continuing its campaign of forcibly deporting Kurdish and Turkoman families to southern governorates. As

> a result of these forced deportations, approximately 900,000 citizens are internally displaced throughout Iraq. Local officials in the south have ordered the arrest of any official citizen who provides employment, food, or shelter to newly arriving Kurds.

The Amnesty International Report on Iraq of November 1999 mentions a decree issued by the office of the president of Iraq that ordered "the deportation of 1,468 families between 15 April and 15 June 1998." It gives details of the procedure to be followed by the security forces:

1. One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern provinces should be detained;
2. Confiscation of property belonging to the expelled;
3. Confiscation of ration cards;
4. Confiscation of membership cards to government agencies;
5. Notification of the decree to the head of security in each district; the Baath Party official of each district; the chief of each village.

The report adds, "Their empty properties in the Kirkuk and in Khanikeen are given by the authorities to pro-government Arabs brought from other regions in Iraq. Thus far thousands of Arabs from other regions in Iraq have resettled in the Kirkuk governorate." The U.S. State Department's report gives details and illustrations of the almost total destruction of the old citadel of the city of Kirkuk, which contained many historic mosques and an ancient church.

All these measures taken by the Iraqi government against the population of this region were in direct contravention of Security Council Resolution 688 of 1991, which condemned the Iraqi government's repression of the civilian population and threatened international peace and security. The same resolution demanded that Iraq should end repression and allow access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq. The Iraqi government failed to comply. It neither ended the repression of its civilian population nor allowed outside organizations access to help those in need. It continued, daily, to deport the Kurdish and Turkoman population from the Kirkuk region and to settle Arab tribes in their home and on their land. This was, clearly, systematic ethnic cleansing of the area similar to that seen in Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor where the international community had intervened to bring it to an end. This policy, above all else, led thousands of displaced people to seek asylum in Europe.

The Kirkuk Trust for Research and Study was founded by a group of academics and others concerned with human rights. It aims to conduct research into the social conditions and the resulting psychological state of those expelled from the Kirkuk region. It also intends to collect more information con-

cerning the number of the displaced persons living in camps and will endeavor to assist them to return to their homes and former way of life.

The situation in Kirkuk was addressed in the Transitional Administration Law in March 2004. Article 58 deferred resolution of the disputed Kirkuk population until a census could determine which persons removed from their homes could return or receive compensation. Article 58 also charged the Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government to address the fact that Saddam's government had changed administrative boundaries for political purposes and to make recommendations to the National Assembly that such injustices would be remedied. When the new Iraqi constitution was approved in October 2005, it provided that a referendum on the status of Kirkuk would be held by the end of 2007.

Much remains to be done, however. The Iraqi government must prepare the rules for the referendum that is to determine the final status of Kirkuk and bring justice. Ethnic emotions promise to be acute in Kirkuk in the interim.

14

Iraqi Kurdistan: The Humanitarian Program

STAFFORD CLARRY

In the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq, the provision of humanitarian assistance began during the refugee crisis of early 1991 following the war over Kuwait. Back then, the media taught the whole world that "We, the people . . . " included Kurds. Nearly half a million Iraqi Kurds fled toward Turkey and more than a million toward Iran, where the world witnessed their horrendous and heart-wrenching suffering. They fled into the mountains during winter, and thousands died. In response to the public outcry stimulated by daily television images of suffering, public pressure reached critical mass, and the international community responded with overwhelming support. What had been one of the largest and fastest exoduses of refugees in history became one of the largest and fastest refugee repatriations.

Security Council Resolution 688 led to the precedent-setting humanitarian intervention of April 1991 where military forces from more than a dozen nations provided assistance at refugee camps and then established a secure environment for the refugees to return home. A no-fly zone was established north of the 36th parallel. It included the city of Mosul, which was outside the Kurdistan region, but excluded the city of Sulaimaniyya, which was inside the Kurdish region. The U.S.–led Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) brought humanitarian assistance to eight refugee camps along the border with Turkey (but not Iran). Under OPC a security zone or safe haven was established in the Dohuk governorate, one of three provinces in the Kurdistan region. Humanitarian assistance and the security zone caused the refugees to pour out of the mountains and rapidly return to their homes.

Since the implementation of the Oil-for-Food Program in 1997 and the armed conflict of 2003 that has led to the ouster of Saddam Hussein, humanitarian assistance from the international community to displaced persons has greatly reduced. The number of displaced persons has also fallen from nearly 1 million to fewer than 10,000 refugees from Turkey and Iran.

Since 1991 there have been two main eras of humanitarian assistance in the Kurdistan region—one preceding and the other during Security Council Resolution 986, the Oil-for-Food Program. This program designated 13–15 percent of the proceeds from UN-supervised sales of Iraqi oil to be allocated

for humanitarian assistance in the Kurdistan region. The program began in December 1996 and concluded in November 2003. Total earnings allocated to the Kurdistan region amounted to nearly $10 billion.

The Kurdistan region is an area theoretically based on a 1970 autonomy agreement between the government of Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdish leadership at that time. Predominantly Kurdish, it includes Duhok, Erbil, and Sulaimaniyya—the three northernmost governorates (provinces) of Iraq—and borders Syria, Turkey, and Iran. The area is approximately the size of Switzerland, or twice the area of the state of Massachusetts. The population of this separately administered region is nearly 4 million. Ruggedly mountainous in most places, it also includes lowlands and plains. The weather is extremely hot and dry from June to September, when hardly a drop of rain falls. Most of the annual precipitation falls between December and March. Spring (March to May) and autumn (September to November) are quite pleasant, with the primary difference being the color of the terrain. Spring is green; autumn is brown.

The Kurdistan region's current geographical boundaries were defined by the government of Iraq when it unilaterally withdrew its administration in October 1991 and abandoned the people to care for themselves. At that time, Iraq established a militarized demarcation line and instituted an internal embargo that cut off supplies of essential commodities, including vital cooking and heating fuels. The salaries of thousands of civil servants and pensions for retired government employees were terminated. Students from the Kurdistan region were prevented from attending universities in other parts of the country.

Family resources were devastated when the old twenty-five dinar ("Swiss") note was cancelled, and residents of the Kurdistan region were not allowed to exchange them for new notes. By August 1993 the region was completely disconnected from the national electricity grid. Electric power was available from two hydroelectric stations connected to only two of the governorates. The history of the post-1991 era is replete with events such as these that adversely affected the well-being of the people of the region.

Without an administration to manage basic services and address other critical public concerns, elections were held in May 1992 when the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA), the regional parliament, were formed. The government bodies that form the KRG today are virtually the same as those that existed before 1991. Regional KRG ministries were based on Iraqi national ministries. Many of the staff serving the KRG today are the same staff that served the government before 1991 when Iraq's public services were among the best in the Middle East.

Before 1991, more than 4,000 communities throughout the region were completely destroyed. Their residents were forcibly dislocated to the main cit-

ies and towns, to other countries (as refugees), or to "collective towns." These collective towns resembled reservations for Native Americans where people were disconnected from their lands and way of life so that they could be monitored, controlled, and made dependent upon the government. Many of the destroyed communities were small mountain villages, but there were also towns with populations of over 30,000, like Penjwin, Sa'id Sadik, Halabja, and Qala Diza.

Chemical weapons were used against civilians throughout the region in more than two hundred locations from northern villages in Dohuk governorate down to the Sulaimaniyya governorate. The most infamous example occurred at Halabja, where more than five thousand were reported killed. The history of the Kurdistan region is largely the history of destruction, displacement, disappearance, and disrupted lives.

In 1991, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was designated the lead UN agency to provide humanitarian assistance, deliver food and medical supplies, and provide shelter and clean water systems for displaced persons—both displaced Iraqis and refugees from Iran. The UNHCR was also involved in agricultural activities in the region and in removing land mines.

The international community responded overwhelmingly. Dozens of international NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) entered the Kurdistan region from Turkey and Jordan via Baghdad. By April 1992 UNHCR had reduced its operations and reverted to its traditional mandate of refugee protection and assistance. It no longer provided assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs). Technically speaking, refugees are persons who flee across international borders. Citizens fleeing from one part to another part of the same country are not refugees; they are IDPs.

Before Security Council Resolution 986, the World Food Program and UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) had been the primary UN agencies that had provided support for nutrition, health, water and sanitation, and primary education. Food and Agricultural Organization and UN Education Scientific and Cultural Organization began small programs in agriculture and education.

Following the humanitarian intervention of 1991, the UN General Assembly authorized the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to deal with "complex emergencies" caused by a mixture of political events and their humanitarian results. DHA established the office of the UN Iraq Relief Coordination Unit (UNIRCU) in Baghdad with a UN humanitarian coordinator in charge.

UNIRCU assigned field delegates to the Kurdistan region to coordinate humanitarian activities implemented by UN agencies and NGOs. Much of their focus was on rural reconstruction and resettlement. During the pre–Security

Council Resolution 986 era, NGOs had taken the lead in helping to reconstruct more than 2,000 villages and to resettle more than 50,000 families. Reconstruction primarily involved providing materials to built shelters, install water systems, and construct access roads, health centers, and primary schools.

NGOs obtained funding from the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, the European Community Humanitarian Office, UNIRCU, and other national governments and private sources. The availability of funds for humanitarian activities drastically declined between 1991 and 1996.

The Security Council Resolution 986 Oil-for-Food Program was implemented in 180-day phases. Oil began flowing in December 1996; the first humanitarian goods arrived in March 1997. The program progressed through thirteen phases until November 2003. In the earliest phases under UN supervision, Iraq had been allowed to sell up to $2 billion per phase. Up to $260 million for humanitarian goods became available for the Kurdistan region. Later, the sales limit was raised to $5.256 billion with $683 million for the region. During the seventh phase, the limit was removed.

In central and southern Iraq, the Oil-for-Food Program was implemented by the government of Iraq without direct UN involvement. The United Nations performed only an observation or monitoring role there. In the Kurdistan region, the United Nations was authorized to manage the program on behalf of the government of Iraq. The United Nations and the Kurdistan Regional Government were implementing partners. While the center and south had various options and resources, primarily political, with which to address the humanitarian situation, the Kurdistan region had far fewer.

In the Kurdistan region, most Oil-for-Food resources were channeled into nutrition and health. This included food, medicines, medical supplies, and equipment. It also included items to improve water supplies, sanitation services, agricultural support for farmers (to increase food production and lower prices), education from preschool to the university level, and electricity production, transmission, and distribution.

More than 10 million mines were estimated to have been planted in the Kurdistan region. Oil-for-Food funds have financed landmine awareness activities, demarcation of known minefields, de-mining, and prosthetic support for victims. To address widespread community destruction, these funds have also been used for rural reconstruction and resettlement. Funds were provided for main road construction and maintenance and the restoration of telecommunications, which supported the delivery of basic public services and lowered the price of essential goods and services.

In the Kurdistan region ten UN agencies managed the Oil-for-Food Program: Food and Agriculture Organization, International Telecommunications

Union, UN Center for Human Settlements, UN Development Program, UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UN International Children's Emergency Fund, UN Office of Project Services, World Food Program, and World Health Organization. The UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq coordinated the entire program.

Two other UN agencies operated in the Kurdistan region at the time: UNHCR and UN Guards Contingent in Iraq (UNGCI). Neither agency received funding under Security Council Resolution 986. UNHCR continues to protect and assist Turkish and Iranian refugees who have sought asylum in the Kurdistan region. UNGCI provides security support for the UN program.

The Oil-for-Food Program in the Kurdistan region was the largest UN program in the world. With the amount of funds available for the operation, it would appear that the United Nations was in an excellent position to engage the best management expertise the world had to offer. Perhaps because Iraq had been designated a "non-family duty station," however, it proved difficult to attract and keep dynamic, qualified, experienced, and professional specialists. International staff turnover was high.

The Iraqi government procured bulk food and medical supplies for the whole country and sent shares to the Kurdistan region. The "food basket" included wheat flour, rice, sugar, tea, cooking oil, dried whole milk powder, cheese, pulses (lentils, beans), iodized salt, soap, and detergent. The quality of these items was often below locally acceptable standards.

There was a major problem with the wheat flour provision. The Kurdistan region's economy centers on agriculture, and wheat is the main crop. Distribution of free imported wheat flour was a severe blow to local wheat production. Furthermore, the amount of flour in the food basket (nine kilograms a month) was excessive and needed to be substantially reduced. Wheat flour was purchased at about $200 per metric ton and was sold in the local market for less than $50 per metric ton. This was a "waste" of $15 to $30 million per year. Despite various requests by the Kurdistan Regional Government even before Security Council Resolution 986 began, UN authorities made no change on this very important issue. Other essential food items could have been provided instead of excessive wheat flour.

While bulk purchases of food and medical supplies for the Kurdistan region were provided by the government of Iraq, all other items were procured by UN specialized agencies. UN procurement was inordinately slow. One has only to analyze the time it takes from the moment oil sale proceeds are deposited into the account until they are released to UN agencies, and from that moment until they are actually spent. It took many weeks to purchase some of the simplest items that could be obtained locally much faster and at significantly lower cost.

After seven years of Security Council Resolution 986 implementation, it is now all but confirmed that the United Nations did not have the capacity to manage such a well-funded and complex program. One of the ten UN agencies declined additional funding because it had reached its managerial limit. Some agencies had large amounts of unspent funds. The United Nations was not accountable for spending funds within stipulated time frames.

Besides mineral resources, notably oil and water, Iraq's real wealth lies in its human resources. The level of education in Iraq has been quite good. Iraqis are incredible implementers. It is not difficult to find well-trained technical men and women, especially university-educated engineers and computer specialists, who can do almost anything. Many served the humanitarian program as employees of the Kurdistan Regional Government, NGOs, and private contractors.

To help implement the humanitarian program, the Kurdistan Regional Government had excess implementation capacity that was both utilized and underutilized. To support government policymaking and implementation, there are three universities in the Kurdistan region that need to play a stronger role in socioeconomic training in public management. What is urgently needed is assistance in strengthening analytical, planning, and presentation skills in both the regional government and universities. Linkages with universities in the Americas, Europe, and elsewhere are important.

Security Council Resolution 986 made a tremendous contribution to meeting the immediate needs of the people of the Kurdistan region. Malnutrition and child mortality rates declined. Due to increased availability of agricultural inputs, food availability increased. Prices declined. More families received clean water. The availability of electricity, however, remained a serious problem throughout the region. More classrooms, educational supplies, and equipment were provided, but serious shortages remained. Rural reconstruction and resettlement needs to be greatly expanded to strengthen the agricultural economy and to relieve excessive pressure on urban areas. Incomes need to increase. Much more rehabilitation must be done to help all families return to the levels many enjoyed before the events of 1991.

15

Ottoman Lessons for a Federal Iraq

ERNEST TUCKER

Speculation about how Iraq might be organized as a federal state has become a focus of discussion on the future of that nation. Massoud Barzani recently asserted that he would not support any government for the Kurdish people "that fails to guarantee their security and their rights as equal citizens in a federal, democratic Iraq." Since its emergence as an independent nation after World War I, Iraq has struggled to bring together its disparate elements.[1] Federalism has been championed as a way to strike a balance between regional autonomy and national unity.

For centuries, the Ottomans allowed important constituencies to enjoy autonomy within a larger imperial system. A brief examination of how the Ottomans did this may shed light on issues related to the creation of a federal system now.

It could be argued that Iraq has become so altered since the end of World War I that the Ottoman contribution to the shaping of modern Iraq pales in comparison with what the country's subsequent rulers have done. Until the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire, as a premodern polity that had only partially evolved into a modern nation-state by its demise, was not trying to remake Iraq. Ottoman sultans merely sought to secure their rule over it. Like most premodern Middle Eastern rulers, they gained considerable legitimacy as the guardians of the "well-protected domains." Once their empire was established and its borders were defined, the sultans' main task was to preserve order and stabilize their control.

The key to Ottoman control over Iraq was that it offered partial autonomy within an imperial system that preserved an adequate amount of administrative uniformity across vast stretches of territory.

The experiences of three key constituencies—Kurds, Arab Sunnis, and Arab Shi'as—can be seen passing through three phases. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Ottomans established a delicate balance between autonomy and central control, particularly given their constant rivalry with Safavid Iran to establish dominance in this region. The best example of how the Ottomans perceived this need for balance can be seen through their establishment of semi-autonomous Kurdish governments in the sixteenth century. This

took advantage of systems of loyalty already in place among the Kurds instead of forcing a stricter Ottoman model of land tenure on them, thus circumventing a system that was applied in other parts of the empire.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the evolution of a political structure in Ottoman Iraq that, despite its successive upheavals, inherent structural weaknesses, and flaws, offered a way for key Iraqi constituent groups to preserve communal stability and autonomy. Two policies exemplified this. First, the Georgian mamluk government of Ahmet and Hasan Pasha in the eighteenth century respected long-established notable families nominally led by the *naqib al-ashraf* in Baghdad. Second, the Ottomans accepted the late-eighteenth-century Hindiyya canal project to bring water to Najaf—a project whose funds came from a Shi'a ruler in India as a pious endowment to bolster the infrastructure of the Shi'a shrine cities of southern Iraq.

The final phase was affected by the political transformations that swept across Ottoman lands during the Tanzimat period (1839–76). The balance between local autonomy and central control was upset by new Ottoman projects to reinvent the empire as a modern nation-state.

Until this final period, Kurds, Arab Shi'as, and Arab Sunnis were able to exercise considerable day-to-day autonomy in the face of an Ottoman ideology that presumed loyalty to the sultan. The actual exercise of power by the Ottomans combined a show of respect for local rulers with the continual prodding of subjects to fulfill their financial and military obligations. Many historians have argued that the growing Ottoman tolerance of local autonomy after the mid-seventeenth century was clear evidence for the decline and degeneration of the classical Ottoman system in various parts of the empire. The apparent disintegration and weakening of Ottoman rule in Iraq, though, might also conceal a strength of the Ottoman system that has been less well appreciated: the pragmatic acceptance of Iraq's de facto power structures. This pragmatism was a quality that, though not always evident in how the Ottomans governed this region, manifested itself in distinct ways at crucial points in Ottoman history. This flexibility and tolerance enabled the Ottoman system to continue functioning even after it became famous as the "sick man of Europe." Ultimately, the crushing forces of modernization tore down the rickety scaffolding of the Ottoman government.

At the Beginning: Incorporating Kurds into the Ottoman Empire

Ottoman expansion eastward began in the early fifteenth century with the incorporation of neighboring Turkish principalities such as Aydin and Mentese in western Anatolia, and it reached Kurdish areas in the sixteenth century. The Kurds were swept up into the larger competition between the Ottomans and

the Safavids over eastern Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia. Led by Hakim Idris, the Kurds supported the Ottoman move into that region, and the Kurdish notable families were rewarded for their loyalty with hereditary domains that they retained for generations. These areas were known in Turkish as Kürt hükümetleri and were administered separately from the general Ottoman land tenure system. Evidence of Ottoman acknowledgment of this system can be found in the *Sharafnama,* a history of the Kurdish ruling families that was completed in 1596 by Sharaf al-Din Bitlisi, a Kurdish ruler who first served the Safavids but transferred his allegiance to the Ottomans.[2] Although the autonomy of the Kurdish principalities waxed and waned dramatically, until the nineteenth century the Ottomans generally supported the rights of local Kurdish dynasties to rule their ancestral domains, as long as they paid their taxes and offered military service when necessary.

Of course, after the establishment of a durable peace with Safavid Iran following the Treaty of Zuhab in 1639, the relative autonomy of outlying areas in the eastern part of the Ottoman Empire began to increase markedly, presaging large-scale imperial fragmentation.[3] Nevertheless, as long as order was roughly maintained and a steady flow of commerce was secured, the Ottoman system tolerated a large degree of autonomy for local Kurdish rulers.

The Middle: Allowing Indian Shi'a Investment in the Hindiyya Canal Project

By the eighteenth century, the Baghdad province came to be controlled by Georgian mamluks, rulers of foreign origin who had been military slaves of the Ottoman sultan but who preserved the complex fabric of society and family structures that had been woven in Iraq over many centuries. The Sunni Arab elites of Iraq's center made up a naturally loyal constituency of the larger Ottoman Empire and were used as such by Ottoman rulers, albeit indirectly under the aegis of the Georgians Hasan and Ahmet Pasha, who ruled from 1704 to 1747. The head of the ancient Gaylani family continued to serve in his traditional post as *naqib al-ashraf* throughout this period. Prominent Baghdad families continued to pursue merchant trade, despite the intermittent and sometimes severe, but ultimately transient, eras of conflict between the Ottoman and Persian empires.[4]

A similar but distinct system prevailed in Mosul during this period, with the Jalili family ruling as the main power in that city for many years. The main difference between Baghdad and Mosul might be noted in the relatively greater power of the lesser notables of Mosul to challenge the Jalilis, compared with the relative weakness of the *ashraf* (Sunni notables) of Baghdad versus the mamluk rulers there.[5] Mosul's lesser notables successfully allied with the cen-

tral Ottoman government against the dominance of the Jalilis when they were able to exploit modernizing reforms introduced by the Ottomans following the middle of the nineteenth century.

Farther south in Baghdad and Basra, control of water distribution continued to play a critical role. Hasan Pasha built a dam to secure the water supply of Karbala, a dam that was part of a continuing series of Ottoman waterway improvements begun in 1533 by Sultan Süleyman I when he ordered the construction of the Husayniyya canal. Hasan also repaired *khans* (travelers' lodgings) between Baghdad and Karbala for Shi'a pilgrims. It has been argued that because the eighteenth-century mamluk regime in Baghdad displayed such laxity in enforcing popular allegiance to the Ottomans, it diminished the loyalties of subject populations to the sultan to the degree that this posed a threat to Ottoman rule there. However, despite the occasional outbreak of hostilities between Iran and the Ottoman Empire, such as wars in the 1770s and 1820s, as well as the often tense atmosphere surrounding Shi'a pilgrims to Iraq's shrine cities that sometimes flared into unrest, the Ottomans allowed the Shi'a culture of southern Iraq to flourish and even expand.[6]

The southern part of Iraq had always been a major pilgrimage site for Shi'as across the Islamic world. Because the Ottomans collected significant revenue from Shi'as pilgrims and from fees paid for transporting corpses to be buried in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, they took a fairly tolerant approach to Shi'i piety and to the spread of Shi'ism in this region. Ottoman ambivalence about the growth of Shi'ism in southern Iraq was demonstrated most clearly by how the Ottomans accepted the Hindiyya canal project. Built between 1785 and 1803 with a large contribution from the Shi'a rulers of the Indian coastal state of Awadh (Oudh), the Hindiyya canal was designed to bring water to Najaf to ease the flow of pilgrims there.[7] The Ottomans permitted Indian and even some Iranian leaders to fund several canal improvement projects through the nineteenth century.[8]

These improvements had unanticipated results. When Arab nomads began farming in the late eighteenth century in the newly fertile lands created by the Hindiyya canal, many of them converted to Shi'ism.[9] While the Ottomans certainly never encouraged this trend of conversion, they permitted Shi'ism to flourish.

The Last Phase of Ottoman Rule: Modernization and the Forming of the Hamidiye Regiments

The upheavals of Europe's entry into the region en masse following Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 forced change on the Ottomans, who suddenly felt their military forces inadequate to counter European plans. As the nineteenth

century developed, the Ottomans began to incorporate Kurdish forces into the general army and Kurdish lands into a regularized land tenure system in ways that had not been seen since Kurdish emirs pledged loyalty to the Ottoman sultan in the early 1500s. Kurdish villagers sensed that the old order had disappeared, the traditional balance had been upset, and their long-standing tribal military leaders could no longer protect them. This led to the resurgence of local spiritual leaders (*shaykhs*) whom villagers had always sought out in times of trouble. The Ottoman goal of dismantling independent Kurdish emirates and canceling Kurdish military fiefs in the Tanzimat period seems to have been to bring Kurdish military resources more directly under the control of the modernizing central army and thus to integrate Kurdish society more firmly into the larger Ottoman social structure. In ways that escaped Ottoman attention, though, these spiritual leaders with their negotiating and mediating skills actually prospered under the new legal and land tenure systems. This validated them as leaders in an era characterized by the chaotic dissolution of traditional social parameters. The personal nature of this connection is revealed in the way that spiritual leaders and their families have retained such continuing political importance through subsequent phases of Kurdish history.

The period of reform known as the Tanzimat (1839–76) upset a fairly stable Kurdish social structure that had flourished for centuries. Because of changes in Ottoman land tenure laws as well as major military and social reorganizations, traditional Kurdish tribal leaders lost influence to spiritual leaders. These changes paradoxically resulted from Ottoman attempts to convert Kurdish nomads into productive "modern" citizens. Changes continued with the transformation of Kurdish irregular troops into Hamidiye regiments after 1891, designed as imitations of Russian Cossacks.[10]

Ottoman reforms had the effect of unintentionally causing these groups to turn to different sources of social support in a world for which traditional supports no longer sufficed. Kurds and Shi'as adapted to enormous dislocations by connecting in new ways to spiritual leaders. They were ultimately able to take advantage of the fact that, despite the severe political, economic, and social oppression that the Ottoman Empire occasionally visited upon its subjects, it remained tolerant enough of religious diversity that both these groups successfully established new bases of personal and social support.

In the premodern era, life had been much simpler. From the early sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, Kurdish leaders had enjoyed relative autonomy within the Ottoman state. Ottoman governors alternately pacified, chastised, and paid Arab Bedouin chiefs in the zone between Baghdad and Basra to maintain a steady peaceful flow of trade between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. The empire was secure enough to allow Kurdish and Bedouin societies to retain their political, social, and economic structures for

centuries alongside the sophisticated Ottoman land-tenure system that had become established as the common denominator by the eighteenth century in places as diverse as Egypt, Bosnia, and Syria.

Nineteenth-Century Changes in Ottoman Ruling Practices

The Ottomans implemented many changes in local areas during the Tanzimat reform period, but at least they allowed Iraqis to secure new sources of social and religious support. The Ottoman state may have tried to dismantle Kurdish social and military structures, but it didn't interfere with how the Kurds chose to rely on their shaykhs as spiritual guides, permitting them to find new ways to maintain continuity and stability in their lives. In another area of Iraq, Arab tribes were a constant disturbance that the Ottomans worked to sedentarize through active economic and organizational measures, but they did not take many concrete measures to block their spiritual path toward Shi'ism, even given an official Ottoman stance against it.

In the end, though, this long-standing Ottoman pragmatism was overwhelmed by the cataclysmic impact of the modern world, particularly after the Young Turk revolution of 1908 and the explosion of nationalisms in the Middle East. However, it would be wise to keep the Ottomans' longer record of pragmatism in mind as discussion continues about how to build a future Iraq. The Ottoman period provided an example of how a state can function well enough through a de facto policy of tolerance. Skeptics, of course, can easily dismiss the Ottomans' tolerance of diversity as merely another sign of decrepitude. However, the Ottomans' traditional tolerance lasted long enough to allow Shi'as and Kurds in Iraq to construct their own modern frameworks of social and personal identities that have sustained them through the upheavals of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

16

Federalism as a Model for Democracy

ALI BABAKHAN

During their first meeting in the region of Iraqi Kurdistan, Kurdish parliamentarians voted on 4 October 1992 to adopt federalism. Nominated as representatives by the inhabitants of the Kurdish region liberated from Baghdad authority, they were duly selected in the elections of 19 May 1992, for the first time in the history of Iraqi Kurdistan since the annexation to Iraq. The liberated Kurdish region contained approximately two-thirds of the total area of Iraqi Kurdistan and had the advantage of air protection by the Allied International Forces since 1991. Iraqi Kurds had been exposed to horrible massacres at the hands of the dictatorial Iraqi government after the failure of their uprising. UN Security Council Resolution 688, dated April 1991, invited an end to the repression of civilian Kurds and protected them from the tyranny of Baghdad.

The adoption of this decree came after successive governments had failed to find an equitable solution for the Kurdish cause. There were several reasons for this failure: the governing elite's ideology toward the Kurds; an Iraqi constitution unresponsive to Iraqi society's political, confessional, and ethical reality; successive governments' neglect of promises and engagements toward Kurds; the failure of the self-determination formula; and the absence of democracy and the political pluralism within the Iraqi political system.

The State of Iraq and the Succession of Government

During its direct rule of the provinces of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul and after its mandate for the state of Iraq founded in 1921, Britain relied on the Sunni Arab elites to rule the country. After conducting a public opinion poll, Britain nominated Prince Faisal as king of Iraq and delegated most ministry, military, and law enforcement positions to Sunni Arabs. They avoided Shi'ite Arabs and Kurds. The minority was ruling the majority.

Sunni Arab governors tried hard until 1991 to assimilate Kurds by military force within Iraqi state structures instead of allowing their free participation in political life. This elite did not take into consideration Kurdish wishes to found an independent, equitable, and legitimate Kurdish state, as was allowed Arabs.

They knew that these claims antedated Iraqi state foundation, Sheikh Mahmud al-Hafid as a governor of Kurdistan (1919), and also the establishment of the first Iraqi government of Abdul Rahman al-Nakib (1920) under British mandate. Kurdish claims preceded the nomination of King Faisal of Iraq two years earlier. The Sunni Arab minority did not ignore the fact that annexing southern Kurdistan (most of the Mosul province) to the Iraqi state served British aims of neglecting Kurdish claims. Thus the Sunni Arab minority pretended that southern Kurdistan was a part of the Arab nation. This lie was so often reiterated by successive Iraqi governments that Arabs believed it in Iraq and elsewhere. This had a great negative impact on the Kurds, whose claims were classified as "isolationist." While Kurds were the victims of British colonialism, the Sunni elite sat "enthroned" in the Iraqi government with a British colonial mandate.

The first Arab geographers located Iraq between Basra in the south and Tikrit in the north. Medhat Pacha, the Ottoman governor, divided Arabic Iraq into two provinces, Basra and Baghdad, and the Kurdish area into two provinces, Mosul and Shahrazur. The latter includes Kirkuk, Sulaimaniyya, and Erbil.

Under General Abdul Karim Kassem (1958–63), who pretended that the term *Kurdu* was a Persian appellation, the press led a large campaign stating "Iraq is one nation and not a series of nations." Under General Abdul Salam Aref, the pretense was that the Kurds were "Arabs of the mountains." Michel Aflaq, the founder of the Arab Socialist Baath Party, declared, "Kurds are Muslim Arab citizens like other Muslim Arab ones and do not defer at all." Saddam Hussein applied the policy of intellectual fusion and invited Kurds to become Baathists, accusing colonialism of being responsible for Kurds' refusal: "Colonialism is the only faction that does not want Kurds to be Baathist." In other words, the Kurd who was not Baathist was an agent of colonialism and should be punished. On 24 August 1978, during his visit to the Kurdish region, Saddam Hussein declared, "Everybody can be a deeply convinced Kurd and a deeply convinced Baathist at the same time." On another occasion, he declared, "There is nothing to be ashamed about or to feel frustrated of in being Kurdish Iraqi and part of the Arab nation."

From the beginning individual leaders in successive Iraqi governments have molded the state. Faisal's personality influenced political life despite the separation of powers. Faisal's son Ghazi succeeded to the throne, following King Faisal's death in 1933 until his own in 1939. King Ghazi's son Faisal II was heir to the throne. Abdul Ilah served as regent for the young Faisal II until May 1953 when he formally succeeded to the throne. King Faisal II was killed on 14 July 1958 in the coup led by General Abdul Karim Kassem. When General Kassem became "the sole leader," he suppressed the parliament and involved the

army in political life as a means of repression. During Abdul Rahman Aref's leadership, the Sunni Arab fundamentalists' role increased, especially in the Sunni triangle of Alramadi, Samira, and Tikrit.

The army converted to Baathism in 1968. Political, social, and economic life and all state government resources came under the Baath Party, especially when Saddam Hussein became the first president of Iraq in 1979. He "Tikritized" all key positions and high responsibilities in the state, in the party, and in the army. He nominated his relatives and others from Tikrit in these positions. Thus Saddam Hussein became a living image of a dictator. Democracy was suppressed. Public freedoms and human rights were often flouted to the extreme against all opponents of the government. He also applied the policy of Arabization, depopulation, destruction of villages, collective exterminations, and use of chemical weapons against civilians in Kurdistan. Iraq's neighbors were his victims, too, as he declared an eight-year war against Iran. He then invaded Kuwait and exterminated opponents who tried to get rid of him during the Gulf war. His refusal to comply with the decrees of the United Nations to remove weapons of mass destruction led to the economic embargo and had a negative impact on the Iraqi people. They suffered from starvation and disease while Saddam Hussein spent petroleum revenues on palaces and weapons.

Repression and human rights violations increased in Iraq even after the state received billions of dollars in 1972. Saddam Hussein spent the funds on the army for equipment rather than on Iraq for development.

The Governing Elite and Kurdish Claims

The Treaty of Sevres (10 August 1920) stated in articles 62–64 that the Kurds had the right to create an independent state in their land of Kurdistan. This was the first international document to recognize the rights of Kurds. The Treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923), however, divided Kurdistan between Turkey, Iran, and Syria (then under French mandate). Southern Kurdistan became Iraqi Kurdistan and included most of Mosul province, an area rich in petroleum. It was annexed to the Iraqi state, then under British mandate, after an agreement between Britain and Mustafa Kemal of Turkey in 1925. Before this partition, Britain occupied Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul provinces and encountered local Shi'ite and Kurdish resistance.

Kurdish hope once centered on creating a Kurdish state presided over by Sheikh Mahmud al-Hafid of Sulaimaniyya. He had declared himself general governor of Kurdistan on 22 April 1919. The British dissolved his government, and a mortal combat arose between the British army and al-Hafid. He was imprisoned, and a British tribunal sentenced him to death. The sentence was eventually reduced to a ten-year imprisonment and banishment.

When Prince Faisal was pronounced king of Iraq, southern Kurdistan's inhabitants refused to accept him. In the meantime, the annexation of the province of Mosul either to Iraq or to Turkey was not completely decided. So Britain brought Sheikh Mahmud al-Hafid back to Kurdistan from India to prepare the way for Turkish influence and for a strong position in the Community of Nations. Al-Hafid seized this opportunity to declare himself king of Kurdistan in November 1922. Britain realized the threat of al-Hafid's influence extending to other parts of Kurdistan and put an end to his ambitions. The British declared officially: "The government of His British Majesty and the government of Iraq both recognize the right of Kurds to cohabit within the Iraqi borders and have the right to found a Kurdish government inside these borders." This declaration was considered the first official British-Iraqi encouragement to Kurds to create their own government. But this declaration was not put into concrete form, even after al-Hafid was silenced.

Several uprisings in 1931 and 1941 failed. Under the conditions of the annexation of the province of Mosul to Iraq, the Community of Nations decided the following: "The province and its Kurdish inhabitants must enjoy self-determination on the administrative and cultural levels." The Community of Nations stated that if the conditions were not applied, then the British mandate on Iraq, the annexation of the province of Mosul to Iraq, would be null and void. The British and Iraqi governments engaged themselves in applying this condition and did not respect their agreement. Under the government of General Abdul Karim Kassem (1958–63), article 3 of the provisional Iraqi constitution stated that "Arab Kurds are partners in this country, and the constitution gives them all the rights within the Iraqi unity." General Kassem did not end the period of transition by promulgating the permanent constitution affirming the rights of Kurds and creating democracy. Instead, he declared war on the Kurdish Democratic Party led by Mustafa Barzani.

The first Baathist government occurred in 1963 under Colonel Abdul Salam Aref. The Baathist Party did not respect their promises and agreements. The agreement of 11 March 1970, for example, recognized publicly the rights of Kurds to self-determination for a period of four years maximum, by the end of 1974. Instead, the party applied a policy of resettling 100,000 Iraqi Kurds in the south between 1976 and 1979. Many Kurds decided to retreat to Iran, according to the Algers Agreement signed between Saddam Hussein and the shah of Iran in Algeria in 1975.

Saddam relocated 250,000 tribal Kurds between 1980 and 1988. He moved the inhabitants of frontier zones like Khanikeen and Mandali and some from Baghdad to the south after keeping their sons (almost 5,000 young men between 16 and 25) as prisoners. After 1980, Saddam's government destroyed more than 4,500 Kurdish villages. In 1988 he struck the city of Halabja with

chemical weapons, killing thousands and wounding thousands more. The survivors still suffer from the effects of the chemical weapons. He also exterminated 182 Kurds in the transfer wars. All Iraqi governments have declared wars whenever Kurds claimed their rights. When they could not win these wars on the military level, they tried to negotiate with Kurds to sign agreements that the governments did not respect once they were strong and powerful again. That was the pattern until 1995.

Iraqi Kurds and Federalism

After the British put an end to Sheikh Mahmud al-Hafid's uprising, Kurds' claims centered on creating a Kurdish state and gaining self-determination. Mustafa Barzani was known for his courage and military capacity. He submitted a document to the United Nations claiming self-determination for Kurds in 1931. Barzani, leader of the Kurdish National Movement and a legend for most of the Kurdish population until his death in 1979, also claimed self-determination in 1944 through "founding a Kurdish province including the cities of Kirkuk, Khanikeen, Sulaimaniyya, Erbil, and the Mosul towns (Dohuk, Zakho, Akra, Sinjar, and Sheikhan)." These regions formed "the geography of self-determination" claimed by Kurds in all negotiations with successive Iraqi governments.

The slogan of the Iraqi Kurds was "Democracy for Iraq and self-determination for Kurdistan." They were convinced that they would attain their national rights only under a democratic government. Political experience has proved their analysis accurate. The Iraqi Baath Party recognized Kurdish national rights and signed an agreement (the famous agreement of 11 March 1970) to give them the right of self-determination for four years. But this agreement was not respected, and the Iraqi Baath Party attacked all public freedoms and non-Baath political parties, even those that participated with them in the same political front as the Iraqi Communist Party. They annihilated all forms of self-determination, executive and legislative, and governmental institutions, and they depopulated Kurdish regions of their inhabitants. All negotiations failed between the Iraqi Baath and the National Kurdistan Union in 1982 and in 1991 the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (which included all Iraqi Kurdish parties). The Iraqi Baath refused to give Kurds their rights despite the fact that the Iraqi leadership was weakened on both the internal and regional levels by the Gulf war.

After these negotiations had failed, the Iraqi government withdrew the persons in charge of management from Kurdistan and stopped paying civil servants and other employees of the governmental institutions wages and salaries. They then applied an economical embargo on the Kurdish region. Kurds withstood frustrations and failures of all policies to obtain their national rights.

They saw federalism as the only viable option in Kurdistan. The representatives of the people in Iraqi Kurdistan believed that federalism would realize an equilibrium between the central authority and the regional ones in each province. The regional governments would be represented in the decision center within the central authority, which would widen participation in all political institutions and would balance the role of the individual and group. Federalism would annul the global system authorities because it depends on political pluralism and respects it. If federalism were applied in Iraq, Kurds would have the right to rule Kurdistan and to participate in the central authority. During the twentieth century, the federalism phenomenon was linked to the principles of minority rights (ethnic, religious) and a weakened central state. Federalism was adopted wherever several ethnic and religious groups cohabited as in Iraq. Federalism's concepts could be summarized as "That government is best that governs least."

Applying federalism in Iraq would require the reign of democracy and human rights in the popular culture and in the political party programs. It would necessitate the changing of all wrong public concepts concerning Iraqi Kurdistan and its part in Greater Kurdistan. This in turn would facilitate the dialogue between Kurds and Arabs. Future Iraqi governments must deal with "geographical regions in the Kurdistan province applying federalism," and the changes that will occur in the hierarchy of authority. The Iraqi constitution will become a federal one and a sample of democracy.

The practical experience that Iraqi Kurds have acquired in ruling their own affairs in the Federal Kurdistan region has proved the suitability of their relations with the central authority in Baghdad. The regions liberated from Baghdad's authority have enjoyed a prosperous economy, booming agriculture, and better public health in comparison with the regions in the middle and south. This growth was remarkable in the face of the double embargo on the Kurdish region, one imposed by Saddam and the other by the United Nations. According to the UNICEF reports, the death rate for children in liberated Iraqi Kurdistan was much lower than in the middle and southern regions of Iraq in the 1990s. The same applied for starvation and medicines. Sixty percent of the destroyed Kurdistan villages had been rebuilt by 2000. Millions of land mines were uncovered and destroyed. The Kurdish region received only 13 percent of the funds from the Oil-for-Food Program. Despite regional political interference in Kurdish internal affairs, especially from Baghdad's authority and the internal fight among Kurds themselves, prosperity increased day after day. The press, newspapers, magazines, and publishing all flourished as well as freedom of expression. The Turkoman and Syriac populations have established their own radio and television stations and press, through which they have enjoyed above all their political and individual freedom.

The international community, led by Europe and the United States, should support this new experience in the Middle East—politically, financially, and militarily. This experience's success and continuity could promise democracy in all parts of Iraq. The application of federalism could lead to peace and security in Iraq and in the whole Middle East. The Iraqi Kurdish experience could promote national unity in a federal context and relieve the apprehensions of Iran and Turkey. It could strengthen claimants for a peaceful solution of the Kurdish questions in Iran and Turkey and the possibility of applying federalism there too. Federalism provides a workable solution for Kurds because they can exercise their rights in a representative democracy.

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Communalism and the Future of Iraq

CAROLE A. O'LEARY

Establishing stability in a future Iraq is a necessary precondition for the development of good governance and a vibrant civil society. The Iraqi experience of state-directed violence against specific ethnic and sectarian groups, including mass murder and ethnic cleansing, requires a framework for governance that accommodates the political and cultural significance of communalism in Iraqi society. Federalism as an organizing framework for pluralistic societies is one model that could promote stability in Iraq. How social scientists, particularly anthropologists, have approached the issue of collective identity in the Middle East will provide the framework for analysis of communal identity in Iraq.

The Paradox of Communal Identity

The issue of communal identity, sometimes referred to as the "social construction of difference" in the language of post modernism, has long been a central focus in the field of Middle East studies. Communal identity is defined by concepts such as kinship, tribe, religion, sect, ethnicity, or nationality. Two excellent reviews of the topic are set forth in Linda Layne's study of Jordanian tribal and national identity and Dale Eickelman's comprehensive discussion of the Middle East and Central Asia from an anthropological perspective.[1] According to Layne, two images—the mosaic and the segmentary triangle—have represented the two most common approaches to the analysis of communal identity in the region.[2]

The mosaic image depicts a Middle East inhabited by distinct peoples, like the individual colored pieces that make up a mosaic. This model was popularized by Carlton Coon in his 1951 study, *Caravan: The Story of the Middle East*,

and has been used to describe the multicultural nature of the Ottoman Empire. As Layne indicates, "the mosaic model has typically been used by anthropologists and others to portray a timeless Middle East, made up of distinct, clearly bounded social groups."[3] Eickelman suggests that this model cannot adequately explain the interrelations among these social groups or their known historical transformations.[4] The other image or model of communal identity in the Middle East has been the triangle or pyramid used to represent the segmentary lineage systems of tribes, particularly Arab Bedouin tribes. Both models view communal identities in essentializing or primordial terms wherein "one's birth defines one's identity permanently as a member of a clearly bounded, easily identifiable group (and in the segmentary model as a member of a series of nesting subgroups)."[5]

Emrys L. Peters's seminal article on "Shifts of Power in a Lebanese Village" is illustrative of the more recent approach to the analysis of communal identity. In this "recantation" of his 1963 analysis of the same village, Peters clarifies why his earlier analysis and implicit theoretical assumptions were invalid.[6] During his fieldwork in the early 1950s, Peters had accepted the statements of the villagers concerning their social and economic relationships as accurate explanations of the system of rank and status in the village. His original analysis, based on the situation of the village in 1952, had assumed a fixity in social relations between groups that Peters later realized did not in fact exist. In his recantation, Peters suggests that his error arose from his decision to adopt an "inside the system" perspective: that is, to accept the explanation of his informants in the village as a framework for his analysis. He argues that in failing to adopt an "outside the system" perspective, he had failed to recognize, for example, that high rank or status could function as a liability in economic relationships. Therefore, Peters concludes that social systems are open-ended and cannot be analyzed without regard to historical transformations that may not be apparent from an insider point of view. Peters's reanalysis of communal identity and status in Lebanon and subsequent postmodern perspectives have provided a necessary correction to the idea that communal identities are fixed or unchanging.

The postmodern perspective considers communal identities to be "imagined," or culturally constructed in specific historical, political, and economic contexts. In other words, recent approaches view communal identities as fluid and situational, not as something predetermined by heredity. Most recently, studies that espouse an essentialist or primordialist model of communal

identity have been associated with Orientalist scholarship.[7] However, while postmodern approaches to the analysis of communal identity have provided a necessary correction to the idea that group identities are fixed or unchanging, such models fail to address the social and political ramifications of the fact that many communal groups view their identities in primordial or essentialist terms, particularly in conflict or post-conflict situations.

Ulf Hannerz's definition of culture in his 1992 analysis of contemporary cultural complexity provides a framework for understanding the paradox of communal identity. For Hannerz, culture is both the meaning that people create and which in turn create people, as members of societies.[8] Hannerz suggests that a useful way to conceptualize culture is through the metaphor of a river, because it captures one of the paradoxes of culture:

> When you see a river from afar, it may look like a blue (or green, or brown) line across a landscape; something of awesome permanence. But, at the same time, "you cannot step into the same river twice," for it is always moving, and only in this way does it achieve its durability. The same way with culture—even as you perceive structure, it is entirely dependent on ongoing process.[9]

As expressions of group identity, notions of tribe, ethnicity, sect, and nationality are cultural constructions—something that people make (that is, the moving water aspect of the river metaphor). At the same time, people often conceive of their own tribal, ethnic, sectarian, or national identities as something akin to heredity, as almost a biological given (the permanent line across the landscape aspect of the river metaphor). This essentialist or primordial understanding of communal identity has serious ramifications for ethnic or minority group rights within nation-states, as well as for the resolution of ethnic-based conflicts.

Any solution to the problem of establishing stability in a future Iraq must take into consideration the fact that some Iraqis view their own communal identities in primordial or essentializing terms. This is clearly the case for the Kurdish community in Iraq, the target of a systemic policy of displacement through Arabization and ethnic cleansing under the Baath. To suggest that communal identity in Iraq is situational, negotiated, or culturally constructed in changing historical, political, and economic conditions simply does not provide an adequate model for addressing the related issues of reconciliation, coexistence, and democratization in a future Iraq. Rather, it is essential that

policy makers consider how Iraqis today understand their national, tribal, ethnic, and sectarian identities.

Nation-States, Nationalism, and Iraqi Identity

Benedict Anderson's seminal 1983 study of nationalism raises a key issue for any consideration of communalism and stability in a future Iraq, in particular his discussion of the rise of "official nationalisms" in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century.[10] Official nationalism imagines a nation without diversity—one people, one language. Often violently imposed, official nationalisms "developed after and in reaction to the popular national movements proliferating in Europe since the 1820s."[11] In turn, official nationalism, a cultural artifact of the later phase of European nationalist projects, became the model for some of the new states in the Middle East.[12] The adoption of the ideology of official nationalism in some Middle Eastern states exacerbated tensions among various ethnic and religious communities and between those communities and the new states. In a recent study, Ali Mirsepassi deconstructs the Iranian experience of modernity and argues that the Islamic revolution represents an attempt to accommodate modernity by locating it in an authentic historical, cultural, and religious context. With specific regard to the creation of the modern nation-state system in the Middle East, Mirsepassi argues that "with political independence, these state machines were passed on to the modernized elite frequently drawn from a particular ethnic set." He stresses that in establishing arbitrary national borders within which existed a diversity of ethnic and sectarian groups, the colonial powers in fact established interethnic struggle as the pattern of politics in these pluralistic societies. Consider the case of Iran: Mirsepassi notes that most modern social movements and political conflicts have ethnic roots, including those of the Kurds, Azeris, and Arabs.[13]

In an analysis of nationalist identity-making on the parts of states and ethnic groups, Arjun Appaduri suggests that "the central problem of today's global interactions is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization,"[14] which is the struggle on the part of states to produce cultural uniformity and the opposing efforts of subnational ethnic groups to gain cultural and political rights, autonomy, and even statehood. Appaduri argues that for many people around the world, the fear is not Americanization, but something much closer to home. Thus, for the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq,

Turkification and Arabization are more worrisome than Americanization.[15] It is plausible that a more elastic understanding of national identity, of "nationness" as Anderson terms it, could have limited or perhaps even prevented the occurrence of ethnic and religious tension in the multicultural states of the Middle East. Arguably, federalism as an organizing principle for at least some of the new states in the Middle East could have provided a better model for accommodating cultural diversity than existing models in which national identity is understood in terms of one language and one people.

Martha and Richard Cottam define a nation-state as "a state in which the citizens of a country identify with the territorial unit as a political unit more strongly than any other politically relevant identity group."[16] In their definition, "the nation is given primary loyalty" and "all other identities and their demands drop to the side when nationalism becomes salient."[17] Under their criteria, Iraq is classified with core community non-nation states, or "states with one identity group that sees itself as constituting the community upon which a nation should be based."[18] Although a thorough analysis of the debate about the nature of the Iraqi state is beyond the scope of this chapter, Martha and Richard Cottam's discussion of the behavior of non-nation states is suggestive with regard to the Kurdish case in Iraq:

> The identity and comparison patters in non-nation states produce patterns of political conflict different from those found in nation states. For example, although scapegoats are selected from groups in nation states as well as non-nation states, the level of violence directed at the scapegoat may be greater in the non-nation state because of the intensity of group identity and the lack of a common identity. The notion of common citizenship is less salient than in nation states. Thus African Americans face discrimination whereas Bosnian Muslims face mass slaughter.[19]

A preponderance of evidence collected inside Iraq since 1991 clearly indicates that Iraqi Kurds faced mass slaughter and not simply discrimination in the Baath period.

In complementary analyses of the politics of identity in Iraq, Adeed Dawisha and Shafeeq Ghabra summarize how national identity has been imagined and reimagined since the creation of the Iraqi state.[20] Both highlight the fact that the failure to construct an Iraqi national identity that includes all Iraqis is a key factor in understanding Iraq's institutionalized culture of violence, its inability to initiate political reform, and its aggressiveness toward its neighbors.

A more comprehensive treatment of the same topic can be found in Kanan Makiya's analysis of the politics of identity in modern Iraq.[21] According to Makiya, Arab Sunni identity was imposed upon a new state in which Shi'a outnumbered Sunnis, and Kurds and other ethnic or national groups existed alongside an Arab majority. Although it is true that the ruling elites did, at times, emphasize Iraqi, Mesopotamian, Islamic, or tribal identity over Arab identity,[22] it is clear that the state has always sought to maintain the status quo of Arab Sunni hegemony. Arab Sunni identity, whether explicitly or implicitly, has been the organizing principle around which succeeding regimes have constructed the ideology of nationalism in Iraq. According to Makiya, "much of the violence in modern Iraqi politics is attributable to the structural incompatibility between political goals and the confessional distribution of Iraqi society."[23] Makiya points out that as early as 1932, only a fifth of the Iraqi population at most could be identifies as a social base for pan-Arabism. Thus, from its inception, Arab nationalism in Iraq was viewed as a form of hegemony imposed by a ruling minority.[24]

Since the mandate period, Arab nationalists in Iraq have labeled the efforts of the Kurds, Arab Shi'a and other non-Arab Sunni communities to assert themselves culturally and politically as treasonous, the causal factor being imperialist scheming. Makiya describes this phenomenon well. The Assyrian pogrom of 1933 was a harbinger of things to come: the slaughter of Iraqi Jews in 1969; the continuous assaults on Kurds and Shi'a, culminating in the use of chemical (and possibly biological) weapons against both communities. Various Iraqi regimes justified such crimes against the non-Arab Sunni communities to achieve cultural and political rights by linking such efforts to imperialism or Zionism.[25]

A key organizing feature of Iraqi Arab nationalist ideology, particularly under the Baath, is the concept of *shu'ubiyya* (from the Arabic *sha'b/'sh'ub* or "people"). The *shu'ubiyya* movement arose in the Abbasid period in the context of the expansion of Islam into non-Arab areas. The original movement included Arab and well as non-Arab Muslims. It arose in response to the problem of cultural diversity that confronted the Arab Muslim community as it spread beyond the Arabian peninsula. According to Makiya, the term *shu'ubiyya* took on a new meaning in modern Iraq. *Shu'ubiyya* became the central organizing principle of an ideology rooted in an "us vs. them" mentality, just as the German term *untermenschen*, or "subhumans," was used to distinguish Jews, Poles and other Slavs, Roma, homosexuals, and others in

Nazi Germany. In Iraq, the term *shu'ubiyyun* was at different times applied to communists, non-Arab ethnic communities, and Shi'a.[26] Faced with an ethnically and religiously diverse society, the ruling elites constructed an ideology to dehumanize groups perceived to be enemies of Arab Sunni hegemony. The ideology of *shu'ubiyya* fueled the institutionalization of violence in Iraq.

Federalism as a Model for Iraq

One important consequence of the establishment of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in 1992 is that nearly four million Kurds have had actual experience with self-rule, civil society building, and democratization.[27] As they face an uncertain future in a post–Saddam Hussein Iraq, these Kurds are focusing their efforts on implementing a new model of governance in Iraq based on the principles of federalism, pluralism, and democracy. Between 1991 and the removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iraqis in exile and those inside the KRG-administered region have debated the framework for a federal state. Some advocated a federal system consisting of two political units: the Arab region and Kurdistan. Others suggested dividing Iraq into three federal units: Kurdistan, a Sunni Arab center, and a Shi'a Arab south. An arrangement of five federal units (Kurdistan, Baghdad, Jazirah, Kufa, and Basra) has also been suggested.[28]

Iraq's Kurds will support the division of Iraq into any number of federal units, under a federal system, as long as Iraqi Kurdistan constitutes one of the units. At a conference hosted by the University of Southern Denmark in late 2002, Brendan O'Leary outlined an interesting alternative to the adoption of a federal political system for all of Iraq. In his view, Iraqi Kurdistan could enter into an institutionalized federal arrangement with the central government wherein the rest of Iraq is not federally organized. He refers to this arrangement as federacy.[29] In theory, this model could accommodate the Arab majority in Iraq if system-wide federalism were to be voted down in the Constitutional Referendum.[30] It is possible that the Kurds would have no objection to the creation of a democratic Iraq that is not federally organized, as long as Iraqi Kurdistan itself achieves self-rule in a constitutionally mandated federal arrangement with the center. However, Kurdish political leaders and citizens of the KRG-administered zone have explicitly opposed the division of historic Iraqi Kurdistan into multiple federal units, an idea that has currency among

some American analysts.[31] Under what might be called a "Kurdistani" rather than a "Kurdish" political solution, a Kurdish majority would still control a geographically defined Kurdistan federal region within an Iraqi federalist system.[32] This type of structure could reduce regional objections by explicitly preserving the rights of non-Kurdish minorities in a Kurdistani federal unit.

Simply defined, federalism refers to a system of government in which power is divided between a central authority and constituent political units. In some states like the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland, the constituent political units are defined not only geographically but also culturally—on the basis of language, ethnicity, religion, or tribe. Federalism as an organizing structure for governance can promote stability in multiethnic or multireligious states through the establishment of political units whose relationship to the center is defined in a governing document that provides written principles concerning structures and rules for governance and appropriation of federal funds. As in the United States, federalism in a future Iraq can provide a system of checks and balances to moderate the power of any future central government, inhibiting the ability of an autocratic leadership—secularist or Islamist—to seize control of the center. And, as in Switzerland, federalism can guarantee the political and cultural rights of all communities.

During the period of Iraqi opposition activities between 1991 and 2003, the Iraqi National Congress (INC) was consistent in its support for federalism in a democratic and unified post–Saddam Iraq. The Supreme Council for Islamic revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) also supported a federal system, arguing that there is a precedent in Islam for this form of governance. Representatives of the Iraqi opposition who met in London in December 2002, reaffirmed their support for a democratic and federal Iraq, a position first articulated at the Iraqi Opposition Congress held in 1992 in Salahadin, Iraqi Kurdistan. The KRG-administered region has, for all intents and purposes, functioned as a federal unit since 1992. How this region will relate to Baghdad in the future, and whether it will eventually include all or parts of the Kirkuk governorate will, in theory, be clarified through the legislative process that began when the new Council of Representatives was seated after the December 2005 elections.[33] A key question for American and European policy makers—as well as for Iraqis, Iran, and Turkey—is whether federalism is the only viable solution to Iraq's still unresolved Kurdish question that will ensure the territorial integrity of the state. A second question relates to how federalism in Iraq will be structured. A third is whether federalism as an organizing framework for governance in pluralistic

societies can best ensure stability in Iraq after regime change—a necessary condition for the development of democracy, human rights, and an active civil society.[34]

Conclusion

In conclusion, many states, including Iraq, either seek to marginalize ethnic groups or to create an imagined, homogenous ethnic group or nation out of a reality that is pluralistic. Iraq's "culture of violence,"[35] directed against all Iraqis, but particularly against the non-Arab Sunni communities, makes Iraq a special case in terms of establishing a framework for governance in the future. In order to establish stability in a future Iraq, the question of identity should be approached from both an "insider" or primordialist point of view and a Western, postmodern perspective. The Iraqi people have too long been brutalized on the basis of communal identity and it is imperative that Iraq's tribal, ethnic, and religious communities create a new social contract that guarantees the cultural and political rights of all communities in theory and in practice. Such a social contract cannot demand allegiance to an imposed form of nationalism rooted in one communal identity (that is, Arab Sunni nationalism). Given the levels of trauma in Iraqi society today, it is simply not relevant at this point to consider how Iraqis in the past constructed their identities as members of ethnic, religious, and tribal communities, or social classes. For example, it is not for Arab Iraqis to refute or disparage Kurdish, Assyro-Chaldean, or Turkoman constructions of "self." What is of relevance to the future of Iraq is how Iraqis today conceive of their collective identities.

The case of Afghanistan is instructive here. Although the young Bush administration was explicit in its rejection of any role for the United States in nation building, the horrific events of 11 September 2001 clearly placed the United States in a position where it was required to confront the issue of nation building in Afghanistan. This is true for Iraq as well. Some form of nation building is imperative if the goal is a pluralistic and democratic Iraq at peace with its own citizens and its neighbors. The tragic outcome of the imposition of official nationalism in the Middle East is readily apparent in the case of Iraq. Although concepts like democracy, tolerance, and coexistence cannot be successfully imposed from the outside, a concerted international effort to assist Iraqis in creating sustainable structures for good governance in a pluralistic

society is urgently needed. Given the fact that successive Iraqi regimes have targeted non-Arab Sunni communities for ethnic cleansing and worse, it is imperative that any future structure of governance institutionalize protections and guarantees for all of Iraq's communities. Federalism is one model, perhaps the best, to guarantee the rights of all communities within Iraq.

Part V

Kurdish Nationalism, Human Rights, and Economic Change in an Islamic Iran

18

Kurdish Nationalism in Iran

CHARLES G. MACDONALD

The Kurdish identity in Iran has been a function of Kurdish nationalism, on one hand, and Iranian nationalism, on the other. An Iranian Kurd, Abbas Vali, speaking at a scholarly conference in London in the 1990s, asserted that he saw "Kurdish nationalists, but no Kurdish nationalism."[1] The response of many of the Kurds in the audience was sharp and critical, but the Vali statement offers crucial insights into the concept of Kurdish identity today. When the Kurdish experience in Iran is reviewed, it is clear that the status of the Kurds has fluctuated significantly since World War II and is a function of political and economic, as well as social and legal, developments. The Kurdish identity and Kurdish nationalism in Iran are products of internal developments within Iran and broader regional and global developments impacting on the Kurds. Professor Vali's comments can be taken in multiple ways, but this chapter will point to the national development of the Iranian Kurds separated from other Kurds in other states by national boundaries. These boundaries have resulted in separate national developments of the disparate Kurdish political groupings. In particular, national boundaries have promoted separate Kurdish identities in the different states because of language differences, distinct national experiences and thus distinct political goals, and a vulnerability to manipulation by rival external states.[2] In other words, the Kurds in Iran have developed differently from the Kurds in other parts of historic greater Kurdistan because of separation. The separation caused problems of communication because of language differences. Their national goals were tied to their experience in Iran. Political manipulation by outside parties was ubiquitous. The Iraqi government supported the Kurds in Iran. The Iranian government supported the Kurds in Iraq, aligning them against the Kurds in Iran. Practically speaking, while Kurdish nationalists seek to support Kurdish interests in their respective states, they have not been unified politically and have no common nationalism. The various host states nevertheless fear that Kurds will move to unify with Kurds across borders or will seek to emulate their political successes.

This chapter proposes to examine the Kurdish identity in Iran as determined by the Kurdish nation experience in Iran. The situation has fluctuated significantly since the Iranian Revolution and the creation of the Islamic Re-

public of Iran. In the past quarter of a century, the Iranian Kurds have faced a number of tragedies that have transformed their political goals and identity. The first part of this chapter will explore the spatial status of the Kurds in Iran with its ambiguities and misunderstandings. Next, the Kurdish political goals will be analyzed vis-à-vis the Iranian government. The chapter will then consider the human dimension of the Kurds as refugees, displaced persons, and the economically disadvantaged. The chapter will conclude that Kurdish identity remains dynamic and will be determined, in part, by the ongoing status of the Kurds in Iran.

Kurdish Identity in Iran and Beyond

The celebration of Nowruz, or the New Year, is an Iranian and a Kurdish tradition that is not common to the histories of other host states where Kurds reside. The Kurdish identity in Iran remains an issue in itself. Kurds are an Indo-European people believed to be descendants of the Medes, as are the Iranians.[3] The Kurdish language is Indo-European on the Iranian tree of languages, as is Persian or Farsi. The Kurds are culturally similar to Persians and other Iranians. For the most part, they are not assimilated into Iranian society.

The spatial setting of the Kurds offers some insight into how they are perceived in Iran. One common misunderstanding is that many Iranians see the Kurds as living only in the province of Kordestan. A significant problem for the Kurds in Iran (as for the Kurds in Iraq) is what makes up the area of Kurdistan within the national boundaries.[4] The Kurds claim a population as high as 16 percent of Iran's population, or over 10 million. U.S. government sources place the Kurdish population closer to 5 million; the *CIA World Factbook 2005* places the July 2004 Iranian population at 69,018,924 with 7 percent being Kurdish. Iranian Kurds claim 125,000 square kilometers in Kurdistan, consisting of Western Azerbaijan, Kermanshah, and Ilam in addition to Kordestan.[5] Also, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) points to the 1.5 million Kurds living in Khorassan and another 700,000 Kurds who have migrated to larger cities, including as many as 500,000 in Teheran.[6]

At the time of the Iranian revolution, the Iranian Kurds were part of the vision of Greater Kurdistan or "the Kurdistan of five parts." (The five parts became seven parts with the fragmentation of the Soviet Union.) The separate history of the Iranian Kurds, however, has given them a worldview essentially within Iranian boundaries with political goals tied to Iran. Kurdish political goals were within the Iranian political context.

Kurdish Political Goals in Iran

In Iran's unstable political environment after World War II, Kurdish political goals were carefully enunciated by the KDPI. This group was established in 1945 under the aegis of Qazi Mohammed, as a successor to the Komala J.K. in Mahabad, and it envisioned Kurdish autonomy within the Iranian state. The Kurds moved to realize autonomy against the backdrop of the presence of Soviet forces, which were reluctant to leave Iran after World War II. The Kurds established what was called the Republic of Mahabad, but the Kurds had not claimed independence. Qazi Mohammed had several political goals in Iran:

1. Kurds "must manage their own local affairs and be granted autonomy within Iran's frontiers."
2. Kurds "must be allowed to study in their mother tongue. The official administrative language in the Kurdish territories must be Kurdish."
3. Iran's "constitution should guarantee that district councilors for Kurdistan be elected to take charge of all social and administrative matters."
4. "State officials must be chosen from the local population."
5. Law "should provide the basis for agreements between peasants and landowners so as to safeguard both sides' futures."
6. The KDPI "struggles for complete fraternity and unity with the Azerbaijani people and with the minorities resident in Azerbaijan."
7. The KDPI "is committed to progress in agriculture and trade; to developing education and sanitation; to furthering the spiritual and material well-being of the Kurdish people; and to the best use of the natural resources of Kurdistan."
8. The KDPI "demands freedom of political action for all the people of Iran so that the whole country may rejoice in progress."[7]

The historical position of the KDPI under Qazi Mohammed in history is unclear. The stated political goals focused upon Kurdish autonomy within Iran's frontiers, but it remained unclear whether the Kurds were seeking an autonomous regional government or a fully independent republic.[8] After the departure of Soviet forces, Iranian troops crushed the Kurdish government under Qazi Muhammed. Qazi Mohammed was hanged.[9] The KDPI continued its stated goal of autonomy.

When the Iranian revolution came, the Kurds sought autonomy for Kurdistan and democracy for Iran. The chaos that ensued in the revolution enabled the Kurds to realize a de facto autonomy under the KDPI led by Dr. Abdulrahman Qasemlou. The Kurdish political and cultural demands were not realized because the Kurds were again put down by force. Ayatollah Khomeini identified the Kurds as traitors and separatists. It might be remembered that

the Iranian Kurds had traditionally received assistance from Iraq. Nevertheless, Dr. Qasemlou was determined to make it clear that the Kurds were only seeking autonomy or self-rule within Iran, but he did not prevail. Islamic Iran attacked the Kurds with its technologically superior military. In some ways, the attack enabled the central government to consolidate its power. The KDPI was forced to flee the cities, but the armed struggle continued seeking autonomy and democracy. A cease-fire was declared, and negotiations followed.

Eight Kurdish demands made public in November 1979 included recognition of Kurdish autonomy in the constitution; recognition of the provinces of Kordistan, Western Azerbaijan, Kermanshah, and Ilam as autonomous Kurdistan; an autonomous Kurdish government with an elected national assembly; recognition of Kurdish as an official language in Iran; budget allocations to improve Kurdistan's economy; a Kurdish role in the central government; Kurdish recognition of the central government role over defense and the economy; and recognition of democratic freedoms for all of Iran.[10] The government responded by offering the Kurds a form of self-administration, but not autonomy. The government viewed the Kurds as a Sunni minority, not a Kurdish minority. It denied Kurdish claims to Western Azerbaijan, arguing that Azeris were a majority there. It also denied claims to Kermanshah and Ilam, contending that each had a Shi'a, not a Sunni, majority. The Kurdish counterproposal called for a general election to identify the Kurdish provinces. The proposal was ignored. When the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran was created, it did not allow for Kurdish rights. It did provide for Kurdish to be offered in schools, but the practice of disallowing Kurdish has continued.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kurds

The Kurdish struggle for self-determination within Iran faced new problems with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Kurds anticipated autonomy and democracy after the overthrow of the shah, but they found themselves alienated from the Iranian body politic.[11] Abdulrahman Qasemlou moved away from armed struggle and sought to negotiate a new relationship with the Islamic Republic, but on 13 July 1989, he was assassinated in Vienna by an agent of the Islamic Republic. His successor, Dr. Sadegh Sharafkandi, was assassinated in Berlin three years later, allegedly by an Iranian agent. The next head of the KDPI, Mustafa Hijri (1992–95), was followed by Mamoste Abdullah Hassanzada (1995 to the present). It was only under Hassanzada in 1996 that the KDPI declared an end to its armed struggle in Iran. A significant change had taken place. The KDPI, to a degree, had been marginalized. Iranian Kurds faced poverty and were one of the most dispossessed peoples in the country.

But were they victims of a purposeful policy of the central government, or was their economic plight equally shared by others in the Islamic Republic?

The 1997 election of the reform-minded President Mohammed Khatemi brought new hope to the Iranian Kurds. Even though the KDPI called for the Kurds to abstain from the elections, they voted in great numbers for Khatemi. Moreover, thirty Kurdish deputies were elected to the majlis. The 2000 majlis was a reform majlis and was received with optimism. Subsequent unfulfilled promises represented the frustrations of the changing political landscape in Iran.

Kurds as Refugees in Iran and Beyond

Another significant aspect of the Kurdish identity in Iran is the status of Kurds as refugees and displaced persons. This, of course, is a function of conflicts in neighboring countries, as well as local economic suffering. Many of the Kurdish refugees and displaced persons came from neighboring Iraq or Turkey. Similarly, the Kurds have fled Iran for political and economic reasons and are now refugees in Iraq or Turkey. Many have fled the Kurdish provinces to urban areas for similar reasons. While the refugee status of Kurds is a function, to a degree, of the Kurdish national aspirations, it is also a function of being caught in the throes of war and internal conflict.

Kurdish refugees from Iraq have come in waves. First, Kurds fled Iraq in 1975 following the Algiers Agreement between the shah and Saddam Hussein when Iran stopped its support (as did the United States and Israel) to the Iraqi Kurds in their struggle with Saddam's central government. Iraqi Kurds fled in 1988 following Iran's cease-fire agreement ending the Iraq-Iraq War. Saddam sent his military to Halabja in a "war of extermination," killing five thousand Kurds. The United States condemned the use of chemical weapons by Iraq, but then handed Saddam $1 billion. The largest wave of Kurds flowed into Iran after the first Gulf War. The United States encouraged them to rise up against Saddam, only to watch Saddam's forces create an unprecedented exodus of millions of Kurds out of Iraq and into Turkey and Iran.[12] Yet another wave of Iraqi Kurds came into Iran in 1996 following internal strife. Moreover, the Iraqi effort to Arabize the Kirkuk area led to Kurds being forced from their homes. On the other hand, Iranian moves against the KDPI and other opposition groups have caused Kurds to flee into Iraq, Turkey, and beyond.

The plight of Kurdish refugees changed the way Iran and its neighbors viewed the Kurds.[13] The declared end of armed struggle by the Iranian Kurds and Turkey's capture of Abdullah Öcalan have changed the way Kurds look at themselves. Similarly, the roles assumed by the Kurds in Iraq's democratic

process after Saddam are promising. In Turkey, the accession process to the European Union has brought greater attention to the human rights of Kurds in Turkey.

The number of Kurdish refugees in Iran remains significant. The Iranian Bureau of Alien and Foreign Immigrants Affairs has cooperated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to screen and document Kurdish refugees. Iran once had more refugees than any other state. While Iran has cooperated with the UNHCR, many problems remain, especially for the unregistered refugees. The Kurdish refugees as a whole tend to live at the subsistence level with their plight even worse than many of Iran's Kurds, if that is possible.

Outlook for Iranian Kurds

Although Iranian Kurds moved to stop armed struggle in 1996 and participated in the Iranian political system by voting in elections, they remain victims of human rights violations. Iranian Kurdistan remains in a "situation of underdevelopment."[14] In other words, the Kurds are no longer a challenge *to* the central government of the Islamic Republic; they represent a challenge *for* the central government.

The armed struggle has gone, but the Kurdish question in Iran remains. The Kurdish demands are made within the Iranian political system. Kurdish human rights activists raise issues as illustrated in an Amnesty International report of 3 March 2005, which reported threats and other hostile actions against the NGO known as the Association for the Defense of Children's Rights and the Kurdish Women Defending Peace and Human Rights.[15]

The KDPI continues to raise issues concerning the status of Kurds in Iran. Abdullah Khosrow stated the following in his 2001 speech before the International Conference on Forced Deportation and Displacements of Kurdish Civilian Populations in Paris: Iran has maintained the Kurdish region in a "situation of underdevelopment" and has failed to provide the promised industry for Kurdistan. Kurds in the government work outside of Kurdistan. Iran has sought to change the nature of Kurdish towns by moving Shi'a populations to the Kurdish region and by converting young Kurds to Shi'ism. Iran refuses to recognize the extent of the Kurdish region. Iran has had a policy of eliminating Kurdish leaders.

The UN Commission on Human Rights, Special Representative on Iran, has also been critical of Iranian policy. In January 2002, Maurice Danby Copithorne noted the problem of assessing the status of the Kurdish minority in Iran without access. While he mentioned some improvement, he charged "discrimination and repression continue to exist." Copithorne further noted

the economic problems of the Kurds: scarcity of jobs and an unemployment rate reported at 25 percent. He included examples of discrimination and violence against Kurds and pointed to Iran's refusal to allow the Kurdish language in Kurdish schools, despite the fact that it is permitted by the constitution.[16]

When the Kurds protested following the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of Turkey's Kurdistan Workers Party, they were met with violence. The U.S. State Department reported twenty deaths and hundreds of arrests.[17] Similar protests, violence, and arrests occurred in Kurdish communities elsewhere. Nevertheless, the actions of the Iranian authorities were extreme.

It is clear that the Kurdish community in Iran faces repression and discrimination. Can the Iranian authorities reverse the discrimination and improve the status of the Kurds? Issues of repression and economic inequalities were instrumental in the coming of the Islamic Revolution. As human rights advocates are replacing *peshmerga*, and as the Kurds are expressing their political demands within the system, it appears that the Islamic Republic has the opportunity to respond positively. Promises of reform should be addressed with a view to upholding the values of Iran's own Islamic Revolution. It will not be easy.

The Kurdish identity in Iran has merged with that of the Iranian identity in some areas. Kurds see themselves as both Kurds and Iranians. If the basic Kurdish desires for fair treatment are not addressed, however, the Kurds will distance themselves from Iranians.

19

Competing National Identities

The Kurdish Conundrum in Iran

NADER ENTESSAR

This chapter studies the opportunities and constraints facing the Kurdish minority in contemporary Iran. Are the Kurds an ethnic group (*qowm*) or a nation (*mellat*)? If a nation is an ethnic group that seeks political autonomy or independence from the larger entity in which it resides, what are the Iranian Kurds? What do they demand from the central government in Tehran? How do they view themselves within the broader context of Iranian nationality and state? What does "self-determination" mean when used by politically active Kurdish groups in the country? These questions do not lend themselves to easy answers, but they are nevertheless important to understanding the Kurdish situation in contemporary Iran. What makes the matter more problematic is the language used to discuss it. Unlike the Ottoman Empire for which the terms *qowm* and *mellat* had distinct meanings, Iranians for the most part have used these terms interchangeably.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review the vast theoretical literature on ethnicity and nationalism.[1] Perhaps as Hugh Seton-Watson has stated, "No 'scientific definition' of *nation* can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists."[2] Benedict Anderson has provided an intellectually challenging and interesting approach to the study of nationhood and nationalism. He defines a nation as an "imagined political community. . . . Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined."[3] By implication, an ethnic group, like a nation, can be perceived as an imagined political community irrespective of the strength of the actual primordialist or other types of identity that may exist among the members of that ethnic community. That is, on the strength of subjective (i.e., imagined) feelings, an ethnic group can transform itself into a nation with rights of sovereignty and self-determination. It is this emotional attachment to an "imagined political community" that has fueled ethnic drives for self-determination in recent decades throughout the world.

The development of Kurdish nationalism, or at least its politicized variety in Iran, must be seen within the broader context of Iran's journey toward modern, territorially based nationalism. The Russo-Persian War of 1804 that resulted in the loss of vast tracts of land in the Caucasus to czarist Russia was a defining moment for the development of Iranian nationalism based on the "myth of unity" among the country's constituent parts and groups. Iranian officials as well as intellectuals began to develop a new concept of Iranian identity away from its long-established cultural construct and more toward a land-based, territorially focused, and Persianized concept of nationhood. As Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet has noted, "The Iranian homeland, though still formally the birthplace of Armenians, Kurds, and Baluchis, as well as Farsis and others, increasingly came to represent the *vatan* [country] of Shi'a Persians through the persistent efforts of the state to extirpate competing cultures."[4] In the same vein, Mustafa Vaziri argues, à la Benedict Anderson, that the modern notion of Iranian nationhood has been an imaginary construct created by Iranian intellectuals and historians to glorify Iran's past and create a fictitious notion of territorial unity.[5] Vaziri, of course, does not deny the existence of a strong sense of Iranian identity and culture. What he contends is that nationalism based on the close identification of a nation with an all-powerful and centrally controlled state dominated by a single ethnic group is an "imagined" nationalism.

This new form of Iranian nationalism was further buttressed after Reza Khan's coronation as the first shah of the new Pahlavi dynasty in 1926 as he sought to impose the central government's authority through a series of military ventures in various provinces. Conflict between the increasingly Persian-dominated central government and the non-Persian ethnic groups in Iran intensified at all levels. This was particularly true in the country's Kurdish regions where tribal uprisings had bedeviled the central government's authorities for several decades. For example, under the leadership of Ismail Agha Simko, the chief of the Shakkak tribe, the central government lost its authority over much of Iranian Kurdistan in the early part of the twentieth century. Reza Khan's military victory over Simko was indeed a major undertaking that augured similar moves against other rebellions and the ultimate establishment of the central government's authority throughout the country.[6]

The most serious Kurdish challenge to the Iranian government's authority occurred in 1946 when the autonomous Republic of Mahabad was established. Although the Mahabad Republic collapsed after only one year, its ultimate meaning for today's Kurdish dilemma in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East remains a subject of intense debate among the Kurds. Was Qazi Mohammed, the president of the Mahabad Republic, a Soviet puppet (as his critics have claimed), a naïve nationalist, or a patriot whose main objective was to create

an autonomous Kurdistan within a democratic and federal Iran? What was the extent of Soviet involvement in supporting the Mahabad Republic and its ill-fated contemporary in Iranian Azerbaijan? These and similar questions are important issues for historical research and debate. However, for our purposes, there is little doubt that the rise and fall of the Mahabad Republic was a watershed in politicizing Kurdish ethnic demands in Iran.[7]

The demise of the autonomous republics in Mahabad and Azerbaijan accelerated the process of the reintegration of non-Persian ethnic groups into the emerging centralized power structure in the Pahlavi Iran. For example, many of the Kurdish tribes that had joined forces with the Mahabad Republic returned to their tribal areas. In the words of General Hassan Arfa, chief of staff of the Iranian army between 1944 and 1946, the Kurds returned to their tribal homelands, "not with the bitter and humiliated feelings of a vanquished nation which had lost its dearly won but short-lived independence, but only with the knowledge that this venture, like many others before, had not come off and that for the time being they had better sit quietly and show themselves good citizens."[8] Notwithstanding General Arfa's assessment, the Kurds accelerated their demands for cultural autonomy after the demise of the Mahabad Republic. As people with common culture and historical experience and a distinctive language, the Iranian Kurds had long felt that without cultural autonomy, they could not attain full citizenship rights in the country. In fact, attachment to the Kurdish language remains perhaps the most important manifestation of contemporary Kurdish nationalism.

Kurdish belongs to the family of Iranian languages and thus has an Indo-European origin. It is more akin to Persian than to Arabic. Nevertheless, Kurdish is distinct from other Iranian languages and is generally unintelligible to the speakers of Persian. There is no Kurdish lingua franca, and speakers of various Kurdish dialects may not be able to communicate with each other. However, one should not overemphasize the differences among various Kurdish dialects, as they are all related to each other. For example, Kurmanji-speaking Turkish Kurds can easily learn other Kurdish languages and communicate with their counterparts in Iraq. In Iran, the main Kurdish dialect is Sorani, which is widely used in such major Kurdish cities such as Mahabad, Saqqez, Sanandaj, and Marivan. Sorani is also the main dialect of the Iraqi Kurds in Erbil, Sulaimaniyya, and Kirkuk. Kurds in Kermanshah use Kermanshani, which is similar to Luri, an Iranian language spoken by the Lurs, who live primarily in the neighboring province of Luristan. The Kurds living around Paveh and some other towns near the Iran-Iraq border region use Hawrami (Gurani). In short, language remains the most significant barometer of Kurdish identity in Iran and the rest of the Middle East.[9]

Mohammed Reza Shah and the Kurds

After the downfall of the Mahabad Republic, the Iranian government outlawed the Kurdish Democratic Party, which had led the revolt against the central government and whose members were heavily involved in running the Mahabad government. The period immediately following 1946 was marked by nationalistic ferment. The issue of nationalization of the Iranian oil industry, which had been championed by the nascent nationalist coalition, the National Front, and its leader, Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, had galvanized the entire country. Mossadegh's nationalistic platform, his liberal democratic ideals, and his desire to govern the country through free elections generated enthusiasm among the Iranian Kurds. When Mohammed Reza Shah was compelled to appoint Mossadegh as prime minister under heavy popular pressure, the Kurdish Democratic Party resurrected itself and began to campaign in various Kurdish cities and towns. Kurdish support for Dr. Mossadegh's government convinced the shah that the Kurds had to be contained at all costs. In a massive display of support for Mossadegh's crusade to force the shah to reign and not rule, as stipulated in Iran's monarchical constitution, Iranian Kurds voted overwhelmingly in a referendum on 13 August 1953 to limit the shah's power. According to Dr. Abdulrahman Qasemlou, the shah received only two out of a total of five thousand votes cast in the city of Mahabad.[10]

After the Anglo-American–sponsored coup of August 1953 and Mossadegh's overthrow, the Kurds once again found themselves at the mercy of the shah's regime, and the Iranian army was once again placed in charge of Kurdistan. Although sporadic rebellions continued, no sustained Kurdish revolt occurred in Iran from 1953 until the onset of the Iranian revolution in 1978. The shah's success in containing Kurdish nationalism was partly a result of the superior forces of the Iranian army and partly a result of his government's successful carrot-and-stick policy. For example, the shah managed to "pacify" Kurdistan through a selective policy of co-optation of tribal leaders by offering them political and financial rewards. The powerful Jaf tribal chiefs are a good case in point. The shah's government identified traditional power holders in the tribe and subsequently gave them high-level positions in the local and national government apparatus. When he embarked upon his land reform program in the 1960s, the shah left the large landholdings of the Jaf tribal leaders untouched. Salar Jaf was given a position in the imperial palace bureaucracy, while his brother, Sardar Jaf, became an influential member of the Iranian parliament.

The Ardalan tribe also provided individuals who rose to prominence during the shah's reign. Moreover, Kurdish soldiers rose to the highest military ranks

in the shah's armed forces. For example, one of the most loyal supporters of the shah, even after the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy, was General Mustafa Palizban, the Kurdish governor general of Kermanshah. Using his knowledge of the topography and geography of Kurdistan and his network of connections in the area, General Palizban remained a thorn in the side of the Islamic Republic for many years.[11] The shah also sought to stifle overt manifestations of Kurdish ethnicity by requiring Persian as the sole language not only in governmental communications but also in printed media and books. Although limited radio and television broadcasts in Kurdish were allowed, all primary and secondary teaching was in Persian. To ensure adherence to the shah's linguistic policies, the government sent many non-Kurds to staff educational institutions in the Kurdish regions of the country.

The shah's final policy posture vis-à-vis the Kurds was precipitated by the Kurdish revolt in Iraq. The shah viewed the assumption of power by the "radical nationalist" Baath Party in Iraq as a threat to Iran's national security. Therefore, he decided to use the Kurdish revolt in Iraq as a counterforce to weaken the Baath regime in Baghdad. Until 1966, the only significant outside help to the Kurdish guerrillas, who were led by the veteran fighter Mullah Mustafa Barzani, had come from the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran. However, according to Abdulrahman Qasemlou, the shah soon recognized the potential for using direct aid to Barzani as a means to "secure some direct influence within the Kurdish national movement. The idea was to make Barzani's movement depend upon the aid and to increase that aid as the movement grew so that eventually the Kurdish movement's survival would depend upon it."[12] The shah had correctly calculated that by helping Barzani, he could compel him to cease his aid to the Iranian Kurds and even collaborate with the shah's government in restraining Kurdish activities inside Iran.

As the Iranian government's aid to Mullah Mustafa Barzani increased, so did the shah's influence over his movement's activities. This resulted in the 1966 issuance of a major policy statement by Barzani regarding the direction of the Kurdish movement in Iran. In his policy directive, Barzani called on Kurdish nationalists to cease their hostile activities against the shah's regime. To do otherwise, the memorandum warned, would result in the cutoff of Iranian support for the Kurdish guerrillas in Iraq and would lead to a certain defeat of the Kurdish uprising against the Baath regime. Barzani further stated that those who refused to obey his directive would be considered an enemy of the "Kurdish revolution." Mullah Mustafa Barzani had apparently concluded that his forces had a greater chance of success against the Iraqi government than the Kurds in Iran had against the shah's regime, and that all Kurds would have to sacrifice their own objectives for the more immediate cause of a Kurdish victory in Iraq.

In the final analysis, Barzani's policy of collaborating with the shah's regime proved disastrous for his own political fortunes and the cause of Kurdish autonomy. Scores of Kurdish militants who had left Iran to join Barzani's forces returned home disillusioned with his strategy and objectives. The returning Iranian Kurdish fighters soon found themselves surrounded by the Iranian army and their escape routes blocked by Barzani's forces. Some key members of this group, such as Abdullah Moini and Sharif Zadeh, were killed fighting the Iranian army. Sulayman Moini, Abdullah's older brother, and a number of other Iranian Kurds were arrested on Barzani's orders and later executed by his forces. According to one estimate, some forty Iranian Kurdish militants were either killed by Barzani's forces or handed over to Iranian authorities to face certain death.[13] Barzani himself was victimized by the shah's policy of divide-and-rule when the shah and Saddam Hussein signed the Algiers Agreement in 1975, thus abruptly terminating Iran's aid to the Iraqi Kurds, inflicting a severe blow to the cause of Kurdish autonomy in Iraq, and bringing to an end the long career of Mullah Mustafa Barzani as the most significant Kurdish leader of his time.

Iran's Revolution and the Kurds

The Kurds enthusiastically supported the Iranian revolution of 1978–79, and a broad spectrum of the Kurdish population participated in the revolutionary process from the outset. However, the initial Kurdish euphoria over the demise of the Pahlavi monarchy soon gave way to the bitter realization that the Kurdish autonomy demands would go unheeded by the new Islamic government. After the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it became evident that Ayatollah Khomeini's objective of establishing a strong and centralized Islamic state would clash with the goals of autonomy-seeking Kurds. Despite Khomeini's rejection of ethnic differences among Muslims, the constitution of the Islamic Republic did recognize the existence of linguistic diversity among the Iranian people. In article 15 of the constitution, Persian is recognized as the official language of the country. All official communications, as well as instructional and educational materials, must be in Persian. However, the use of local languages in the media and in the classroom is permitted so long as they are used in conjunction with Persian.[14] The only specific recognition given to the minorities in Iran's Islamic constitution was to the non-Islamic religious minorities (Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians) and not to the Islamic minorities, such as the Kurds. The Kurds were viewed as an integral part of the Islamic *umma* (or community) and hence were not to be treated differently than other Muslim groups in the country.

The Kurds, however, saw an unrivaled window of opportunity created by

the downfall of the monarchy to push for the autonomy and recognition of their cultural rights by the new government in Iran. Dr. Abdulrahman Qasemlou, who had become the secretary general of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) in 1973, returned to Iran on the eve of the Iranian revolution after several years of exile in Europe and sought to transform what was then a dormant KDPI into the principal Kurdish political organization in the country. On 30–31 March 1979 the Iranian government conducted a referendum asking the voters to vote on a single proposal—to maintain the monarchical system or replace it with an Islamic republic. The KDPI, as well as many other secular groups in the country, boycotted the referendum because it offered only two choices to the voters. Given the general antipathy toward the shah's regime and revolutionary euphoria, it was evident that the majority of voters would opt for the choice of the Islamic Republic. Khomeini's exhortations for a massive turnout resulted in an overwhelming victory for the new regime, as 98.2 percent voted to replace the monarchy with an Islamic republic.[15] The Kurds had lost their first political battle with the revolutionary regime in Tehran.

The Kurds then shifted the focus of their political struggle to affect the draft of Iran's new constitution. The proposed constitution was unveiled by the provisional revolutionary government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan in June 1979. Although the draft of the constitution contained democratic provisions to safeguard the rights of all Iranians, the Kurds felt that it did not address their autonomy demands adequately. The KDPI joined many other nationalist and secularist groups and demanded that a constituent assembly, consisting of no more than 500 representatives, be elected to debate and revise the draft constitution. Fearing the dilution of the Islamic elements of the draft constitution if a constituent assembly, representing several constituencies and interests, were to review the document, Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the establishment of an Assembly of Experts to review the proposed constitution. Kurdish nationalists were not included in this body of seventy-three men. Nevertheless, the Kurds continued to articulate their views on the shape of the new constitution in formal and informal gatherings. For example, Sheikh Ezzedin Husseini, the spiritual leader of the Sunni Kurds in Mahabad, argued that since Iran was a multinational state, its constitution must legally recognize the cultural, economic, and sociopolitical rights of all ethnic and religious groups in the country.

Furthermore, many Sunni religious leaders opposed the inclusion of Shi'ism as the official religion of the state in the new constitution. According to Ayatollah Montazeri, the head of the Assembly of Experts at the time of the drafting of the Islamic Republic's constitution, conflicting opinions were expressed by the members of the Assembly on this issue. The Sunni clerics as well as some Shi'a members of the Assembly of Experts (e.g., Azodi) preferred Islam rather

than Shi'a Islam to be listed in the new constitution as the official religion. Ahmad Moftizadeh, a Sunni Kurdish cleric sympathetic to the Islamic Republic, was also asked to express his views to the members of the Assembly of Experts. In the final analysis, those favoring the inclusion of Shi'a Islam as the official religion prevailed. They argued that the overwhelming majority of Iranians are Shi'a Muslims and that even the monarchical constitution had recognized Shi'a Islam as the official state religion. It would be unthinkable for the Islamic Republic to do less than the shah had done in this respect. Moreover, they reasoned that the Sunnis would still be able to follow their religious practices and follow the rulings of their own judges in religious courts.[16] The Kurdish leaders were also concerned that the clerical leadership in Tehran would seek to replace Kurdish leaders, both secular and religious, with Shi'a personalities or Sunnis loyal to the Islamic Republic. As evidenced by subsequent developments, the Kurdish fears in this regard were not without foundation.

Acrimonious debates about the draft constitution and Kurdish autonomy demands conjured up memories of the Mahabad Republic. Furthermore, Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters within the clergy feared that the foundation of their preferred system of government would be weakened if ethnic demands, especially secular ones, were accommodated in the revised constitution. To make matters worse, tension between the Islamic authorities and Kurds manifested itself in a series of armed clashes between the forces of the KDPI and the newly created Revolutionary Guards (pasdaran-e enghelab). In order to stem the tide of armed conflicts in Kurdistan, Sheikh Mohammed Sadegh Sadeghi Guivi (better known as Sadegh Khalkhali) was dispatched to the region to punish those who had taken up arms against the new regime in Tehran. As the first judge of the revolutionary courts he had condemned scores of high-level officials of the Pahlavi regime to death. Khalkhali's arrival bode ill for a peaceful resolution of the Kurdish conflict. In a series of trials that lacked even the most basic elements of fairness, Khalkhali condemned scores of Kurdish nationalists to death. He blamed Prime Minister Bazargan, who had tried unsuccessfully in the past to control Khalkhali's freewheeling dispensation of justice, for the deterioration of conditions in Kurdistan. In particular, Khalkhali accused Bazargan of currying favor with Qasemlou and other high officials of the KDPI. As Khalkhali put it, by placing "known communists" in key positions in Kurdistan, Bazargan was responsible for the martyrdom of Revolutionary Guards in the region, and by undermining the authority of the revolutionary courts, Bazargan "weakened their steadfastness."[17] Continuing armed clashes between the Kurds and the Iranian military and Revolutionary Guards led to the banning of the KDPI at the end of autumn 1979 followed by Ayatollah Khomeini's labeling of Qasemlou as "corrupter for the earth" (*mofsid-e fil arz*). However, shortly before the complete breakdown of nego-

tiations between the Kurds and the representatives of the Iranian government, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a conciliatory message addressed to the people of Kurdistan. For the first time, Khomeini publicly acknowledged the legitimate grievances of the Kurds. He promised to continue negotiations with religious and nationalist leaders of the Kurds until peace was restored. Khomeini further stated that a lot of people in Iran had suffered under the monarchy and the revolutionary government, and he asked for their patience. In the last paragraph, Khomeini beseeched the Kurds to join him in the name of God and Islam to "save our country and to direct our energies against the real enemies of our country led by the United States."[18] The content and tone of Khomeini's last message to the Kurds was profoundly different from his previous message delivered three months earlier in which he had issued an ultimatum for the Kurds to lay down their arms. It was apparent that Khomeini had feared that continuing armed clashes in Kurdistan would redound to the detriment of the Islamic Republic and could have even broadened the conflict with unforeseen consequences for the integrity of the country.

Factional Politics in Iranian Kurdistan

The banning of the KDPI and damning of its leaders by the Islamic Republic did not put an end to the Kurdish leadership's search for dialogue with the Iranian government. However, Qasemlou's dabbling with the Islamic Republic in search of moderate figures within the ruling circles in Tehran caused open dissension within the KDPI. Some on the left in the KDPI accused Qasemlou and the "Kurdish bourgeoisie" of betraying the Kurdish cause by abandoning KDPI's ideals in favor of a policy of national reconciliation with the "Iranian bourgeoisie" in the Islamic government. This led to a major schism within the KDPI. The ensuing power struggle among the different political factions was carried into the KDPI's eighth congress in 1988, resulting in the expulsion of fifteen prominent members of the party's executive committee. The Left then coalesced around the expelled members and established a new movement, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran—Revolutionary Leadership. However, this breakaway party was never able to develop into a broad-based popular organization and eventually withered away as a functioning entity.[19]

The KDPI was dealt a major blow when Qasemlou was assassinated on 13 July 1989 while meeting with representatives of the Iranian government in a Vienna apartment. Dr. Abdullah Ghaderi-Azar, the KDPI's chief representative in Europe, and Dr. Fazel Rasul, a member of the Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, were also murdered. According to both the KDPI and independent sources, they were connected with certain circles in the Iranian power

structure. After Qasemlou's assassination, the KDPI appointed Dr. Sadegh Sharafkandi as the KDPI's new secretary general. Sharafkandi, KDPI European and German representatives, and four other Iranian dissident leaders were gunned down in the Mykonos restaurant in Berlin in 1992. The Mykonos incident and the subsequent verdict handed down by a German court on 10 April 1997 further strained Kurdish-Iranian relations. The significance of the Mykonos verdict was that, for the first time, a foreign court had implicated the highest echelon of the Iranian government, including the Supreme Guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and then president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, in ordering the killings of the KDPI's leader and other dissidents.[20] The KDPI once again swiftly appointed Mustafa Hijri to replace Sharafkandi. Hijri later stepped aside in favor of Abdullah Hassan Zadeh, the KDPI's current secretary general. In my judgment, the KDPI has yet to fully recover from the loss of Qasemlou. He was an adept politician who had extensive contacts within society. Moreover, because of his long residence in Europe, Qasemlou had been the most recognizable political leader with the widest appeal within the Iranian Kurdish population since the downfall of the Mahabad Republic.

The misfortunes of the KDPI, both before and after Qasemlou's assassination, allowed another Kurdish movement, the Revolutionary Organization of the Kurdish Workers of Iran (Komala), to emerge as the main contender for Kurdish aspirations, especially among the urbanized youth. As a Marxist-Leninist movement, the Komala was as critical of the "Kurdish bourgeoisie" (i.e., KDPI) as it was of the Islamic Republic. It was able to expand its appeal by securing the support of Sheikh Ezzedin Husseini, the popular Sunni religious leader of Mahabad. Unlike the KDPI, the Komala saw the success of the Kurdish struggle within the context of a Marxist-Leninist revolution throughout Iran.[21] In other words, the Komala viewed itself as a movement that transcended the ethnic boundaries in the country. As has been the case with similar ideologically rigid and doctrinaire movements, a faction within the leadership broke away from the Komala and created the Workers' Communist Party of Iran (Hezb-e Kommunist-e Kargari-e Iran). Most of the remaining members of the Komala eventually reconciled with the KDPI. Today, the Komala is a shell of its earlier self, and it is unclear whether it still has any effective organization in Iranian Kurdistan. The Workers' Communist Party has remained active outside Iran with branches in many western countries, including the United States. Although this party operates an active publication business and is visible in anti-Islamic demonstrations in the West, it is doubtful that it has any firm base inside Iranian Kurdistan. In short, despite its personal tragedies and organizational setbacks, the KDPI remains the most recognizable and best organized political movement among the Iranian Kurds.

Khatami's Administration and the Kurdish Challenge

The election of Mohammed Khatami as Iran's president in May 1997 and the defeat of conservative forces in the February 2000 parliamentary elections generated a great deal of expectation for political change in Iran. Khatami, a reformist mid-ranking cleric, received some 70 percent of the popular vote with a mandate to reform Iran's political system and allow the emergence of a genuinely pluralistic political culture in the country. As Khatami had written, "We cannot expect any positive transformations anywhere [in Iran] unless the yearning for freedom is fulfilled. That is the freedom to think and the security to express new thinking."[22] Furthermore, from the beginning of his presidency, Khatami continued to emphasize the notion of inclusiveness (i.e., Iran for all Iranians) and the importance of the rule of law in nurturing and enhancing the foundation of Iran's political system.[23] The Kurds, as well as several other ethnic groups in the country, welcomed Khatami's election. The reform movement (the Second of Khordad) that brought Khatami to power and provided him with political backing proved to be weak. In addition to limits imposed on the authority of the president by the Iranian constitution, Khatami and his supporters were challenged in all arenas by their conservative opponents. When challenged, Khatami always conceded. Closing down reformist newspapers and organizations as well as jailing supporters of political reform have all gone unchallenged by Khatami except for occasional denouncements of violations of the rule of law.

In Kurdistan, the arrest of officials, some of whom had identified with Khatami's programs, has intensified since 1999. City council elections have been nullified by conservative forces. The credentials of either pro-reform or independent Kurdish politicians have been rejected when they seek to run for various offices in the province. In a crackdown on Kurdish officials, Governor General of Kurdistan Abdullah Ramazanzadeh was summoned before the Special Court for Public Officials in April 2001 and was charged with the "dissemination of lies." Although Ramazanzadeh was released on bail on 9 April 2001, his arrest highlighted the precarious nature of the Second of Khordad coalition in the country. Ramazanzadeh's "crimes" were his objections to the nullification of the votes of two constituencies in the Kurdish cities of Baneh and Saqqez; thus he was accused of libelous statements against the Council of Guardians, which had ordered the nullification of the aforementioned constituency votes.[24]

Another significant political obstacle between Khatami and the Kurds is the presence of many individuals in the reform movement who had earlier participated in the suppression of Kurdish uprisings. Many Kurds believe that today's reformists are yesterday's oppressors and that they cannot be trusted. The case

of Hamid Reza Jalaipour is illustrative of this point. Jalaipour, who became a significant architect of the Second of Khordad reform movement and an editor of *Asr-e Azadegan*, the banned reformist Tehran daily, spent ten years in the province of Kurdistan fighting Kurdish autonomy demands. As a commander of a Revolutionary Guard unit, and later the governor of Naqdeh and Mahabad and deputy governor general for political affairs in Kordestan, Jalaipour was directly or indirectly responsible for some of the worst revolutionary excesses in that region. When asked if he had any remorse about ordering the execution of fifty-nine Kurdish nationalists, Jalaipour refused to offer any apology for his past actions by claiming that he could not be held responsible for actions undertaken when he was a revolutionary in his twenties and in the interest of saving the nascent Islamic Republic.[25] However, when Jalaipour was invited to participate in the now "infamous" Berlin Conference, organized by the Heinrich Boll Foundation in Germany to initiate a dialogue between the representatives of the reform movement in Iran and the outside world, Jalaipour claimed that he had been misquoted by the correspondent of *Asr-e Azadegan,* who was a Kurd himself.[26] These exchanges also demonstrated the existing gap between the reform movement and the Kurds.

The lingering suspicion that the Kurdish demand for autonomy is, in fact, a disguised attempt at secession has hindered meaningful dialogue between the Iranian reformists and the Kurds. From the outset, the Kurds have denied that their aim is to weaken Iran or to establish a sovereign nation-state of Kurdistan. As Qasemlou stated, "Let me make one thing clear: no political force in Iranian Kurdistan wants to secede from Iran. Our demands are framed within the context of [the] Iranian state."[27] He also helped coin the phrase "democracy for Iran, autonomy for Kurdistan" as the motto of the KDPI. Abdullah Hassan Zadeh has also reiterated this point. In an interview with *Al-Zaman*, Hassan Zadeh further stated that the KDPI believes that the time for establishing small, nonviable countries has long passed. That is, the legitimate rights of the Kurds can be best guaranteed within a democratic Iran. Besides, he added, regional geopolitical realities in the region will not allow the creation and/or survival of an independent Kurdish state.[28] In response, the Iranian authorities have insisted that the KDPI must prove its loyalty to Iran and the principles of the Islamic Revolution. In the words of Dr. Mustafa Chamran, the first defense minister of the Islamic Republic, who oversaw some of the most intense battles in Kurdish regions in the early months of the postrevolutionary period, if the KDPI and other Kurds really believe in the Islamic revolution,

> We would give them autonomy not just in Kurdistan but would also ask them to show us how to give autonomy and freedom to every ethnic group in the country. However, if they simply use fancy and misleading

> slogans to hide their intention to harm Islam and our revolution and to serve foreign powers whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the Iranian people, including the Kurds, we will fight them to the end.[29]

Hamid Reza Jalaipour criticized the very notion of autonomy (*khodmoktari*) as proposed by the KDPI. What does autonomy entail for Iran? What guarantees will Iran have that outside powers would not take advantage of the situation and harm our territorial integrity? Jalaipour said that the recipe for Kurdish autonomy is anathema to Iran's national identity and is a foreign concept to most Iranian Kurds. He further stated that because Kurdish history in Iran is so vastly different from Kurdish experience in Iraq or Turkey, models of autonomy imported from outside Iran are not applicable to Iranian Kurdistan.[30]

Finally, Kurdish autonomy demands may run counter to similar demands by other ethnic groups in Iran. There are several areas of Iran where the Kurds, Azeris, and other ethnic groups live side by side. For example, the provinces of West Azerbaijan, Ilam, and Kermanshah are inhabited by numerous groups, including the Sunni and Shi'a Kurds, as well as the Armenians and Assyrians. The exclusive ethnic claims of each group may generate interethnic conflict in these provinces. This problem first came up during the negotiations between the KDPI and the provisional revolutionary government of Iran in 1979, and it is still a sensitive issue under Khatami. In fact, when a group of Azeri intellectuals, journalists, students, and parliamentary representatives wrote an open letter to President Khatami asking for more cultural autonomy for the Azeris, they also referred to a "specific ethnic group" that seeks to create another "Karabakh enclave" in Azerbaijan.[31] It was clear that the Kurds were the target of this letter. Consequently, the KDPI criticized both the Azeris and Khatami for ignoring Kurdish claims in West Azerbaijan. The aforementioned is symptomatic of logistical problems that may snarl granting autonomy demands of the Kurds in a democratic Iran. Notwithstanding political and logistical problems, it is clear that the long-term stability of Iran requires the recognition of the rights of all its inhabitants.

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The Human Rights of Kurds in the Islamic Republic of Iran

ELAHÉ SHARIFPOUR HICKS AND NEIL HICKS

For the past twenty years there has been conflict between Iran's central government and Kurdish political movements rooted in the predominantly Kurdish region of western Iran. The level of violence has ebbed and flowed with peaks of serious conflict in 1979, the early 1980s, and the early 1990s. Kurdish casualties are estimated by the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) at more than 30,000 civilian dead in addition to 4,000 Kurdish fighters. The KDPI does not estimate casualties of the government side, nor are we aware of official figures for losses in this internal armed conflict, but a figure in the thousands seems likely. Along with the dead, there have been tens of thousands imprisoned, hundreds of thousands displaced, and hundreds of villages destroyed. The local economy of an already underdeveloped region has been severely damaged by the conflict, as has the Iranian economy as a whole.

The background to the human rights situations of the Kurds in Iran is similar in scale to that between the Turkish state and the PKK and perhaps even greater in intensity (given the smaller relative size of the Kurdish population of Iran). If the costs of the two conflicts sound similar, the political dimensions of the two conflicts are substantially different, not least in the amount of international attention devoted to them. The human rights consequences of the conflicts in which modern mechanized armies have been deployed against vastly outnumbered and outgunned guerrillas operating in rugged terrain have been similar in the areas of each country with majority Kurdish populations. There are two fundamental differences between the two conflicts: the religious dimension of the Iranian conflict (approximately 75 percent of Iranian Kurds are Sunni Muslims, a disadvantaged minority in the Shi'a Islamic Republic) and the degree to which the Kurdish conflict has become a central issue of domestic politics (extensively in Turkey, and negligibly in Iran).

Another important factor to take into consideration is the different ethnic composition of the two countries and the differences in the relative size of the Kurdish communities. In Iran, Kurds are one minority among several size-

able ethnic communities. They are not the largest ethnic minority. There are as many as 20 million Azeri Iranians, for example, with their own language, distinct from Persian, the official national language. Iran, as a state entity, is constitutionally more at ease with its ethnic minorities. The 1979 constitution, for example, upholds in article 15 "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." A picture of the nature and scope of the human rights issues confronting Iranian Kurds will emerge from an examination of four aspects of their situation: the international legal framework, religion, Iranian domestic politics, and international pressure.

The Legal Framework

The major international treaties ratified by Iran bearing on human rights conditions of its population, including the five to eight million Kurds, are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. These instruments, ratified in 1975, give effect to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to self-determination is given a prominent place in both treaties, forming article 1 of both covenants. The prominent place accorded to this right reflects the spirit of the times when they were drafted and adopted. The 1950s and 1960s were a time of decolonization and the emergence of newly independent states throughout the developing world. In many places, it was evident who were the colonizers and who were the colonized. The colonized, as a newly independent people, gained sovereignty over their new nation-states. However, for the Kurds, citizens of multiethnic states—which in Turkey and Iran had not been colonized in the conventional sense of the term—exercising their right to self-determination or even establishing that they had such a right was a more complex proposition.

The right to self-determination, as provided for in the covenants, is in fact more ambiguous than it might seem. Unusually for a right upheld in the covenants, the right to self-determination is exclusively a collective right to be exercised by "peoples." In contrast, the covenants place obligations on states to accord other rights to "all individuals" or "everyone." This type of formulation is much clearer in that there is a granter of the right, the state, and a grantee, the individual. "All peoples have the right to self-determination" has a fine rhetorical flourish to it, but on closer examination it begs the question, "Who is the granter of this right?" In practice, states have proved reluctant to recognize, let alone concede, a right that would undermine their territorial integrity or national sovereignty.

The language of the article in the covenants qualifies the obligation of states to promote the realization of the right by stating that it should be respected, "in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations." National sovereignty is a core principle. The Vienna Declaration, which emerged from the June 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, was even more explicit in limiting the exercise of the right to self-determination. In recognizing the rights of peoples to take action to realize their right, it is also stipulated that "this shall not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent states."[1] This article of the Vienna Declaration is pertinent to our discussion because it begins to describe the type of behavior that exempts a state from yielding to claims for self-determination by its constituent peoples. It declares that such states must be "conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and thus possessed of a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction of any kind."

This formulation appears to define exemption with respect to the right of self-determination, for a state, as having a representative government and not practicing discriminatory treatment. Nondiscrimination is a basic principle of the ICCPR, delineated in article 2 of the covenant and in many other international instruments. Article 25, which provides for free elections and an equal right to participate in public service, sets out a methodology for the provision of a representative government. Thus, in the Vienna Declaration, the right to self-determination is conflated with two other rights, almost as if to say that if the state complies with these two other principles, then self-determination as a reason for secession or division of a state's territory is not authorized. With the tepid formulation of the right to self-determination in international instruments, it is perhaps not surprising that respect for the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity have in practice outweighed Kurdish claims to self-determination in Iran, Turkey, and elsewhere.

With the benefit of hindsight we can also observe that another weakness in the right to self-determination, as delineated in the covenants, is the supposition that all constituent members of the group described as a people will share the same aspirations in terms of their political status or nationality.[2] Iranian Kurds, for example, in common with Kurds elsewhere, have not shared a common view on their status as a people with respect to the state in which they are citizens. Some Iranian Kurdish political movements have advocated secession from Iran, but the mainstream preference has been for greater cultural autonomy within a sovereign Iranian state.

A further caveat to the rights of peoples to self-determination is implied by the inclusion within the ICCPR of article 17, which states:

> In those states in which ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

Thus the ICCPR establishes a category of persons deemed to be religious or ethnic minorities. It is unclear how a minority, entitled to exercise a degree of religious, cultural, or linguistic autonomy, differs from a people endowed with the right to self-determination. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, UN special rapporteurs studied this distinction but were unable to come up with defining criteria that amounted to much beyond a distinction without a difference. Two reports, "The Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities" (the Capotorti Report)[3] and "The Right to Self-Determination: Historical and Current Development on the Basis of United Nations Instruments" (the Critescu Report),[4] delineated four criteria for a population to be recognized as a people. These were (1) distinctive language and culture, (2) shared history and experience, (3) commitment to preserving their separate identity, and (4) association with a specific territory. Although the Critescu Report explicitly stated that "a people should not be confused with ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities, whose existence and rights are recognized in article 27 of the ICCPR," it did not set out definitive criteria for distinguishing between the two categories.[5]

Given that the pertinent international instruments are ambiguous when it comes to defining an ethnic group as a people with a right to exercise self-determination by secession, it is perhaps not surprising that international organizations charged with overseeing the implementation of human rights standards have been reluctant to uphold such a right. For example, the UN Human Rights Committee, the body responsible for dealing with states' compliance with their obligations under the ICCPR, has declined to rule on claims on behalf of indigenous communities in Canada when their right to self-determination has been violated. The committee has stated that the question of whether a particular group constitutes a "people" is not an issue that it can address.[6] Article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Right, the instrument under which victims of a violation of their rights may submit a complaint to the committee, states that "individuals who claim that any of their rights enumerated in the Covenant have been violated and who have exhausted all available domestic remedies may submit a written communication to the Committee for consideration."[7] The text of the protocol refers repeatedly to "the individual" but makes no reference at all to the collective rights of a group.

This international law provides scant support for Kurdish claims, as a distinct people, to exercise their right to self-determination through the creation of a separate, independent state. In effect, their right to "freely determine their political status" is constrained by political and legal reality to choices other than independent statehood. However, although international standards have given no practical support to Kurdish secessionism, the rights of Kurds as a minority with their own distinct language and culture have been bolstered at the UN and within other multilateral bodies.

On 18 December 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights and Freedoms of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, or Linguistic Minorities (GA Res. 47/135). This sets forth nonbinding guidelines for states, but these guidelines were written and acceded to by states. It couches the rights of minorities as belonging to individual members of minority communities. However, the rights promoted in the declaration, such as respect for and encouragement of minority languages and cultures, imply communal activity in their realization. Article 2(3) of the declaration provides for a right of effective participation in decisions of concern to their community, enhancing the protections set forth in article 27 of the ICCPR by making clear that minority communities must have a say in the administration of their own affairs. The active obligations placed on the state to promote and protect minority languages, religions, and cultures, as well as the frequently upheld obligation not to discriminate against members of minority communities, represent the international legal framework within which we should assess the Iranian government's treatment of its Kurdish minority.[8] As we shall see, Iran has fallen short of these standards in practice.

Religion

Sunni Muslims are by far Iran's largest religious minority, making up as much as 20 percent of the population. The great majority of Kurd, Baluchi, and Turkoman populations are Sunni Muslims. The ascendancy of the Shi'a clergy since the formation of the Islamic Republic has accentuated Sunni grievances. An Iranian Kurdish exile in London described it thus:

> We Muslim Sunni of Iran bear with daily insults ushered at us by the Shi'a clergy. They destroy our mosques to build and expand theirs; they humiliate our most sacred men and values in the officially controlled media; they encourage religious wars between Sunnis and Shi'as; they arrest, torture, and kill Sunni Muftis and personalities. They force Sunnis to convert to Shi'ism, forbid Sunni teaching in the schools in Sunni

> dominated areas, refer to Sunni ulama as apostates, and produce many volumes on Shi'ism while forbidding the printing of Sunni books.[9]

In an interview in the banned reformist newspaper *Sobhe Emrouz* [Today Morning] on 29 January 2000, Ehsan Houshman, editor of *Zabare Sirvan* [Sirvan Language], the Kurdish weekly magazine published in Sanandaj, complained that Sunni Kurds are treated as second-class citizens. He said, "You see the situation of the Kurds in our country today. When a Sunni Kurd is proposed to take a managerial post, there is a great resistance to prevent this."[10]

In 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini declined to appoint as his representative in the Kurdish region the popular Sunni cleric Ahmad Moftizadeh and chose instead a Shi'a cleric with no local following. Friday prayer leaders, even in the Sunni mosques, are appointed by the central authorities. The dismissive official attitude toward Kurdish rights in particular and minority rights in general may be seen in Ayatollah Khomeini's statement from December 1979:

> Sometimes the word *minority* is used to refer to people such as Kurds, Lurs, Turks, Persians, Baluchis, and such. These people should not be called minorities, because this term assumes that there is a difference between Muslims who speak different languages. . . . It is very probable that such problems have been created by those who do not wish Muslim countries to be united. . . . They create the issues of nationalism . . . and such-isms which are contrary to Islamic doctrines. Their plan is to destroy Islam and Islamic philosophy.[11]

One can imagine that to Sunni ears the assumption of a unified Shi'ite Muslim identity as paramount—or more accurately, unique—must be disturbing.

Ayatollah Khomeini's rhetoric notwithstanding, the binding ideology of the Islamic Republic has been at least as much Iranian nationalism as it has been pan-Islamism or Shi'a exceptionalism. For example, President Khatami's advisor on Sunni affairs, As'ad Sheykholeslam, stated in June 2000: "Kordestan is an inseparable part of Iran and will never distance itself from the homeland, for this reason: *Kurds are Iranians first, Kurds second, and Muslims [last].*"[12] In his rhetoric, Khatami has promoted national reconciliation and adopted the inclusive slogan "Iran for all Iranians." Kurdish supporters of the president have tried to emphasize his commitment to dialogue and national unity.[13]

Nevertheless, religious sensitivities remain a bone of contention between Sunni Kurds and the Shi'a religious establishment. The sensitivity that attends the issue of religion may be seen in the confrontation that followed the death under suspicious circumstances of a prominent Sunni cleric, Mullah Mohammed Rabi'i, in Kermanshah on 2 December 1996. His death led to three days of violent clashes between Sunnis and the security forces. Demonstrators

claimed that Mullah Rabi'i had been killed because of his activities advocating the religious rights of Sunni Muslims in the Al-Shafe'i mosque, the major mosque in the city. Rioting arising from the death spread to cities throughout the Kurdish region.

State appointees as teachers or religious leaders sometimes have hostile attitudes toward Sunni Islam. For example, in 1996, a teacher in Sanandaj Higher Education College attracted local protest because of his derogatory statements about Sunni Islam. Students staged a protest, which included Shi'a students, and they were suspended from their courses because of their protests.[14]

While Shi'a religious institutions are encouraged, Sunni institutions are blocked. For example, in 1993, a newly constructed Sunni mosque in Sanandaj was destroyed by a mob of Shi'a zealots, unrestrained by the authorities. In 1994, the Sunni community of Sanandaj raised funds in order to enlarge the Dar al-Ehsan mosque. Despite the fact that all necessary building permits were obtained from local authorities, the central authorities stepped in to block the project and confiscate the funds.

The disfavored status of Sunni Muslims has a negative impact on Kurdish access to educational opportunities, to positions in state institutions, and to participation in local and national politics. Piety and Shi'a orthodoxy are important factors in gaining admission to universities, leaving Sunni Kurdish applicants at a disadvantage and perpetuating chronic underdevelopment. Governors of Kurdish provinces are Shi'as and often not Kurdish. Shi'a Kurdish politicians enjoy access to national patronage networks and call on the support of Shi'a foundations and endowments to reward their supporters. In this way, confessional differences serve to divide the Iranian Kurdish population.

Sunni Iranians, including many Kurds, have been encouraged by the inclusive statements of President Mohammed Khatami. For example, during campaign visits to the Kurdish region, Khatami remarked: “The national Kurdish involvement in higher posts in the country is very low. This is one of the issues that needs proper attention.” His 1997 appointment of Dr. Ramezan Zadeh as the first Kurdish governor of the province has eased Sunni grievances. Although Zadeh is Shi'a, he has appointed Sunni Kurds to senior positions in the local administrations. As he told *Al-Sharq al-Aswat* in June 2000, “Before Khatami’s government took power, it was prohibited to appoint Sunni Kurds as managers in government departments or as governors. But we actually started to do that. Sunni Kurds now occupy 35 percent of the managerial posts in Kurdistan.” Nevertheless, political tensions remain high in Iranian Kurdistan. The region is chronically underdeveloped, and grievances over cultural expression, including public education in the Kurdish language, remain not assuaged. The education question is bound up with religious grievances as parents have tried to send their children to Sunni religious schools, where the Kurdish,

Arabic, and Persian languages are part of the curriculum. Although article 15 of the constitution of the Islamic Republic upholds the right to education in languages other than Farsi, the state has resisted giving financial support to educational institutions over which they have no control. However, in recent years, such private schools have been permitted to function. Zadeh identified the lack of qualified teachers as the reason for the absence of public schools in which Kurdish is the primary language of instruction, although he did not raise any objection to the concept in principle.[15]

The Kurdish Question in Domestic Politics

Despite playing an active role in the revolution that overthrew the shah in 1979, Kurdish political organizations have had intense relations with the leadership of the Islamic Republic from the outset. In common with many political movements in Iran that did not support the primacy of the Shi'a clergy in the new republic, Kurdish political movements, notably the KDPI and the leftist Komala, soon faced severe oppression from central authorities, including mass arrests and summary executions. The brief hope of reconciliation between the Kurds and the new government, brokered under the interim Bazargan government, was short-lived, as the clerical leadership cemented its primacy in the December 1970 constitution. In February 1981, KDPI leader Abdulrahman Qasemlou announced a joint program, together with a range of political groups opposed to clerical rule, for a democratic Iran. Dr. Qasemlou claimed that this program was supported by President Abol Hassan Bani Sadr, who was himself on the verge of being removed from office by the clerics.[16] In common with other secular parties, the KDPI and Komala were banned and their supporters and sympathizers were hunted down as enemies of the state. In the late 1980s, the Iranian Kurdish political movements deteriorated into conflict between different Kurdish factions and with other elements of the Iranian opposition.

In 1989, after the eight-year war with Iraq, the government was able to turn its military resources to pacifying the Kurdish areas that had become bases for armed opposition groups, many supported by neighboring states. In this period, villages were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people were displaced. Large tracts of the border have been seeded with land mines; hundreds of thousands of Iranian troops are garrisoned in the Kurdish region; and armed clashes occur sporadically.

Despite the extent and cost of the Iranian state's conflict with Kurdish political organizations, the situation of the Kurds is not considered a crucial question facing the central government, as it is in Turkey, for example. Iranian Kurds are less educated and less prosperous than Kurds in Turkey. They are

also less integrated or assimilated in Iranian society than many Turkish Kurds. The Kurdish issue has not found support in Iran from other organized political forces, as it has from parts of the Left in Turkey. Those elements of the Iranian opposition that are sympathetic to Kurdish aspirations cannot organize in today's Iran, where secular political parties remain banned. The Iranian state feels less threatened by Kurdish aspirations than the Turkish state. It has not been moved by sweeping laws to restrict Kurdish language publications or cultural activities. The Islamic Republic has not proclaimed itself for Persians in the exclusive way that Turkey has. The Kurds in Iran are not the major ethnic minority. Azeri Turks make up as much as 25 percent of the population, and they are wealthier, more powerful and more integrated in Iranian society. So the Kurds remain a peripheral concern of the central government, whose major worry is that the volatile border territory should not be used by the Republic's foreign enemies. Perhaps recognizing their relative weakness within Iranian national politics, the major Kurdish political group, the KDPI, has long embraced moderate goals of greater Kurdish autonomy within a unitary Iranian state and has shown willingness to negotiate with the central authorities. However, the Kurds were to be disappointed.

> In July [1989] Abdulrahman Qasemlou, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, was killed in a Vienna apartment together with two companions while taking part in negotiations with Iranian government representatives. In November [1989] the Austrian authorities issued arrest warrants for three suspects in connection with the KDPI killings. The suspects included Iranian government agents who had left Austria or gone into hiding in the Iranian Embassy in Vienna after the killings.[17]

Other KDPI leaders abroad were targeted by the Iranian regime's infamous hit squads, which have mercifully become less active in recent years. Rumors circulate periodically that negotiations between the KDPI and the government may be in the offing. The head of the Iraqi PUK, Jalal Talabani, is said to serve as the intermediary between the government and the KDPI leaders.

Positive steps in the Kurdish region have been taken under President Khatami. Literacy and education levels have improved, as have provisions of piped water, electricity, and telephone lines to villages. However, the region remains severely underdeveloped; poverty and unemployment are widespread. Governor Zadeh has taken the lead in the formation of an alliance of underdeveloped provinces seeking to gain greater support from the central authorities.

At the political level, military rule was removed from the Kordestan province at the end of 1999. However, the level of local political activity remains low. There are no legal Kurdish groupings. An independent Kurdish Cultural Association, formed in Sanandaj after President Khatami's election, has been

waiting for almost three years for its application to register as an association under the law.

In February 1999, following the arrest of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), by the Turkish authorities, demonstrators clashed with Iranian security forces in Sanandaj and other Kurdish towns, leaving several dead and wounded. This was the worst political unrest in Kordestan since the election of Khatami. The authorities had granted a permit to students at Kordestan University to hold a protest against Öcalan's arrest. This protest, the first officially approved public demonstration for many years, was disrupted by plainclothes vigilantes who attacked demonstrators on their way home. This provocation sparked further violence.[18] These organized violent groups are a common feature of Iranian political life. They are controlled by leading conservative figures with close ties to the government, and they are used to target reformist personalities or gatherings of reformist supporters. Their intervention in this demonstration is a sign that conservative forces within the Iranian government, who are opposed to the political reform agenda of President Khatami's supporters, were not prepared to tolerate freedom of assembly and expression on a Kurdish issue by a group of Kurdish activists. The governor, Dr. Ramezan Zadeh, demanded a public inquiry into the events in Sanandaj in February 1999, but no inquiry has ever been held.

In common with the rest of Iran, the political rights of Kurdish Iranian citizens are held hostage to the unresolved power struggle between reformists, identified with President Khatami, and conservatives opposed to liberalization, which might endanger the grip on power of the clerical leadership that has dominated Iranian politics for the past twenty years. Paradoxically, efforts to promote greater freedom have often met with a severe reaction that has exacted a high cost in human rights terms. The events in Sanandaj in February 1999 may be seen in that light, in that permission to hold a demonstration triggered a severe reaction.

A good indication of the political attitudes of Iranian Kurds came with the elections to the sixth Majlis, the Iranian parliament, in February 2000. These were widely credited with being much freer than previous elections over the past two decades, with voters allowed to choose between candidates presenting different points of view. In an interview with *Sobhe Emrouz* on 6 April 2000, Governor Ramezan Zadeh commented that the high level of participation of Kurds in the recent parliamentary elections demonstrated that "armed groups have been rejected by the people of Kurdistan" and that "Kurdish political leaders should catch up with their people." The newspaper, which supported Khatami, went on to note that many voters in Kurdish areas had supported reformist candidates. Our own review of election returns from Kurdish districts indicated that about half of the decided seats had indeed swung to

reformist candidates in February, but not by wide margins. About a third were decided in second round voting, and about 20 percent remained with incumbents. Broadly speaking, Iranian Kurds followed national trends in supporting candidates associated with Khatami, but they were substantially less reformist than voters in the capital. Their voting pattern was in fact similar to that in other rural, traditional areas of the country.

Before the elections, the KDPI had issued a statement urging the Kurdish population and the Iranian population as a whole "not to remain indifferent" to the elections, noting that the "liberation movement of the population" of the last few years had made the elections worth contesting. From this, and from the voting behavior noted above, we may infer that the largest Kurdish political movement holds out some hope for the reformist policies of President Khatami.

Following the overall victory of candidates identified with Khatami in the February 2000 parliamentary elections, there has been a backlash against reformists by the conservative clerical establishment, which still holds most of the key centers in the Iranian state. Part of this backlash, together with the closure of almost all independent newspapers and the arrest and intimidation of leading reformist figures, was the cancellation of election results in several cities. Among those affected were the cities of Saqqez and Baneh in the Kurdish region. The cancellation of election results by the Election Council, appointed by the conservative dominated Council of Guardians, was a violation of internationally protected rights to political participation, as provided for in ICCPR, article 25.[19] Moreover, it exacerbated the sense of grievance among Iranian Kurds that their views were not being taken into consideration by the national authorities.[20]

Despite these setbacks, President Khatami has continued to promote an inclusive agenda. For example, speaking in Sanandaj in August 2000, he declared, "All Iranians, regardless of their Arab, Persian, Turkish, or Kurdish origins, have a 3,000-year-old history of rich civilization behind them, and for this particular reason they can call themselves part of Iran's ancient culture."[21]

International Pressure

The situation of the Kurds of Iran has attracted remarkably little international attention. Even the diplomatic outrage that followed the assassination by Iranian agents of KDPI Secretary General Sadegh Sharafkandi and three of his associates in the Mykonos restaurant in Berlin in 1992 did not focus on the situation of the Iranian Kurds. Neither the European Union nor the United States has included the rights of the Kurdish minority on lists of desiderata

presented periodically to the Iranian government as a condition for the normalization of strained relations.

This is unlikely to change soon. Iran is not subject to the Council of Europe's mechanisms and the EU admission criteria that have placed a spotlight on Turkey's treatment of the Kurds. Nor do Iran's Kurds administer an autonomous region seen as a strategic asset in the West's struggle against the central government, as in Iraq. Iran's Kurds are therefore wise to look to the Iranian national context for an improvement in their situation, rather than looking west for salvation.

Here we think we can draw some parallels between the situation of the Kurdish political movement and other political movements outside the clerical oligarchy that has ruled Iran for the last twenty years. The rhetoric of President Khatami and the reformists clearly holds some promise for the groups that have been kept out in the political cold, or worse. Upholding the rule of law, building civil society, respecting freedom of expression and diversity of opinion, and consolidating democracy would be welcome steps for Kurdish and other secular political movements.

The main question for the Iranian Kurdish movement, for a resolution of conflict and a better human rights context, is whether Khatami and the reformists can carry through their reforms in practice.

If the reformists are successful, then a loosening of clerical control would mean greater self-determination in Kurdish regions of Iran. But the obstacles to the reform movement—first securing a grip on the levers of power, and then tackling the economic and social problems confronting the state—are immense. The essence of the legal problem facing Iranian Kurds is not that there is a body of discriminatory anti-Kurdish legislation. There is little such law. The Kurdish political movement faces the same obstacles confronted by other pluralistic, secular political movements—that much law in the Islamic Republic permits arbitrary clerical rule and fails to protect basic freedoms. Constitutional provisions establishing the right to freedom of expression and other basic freedoms are rendered impotent by clauses asserting the primacy of undefined Islamic interests. The Shi'a clerical political elite has abrogated to itself the right to determine what these interests are. Thus we may see a common interest between reformists and Kurdish political aspiration. It is to the effort of establishing Iran as a state of law that the energies of those wishing to improve the lives of Iran's Kurdish population would be best redirected.

21

Economic Transition of Kurdish Nationalism in Iran

FARIDEH KOOHI-KAMALI

Kurdish nationalism in Iran develops through its progression from a society based on the definition of tribe, tribal affiliation, and loyalties to a society as a nation-state. The distinction between these movements was connected to the way Kurdish society perceived the issue of autonomy. The economic development of Kurdish society played a great role in determining how Kurds saw themselves and expressed their political demands for independence. Therefore, economic development in Iranian Kurdistan has affected the development of Kurdish nationalism. I have borrowed two phrases: Peter Laslett's "face-to-face society" (to describe Kurdish tribal life) and Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" (to refer to the Kurdish movement when it sees itself as a nation). Laslett defines face-to-face society by applying four criteria. First, everyone knows everyone else. Second, all important problems are resolved by discussion among members. Third, it involves a small area. Fourth, short distances allow for easy contact. Laslett contrasts such a society with a "territorial" society, of which nation-states are prominent examples.[1]

Anderson refers to "imagined communities," whose populations are so large, or dispersed, as to make it difficult to bring them all together in one time and place. Members might never see and know each other, but they firmly believe in each other's existence and bond by solidarity and fraternity. Religious communities and nation-states are examples of "imagined communities."

Regarding Kurdish nationalism, the main question to ask is what historical factors came together for Kurds to see themselves as a nation. The emergence of Kurdish nationalism in Iran began with a break in the traditional economic and social state of the predominantly tribal community and its transition to a society with market-based economic and social relationships. In other words, Kurdish nationalism appeared when the tribal face-to-face society was transformed into a community that was able to "imagine" itself as a nation.

Kurdish Tribal Society as a Face-to-Face Society

In Kurdish tribal society economic activity was primarily nomadic, characterized by animal husbandry with some agriculture. It consisted of social and

political relationships based predominantly on tribal face-to-face contact. Simko's revolt (1918–22) belonged to this period. It sprang from a face-to-face nomadic economy and an egalitarian society stemming from the relative absence of social division, where most social and political decisions of the community were conducted in a face-to-face manner. It was a movement against an emerging central government by a once powerful tribal leader whose influence was curtailed.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, great changes were occurring in the social and economic life of Iranian Kurdistan. These were perhaps inevitable. Government policies had destroyed the nomadic/tribal lifestyle and contributed greatly to the speed of changes. The result of these changes was the sedentarization of Kurdish tribes.

Eventually, all the Kurdish tribes settled into villages. This was a gradual process caused in part by the scarcity of pastoral land, which itself related to population growth and an increase in the number of villages. There also was a greater demand for tribal products and extensive use of pastures. The conscious attempts by Reza Shah's government further settled the tribal population. These attempts included the privatization of communal pastures and closure of borders to migrating tribes. In her research, Ann Lambton refers to the prevention of migration and the forced settlement of tribes as attempts by the government to destroy the tribes' organization. All these components impacted Kurdistan.[2]

Government policies changed the socioeconomic situation in Kurdistan by means of forced settlement and prohibition of migration. It brought an end to herding, a vital aspect of which was distance migration. This affected the tribal goods exchange system, encouraging sedentarization and the growth of a money economy. Both helped to weaken the traditional economic and social relationships of tribal society.

Why Do Tribes Settle?

Pastoralism usually refers to a system characterized by the individual or communal trading of livestock, the use of pastureland to feed animals, and the provision for the individual or community of the resulting produce to exchange for other goods through barter.[3]

In this system, three factors of production interact: people, livestock, and land. For equilibrium to exist, there must be sufficient pasture to provide food for enough livestock to guarantee the viability of the household. The literature on household viability emphasizes the balance between the size of herds and the number of people in the household who benefit from the herds.

In the case of Kurdish tribes, migration had a direct relationship on tribal

herding. Migration was the way the tribe adapted itself to the natural environment through collective and seasonal movement. Migration ensured a varied diet as well as the survival of animals when the climate became hostile, and it also provided a kind of political protection for the tribe because it gave them mobility. The very fact that the tribal people were not dependent on the land and were able to move their source of wealth, their flocks, to a new region gave them a kind of economic self-sufficiency and the capacity to survive under political pressure, especially pressure from the central government. However, forced settlement of tribes destroyed the equilibrium and forced the population to become more dependent on land and agriculture. This fundamental change in their lifestyle gradually changed the social relationships among the population.

Forced settlement, however, did not mean the total disappearance of tribal relationships. Despite the weakening of face-to-face relationships and fundamental changes to the tribal structure of Kurdish society, there were also factors that contributed to the continuity of some tribal relationships. Elements of this continuity are still evident in the relative equality existing in Kurdish tribal life that evolves from the main economic activity of the tribes, animal husbandry, which in turn is based on the mountainous features of the region. The very feature that forced the settlement of the Kurdish tribes also helped to preserve some tribal characteristics.

In the process of adapting to new forms of economic activity, migration ceased to be an important element in tribal identity, but other factors such as kinship continued to be important. The continuation of herding, due to geographic conditions favorable for it, even after the communities became settled and agrarian, made it possible for some limited aspects of tribal relationships to continue. Tribal membership or affiliations were no longer the only source of identity. Rather, the tribal relationship was a point of reference with the community's past—a shared feature that continued to exist in a new form alongside other identities. Continuation of herding connected the communities to the past, while settlement and sedentarization introduced them to a new phase and a new understanding of changed social and economic relationships.

During the process of involvement with other communities, the face-to-face character of Kurdish society weakened, and a new understanding of national identity appeared. This change can be found in two Kurdish movements, one belonging to Simko's uprising and nomadic/tribal life in the 1920s, and the other belonging to the Kurdish movement of 1946 known as the Mahabad Republic, when Kurdish society was almost entirely sedentarized.

The analysis of the Mahabad Republic is a significant study in the development of Kurdish nationalism, but here it suffices to say that this was the period

of national consciousness among the Kurdish leaders in Iran and the expression of discontent in clear nationalist language. Prior to this period, Kurdish society in Iran lacked the social and economic institutions and the political and ideological organizations necessary to form a nationalist movement. The Mahabad Republic was the consequence of Reza Shah's policies of destruction of the political, social, and military organizations of tribes, separation of tribal leadership from its body by imprisonment and exile, and imposition of government officials. Reza Shah made Kurdish society receptive to nationalist ideas, and he changed the perception of Kurdish society by changing Kurds' economic and social lives.

In retrospect, it can be seen that with the collapse of the Mahabad Republic, the Kurdish national movement entered a new phase in search of another political and military institution to gain the support of the peasantry and draw them into an active struggle for national autonomy. In this process, the Kurdish national struggle received a major boost from the economic and social changes that occurred in Iran between 1950 and 1979. The fundamental change in the material and social conditions of life in rural Kurdistan stemmed from the introduction of the land reform program (1962–66).[4]

Land Reform

Changes in the tribal economy led to the transition from a face-to-face tribal/rural society to a national community. However, the mere awareness of membership in a larger community does not necessarily lead people to view themselves as members of a separate national community. An assessment of conditions favoring Kurdish cohesion and solidarity is closely related to the relative absence of inequalities in rural Kurdistan. Members of a close-knit society, however, do not necessarily campaign for a national community, unless they feel that they have been unfairly treated by the society within which they live. Indicators of inequalities between Kurdistan and Iran further highlight the rise of a sense of community.

Transition to a National Community

Demographic, economic, and social factors contribute to growing awareness of a national Kurdish community in Iran. Some of these factors are long-distance trade, migration, geographical mobility, occupational mobility, urbanization, and accessibility and efficiency of the mass media.

Perhaps the most important changes in the economic demography of Kurdistan are migration and the rapidly growing trend of urbanization. Where do the rural Kurds, a predominantly nomadic people, prefer to migrate? Clearly

Table 21.1. Migration Preferences of Rural Kurds

Destination	Landless laborers	Landowning peasants Under 8 ha	Landowning peasants Over 8 ha
Tehran	4.9	3.23	15.79
Kurdish provincial cities	88.3	77.42	57.89
Other Iranian cities	5.2	19.35	26.32
Iraq		1.6	

Source: Mostafa Azkia, *Khushnishinan-i Kurdistan* (Landless peasants of Kurdistan) (Tehran: University, 1976), 52, 201.

migration outside Kurdistan, especially to Tehran, might be thought to encourage a gradual process of assimilation into a dominant Iranian identity. Migration within Kurdistan, on the other hand, is likely to reinforce a greater sense of belonging to a Kurdish national community.

It should be noted that the percentages for landless laborers in table 21.1 refer to actual numbers. Those percentages for landowning peasants refer to their preferences for places of migration. Among the reasons cited by the migrants for their preference for Kurdish cities were lower costs of migration, presence of relatives and friends in the cities to provide help, and cultural and linguistic familiarity. This last reason must not be underestimated. According to the 1985–86 National Census (86), a staggering 55 percent of the inhabitants of Kurdistan do not understand Farsi at all. In spite of differences between the three principal economic classes of rural Kurdistan, most migrate to the cities of Kurdistan. Available data shows that 88 percent of the landless laborers migrated within the Kurdish province.

Since the figures for landowning peasants and farmers refer to their preferences for place of migration rather than actual number of migrants, it would be appropriate to offer alternative sources of support for this conclusion. An example of how demographic and economic changes have helped to form the political features of Kurdish nationalism can be seen in the emergence of the Peshmerga (people's militia). If economic changes, as the result of the land reform program in Iran, did not create a thriving capitalist class in Kurdish villages, it nonetheless led to the emergence of a large class of landless laborers. With the weak labor market in the Kurdish agrarian sector unable to absorb this surplus labor, migration to cities became the principal channel through which surplus labor was transferred out of villages. Evidence suggests this migration was confined to Kurdistan. During the 1960s and 1970s, Kurdish cities such as Sanandaj received this mass of uprooted peasantry. A study on peasant cooperatives in Kurdistan in the 1960s and 1970s shows that 84.4 percent of landless laborers migrated to Sanandaj and its satellite villages in search of work (table 21.2). If so, then one could plausibly argue that the pecu-

Table 21.2. Percentages of Rural Kurdish Population in Migration

Destination	Landless laborers	Shareholding co-op peasants
Sanandaj	25.0	32.1
Sanandaj villages	59.4	39.2
Saqqez	-	7.1
Other cities of Iran	6.2	18.0
Unknown	9.4	3.6

Source: Ghullam-Hassan Babayi Hamati, *Sharkat-i Sahami-i Zera'-yi Farah* (Tehran: University, 1971), 190.

liarity of Kurdish migration has helped to reinforce the ideological cement of Kurdish nationalism (awareness of the existence of a separate community of Kurds outside the village) and knowledge of its boundaries. Indeed, the major instrument for drawing the Kurdish masses into nationalist movements forged by the Kurdish intelligentsia is the development of a volunteer militia. Even here the role of economic features in the growth of the militia should not be underestimated. As Eric Hobsbawm has pointed out, rural areas with surplus population reflected in rural migration toward cities produce an ideal breeding ground for the uprooted peasantry to take up arms against the state.[5] Moreover, they are more likely to be unmarried and, while marginalized in their rural communities, are unlikely to have completely severed their links with their villages. As our analysis of migration shows, all these conditions have prevailed in Kurdistan, at least since the early 1960s, which is also the period of growth for the *peshmerga*.

Inequality within Kurdistan

A unified nationalistic political movement is unlikely to develop in a society characterized by internal division. Nationalism requires a relatively cohesive society. The issue crucial to the growth of Kurdish nationalism is whether rural Kurdistan is characterized by the relative absence of agrarian class divisions. Here, again, the answer lies with the Land Reform Act of 1962.

In examining the factors contributing to the relative absence of inequality within Kurdistan, one can study patterns of land distribution, relationships between land and population, conflicts of interests between landless and peasant households, and the gap between rural and urban populations. Evidence shows that Kurdistan has been a society relatively less divided than Iran. Here emphasis is on “relatively.”

The first factor is the impact of the land reform program on the distribution of land in Kurdistan. Although the picture is far from clear, there is little doubt that the broad impact of land reform on the social structure of rural Kurdis-

Table 21.3. Households with Property after the Land Reform Program

Hectares	% of Households	% of land cultivated
4 or less	35	8.2
4.1–8	27	19.6
8.1–15	23	31.3
More than 15	15	40.9

Source: Mostafa Azkia, *Khushnishinan-i Kurdistan* [Landless peasants of Kurdistan] (Tehran: University, 1976), tables 149, 291.

tan was to reduce inequality among main social classes, and to this extent it should be regarded as a cohesive force and a factor contributing to the growth of Kurdish nationalism.

Landed property contributed 78 percent, while peasant property stood at only 8 percent of the total cultivated land in 1950. Ann Lambton also reports the dominance of large landownership in much of Kurdistan, especially in the Sanandaj and Saqqez areas. In the selected sample of villages in Mostafa Azkia's study, large landownership (6 dangs) constituted 46.9 percent, while small peasant landownership was 42.9 percent in the villages. By the end of the first stage of the reform in Kurdistan, 73 percent of large properties (6 dangs) and 52 percent of small ones (less than 6 dangs) were distributed to peasants. The scope of land transfer became considerable with the waning influence of landowners in the second stage of the reform.[6]

Table 21.3 supports the general conclusion that the economic influence of landlords had been diminished with the implementation of the reform and had resulted in a greater equality of landownership among Kurdish peasants. It should be noted that half of the land was owned by those with 4–15 hectares. The data nevertheless suggests a relatively large class of peasantry, normally considered a major social force in radical peasant and nationalist movements. The major impact of the land reform program was to reduce the influence of socially divisive, exploiting classes and bring about a more cohesive society, an outcome that must have contributed to the consolidation of a national identity within Kurdistan.

The scope of wage labor among landless peasants seemed rather limited. According to the study by Azkia, 78.4 percent of all those working on the land were peasants with some land, and only 21.6 percent were landless laborers. Wage labor, of course, may have been more common than it appears from these figures, as many landowning peasants supplemented their income by working for others. Nonetheless, not only does the exploitation of labor have limited scope in rural Kurdistan, but also landlessness seemed to be caused primarily by population pressure on land rather than exploitation of the peas-

Table 21.4. Percentage of Landownership by Peasant Families

Types of families	0–4 ha	4.1–8 ha	8.1–15 ha	15.1 ha and over	Total for all landowners
Childless couples	4.3	3.7	6.5	n.a.	4
Couples with children	58.6	55.6	32.6	36.7	48
Total nuclear families	62.9	59.3	39.1	36.7	52
Couples with married children but without grandchildren	4.3	7.4	4.3	6.7	5.5
Couples with married children and grandchildren	4.3	1.9	8.8	16.7	6.5
Other types of extended families	20	22.1	41.3	36.7	28
Total of extended families	28.6	31.4	54.4	60.1	40
Incomplete families	8.5	9.3	6.5	3.2	8

Source: Mostafa Azkia, *Khushnishinan-i Kurdistan* [Landless peasants of Kurdistan] (Tehran: University, 1976), 384.

ants and a process of growing differentiation within the peasantry. It should be borne in mind that this analysis is an attempt to discover those economic features of Kurdish life that point to the relative lack of inequality within Kurdistan, which in turn becomes an element encouraging national cohesiveness.

The relationship between poverty and occupational change highlights many points that are of direct bearing on the relative equality within rural Kurdistan, namely, the causes of landlessness. Clearly, if this was due to economic differentiation within the peasantry, then it would be hard to maintain the argument of limited scope for class divisions. However, there appeared little evidence in support of the view that changing of landownership from the poorer to the richer peasants was the chief cause of landlessness. On the contrary, figures strongly suggest that the pressure of population growth on land was the principal cause of landlessness in rural Kurdistan.

Table 21.4 sums up the evidence and relates the size of the land owned by a peasant household to the structure of the peasant family. The first two groups are nuclear families, with and without unmarried children. The next three groups are extended families, parents with married children (two generations), with children and grandchildren (three generations), and other kinds of extended families. The final group is incomplete families, for example, an unmarried son and mother, and so on. It is clear from table 21.4 that nuclear families dominated the Kurdish peasantry and constituted 52 percent of all peasant households. The percentage of nuclear families fell with the size of landholding from 62.9 percent to 36.7 percent over the four groups of landholding peasants.

There was a negative relationship between the size of land and the percentage of nuclear families. By contrast, the percentage of extended families increased with the size of land owned. Taken together, these suggest that own-

Table 21.5. Household Size and Income

Size of shareholding in co-op	Average family size
Less than 15 shares	3.7
15–29 shares	5.9
30–39 shares	6.4
40 shares and over	6.4
Landless	4.6

Source: Ghullam-Hassan Babayi Hamati, *Sharkat-i Sahami-i Zera'-yi Farah* (Tehran: University, 1971), 10.

ership of sizeable pieces of land provided the economic means of sustaining large extended families, the type of families favored in traditional tribal/rural societies. The very fact that nuclear families were more dominant points to the fact that the pattern of landownership after the land reform program could not sustain the traditional family structure, forcing people to set up nuclear households. Support for this view also comes from the study of the Farah peasant cooperative conducted in Kurdistan around the same time (table 21.5).

Again, it can clearly be seen that average family size increased with the number of shares owned in the cooperative. Average household size for the landless was smaller than all the landholding peasants except the poorest group with less than fifteen shares. It is thus clear that the high rate of fertility typical of rural societies such as Kurdistan has exerted pressure on family land resources, forcing components of extended families to detach themselves into separate nuclear families. Most such families would have to earn their living without access to any land of their own.

Inequality between Kordestan and Iran

The indicators show that there are some important aspects of the economic structure of Kordestan that served to contain antagonism between social classes and to reinforce the relative homogeneity of Kordestan, at least in its rural areas. (Kordestan refers to a specific Iranian province.) This is not to say that the mere presence of such cohesiveness would be sufficient for the growth of nationalism. The flip side of this relative equality within Kordestan is the extent of inequality between Kordestan and Iran without which no amount of cohesiveness could produce sufficient popular dissatisfaction on which to base distinct minority nationalism.

The literature on nationalism acknowledges the "uneven development" between communities as a principal cause of nationalism. Tom Nairn stresses that nationalist movements become particularly vocal in communities that are behind in terms of industry or standard of living (especially in underdeveloped

societies after World War II, or communities that felt a threat to their position of dominance, such as czarist Russia or modern Great Britain).[7] In either case, the "uneven development" becomes the driving force of nationalism.

No development, of course, has ever been even, and to speak of "uneven development" as a major cause of nationalism is not very helpful. However, the substance of this idea is contained in the notion of relative inequality. The mere fact of backwardness is not so relevant here as the gap with the group or the community used as a standard of comparison. It was the relative inequality between Kordestan and other parts of Iran, rather than the poverty of the region, that was important for Kurdish nationalism. Indeed, the perception of this relative inequality among the members of a national minority became politically important in generating a sense of resentment on which nationalism could feed. Resentment can flourish even if inequalities are relatively moderate. W. G. Runciman has observed that when people perceive substantial inequalities, it always involves a comparison of their position with a "reference group" belonging to the same category. The perception of relative deprivation is related to the gap between groups.[8] Since there is no access to information about opinions on these perceived inequalities, our comparison will be based on actual averages for the province of Kordestan and for Iran as a whole.

A principal component of this inequality between Iran and the minority society of Kurds within it is the nonexistence of Kurds among the Iranian elite. Some important Kurdish individuals from Kermanshah, the Shi'a region of Kurdistan, have been part of the Iranian ruling elite, in politics, the military, or business, both before and since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. The position of Kurds in this regard is in strong contrast to the minority Azerbaijani elite, who have always constituted an important part of the Iranian ruling class.

A good overall measure of the standard of living of a community is how much it spends on food. The percentage of income spent on food declines as income increases. The share of nonfood items becomes substantial in a richer society, for example, greater expenditures on education, health, housing, and so on. Thus the smaller the percentage of food expenditure in a society, the higher is the average standard of living enjoyed by that society. According to the household budget survey of 1984–85 in the Collection of Studies on the Current Conditions in the Province of Kordestan, average share of food in the total expenditure was about 50 percent for urban Kordestan compared with 39 percent for urban Iran. Thus Kurdish urban areas have a lower standard of living. Food share is about the same for rural areas, perhaps because the differences among most rural communities of Iran with respect to nonfood consumption are relatively small.[9]

Given the growing importance of the urban population of Kordestan, the

inequality in the standard of living between Iran and Kordestan as measured by food share is concentrated where it politically matters most for the development of a nationalist movement in the Kurdish cities.

Food share is only one limited indicator of the standard of living. Literacy is correlated with many other material and cultural aspects of life, for example, better employment, higher income, and better housing. The extent of relative illiteracy can thus be regarded as a proxy indicator. As an example in 1984–85, the percentage of families with an illiterate household head was 80 percent for rural Kordestan compared with 74 percent for all other rural areas of Iran. The urban difference was greater: 59 percent for Kordestan and 42 percent for Iran.[10]

In all these comparisons between Kordestan and Iran, it should be recalled that there are poorer regions, perhaps much poorer (for example, Sistan and Baluchestan). Their inclusion in the statistics for the whole country reduces the Iranian averages to closer to the Kordestan averages. It is more realistic to assume that a sense of relative deprivation, at least for the urban population of Kordestan, is more likely to be the result of comparison with more affluent parts of Iran rather than with most deprived regions, suggesting a comparison with Tehran as more appropriate. Such comparison would undoubtedly reveal a much bigger gap between the Kurds and their reference group.

One way to interpret the relativity implied in such a comparison is to arrange these two indicators of standard of living and illiteracy for each of the twenty-four provinces by their relative position to each other and look at the place of Kordestan relative to the others, especially relative to Tehran. Table 21.6 has ordered the provinces of Iran in terms of decreasing average share of food in total household budget in 1983–84 for rural and urban areas separately. Thus the province with the lowest standard of living will have the rank of 1 corresponding to the highest food share, and the highest number goes to the province with the highest standard of living. When two or more provinces have the same average value of food share, they receive the same rank. We can see the position of Kordestan relative to any reference province, such as Tehran, once they are arranged in this way.

A reference group is selected on the basis of subjective group percentage and attitudes. Nonetheless, it is safe to assume that perceptions of relative deprivation are principally, but not exclusively, influenced by actual relative inequalities, which becomes a rough indicator of individual or group perceptions. This is what happened in table 21.6 by basing relative inequality of the ranking of food share. Tehran, for both rural and urban populations, is the province with the highest standard of living in the country. It has the lowest food share and thus the highest rank.

If Tehran becomes the reference group for Kordestan, since it is the prov-

Table 21.6. Average Food Share of Provinces of Iran, 1983–84

	Rural	Urban		
Province	Food share	Rank	Food share	Rank
Tehran	42.3	23	33	22
Central	57.5	2	41	15
Gilan	59	1	43.3	11
Mazandaran	49.5	13	41.1	14
E. Azerbaijan	55.7	3	40.6	16
W. Azerbaijan	50.4	10	42.6	13
Bakhtara	53.4	8	46.1	5
Khuzistan	55.2	5	46	6
Fars	47.3	17	38.1	20
Kerman	46.9	18	40	18
Khorasan	53.9	6	39.8	19
Esfahan	49.9	12	43.1	12
Sistan and Baluchestan	45.8	20	45.9	7
Kordestan	49.1	15	50.9	4
Hamadan	49.4	14	45.2	9
Bakhtiari	55.3	4	52.7	2
Lurestan	53.6	7	51.5	3
Ilam	45	21	43.7	10
Boyer Ahmadi	53.2	9	55.9	1
Boshehr	44.8	22	40.4	17
Zanjan	55.2	5	46	6
Semnan	48.4	16	37.7	21
Yazd	46.3	19	45.4	8
Hormozgan	50.1	11	46.1	5
Average	51.7		38.7	

Source: Iran, Ministry of Plan and Budget, *Expenditure and Income Rural Households, 1983–84,* tables 6, 7, 15, and 17.

ince to which the rest of the country is most exposed in the mass media, the gap in ranking between rural Kordestan (15) and rural Tehran (23) is wide. Seen in the context of other provinces, this gap is not really substantial. Indeed, the standard of living in rural Kordestan is above the average for rural Iran, with a food share of 49.1 percent as opposed to 51.7 percent for rural Iran. This reflects many aspects of relative equality in rural Kordestan (more equal distribution of land, the relatively small class of wage laborers).

By contrast, a comparison of food share of urban Kordestan and urban Tehran shows that the gap is substantial. Urban Kordestan has the fourth lowest standard of living, while urban Tehran has the highest among all provinces in the country. Urban Kordestan has a much lower standard of living compared with the country's average, with a 50.9 percent food share, while the average for urban Iran is 38.7 percent.

Once again, relative inequality is shown in urban Kordestan, where the leadership and active cadres of nationalist political organizations originate. Note again that the gap between the rural and urban standards of living in Kordestan is slight. At 49.1 percent food share, rural Kordestan enjoys a slightly higher standard of living than urban Kordestan (50.9 percent). The corresponding gaps for Tehran (42.3 percent rural and 33 percent urban) or for Iran as a whole (51.7 percent rural and 38.7 percent urban) are large, but the rural standard of living is much worse. This is another indication that Kordestan, urban sector included, is characterized by a greater degree of equality because the rural standard of living is relatively high, bringing it closer to the urban standard.

Finally, there is a similar ranking for illiteracy. The much larger gap for the urban areas, combined with greater inequality in standard of living in urban areas of Kordestan compared with Tehran (or the average for Iran), suggests that the urban sector is a crucial component of this relative inequality between Kordestan and Iran. Accordingly, table 21.7 gives relative rankings for illiteracy and is confined to the urban population of Iran. Figures given in this table relate to the percentage of illiterate persons in the total urban population ages six and older in each province in 1981–82.

The relative inequality in illiteracy levels between urban Kordestan and that of the "reference group" is the largest gap existing between any province and Tehran. Indeed, Kordestan has the highest rate of urban illiteracy (73.5 percent) in the country, over twice that of Tehran and substantially above the national average. Although one may have some reservations about the precise ranking of urban Kordestan in the provinces of the country, the same general gap is evident from another source on illiteracy for 1983–84 and is in line with a different indicator of inequality based on food share. Both indicators show inequality between Kordestan and Iran (or Tehran) to be substantial mostly because of the relative inequalities of the urban sector of Kordestan. Nationalism might gain greater adherents in an urban center than in rural areas. This type of relative inequality appears to be concentrated where the resentment it generates may be of greater value to the growth of nationalism, namely, in urban Kordestan.

The question of the greater deprivation of Kurdish regions of Iran is a less controversial issue than the question of the relative equality of Kordestan. The combination of limited inequality among the Kurdish population and perceived relative inequality between Iranian and Kurd provide a powerful force for the growth of Kurdish nationalism in Iran. Therefore, the limited inequality provides the economic cohesion and reduces the inevitable social division, while the perceived relative inequality supplies the sense of relative deprivation that stimulates modern nationalism.

Table 21.7. Illiteracy in Urban Iranians Ages Six Years and Older, 1981–82

Province	Percentage of illiterates	Rank
Tehran	35.2	23
Central	51.7	15
Gilan	43.8	20
Mazandaran	48.3	18
E. Azerbaijan	59.1	6
W. Azerbaijan	61.7	5
Bakhtaran	62	4
Khuzistan	56.1	9
Fars	43.7	21
Kerman	53.3	12
Khorasan	50.9	16
Esfahan	46.4	19
Sistan and Baluchestan	67.1	3
Kordestan	73.5	1
Hamadan	54.2	11
Bakhtiari	58.6	7
Lurestan	61.7	5
Ilam	68.1	2
Boyer Ahmadi	51.8	14
Hormozgan	54.6	10
Semnan	39	22
Yazd	49.2	17
Zanjan	52.9	13
Boshehr	56.7	8
Total	47.9	-

Source: Iran, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, *Assessment of General Problems of Human Resources and Employment--Urban Areas, 1981–1982.*
Note: Figures in this table are not from a population census but rather from the Ministry of Labor list of households registered as receiving coupons for rationed goods during the early stages of the Iran-Iraq War. Such a list does have some disadvantages as a source of population census. For example, richer households not using the coupon system are left out, while deceased members, not reported as such so that their ration quotas may be purchased, are counted in. More specifically, we cannot establish from this publication whether *illiterate* refers to someone who cannot read or write or to someone who cannot read or write in Farsi. Nonetheless, the general picture given in this table is also confirmed by other published data on illiteracy and by totally different indications of relative

Conclusion

A number of economic and demographic issues had implications for the political sociology of Kurdish nationalism. Rapidly changing demographic and economic conditions transformed rural Kurdistan from isolated communities into societies well integrated with the rest of the province and its urban centers. Along with these processes came the awareness of the outside world, brought about by the integration of village communities into a closely con-

nected entity that demonstrated the relative cohesiveness of rural Kurdistan. The absence of a deeply divided society and the presence of a relatively high degree of internal solidarity among its members produced a successful nationalist movement.

Kurdistan became a single entity, but rural Kurdistan was characterized by a relative absence of class antagonism, which was particularly favorable to the growth of nationalist awareness based on common historical and cultural bonds. Inequality between Kurdistan and Iran led to solidarity and the awareness of nationhood. The findings supported the view that such inequalities were real and substantial.

This study recognizes both continuity and change. The principal theme of continuity in Kurdish life, nomadic or rural, would have to be the natural conditions of the region. It was the mountainous feature of Kurdistan that encouraged and developed nomadism as a form of economic and social organization with strong influences of egalitarianism such as widespread ownership of the herd. The transition from nomadism to settled agriculture in this predominantly mountainous province brought about many changes in Kurdish society and politics, but encouraged egalitarianism and nomadism at the same time. On the hills and mountains of Kurdistan only small-scale farming was viable. Large landownership and a huge labor market could not be a feature of such a society. Subsistence farming and herding created a society of relative equality within Kurdistan and the solidarity of the Kurdish ethnic minority.

These conditions were particularly favorable to the growth of nationalism, but they did not mean that nationalist activists could take advantage of them to build massive parties. To do so would require a reasonable degree of political freedom that was denied to them in the Iran of the 1960s and 1970s. Nonetheless, what nationalist intelligentsia had to achieve by much hard groundwork in other historical eras and other countries was achieved for the Kurdish nationalists by the sheer force of rapid economic and social changes resulting from the land reform program of the 1960s. All the nationalists had to do was to wait for a suitable time to transfer a movement of the Kurdish intelligentsia into a mass party of Kurdish nationalism by drawing the population into their movement. This opportunity was offered to them by the complete collapse of the central authority in the regions of Kurdistan in 1979. One year of political freedom proved sufficient to build a mass party, given that the conditions for nationalism had already been met.

Part VI

Perceptions of the Kurds in the Global Arena

22

The Arab World and the Kurds

MICHAEL COLLINS DUNN

It is often said that the Kurds have no friends other than the mountains. Time after time, they have accepted support from countries opposed to the Turkish, Iraqi, or Iranian governments, only to find themselves left high and dry when allies, true to their own distinct interests, cut their own deals.

This study seeks to provide an overview of the Arab world's relations with and attitudes toward the Kurdish issue. Because of its complexity, Iraq will be considered in a separate discussion. This study is from the perspective of an Arabist, not a Kurdish specialist. It offers a broad analysis of the policy and geopolitical implications of various Arab positions, but it does not attempt to be comprehensive. The Arab world's interest in the issue dwindles with distance. Most Maghreb states, for example, rarely address Kurdish issues except in the context of their relations with Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria.

One other regional country has played a significant role in the Kurdish drama in the past. Israel has a small population of Kurdish-speaking Jews from Iraq and Syria, and like the superpowers and the regional states, it has sought to play the Kurds against Arab governments, particularly Iraq. During the period of U.S. and Iranian support for Mustafa Barzani in the early 1970s, an Israeli military mission was also reportedly present. After the U.S. and Iran ended their support for Barzani in 1975, reports of Israeli involvement also ended.

After Iraq, the Arab country most embroiled in Kurdish issues is Syria, which has a substantial Kurdish minority of its own. Until 1998, Syria supported the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in its fight against the Turkish state. For that reason, this study will focus first on Syria and second on the rest of the Arab world.

Syria and the Kurds

While Syria is not as involved in the Kurdish drama as Iraq, Turkey, or Iran, it has a significant Kurdish minority. For many years, Syria was a primary supporter of the PKK. Abdullah Öcalan lived in Damascus until he was expelled in 1998. It has often provided a haven for Iraqi Kurds, particularly the Patri-

otic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in the 1970s. Syria has been willing to support Kurdish insurgencies against neighboring states, while rejecting any special status for Kurds within Syria. This has sometimes been "called exporting the Kurdish question" or deflecting Kurdish aspirations against neighboring regimes. In fact, some young Syrian Kurds were reportedly encouraged to become PKK fighters.

It is somewhat difficult to obtain firm information about Syria's Kurds. Most sources estimate the number at something over 1 million, out of a population of perhaps 17 million. Other estimates range higher and suggest that 10 percent of Syria's population might be Kurdish. As in every country with a Kurdish population, numbers are themselves a matter of dispute. It is clear enough that most of Syria's Kurds are concentrated either along the Turkish border or in the northeast, in the Hasakah and Deir al-Zor areas. One result is that the Kurdish population of Syria, unlike that of other countries with Kurdish minorities, does not live in a geographically contiguous region. Large empty areas separate Kurds living along the Turkish border from those living along the Euphrates and the Iraqi border. This division has probably been a contributing factor to the relative lack of successful political organization among Syrian Kurds.

Complicating matters further is the fact that a significant number of Syrian Kurds are legally stateless. In 1961, the first Baath government after the dissolution of the United Arab Republic sought to reinforce its claim to Arab nationalism. In 1962, the government decreed a special census in the Hasakah governorate in order to identify "alien infiltrators" from Turkey. Some 120,000 Kurds living in Syria were stripped of their nationality, even though they held no other. Most accounts claim that the identification was either arbitrary or specifically aimed at persons suspected of political activity. In some cases, brothers were treated differently. The children of those 120,000 are also stateless. Some estimate that as many as 200,000 Kurds in Syria have no legally recognized nationality.

Syria has always emphasized its role as the center of Arab nationalism—"the beating heart of Arabism"—which has left little room for Kurdish identity. Kurds are not mentioned in the Syrian constitution, nor is their language given any official recognition. Since the early 1970s, Syrian governments have been dominated by the 'Alawites, who are themselves a minority. The 'Alawites, however, are an Arab-speaking minority.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, Syria was actively engaged in creating a so-called "Arab belt" running about 10 kilometers along the Turkish border. Although Kurds were not evacuated, Arabic speakers, including those relocated to build the Assad Dam on the Euphrates, were settled alongside them. Showing little recognition of its own Kurdish population, the Syrian government

has often been willing to use Kurdish nationalism to harass its regional rivals, Iraq and Turkey. In addition to its indigenous Kurds, Syria has received refugees. There was a significant flight across the Syrian border during the Turkish repression of the Sheikh Sa'id revolt in the 1920s. More recent conflicts in eastern Turkey have also led to cross-border movements. (The arrival of Kurds from Turkey provided the pretext for stripping those 120,000 Syrian Kurds of their nationality in 1962, although it was not applied consistently to those of foreign origin.) Syria also reportedly possessed refugee camps of Iraqi Kurds.

Syria has played host to various KDP and PUK exiles. The creation of the PUK was actually proclaimed in Damascus. Syria has sponsored efforts to reconcile the two factions and has otherwise encouraged Iraq's Kurds in their efforts at winning autonomy. But there have been limits to Syria's enthusiasm. In 1991 and 1992 after the creation of a genuinely autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan, quasi-independent of Baghdad and under western protection, Syria became far less supportive of Iraq's Kurds. Syrian officials met with Turkish and Iranian officials in an effort to contain the danger of an independent Kurdistan. Syrian concerns were reduced once the two main Iraqi Kurdish parties began fighting among themselves.

While seemingly inconsistent, there is a strong geopolitical logic to this sort of policy. Syria and Iraq have been countervailing poles of power in the Fertile Crescent for a very long time. The fact that in recent decades they were ruled by rival (and hostile) wings of the Baath Party exacerbated the rivalry rather than cooling it. Since Iraqi Kurdistan is a greater problem for Iraq than Syria's Kurds are for Damascus (given the larger population of Kurds in Iraq and their geographic cohesiveness), the temptation to destabilize Iraq by supporting Iraqi Kurds has been irresistible. The problem arose in the early 1990s. The prospect of a genuinely autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan was unacceptable for an Arab nationalist state like Syria, whose borders also include a number of minorities, some linguistic (Kurds, Armenians) and some religious ('Alawites, Druze, various Christians, and Jews).

In the case of Syrian support for Turkish Kurds, geopolitical considerations, old rivalries, and the presence in Syria of a significant population of non-Turkish Kurds all combined to bring about Syrian support for the PKK. Syria also has several historic and contemporary quarrels with Turkey unrelated to the Kurdish question. Although the claim is essentially latent, Syria still does not recognize Turkey's annexation of the Hatay region (the former Alexandretta, now Iskenderun). Syria and Turkey also have deep differences over the Euphrates waters, especially in light of Turkey's dam-building upstream. A recent concern is the growing Turkish-Israeli strategic alignment, which is seen by Syria (not without reason) as aimed at encircling it.

Syria has often been willing to provoke Turkey by quietly supporting groups

hostile to the Turkish state. In the 1980s, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) had camps in Lebanon's Baqaa Valley. ASALA was attacking Turkish targets abroad. Syrian support for the PKK stemmed from a similar effort to use a surrogate against Turkish interests. Reports persisted that Syrian Kurds were excused from Syrian military service if they would serve in the PKK. Furthermore, the PKK never attacked Turkey from inside Syria. Rather, Syria quietly supported the PKK in its camps in northern Iraq. When Turkey struck across its border at the PKK, it struck not at Syria but inside Iraq.

For many years, this careful Syrian policy of supporting the PKK at one remove worked. But in 1998, Turkish pressure and threats finally made the policy no longer politic. Syria agreed to end its support of the PKK. Öcalan left Damascus on his "Flying Dutchman" tour of Europe and Africa and ended up in Turkish custody.

Syria supported the PKK, not from any Syrian interest in Turkish Kurds but because its overall interests clashed with Turkey's in other areas. In the long run, Syria would no more want to see an autonomous or independent Turkish Kurdistan than it did an Iraqi Kurdistan in 1991–92. Its support of the Kurds was purely a tactic to outmaneuver Turkey, not an altruistic commitment. When the policy no longer served its interest, especially with Turkey threatening intervention against Syria, Syria abandoned the policy.

The transformations of the region in the early twenty-first century have brought renewed attention to the Kurds of Syria. The arrival of U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq in 2003 and the growing power of autonomous Kurdistan within Iraq almost certainly contributed to the outbreak of violence in Syria's Kurdish community in 2004. The death of Hafez al-Assad in 2000 had already sparked hopes among various population groups for a relaxation of the strict Baath Party rule. The degree to which Syrian Kurds received, or hoped for, assistance from the now-empowered Kurds of Iraq is unclear, but certainly the advances made by Iraqi Kurdistan inspired the 2004 troubles. Beginning with a disputed soccer game between Qamishli and an Arab team on 12 March violence soon spread to the other Kurdish regions of Syria and even to Aleppo. Typical of political agitation in the twenty-first century, several Syrian Kurdish Web sites sprang up to spread word of the troubles and to publish pictures on the Internet. The Syrian government responded by sealing its borders with Iraq and Turkey. Although the rioting was eventually put down, it remains the most significant outburst of Kurdish nationalism in Syria in years.

The unprecedented emergence of Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, as president of Iraq further fueled Syrian Kurdish activism. In 2005 a Kurdish cleric, Sheikh Mohammed al-Khaznawi, was kidnapped and murdered in Damascus. It was widely assumed that Khaznawi, a popular advocate for Kurdish rights, had

been perceived as a threat and had been liquidated by the government. Dissent continued to simmer in Syrian Kurdish areas in 2006 with incidents reported on the March anniversary of the Qamishli riots and during the celebrations of Nawruz during the same month.

The Rest of the Arab World

No Arab country other than Iraq and Syria has a significant Kurdish minority, although Kurds may be found scattered in Jordan, Lebanon, and elsewhere. As noted earlier, a country's interest in Kurdish issues tends to diminish with distance from the region. The Arab countries that border Iraq are more concerned with the Kurdish issue than those farther away. Only Syria has been a major supporter of Kurdish aspirations. Most Arab countries, no matter how opposed they were to Saddam Hussein, appear to have refrained from supporting the Kurdish movements. Verbal support for greater autonomy without independence has sometimes been offered, but usually without much enthusiasm.

One reason for the lack of enthusiasm is that no Arab country is eager to encourage separatism in another. Aside from their boilerplate rhetoric about Arab brotherhood, many Arab states have ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities of their own with boundaries as arbitrary as those in Kurdistan. They fear that separatism encouraged in one place might spread.

Iraq's election of Talabani as president has been met with considerable ambivalence in the Arab world. On one hand, Arab regimes demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the unity of Iraq. On the other hand, they manifest a certain discomfort in dealing with a regime in which Kurds and Shi'ites play critical roles while Sunni Arabs are seen as marginalized.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf

At the end of Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait clearly had little love for Saddam Hussein. They were more alarmed by the uprisings in Iraq, largely centered in the Kurdish north and the Shi'a south. Both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have substantial Shi'a minorities. If Iraq were to fragment along ethnic and religious lines, and if a Shi'a-dominated state were to emerge, a potential Shi'a threat supported by Iran could endanger Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain with its Shi'a minority and Sunni ruling class.

The Saudis perceived dangers in Iraq in 1991. If Iraq had fragmented, the Shi'as might have tried to create an enclave starting somewhere south of Baghdad. If Iraq were to split into only two parts, one would likely be Shi'a. In the past, Sunni Arab dominance has been achieved by cutting a deal with Sunni

Kurdish leaders. An Iraq from which the Sunni Arab dominance and Kurdistan were removed could create a territory from Kirkuk all the way to Basra with a Shi'a majority. If the Tikriti elite were swept away at the same time, the remainder would be led by Shi'as. This scenario frightened the Saudis and Kuwaitis and explained the insistence of most Arab governments, particularly in the Gulf, on an undivided Iraq in the post-Saddam period.

Between the Gulf wars of 1991 and 2003, Saudi Arabia and the other conservative Gulf states generally preferred the devil they knew (Saddam) to the devil they did not know (potential fragmentation of Iraq). While the peninsular states did cooperate in the 2003 coalition campaign to remove Saddam Hussein, they have remained uncomfortable with the paramount role of Kurds and Arab Shi'a in the Iraqi government

Beyond Syria and the Gulf, the Kurdish policies of most Arab states, even major ones like Egypt, first insist on the integrity of Arab boundaries everywhere. Second, they consider the relationship between the Kurdish minorities and their host state as internal issues, and they are not open to interference by others.

Thus the Arab world as a whole pays little attention to Kurdish issues. The exceptions are those countries directly involved (Iraq and Syria) or those who consider the stability of Syria and Iraq to be in their own interests. Beyond this, the Kurdish issue does not resonate deeply in the Arab world. It does raise issues of the rights of cohesive minority groups for other Arab countries as well. Other Arab countries have substantial minority populations, such as southern Sudanese or Algerian Berbers, who also desire a greater role in their own societies.

23

The European Perspective

KENDAL NEZAN

Thirty million Kurds who live in a highly strategic region between the Caucasus and the Gulf, at the limits of the Turkish, Arab, and Iranian worlds, constitute a key factor in the political development and stability of several major states in the region. They deserve to be better known and understood by the American public and government. Beyond any humanitarian considerations, this understanding is necessary for the definition of a strategy to reduce tensions and to build a peaceful, just, and democratic future in this part of the world. It is in the interest of the Kurds, of the Americans, and of all the peoples in the region.

In 1975, had Americans better understood the Kurdish question and the legitimacy of Kurdish demands in Iraq, the Ford administration might not have so readily abandoned General Mustafa Barzani's Kurdish resistance. The resulting human catastrophes of the Iran-Iraq conflict, the campaigns to evacuate and destroy Iraqi Kurdistan, the gassing and massacre of Kurdish civilian populations, the invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf war, the Kurdish exodus of 1991, and the present trials of the Iraqi people might have been avoided.

Similarly, had the Kurds of Turkey been able to make themselves better understood and liked by Americans, the Ford administration might have persuaded its Turkish allies to recognize the identity of its Kurdish citizens and guarantee their linguistic and cultural rights. A Turkey at peace with its Kurds would be a more stable ally and thus more reliable. It might easily become a respected and prosperous member of the European Union (like Spain after Franco) by granting a large measure of autonomy to its minorities. America has become a super power without any real external counterweights. Its deeds and misdeeds cost the rest of the world dearly, especially defenseless Kurds.

Are the Kurds better known in Europe? How are the Kurds perceived or misperceived in the Old World? Is there a European perspective on this question? This problem is complex. One may take Europe in its accepted geographic meaning of a continent stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, including political realities as diverse as the ex-communist countries and Western Europe. Forty-one of these are now members of the Council of Europe, whose headquarters are in Strasbourg, France.

The European Union, on the other hand, forms a politically and economically more structured area, endowed with common institutions, like the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, and the European Parliament. It brings together fifteen states that by referendum refused to be members of the European Union. In December 1999 in Helsinki, the Summit of Heads of State of the members of the European Union agreed to grant Turkey the official status of candidate for membership. Other central and eastern European states have also been recognized as candidates. Eventually, the European Union will bring together about twenty-five to thirty European states. This shows the diversity and complexity of this Europe as well.

Despite recent efforts, the European Union remains largely a free trade zone, endowed with common money but without a common foreign and defense policy yet. However, the revolving presidency of the Union frequently takes positions on external problems, and the former secretary general of NATO, Javier Solana, has been filling the newly created post of commissioner for external policy and joint defense. Meanwhile, the European Parliament, directly elected by universal suffrage, embodies the collective conscience of the European Union and regularly expresses its views on questions of foreign policy and human rights in Europe and the world. This parliament has a power of decision on financial aid to be granted to third parties and on admission of new members to the Union. It relies on the observance of human and minority rights as a condition for granting aid. Parliament's role is important and has pride of place.

In the early 1970s, we were just a dozen Kurdish students in France and some 300 to 400 throughout Europe. Today there are some 120,000 in France and about a million Kurds in Europe. At the time, apart from some very specialized journalists or learned intellectuals, the Europeans were ignorant of the very existence of the Kurds. The only Kurds the press mentioned were from Iraq. The collapse of their resistance after the signing of an agreement in Algiers between the shah of Iran and Saddam Hussein brought about the first psychological shock in an enlightened fringe of European opinion. The image of the Kurds became one of brave and chivalrous resisters, victims of betrayal by the shah, Saddam Hussein, and the United States. Many European countries sympathetically welcomed Kurdish refugees. The Kurdish cause began to win sympathy among intellectuals. In France, a solidarity association, called France-Kurdistan, included prominent intellectuals like Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, published books on the Kurds, and won media coverage. Other countries like Sweden and Austria began to interest themselves in the Kurds because of the development of growing Kurdish communities. After the overthrow of the shah in 1979, the emergence of the secular and democratic Kurdish resistance, led by Dr. Abdulrahman Qasemlou, amplified pro-Kurd-

ish sympathies in Europe. While criticizing America's policy of support for the shah's regime, Dr. Qasemlou publicly condemned the taking of hostages at the American embassy. From chivalrous warriors of a somewhat bygone age, the Kurds became modern democrats fighting for freedom against a medieval fundamentalist regime.

In 1981, Dr. Qasemlou and I made our first diplomatic breakthrough in Europe. We were officially received by Bruno Kreisky, the chancellor of Austria, by Olaf Palme, the premier of Sweden, and by the foreign ministers of several other European countries. Each time, we exposed the Kurdish question as a whole and formulated the demand for regional autonomy for Kurds within the borders of the existing states, as part of the process of their democratization. This demand seemed realistic and modest to those to whom we spoke. The Socialist International became open to Kurds. In December 1981, after the leftist victory in France, the French Socialist Party officially demonstrated support for the Kurdish cause by inviting a delegation consisting of leading Iranian, Iraqi, and Syrian Kurds and led by myself, to its congress. The French Socialist Party Project included a defense of the right to autonomy for Kurds in each of the states where they lived.

Meanwhile, in September 1980, a military coup d'état took place in Turkey, and the Iran-Iraq war began. These two events caused thousands of Kurds, often intellectuals, from Turkey, Iran, and Iraq to seek asylum in Europe. This sudden influx increased the Kurdish presence in Europe and accelerated its restructuring. In February 1983, with the support of the French government, the first Kurdish Cultural Institute appeared in Paris. Perceived as democratic victims of dictatorships, the Kurds enjoyed wide sympathy in several European countries. Their peaceful and diplomatic struggle prompted France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway to petition the European Human Rights Court on the subject of massive human rights violations in Turkey. French public opinion on this matter was such that in 1986, when Turgut Özal, the Turkish prime minister, came to Paris for a UNESCO conference, the only French official who agreed to meet him was the mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac.

From 1985, the French Foreign Ministry received leading Iraqi Kurds, and there was a progressive cooling of French policy toward Baghdad. Some rare documents on the destruction of Kurdish villages were published by the French media and then taken up by the Scandinavian press. The majority of the political caste in France, however, considered the Iraqi regime a necessary evil to stop the spread of the Islamic revolution. A similar tendency was shown in Italy and Spain. Germany sold arms to both Iraq and Iran…and refused any contact with Iraqi and Iranian Kurdish movements.

The situation only began to change substantially with the publication of pictures of the terrible gassing of the Kurdish population in Halabja in March

1988. A few weeks after the end of the Iraq-Iran conflict, in August 1988, the Iraqi army launched an offensive against the Kurdish population and drove tens of thousands to seek refuge in Turkey. The widely publicized visit of Danielle Mitterrand to the refugee camps, refugees' reception in France and other countries, and their testimony to the media all amplified awareness of the fate of the Iraqi Kurds, then as a whole. To test the magnitude of this sympathy, the Kurdish Institute of Paris organized an International Conference of the Kurds in October 1989. Delegations from thirty-two countries, including a Soviet delegation and an American delegation headed by Senator Claiborne Pell, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, attended the conference. An important new phase in internationalization of the Kurdish issue had begun.

After an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the pictures of Kurdish victims were largely used to prepare public opinion in the Gulf war, and the mass exodus at the end of that war in April/May 1991 shook opinion in Europe as well as in the United States. When President François Mitterrand first called for urgent UNC action and France invoked the right to humanitarian intervention and secured the adoption of the famous Security Council Resolution 688, there was broad public support for this policy. At that time, speaking to the parliaments and media of several European countries, I presented the Iraqi Kurds' demands for regional autonomy. Most of those to whom I spoke protested, saying that the Kurds should take advantage of the situation and demand their own country, an independent state. They felt the Kurds had fully paid the price of their freedom.

In May 1991, at the European Council in Luxembourg, several heads of state and government spoke of the genocidal Iraqi policy. The time was right for a decisive political advantage. After Saddam had committed crimes against Kurds, an ill-timed televised meeting of Kurdish leaders with Saddam Hussein had the effect of a cold shower. Shocked by the lack of principle and stature of Kurdish political leaders, opinion remained sympathetic to the Kurdish population. In an opinion poll taken in 1992 by the French paper *Actuel*, the Kurdish cause ranked at the top of the list of causes deserving French government support. Hence Iraqi Kurdish leaders were received at the highest levels in France, Germany, Britain, and Italy.

This sympathy eroded after 1994, due to the fratricidal clashes in Iraqi Kurdistan and the violent actions and demonstrations of the PKK, particularly in Germany. The image of victimized democratic Kurds was obscured by that of violent and intolerant activists who did not respect the laws of their host country. This degradation of image was greatest in Germany, Holland, and Belgium and to some extent in Sweden. Countries like France, Italy, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Great Britain, and Austria continued to have a positive

image of the Kurds, a people driven from their lands by repressive regimes and defending a just cause. It should be noted that public opinion makes no distinction between the different groups of Kurds, so the negative actions of some are attributed to the Kurds as a whole. Over the last few months, since the PKK's commitment to end armed struggle and the disappearance of violent incidents, the image of the Kurds has begun to improve in countries like Germany as well.

Another important factor is the presence in Europe of a substantial diaspora, increasingly numerous, educated, organized, and effective. The Kurdish population of the European Union is now around a million individuals, 600,000 of whom are in Germany. Without hope of returning in any foreseeable future, most have become citizens of their host country and have integrated into its political and cultural life. At the same time, they remain attached to their Kurdish identity and to the Kurdish cause.

In this sense, the Kurdish problem is no longer an exotic affair of a people living at the other end of the world. It is largely perceived as a European problem. In this regard, a German foreign minister, on a visit to Ankara, replied to his Turkish interlocutors that, even if there was no Kurdish problem in Turkey, there was a major Kurdish problem in Germany!

As a matter of fact, Germany has become the most active European country in searching for a solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Germany maintains good working relations with Iraqi Kurdish organizations, especially the KDP. Germany was directly involved after the murder of four Iranian Kurdish leaders in Berlin in September 1992. A German criminal court has resolved that these murders had been ordered by the highest authorities of the Islamic Republic. This court ruling brought about a serious diplomatic crisis between Bonn and Teheran that turned into a showdown between the European Union and Iran.

In July 1989, the Iranian Kurdish leader Dr. Qasemlou and two aides were murdered in Vienna during peace negotiations with envoys of the Iranian president. The Austrian government, fearing Iranian retaliation, let the murderers go back to Iran. The existence of a sizable Kurdish community and strong German opposition prevented the German government from acting in the same shameful way toward the state terrorism of Iran.

The failure to settle the Kurdish problem in its country of origin generates a constant flow of Kurdish refugees to Europe and raises serious problems of public order and employment. "The solution is not to accept more and more Kurdish refugees, but to settle the Kurdish question in Kurdistan itself, so that people should no longer have to expatriate themselves," declared the French minister of the interior.

In fact, today all the countries of the European Union feel, in differing de-

grees, concern for the Kurdish problem. The European Parliament in June 1987 adopted a resolution calling on Turkey to "recognize the Kurdish fact." In 1992, it adopted a special resolution on the rights of the Kurdish people of Iraq, Iran, and Syria. The resolution states that the Kurdish states form a distinct people and, as such, have the right to self-determination. It stresses that the international and regional balance of forces will not allow the Kurds to impose their right to self-determination at this time, but that ignoring this reality would push the Kurdish people into tragic massacres. Meanwhile, it was necessary to struggle to secure as many rights as possible in the existing context.

In their discussions with Turkish leaders, the Europeans insist that the strict minimum would be to recognize cultural and linguistic rights, including the right to have education and media in the Kurdish language. The demand for an autonomous or federal status for the Kurds in Turkey (as for those in Iraq and Iran) must be decided within a democratic framework of dialogue between the elected representatives of the Kurdish people and the central government.

The position of the European Parliament constitutes the lowest common denominator of the views of the fifteen countries of the union. It is a limited approach, since it proposes wide autonomy for the Kurds of Iraq while for those of Turkey (at least three times more numerous) it defers to the balance of forces and proposes only cultural and linguistic rights.

The Council of Europe, which includes about forty European states that have signed the European Convention on Human Rights, watches over the observance by member states of basic freedoms. It has the European Human Rights Court based in Strasbourg, to which any citizen of a member state can appeal. It can try to punish any state that contravenes the terms of the European convention. Massive violations can lead to suspension or exclusion from the council if proposed by the parliament. In the past, Greece was excluded from the council under the colonels' dictatorship, and after the coup d'état of 1980, Turkey was temporarily suspended.

While the Turkish government has frequently been found guilty of individual rights violations (torture, murder, inequitable trial, destruction of property, restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, or meeting), its policy of forcible evacuation and displacement of the Kurdish population has not been subject to any sanctions. In March 1994, the European Parliament passed, with a decisive majority, a resolution that demanded the freeing of imprisoned Kurdish members of parliament and a political settlement of the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Without sanctions, however, this sort of resolution remains ineffective. Similarly, the Council of Europe has drawn up a Charter of Regional and Minority Languages that provides for the promotion and use of these languages in all fields. This charter, proposed for signature by the member states, provides wide linguistic and cultural rights that could satisfy the aspirations of

the Kurds in Turkey. Ankara has refused to sign it. Furthermore, the Council of Europe has no jurisdiction over countries like Iraq, Iran, or Syria, who are not members.

One other organization with a substantial European membership, the Socialist International, is increasingly concerned with the Kurdish question. It has set up a study group on the Kurdish question chaired by Carl Lidbom, the Swedish former minister of education. This committee meets regularly. One Iranian party, the KDPI, and two Iraqi parties, the KDP and the PUK, as well as the Kurdish party in Turkey have participated in some of the committee's meetings and may be more regularly associated in the future. These exchanges resulted in the adoption of a resolution by the 1998 Congress of the Socialist International in Vienna. It demanded recognition of the national rights of the Kurdish people "in the context of the existing State borders, including the right to a wide measure of autonomy."

Eleven of the fifteen countries of the European Union are at present run by parties that are members of the Socialist International. Thus the organization's stand reflects the views of a substantial majority of European states on the settlement of the Kurdish problem.

In conclusion, one can say that in a little less than two decades, the Kurds have erupted onto the stage of European collective consciousness. Europe now considers them to be an oppressed, persecuted people, victims of injustices of history and the Realpolitik of the Great Powers. Their image has evolved over the years. No longer are they somewhat idealized, the children of Saladin. Events and actions have tarnished that image in certain countries, but the image of the states that repress them is so much more negative in public opinion that the Kurds continue to enjoy wide sympathy. Often their faults and errors are attributed to their oppressed situation. "How can you expect the Kurds, who have grown up under authoritarian or dictatorial regimes, to become tolerant and pacific democrats?" one often reads in the European media. The presence of a substantial Kurdish diaspora, active and well integrated into society, the number of marriages between Kurds and Europeans, the existence of thousands of Europeans who have visited or worked in Kurdistan as doctors, journalists, and NGO activists—all have created a situation where the Kurds are part of the cultural, human, and political landscape. The Kurds have become a political factor and a significant constituency in several European countries.

The Kurdish problem has thus become a European problem and at times a domestic political issue. In Germany, the resolute opposition of the Greens to the sale of weapons in Turkey led Berlin to give up the idea of selling tanks to the Turkish army for fear of a breakup of the coalition government. In France, such a sale would also provoke lively protest. Building a dam on a medieval

Kurdish site in Turkey raised a lively controversy in Great Britain, where the government withheld any British financing. In Italy and Greece, the Kurdish issue has become a national cause.

The Scandinavian countries create opportunities to defend the rights of Kurds in Turkey and carry out important humanitarian projects in Iraqi Kurdistan. Sweden finances both Kurdish language instruction by Kurdish teachers and publication of Kurdish books and journals.

The consensus that emerges from Europe is that the key to the Kurdish question lies in Turkey, which is both an ally and an important trade partner of Europe. Its application to join the European Union gives Europe the means of applying political and economic pressure to ensure democracy and to grant the Kurdish citizens linguistic and cultural rights. The settlement of the Kurdish problem in Turkey will greatly contribute to finding a solution for the Kurds in neighboring countries. Many Europeans criticize Washington for extreme tolerance of Ankara. During the Kosovo War, the European media often accused the United States of having a double standard regarding its human rights policy. While waging a large-scale war to impose autonomy of 1.8 million Kosovar Albanians, Washington remained silent on the similar autonomy claims of 15 million Kurds in Turkey. Even worse, it helps Ankara suppress them.

We know Ankara pressured its western allies in 1992 and blocked indispensable economic and political aid to the democratically elected government of Iraqi Kurdistan. This aid would have consolidated the democratic Kurdish institutions and prevented fratricidal fighting caused by shortages and poverty in a country devastated by three decades of dictatorship. Protesting the creation of a Kurdish state, Turkey succeeded in dissuading Washington from recognizing the Iraqi Kurdish administration or giving it the means of governing and rebuilding the region.

In fact, Turkey's application for membership in the European Union offers the first real hope of a solution to the Kurdish question as a whole. After dozens of fruitless and counterproductive armed insurrections, the Kurds can now anticipate peacefully obtaining their fundamental rights with the support of the western democracies. Since the Kurds must live alongside their Turkish, Arab, and Persian neighbors, a modus vivendi can only be achieved by dialogue, education, and evolution of mentalities. Just like the blacks of South Africa, the Kurds must have the patience to educate themselves and their neighbors so that they can live together in mutual self-respect in a context of democracy and tolerance. They must convince the Americans and the Europeans that all interests are better served if authoritarian military regimes, apparently strong but in reality unstable and fragile, are replaced by democracies that respect the cultural, linguistic, and political pluralism of their societies.

The success of this development largely depends on the role played by western democracies, especially the United States, including the practices of foreign policy and the sale of arms. Hitherto the western states have placed commercial interests above the objectives of peace, stability, justice, and democracy. Oppressive regimes have played the democracies against one another in order to arm themselves, squandering the resources of their countries, persecuting their populations, and threatening peace. Iraq, which could not even manufacture shotguns for hunting until the 1960s, was able by skillful politics to build up a redoubtable arsenal of weaponry, conventional and nonconventional. Today, those who thought they could profit from these juicy contracts are desperately trying to pursue their debtors. Everyone—Kurdish, Arab, Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Russian, French, German, and American—has lost over this. Some have lost their lives, others their property, and still others their money, their credibility, and their souls. The case of the shah of Iran is in everyone's memory.

Hope for the Kurds and their friends lies thus in the democratization of the states of the region, in the Europeanization of Turkey, and in the joint actions of the United States and Europe toward their Turkish allies. They must ensure that Turkey accepts the legitimate rights of its Kurdish citizens and ceases to see the Kurds as a secessionist threat instead of a link to the neighboring countries.

Many European political figures like to cite for their Kurdish and Turkish friends the example of the French and Germans who, after three devastating wars, have transformed their conflicts into solutions and have moved forward from territorial disputes to the creation of a new European entity with shared sovereignty in peace and democracy.

A compromise that respects the identity and cultural survival of the Kurds, the security preoccupations of their neighbors, and the interests of their western allies is possible. It is the solution, provided that one and all make the necessary effort.

Western Europe, in its overwhelming majority, considers that, after a twentieth century particularly unjust to the Kurds, the time has come to ensure their right to live as a distinctive people. Europe believes that justice can only arrive with the cooperation of the United States.

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An American Diplomat's Perspective

FRANCIS J. RICCIARDONE

I commend American University's Center for Global Peace and Professors Carole O' Leary and Abdul Aziz Said for organizing this symposium. Thank you for inviting me. Secretary Albright has made it clear that we in the Department of State should seize just such opportunities to converse with American and foreign publics on the issues that we manage on behalf of our citizens.

I was invited as a foreign service officer with experience in Iran, Turkey, and Iraq. My job now is to coordinate the United States' support for Iraqis working to promote a transition to democracy under a new government, so I will focus on our dealings with Iraqi Kurds. Of course, my participation today does not imply that the Department of State or I endorse what others here might say.

Overview: The United States and the Kurds

Let me now offer my "take-home" points concerning the position of the United States. First, there simply is no overarching U.S. government policy toward the Kurds, as such. Rather, we interact with Kurds precisely as we do with any other citizens of their various countries. To illustrate, I will recap the larger Iraqi policy context underlying our relations with the Iraqi Kurds and other free Iraqis. Our approach both suits and reflects the profound changes under way in the conduct of international relations.

Second, as "globalization" inevitably turns formerly local issues into international ones, non-state players are rising in influence in the rapidly evolving business of international relations.

Third, Iraqi Kurds are among the leaders of those free Iraqis who are breaking Baghdad's dictatorial monopoly on communications, both among Iraqis and between them and the world. In so doing, they are laying the groundwork for a hopeful modern definition of what it can mean to be an Iraqi and what Iraq can be as a country.

You might reasonably have expected to hear a statement of U.S. policy toward the Kurds. I am sorry to disappoint: I know of no statement of official policy toward the Kurds. Nor have I ever seen others advocate such a foreign

policy focus. There is simply no need. Issues of Kurdish identity—communal, political, or otherwise—certainly are beyond the United States' ability, authority, or responsibility to resolve for others. Hence, as a practical matter, we simply set aside such questions as immaterial to our ability to communicate productively and respectfully with Kurds wherever we have common interests to address.

We deal with Kurds as citizens of their countries. Of course, we believe the human rights of Kurds must be protected as fully as those of other countrymen. We also believe that a strong democracy affords the best protection for the rights of all citizens in any country. I will not compare the status of Kurds in different countries. But I will briefly sketch our dealings with several sets of Kurds to show that the absence of a specific policy on the Kurds does not impede useful, direct U.S. government communications with individual Kurds and Kurdish organizations who play important local or national roles in their countries. Of the states blessed with large indigenous Kurdish populations, clearly Turkey, as a NATO ally has the best and closest relations with the United States. This means that thousands of American businessmen, scholars, journalists, politicians, tourists, diplomats, and soldiers do various forms of business with Turks of Kurdish origin every day. Usually, and quite naturally, such Americans are unaware of and indifferent to the ancestry of their Turkish interlocutors. The Turkish parliament counts many Kurdish deputies, and many Turkish municipalities routinely elect Kurdish mayors. Our diplomats meet such prominent Turkish citizens as routinely as we see the Turkish politicians and officials of Balkan, Caucasian, Central Asian, or other backgrounds. We promote American exports and investment all over Turkey, including in the southeast, where we see particular business growth opportunities. By contrast, since the United States has no direct diplomatic relations with Iran and no official American presence there, our direct official contacts with Iranian citizens, of any description, in their own country are nil.

Iraq is, of course, a peculiar case. Few, if any, democracies have what could be called "normal," much less "good," relations with Baghdad, and of course we have no relations at all with that regime. But we do have direct and meaningful contacts with a wide range of Iraqis, either outside Iraq or in northern Iraq—so far the only part of Iraq where its citizens can freely communicate with each other and with the outside world.

It is hard for us to imagine a free Iraqi national parliament or government of the future in which Kurds (and their Turkoman and Assyrian neighbors) do not play leading roles alongside their Arab countrymen. Of course, until all Iraqis live under a national government that is accountable to them, we and many other governments will continue to deal respectfully and openly with free Iraqi Kurdish, Turkoman, Assyrian, and Arab personalities and groups as

the holders of local authority, personal prestige, and wide influence. We see them now in an anomalous and temporary situation, after which they will have even more impact on the strategic directions of their country and its national government. We believe that even now, such free Iraqis, far more than the Baghdad regime, best display their country's civilization and its potential.

Iraqi Kurds within U.S. Iraq Policy

We deal with Iraqi Kurds, as with all free Iraqis, within the context of our policy toward Iraq. That policy is clear. We support the territorial integrity and unity of Iraq as necessary for regional peace and stability. We would oppose the creation of separate states or statelets either for the Kurds or for any Iraqi ethnic or sectarian community. We recognize that change in Iraq will come from within and that who will lead the new Iraq and how it will be organized are matters that the Iraqi people must decide all together when they are free to do so. We look forward to the return of Iraq to the community of nations under a new government that will respect the rights of all Iraqis and of Iraq's neighbors under international law. We deal with Kurdish parties and individuals as important constituents and leaders of an Iraqi national movement that seeks to restore such an Iraq to all its people and to its rightful place in the world. Iraqi Kurds are among the most committed advocates of such a new Iraq.

Let me here rebut a fallacy suggested by some opponents of the Iraqi Kurds' long struggle against tyranny. We see no comparison at all between terrorism as practiced by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the Iraqi Kurds' resistance to an outlaw regime condemned and sanctioned by the United Nations as an oppressor. There is no moral ambiguity here. We condemn PKK terrorism.

Shaping a New Iraq

Although Iraqis often ask our outlook, the U.S. government does not and really cannot prescribe how the next Baghdad government should reform the state to guarantee the rights of all its citizens and to restore and strengthen national unity. Naturally, we favor democracy, protected by the rule of law, as the best way to do this. Beyond this, it is not appropriate for us to approve or disapprove the various plans or philosophies now discussed by free Iraqis. In general, we are most comfortable with democratic political principles that promise to strengthen national unity, stability, and prosperity, and to guarantee the full freedoms and other human rights of all Iraqis.

Likewise, we are most uncomfortable with any policies that would tend to

divide or to oppress Iraqis and thus further to weaken Iraq, as the current regime continues to do. We support the universal aspiration of Iraqis to put the days of dictatorship into the past.

The Iraqi National Congress, the umbrella group representing Iraqi democratic opposition parties of all ethnic, sectarian, and ideological communities including the major Kurdish parties, has described such a free Iraq as the goal of all Iraqis. As I understand the INC, they advocate a democratic Iraq with one national government, one army, one diplomatic service, one passport, one currency, and freedom of movement and commerce for all Iraqis from Zakho to Fao.

At the same time, Iraqi National Congress thinkers, including the Kurds, advocate some constitutional decentralization of fiscal and political authority. I find it healthy that the Congress has begun this important national debate even now, the better to develop a ready-made national consensus for the day the dictatorship ends in Iraq. The Iraqis, like any other free people, will have to decide for themselves the right balance between central and decentralized authority, between public and private sector responsibilities. And they will have to do this together. Whatever the terms of their debate, I am confident that the Iraqis will succeed in striking the right balance for themselves.

Iraqi Kurds as Influential Non-state Actors

Let me now return to the growing influence of Iraqi Kurds as non-state players on the global stage. It is remarkable that Iraqi Kurds, formerly among the most culturally and geographically isolated people on the planet, have embraced overt, broad engagements with the outside world with both spirit and skill. Their budding success in the world arena has been hard won through an epic and painful learning process.

One eulogist recently has credited this engagement with the world as an enduring legacy of Mulla Mustafa Barzani. Born a simple villager in a remote province of the Ottoman Empire, Mulla Mustafa died far from his birthplace in a superpower capital. As a guerrilla leader, he had found that the force of local arms, however heroically borne, could not prevail against a modern army backed by the full resources of a state, no matter how poorly led. Hence he sought and exploited secret alliances with powerful foreign states. Any advantages gained became only tactical and temporary. Alignments among states shifted without warning. From the tragic consequences, the Kurds of Iraq wisely have drawn the right lesson: not to retreat or disengage from the world stage, but rather to engage all the more fully and forthrightly, the better to ensure clarity of expectations and commitments.

How have the Iraqi Kurds come to communicate so effectively with so many

states of the world—in the face of their continuing disenfranchisement and the internal embargo imposed by the national regime in Baghdad? As non-state practitioners in international relations, the various Kurdish organizations now enjoy greater influence, access, and credibility and more meaningful international relationships than does the regime that purports to speak for them and for all Iraqis from Iraq's seat at the United Nations. The same is slowly becoming true for the Iraqi Kurds' lesser known neighbors, the Turkoman and Assyrian parties of the Iraqi national opposition. Likewise, traditionally inward-looking Iraqi Arabs, such as tribal leaders and Islamists, are now forging new communication channels to foreign governments and NGOs sympathetic to their human rights. Governments, international organizations, businesspeople, scholars, and NGOs care what such free Iraqis have to say, as the diverse participation here attests, and deservedly so.

Iraqi Kurds have grasped the value of international arrangement and are developing the skills both to bring home the benefits of globalization and to manage its risks. That private Iraqi Kurdish wealth has endowed a scholarly chair in the study of conflict resolution at American University shows a sophisticated awareness that the defeat of oppression requires far more than the force of arms. Such initiatives are indispensable to rebuilding a vital Iraqi national consciousness that will sustain democratic reform by the next leaders of Iraq.

United Nations Security Council resolutions attest to the Iraqi Kurds' growing international influence. The Kurds' impact also can be seen in their open welcome in the ministries of democratic governments. Their connectedness to the larger world likewise is evident in the presence of the many international NGOs, scholars, and journalists whom they welcome to free Iraq without imposing official "minders." Several Iraqi Kurdish groups have permanently posted representatives abroad who are trusted by foreign hosts for their outstanding personal abilities. Such experienced and effective international representatives should prove invaluable assets to any future national government of Iraq.

The Iraqi Kurds' success in dealing with powerful states lies in their dawning understanding that the key to international influence—whether for state or non-state players—is a skill in all aspects of the use of truthful information. I concur. This is not at all the same thing as either "propaganda" or even "public relations" work. Nor is this merely "intelligence" work. Rather, I refer to the timely and broad presentation of truth to influence international public opinion and, through it, the policies of democratic governments. For maximum punch, no medium compares to the visual.

The Iraqi Kurds' first big step on the road to international influence came as the result of televised tragedy. Images of half a million freezing and fright-

ened Iraqi refugees moved the conscience of the world in March 1991. Only days earlier, for lack of real-time video images, that same world stood silent at Baghdad's mass slaughter of innocent Iraqi Arab civilians in the south. Only three years earlier, the world was able to ignore the rumored, but untelevised, poison gassing of Halabja.[1] Still earlier, the lack of televised evidence helped shelter Saddam Hussein's criminal use of poison gas against Iranians, until the United States independently developed the evidence to lead world condemnation of his actions in March 1984.

The sustained international attention to northern Iraq long after the catastrophes of 1988 and 1991, however, results not from the onetime, one-way transmission of images of suffering innocents but from two-way engagement. Iraqi Kurdish leaders have opened their part of the country far more than Baghdad has ever dared to reveal itself to the eyes of the world. Iraqi Kurds do not merely purvey information to the world; they also welcome the world into Iraq. Iraqi students and teachers in Dohuk, Erbil, and Sulaimaniyya freely exchange views and information with each other and with the world via the Internet. While Baghdad bans United Nations–mandated human rights rapporteurs and monitors, Kurds (as well as their Assyrian and Turkoman neighbors) welcome all official and independent foreign visitors. While the son of a dictator controls Baghdad's mass media and bans foreign publications and broadcasts, local and international broadcast channels and publications proliferate in several languages in the north.

While Baghdad vainly struggles to preserve an obsolete dictatorial monopoly on information, free Iraqi Kurds are leading their countrymen of all ethnic origins in communicating as never before. These free Iraqis are making the most of their access to expose truth not only about their oppressors but also about themselves. In the process, they are creating a dynamic definition of who they are as Kurds and as Iraqis, for the world, for their country, and for themselves. To me as an American diplomat, this process is stimulating to observe and a privilege to support.

VII

Conclusion

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The Kurdish Identity

Kurds in a Democratic Iraq and Beyond

CAROLE A. O'LEARY AND CHARLES G. MACDONALD

Life goes on in the Middle East with ethnic and religious conflict ever present and challenging stability. Israelis and Palestinians at times appear to make progress, but often seem deadlocked. The broader underlying Arab-Israeli conflict does not go away as demonstrated by the tragic conflict between Israel and Lebanon in 2006. The conflict started between Israel and the Hizbollah, but escalated. Other conflict continues with ethnic and religious dimensions. Afghanistan and Iraq each face continued fighting and violence. The Kurds in Iraq became major players in the Iraqi political system, but Iraq's emerging democracy remains uncertain as violence continues. Despite Iraq having its own government with a new constitution, it is threatened by the possibility of civil war erupting from local ethnic and religious conflict or sparked by outside involvement.

The United States has come to play a dual role in Iraq and in the Middle East as a whole. Its policy is essentially proactive and reactive. It uses its seemingly unlimited power to make things happen, but still must react to myriad challenges. It promotes democracy, but is also a focal point for cries of hypocrisy, hegemony, and imperialism. What is definite is that the complexity of relations in the Middle East includes the dynamic interaction of outside forces with the complicated mix of regional entities. The challenges to stability are relentless. Dangers of unexpected consequences of policies strike home the reality of ineluctable conflict. Support for states and ethnic groups too often ebb and flow with the exigencies of the day. It is against this backdrop that Kurds and others in the Middle East are prisoners to shifting political interests.

The Kurdish political status remains a function of the political and religious realities where the Kurds are located. Kurds seek to protect their communities and have their human rights respected. Kurds pursue their self-interests in the political systems in which they find themselves. The Kurdish identity remains a mix of the aspirations of Kurdish nationalism and the Kurdish desire to find peace, stability, respect, and human dignity in the particular state

in which they live. The changing political realities in Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria, among others, create constant challenges for the Kurds and underscore the reality that the Kurds can pursue their self-interest but cannot determine their own future.

Iraq and Future of the Kurds

Iraq holds the key to stability in the Gulf region and impacts on developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict and beyond. In mid-2006 the strong showing of support in Baghdad for Hizbollah and against Israel promised to complicate U.S. policy and in its military support for Iraq. Developments in Iraq are also key to the future of Kurds throughout historic Kurdistan.

Kurds in Iraq, despite some earlier internal Kurdish conflicts, have benefited greatly from their democratic experience while apart from Saddam's control. The Kurds had de facto self-rule and came prepared to the political negotiations for the future of post-Saddam Iraq, held under the aegis of the United States. The Kurds sought an ongoing autonomy in a federal, democratic Iraq, with their fair share of the economic benefits of Iraqi oil. The Kurdish experience in post-Saddam Iraq has been closely watched by the Kurds in neighboring states, as well as by the governments of Turkey and Iran. The provision for the Kurdistan Regional Government as written into the new Iraqi constitution is especially important in this regard. The Kurds know that their future is a function of the success or failure of Iraq's drive for democracy and of U.S. policy.

The status of the Kurds in Iraq today is a culmination of events following Operation Desert Storm. The successful Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq was established in 1992 in the aftermath of the 1991 Kurdish uprising, long before the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime. It had no formal legal standing within the region, in the UN system, or with the United States. This changed in less than a year after Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003. The Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period (also known as the Transitional Administration Law) was created to govern Iraq starting 8 March 2004. Under the United States, Iraq has transitioned from the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) under Ambassador Paul Bremer with its associated Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), to a sovereign Iraq with an interim government under Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, to an elected transitional government under Ibrahim Jaafari, to a permanent four-year government under the leadership of Nouri al-Maliki. Moreover, a new Iraqi constitution has been ratified through a national referendum that took place on 15 October 2005. Prime Minister al-Maliki has his work cut out for him. He must unite Iraq under the law, empower Iraq to assume its own police

and military responsibilities, and build democratic values while limiting ethnic and religious conflict. He and/or his successors must convert Iraq to full independence and establish stability without a dominant U.S. presence. He must avoid civil war and the fragmentation of Iraq. Some significant skepticism was voiced in 2006 by Peter Galbraith in *The End of Iraq: How American Incompetence Created a War without End* and by Thomas E. Ricks in *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. Iraq faces the arduous task of keeping the Shi'a, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds engaged in supporting the Baghdad government as Iraq moves forward under its new constitution.

The ability of Iraqi Kurds to achieve their goals of autonomy and democracy was greatly bolstered by the implementation of the Transitional Administration Law (TAL) in 2004. It can be argued that the TAL represents the single most important event for the Kurds in Iraq and throughout the entire region in the modern period. A review of the TAL underscores the successes that the Kurds achieved through negotiation to support their concept of federalism and further legitimize the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Article 4 provides that the system of governance in Iraq will be republican, federal, democratic, and pluralistic and powers shall be shared between the federal government and the regional governments, governorates, municipalities, and local administrations, with a federal system based upon geographic and historical realities and the separation of powers, and not upon origin, race, ethnicity, nationality, or confession. Article 7(B) identifies Iraq as a country of multiple nationalities and specifies that Iraqi Arabs are an inseparable part of the Arab nation. Article 9 recognizes Arabic and Kurdish as the two official languages of Iraq. Concerning the management of natural resources, including oil, article 25(E) states that Iraq's natural resources belong to all the people of all the regions and governorates of Iraq and that the federal government will manage these resources in consultation with the governments of the federal regions and the administrations of the governorates. The article further states that revenues resulting from the sale of these resources will be distributed in an equitable manner proportional to the distribution of population throughout the country and with due regard for areas that were unjustly deprived of these revenues by the previous regime. The two areas most unjustly deprived of oil revenues by the previous regime are the Iraqi Kurdistan region and the predominantly Shi'a south.

Article 27(B) states that armed forces and militias not under the command structure of the Iraq Transitional Government are prohibited, except as provided by federal law. However, article 54(A) states that the Kurdistan Regional Government shall retain control over its police and internal security, which means that the Peshmerga are exempt from the provisions of article 27(B). Article 53 formally recognizes the Kurdistan Regional Government as the of-

ficial government of the territories that were administered by that government on 19 March 2003, in the governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, Sulaimaniyya, Kirkuk, Diyalah, and Nineveh. Article 54 grants the KRG the right to impose taxes and fees within its own region and specifies that the Kurdistan National Assembly may amend the application of federal laws in the Kurdistan region, with the exception of the provisions of articles 25 and 43(D) of the TAL. Article 58(A–C) defers resolution of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, until a national census has been conducted and persons who have been forcibly deported, expelled, or removed from their residences and region are compensated or returned home. Article 58 also recognized that the previous regime changed administrative boundaries for political ends (as was the case in the Kirkuk governorate) and instructed the Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government to make recommendations to the National Assembly to remedy these unjust changes in the permanent constitution. The new Iraqi constitution, approved in the 15 October 2005 referendum, suggested that a referendum on the status of Kirkuk is to be held no later than 31 December 2007. Finally, Article 61(B) provided that the draft of the permanent constitution would be presented to the Iraqi people for approval in a general referendum in October 2005. Article 61(C), often called the "Kurdish Veto Clause," states that the general referendum will be successful and the draft constitution ratified if the majority of voters in Iraq approve it and if two-thirds of the voters in two or more governorates do not reject it.

The constitution explicitly recognized the existence of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and its government, the Kurdistan Regional Government. The KRG, headed by Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani, and the Kurdistan Region, led by President Massoud Barzani, moved to implement the articles of the constitution that pertain to regional rights and powers, including rights over new oil resources, such as oil fields not yet in production. The KRG had signed a deal with Det Norske Oljeselskap (DNO) in 2004, and less than a month after drilling began, DNO announced that it had struck oil with its first new well in the Kurdistan Region. Meanwhile, Iraq's neighbors, Turkey, Iran, and Syria, regarded these developments with deep concern and watched for any hint that the Kurdish leadership in Iraq might move in the direction of declaring independence from Iraq.

As early as 20 February 2004, one month before the signing of the TAL, the United States, represented by Ambassador Paul Bremer, had yet to secure the support of Kurdish leaders for the document. Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani were engaged in what can be termed an existential struggle with Bremer over the rights of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and its government in post-Saddam Iraq, as well as the disposition of Kirkuk and other areas from which Kurds had been ethnically cleaned.[1] While the Kurds did not succeed in

securing all of their demands, it is remarkable to compare the final language of the TAL with the "KDP-PUK constitution" and the 4 February 2004 document presented by the Kurdish leadership to Bremer and his team.[2] Moreover, the now ratified Iraqi constitution indicates the Kurdish leadership proved successful in negotiating on behalf of Iraq's Kurds, who compose 20 percent of Iraq's population. Moreover, as Arab leaders have learned, the Kurds in Iraq have proved to be politically astute and a force to be reckoned with. In fact, in comparison with the TAL, the permanent constitution of Iraq further strengthens the power of federal regions in Iraq, including control over resources.

The success of Iraq's democracy holds the future of the political status not only of the Kurds in Iraq but also of Kurds elsewhere. Political developments in Iraq impact political developments in Turkey, Iran, and Syria. The role of the United States also is crucial to the region and is subject to shifts tied to its role elsewhere in the Middle East, such as in the Arab-Israeli conflict. For example, states could create problems in Iraq to put pressure on the United States. Many would like to see Americans fail in Iraq. Insurgents, many of whom are from outside Iraq, have tried to sow discord and civil war. Turkey, Iran, and Syria would oppose the establishment of a Kurdish state if Iraq fragmented. At the same time, all could support stability, especially to avoid the internal ethnic and religious conflict that Iraq faces.

Turkey, in particular, represents a potential threat to the Kurds in the future, especially if Iraq were to fragment or if the Kurds were to move to independence. Turkey has a submerged claim to what was the Mosul Province of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey would also have many uses for the oil from the Kurdish area. Turkey's continued military incursions into the Kurdish region, reportedly to pursue PKK rebels, could easily become a military threat to the Iraqi Kurds.

The future of Kirkuk is perhaps one of the most difficult internal issues that Iraq faces. Kirkuk remains a potential flash point for Iraqis and their neighbors. According to Iraq's constitution, the "normalization" of Kirkuk and the referendum are to be completed by 31 December 2007. The constitution, however, does not provide rules for the referendum. Will the threshold for the referendum be a simple majority or a two-thirds majority? It is also unclear what questions will be asked in the referendum. Earlier, the Kurds accused the Jaafari government of stalling on implementation of article 58 of the TAL, which dealt with ethnic issues such as Kirkuk, where ethnic cleansing had taken place. The Kurds argue that only a fraction of the hundreds of thousands of refugees eligible for resettlement has been processed. The issue briefly paralyzed the formation of Iraq's transitional government until the Shi'a leadership provided written guarantees that article 58 would be implemented. The spark

that launched the crisis between President Talabani (and the Kurdish leadership) and the Jaafari government was the visit by Jaafari and his delegation to Turkey in early 2006. The Kurdish leadership maintained it was not told in advance of this visit, while the Shi'a side denied that it kept the trip secret and asserted they were not trying to back out of the property claims, resettlement, and boundary adjustment process established in the TAL.

Another issue of great concern to Iraqi Kurdish leaders is the fact that both Muqtada al-Sadr and SCIRI (supported by Iran) have moved elements of their respective militias into Kirkuk and established political offices there. This development, if unchecked, could further destabilize the situation and possibly lead to direct intervention by Turkey or Iran in Kirkuk or elsewhere in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. It could also inflame the Kurdish citizenry in Iraq and throughout the region and pose a huge challenge for American policy. How can the United States manage a conflict situation in which disputants—the Iraqi Kurdish leadership (and people of Iraqi Kurdistan), the government of Turkey, and the government of Iraq—are all perceived as allies? What influence could the United States, Turkey, and/or the government of Iraq assert over Iran? If Iraq were to slide into civil war and if American policymakers were to decide to establish a new Kurdish safe haven zone, the presence of the Mahdi Army and Badr Corps in Kirkuk could present a significant problem if the U.S. goal were to secure areas of the Kirkuk governorate as part of a reconstituted northern safe haven zone.

Kurds in Turkey, Iran, and Syria: A Contrast to Iraqi Kurds

The Iraqi Kurds have made great gains in political status, but still face threats. In neighboring Turkey, Iran, and Syria, Kurds have had political setbacks despite some redress through the use of law. The seizure of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 represented a sea change in the struggle between Turkey and the PKK. The PKK's armed struggle was weakened dramatically. The Turkish Kurds are looking beyond the use of force to pursue interests through the rule of law, especially as the accession process continues for Turkey to join the European Union. Turkey's move to become a member of the European Union began in April 1987 with its application to the then European Community. Turkey became an official candidate for membership in December 1999. It started formal negotiations for accession to the European Union in October 2005. These negotiations are expected to take a decade or more. At the heart of the process is Europe's evaluation of Turkey's internal policies and the Islamic character of the Turkish state. Positive policy changes and revised laws have led to better treatment of the Kurds and others in Turkey. The coming years promise continued European scrutiny that could contribute to greater justice

for the Kurds. Nevertheless, despite major progress, the U.S. State Department indicates that torture and other human rights issues continue to be reported in Turkey.

While some PKK forces remain active, the ongoing civil strife in the southeast declined after the arrest of Öcalan. The Turkish government maintains a hard-line policy against the PKK's armed struggle. Turkey has always pursued a military solution and reacted harshly in the 1990s when the United States suggested that Turkey pursue a political solution instead.

The Turkish government recognizes only Turkish nationality and not ethnic groups such as the Kurds. Kurds who assert their ethnic identity publicly are in danger of being arrested or persecuted. Turkey continues to limit the use of the Kurdish language in the media, unlike in Iraq, where Kurdish is an official language. Many Turkish Kurds still cannot read or write or speak Kurdish. While the Kurds are given equal rights under the law as Turks, their Kurdish identity continues to be seen as distracting from the unity of Turkey. Although many Kurds are now assimilated and some have intermarried with Turks, the Kurdish identity remains alive and well in Turkey.

In Iran, as in Turkey, the principal Kurdish nationalist organization, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI), is only a shadow of its earlier self. Since the targeted killings of two successive KDPI leaders, the Iranian Kurds have not proved to be a significant opposition to the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Nevertheless, Iranian military forces remain stationed in Kurdish areas. In March 2004, Iranian Kurds demonstrated in support of the Iraqi Kurds, who were granted a special status as a federal region in the new constitution for Iraq. The Iranian security forces responded violently.

The 1997 victory of Iranian reformist president Mohammad Khatami sparked new hope for the Iranian Kurds. Iranian Kurdish politicians working within the system garnered a significant budget increase for the Kurdish region. The success of the Kurdish region proved to be short-lived, with the hardliners able to block reformist candidates and recapture parliament in 2004. The election of a hard-line president in 2005 further served to marginalize the Kurds. They reacted with human rights activism and demonstrations rather than insurrection.

Today, ethnic Kurds are found throughout Iranian society in all walks of life, including the military. Kurds, for the most part, remain Sunni. Kurdish identity in Iran remains a function of tradition and the events of the day. Kurdish culture and Iranian culture are similar, which leads to Kurds sometimes having an ambiguous identity, seeing themselves as both Kurds and Iranians. The economic difficulties in the Kurdish areas, if not addressed, could lead to increased Kurdish opposition to the Islamic Republic.

In Syria, the Kurdish situation remains problematic. Syrian government's

harsh treatment of Kurds is unusual. The Kurds are a minority that did not represent a threat to the Syrians. Nevertheless, Syrians continue to prevent them from celebrating their holidays, such as the Kurdish New Year. The Syrian government has also restricted the use of the Kurdish language. In May 2005, when a Kurdish sheikh was murdered, the government used police and military to break up a demonstration, calling for an investigation. About sixty Kurds were arrested. The year before, Syrian authorities fired into Kurdish demonstrations.

The plight of the Syrian Kurds is starkly different from the Turkish Kurds who have full legal rights as Turkish citizens. Kurds in Iraq and Iran similarly are nationals of their respective states. In 1962, the Syrian government removed the Syrian nationality from about 120,000 Syrian Kurds, who became stateless people. These Kurds and their children have been denied state education, health services, and employment. Now numbering more than 300,000, these Kurds are viewed as a problem that needs to be resolved.

The Kurdish identity in the Middle East remains a function of the Kurdish situation in the various states in which they live. The success of the Kurds in Iraq, as represented by the federal structure written into the new constitution, offers hope for the Kurds in other states, too. All Kurds will continue to pursue their political interests and human rights with a view to a greater role in determining their future in a civil society or a not-so-civil society.

Appendix 1

A Draft Constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan Region

NOURI TALABANI

I prepared a draft constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, and it was adopted, with some amendments, by a Kurdish high judicial committee in October 1992. It was presented, in its revised version, to the elected parliament, which had unanimously adopted a federal system on 4 October 1992. About one-third of the members of that parliament (33/105), from both main political parties, formally requested that the project be discussed and, later, adopted. It was supported not only by those members of parliament but also by most members of the legal profession as well as by the different political parties. It represents the hopes and desires of the people of Iraqi Kurdistan. This proposed constitution suggests ways in which the relationship between the region of Iraqi Kurdistan and the central government in Baghdad can be developed. I have added the text of a speech that I gave to a constitutional conference at Princeton University in September 1994. It explains the constitution's proposals in the hope that together they will explain the Kurdish view on the constitutional future of Iraq when its present dictatorial regime is no more.

The parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan proposed a federal system that must be approved by the Arab people of Iraq. How this system would apply to Iraqi Kurdistan is also explained in the text. Such a system must be based also on democracy and freedom and on the respect of all aspects of human rights, including the rights of ethnic minorities and religious groups in the whole of Iraq. This would happen if the representative body of Arab Iraq accepted the proposal. If, however, this proposed system is not approved, the central government cannot impose any other system on Kurdistan, as it is contrary to the will of the Kurdish people.

This new, peaceful, federal, democratic Iraqi state, composed of Kurdistan and Arab Iraq, would play a vital role in maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East where it has previously been marginalized as a result of its failure to respect the wishes of its people.

Draft Constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan Region

PREAMBLE

Every society requires the existence of an authority that sets down general rules that are binding on the members of that society. However, that authority is not legitimate unless its power is exercised by the people or their representatives. Therefore, any government that does not come to power through election by the people is not a legitimate government. The exercise of power is determined by legal principles set down by people's representatives and thus the constitution is considered as the highest legal standard, superseding all other laws. The government's exercise of power is not legitimate unless it is exercised in the way prescribed by the constitution.

The people of Iraqi Kurdistan, too, have the right to govern themselves through a legitimate elected body. They were exercising this right when, on 19 May 1992, they elected their first regional parliament in a free atmosphere, witnessed by international observers.

Kurdistan was among the countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War I. It was mentioned by name, together with the Arab countries and Armenia, by U.S. president Woodrow Wilson, in his plan submitted to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, which created the League of Nations. He asked that they all be put under an international mandate.

The Treaty of Sevres was concluded between the Allies and the Ottomans on 10 August 1920, and it stipulated in articles 62–64 that preparations be made for the establishment of a Kurdish state. Initially, this was to be Northern Kurdistan, to be joined later by Southern Kurdistan, which comprised the greater part of the Ottoman Mosul vilayet. Subsequent to the suspension of the articles of the Treaty of Sevres dealing with the future of the Kurdish nation, and after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty between the Allies and the new regime in Turkey on 24 July 1923, Southern Kurdistan was annexed to the Iraqi Kingdom, which was created by the British from the two vilayets of Basra and Baghdad in 1921. The newly created Iraqi state and the British government, which had a mandate over Iraq, issued a joint declaration on 24 December 1922, which was communicated officially to the League of Nations by mandatory power. In it, they stressed the right of the Kurdish people to a broad measure of autonomy within the new Iraqi state, including the formation of a Kurdish government. It called on the Kurds to form this government themselves and to define their political and economic relations with both the new Iraqi state and the British government through negotiations. This joint declaration constitutes an official recognition of the right

of the Kurdish people to establish a Kurdish entity within the newly created Iraqi state. Therefore, this joint Iraqi-British declaration constitutes a legal and historic basis for the demand by the people of southern Kurdistan for a federal system after their annexation to the new Iraqi state in 1926. Under such a system, Iraqi Kurdistan will have sufficient safeguards to avoid any repetition of the tragedies that have befallen it for decades, especially since 1963, including the large-scale relocation of the people in order to alter the ethnic composition and national identity of Kurdistan, the systematic and total annihilation of its people by every type of lethal weapon, and the destruction of thousands of Kurdish villages and scores of small towns. All these acts can be considered crimes of genocide, which are covered by the International Agreement on the Prevention of Genocide, adopted in Paris by the United Nations on 9 December 1948.

As we near the end of this century, at a time when great changes have taken place concerning the achievement of national rights, the reaffirmation of respect for human rights and basic freedoms for all people regardless of race, gender, language, or religion, the Kurdish people are still subject to crimes of genocide. The UN charter was designed to save humanity from the tragedies of war and destruction and to reaffirm this international body's belief in basic human rights, dignity, and equality for men and women and of all nations, great and small. The Kurdish people's demand for self-determination, following the example of all other nations of the world, is a legitimate demand and is in accordance with paragraph 2 of article 2 of that charter. While suffering the great hardship and being forced to carry arms against the successive dictatorships that have ruled Iraq since September 1961, in order to defend their very existence, tens of thousands of Kurds have been martyred. They have also been the victims of the notorious Anfal campaign, in which an estimated 180,000 Kurds have died. In March 1991 they courageously rose and liberated most of Kurdistan in a few days, but were then forced to abandon their homes in a mass exodus unprecedented in history when subjected to brutal retaliation by the dictatorship of Baghdad, which temporarily regained control of Kurdistan. Since then, they have stoically resisted the hardships caused by the withdrawal of the civil administration from much of Kurdistan and the imposition of an arbitrary economic blockade since October 1991 that caused starvation and suffering in the cold winter. Finally, by their impressive participation in the first free election in the history of Kurdistan to elect a Kurdish parliament, they have expressed their commitment to freedom and their insistence on attaining and safeguarding their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination.

The recognition of the right of the people of Iraqi Kurdistan to self-deter-

mination does not necessarily mean its inevitable separation from Iraq, but living with the Arab people of Iraq in a voluntary federation, in a democratic system that recognizes the right of the Kurdish people to self-determination, that guarantees basic human rights and freedom of expression, and a multiplicity of political parties and organizations that will ensure the existence of such a federation and its survival.

History has shown that there can be no peace and stability in a multinational state unless each nation feels that its rights are protected and that it governs itself by itself. Federalism is nowadays considered the best and most suitable system for multinational states, provided that they adopt democracy. This system not only protects the national rights of the member regions or states but also attempts to strengthen the central government with regard to the fundamental policies of the country and consolidate the foundations of the state.

In the light of the foregoing, and in order that the people of Kurdistan may enjoy their constitutional rights, a basic condition of the federal system, and in order to define the constitutional authority of Kurdistan and to explain how the executive, legislative, and judicial authorities in the region can carry out their responsibilities, this constitution was adopted for Kurdistan by its parliament.

PART ONE: IRAQI KURDISTAN'S POLITICAL SYSTEM

Article (1). Iraqi Kurdistan, which comprises the governorates of Erbil, Dohuk, Sulaimaniyya, and Kirkuk (with its pre-1976 administrative boundaries) and the Kurdish administrative districts of the Mosul, Diyalah, and Al-Koot governorates, is a federal region of the federal Republic of Iraq, which will have a democratic, parliamentary system.

Article (2). Iraqi Kurdistan, with its natural and geographic borders as delineated in Article 1 above, is part of Kurdistan.

Article (3). 1. All power rests with the people of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, who will determine their future unilaterally.

2. The people exercise their power through their representatives or, in exceptional cases, through a plebiscite, according to the provisions of this constitution or according to a decision by Iraqi Kurdistan's parliament.

Article (4). The people of Iraqi Kurdistan enter into a voluntary federation with the Arabic part of Iraq within the framework of a federal Republic of Iraqi that will include two federated regions enjoying equal rights guaranteed by a federal constitution to be enacted by the legislatures of the two regions and the elected, federal legislative assemblies.

Article (5). The population of Iraqi Kurdistan is comprised of Kurds, who

are in the majority, and minorities including any Turkoman, Assyrian, and Arab permanently residing in Kurdistan. This constitution will establish the legitimate national rights of these minorities, and these rights will be regulated by law.

Article (6). 1. Kurdish is the official language of Iraqi Kurdistan. In addition, Arabic will be an official language in matters concerning communications with the federal government.

2. Instruction at all levels of education will generally be in Kurdish. Arabic and one foreign language will be taught toward the end of the elementary level and in the higher levels. Minorities in Iraqi Kurdistan have the right to use their own language until they reach higher education.

Article (7). The capital of Iraqi Kurdistan is Erbil (Hawler). Another city, when necessary, may be chosen as temporary capital by the regional government and with the approval of the region's chief executive.

Article (8). Law shall determine the flag, the national anthem, and the emblem of Iraqi Kurdistan. A federal law shall determine the Iraqi republic's flag, national anthem, and emblem.

Article (9). 1. Nawruz, which falls on 21 March of each year, is Iraqi Kurdistan's National Day.

2. The Kurdish calendar will be used in the region in addition to the Gregorian calendar.

Article (10). The status of Iraqi Kurdistan cannot be abolished by any means whatsoever; neither can any part of it be annexed to another region except with the approval of two-thirds of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament and that of the people of the region by a referendum.

Article (11). No federal legislation shall have any effect or validity in Iraqi Kurdistan without the approval of the region's parliament.

Article (12). The Kurdistan Regional Parliament shall determine the areas and goods that will be subject to federal taxes as well as the percentage of these taxes, which will be allocated to the government.

Article (13). 1. Twenty-five percent of the general federal budget and other central government budgets shall be allocated to Kurdistan. This percentage shall not be reduced by the decisions of the federal legislature or government.

2. Fifty percent of the revenues from oil and minerals extracted from Kurdistan's soil shall be allocated to the region itself.

Article (14). The approval of Kurdistan's appropriate authorities must be obtained for the ratification of any financial or other treaties or agreements that the federal government wishes to conclude with other countries and international organizations, which may limit or decrease the authority of the regional government or affect its borders.

Article (15). 1. The legislative, judicial, and executive authorities in Iraqi Kurdistan shall hold all powers, except those vested in the federal government, in other words, those relating to defense matters, international relations, issuance of currency, citizenship, tariffs and customs, international airports, and central telephone and mail services.

2. Kurdistan shall have the right to conclude treaties and agreements with foreign and international organizations and entities in humanitarian, cultural, and commercial fields.

Article (16). Iraqi Kurdistan will be divided into administrative districts and governed on a decentralized basis.

Article (17). Kurdistan's armed forces shall not be deployed outside the region, nor shall federal armed forces be permitted to enter the region without the written approval of the region's government.

Article (18). The citizens of Iraqi Kurdistan shall perform military service only within the region itself.

Article (19). The citizens of Iraqi Kurdistan shall serve proportionate to the region's population in all federal ministries and institutions and international bodies in which Iraq participates.

PART TWO: PUBLIC RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

CHAPTER ONE: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Article (20). 1. All citizens are equal before the law with regard to their rights and responsibilities, and all are accorded its protection equally and without discrimination.

2. Equal opportunity is guaranteed to all citizens of the region.

Article (21). Human dignity, honor, and privacy are protected. A person's privacy, honor, and reputation shall not be violated arbitrarily or illegally.

Article (22). 1. An accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

2. No one shall be sentenced to death for a crime committed for political reasons.

3. No one shall be sentenced to death for a crime committed while less than twenty years of age.

Article (23). Punishment is personal; no one shall be punished for another person's crime.

Article (24). The right to defense is sacrosanct. The law guarantees an accused the right to defend himself personally or through a lawyer.

Article (25). 1. Law determines crimes and punishments.

2. No act shall be punishable unless it is considered a crime at the time of its commission.

3. When more than one penal code applies to a crime, the one more favorable to the accused shall be applied.

Article (26). Anyone convicted of a crime is entitled to compensation as prescribed by law if it is discovered that a serious miscarriage of justice has occurred.

Article (27). 1. Any attack on a public service official during the performance of his duties, or as a result of them, is considered a crime.

2. Any attack by a public service official on a citizen's personal freedom, privacy, or other rights and freedoms guaranteed by law and the Constitution, is considered a crime.

Article (28). 1. No one shall be detained, arrested, or imprisoned without a warrant from a judicial authority or any other authority authorized by law.

2. Under no circumstances shall anyone be tortured physically or psychologically for any reason whatsoever during his arrest, detention, or imprisonment.

3. A person is entitled to claim fair compensation for any damage incurred as a result of a violation of sections 1 and 2 of this article.

4. A person is entitled to fair compensation for any material or psychological damage he suffers as a result of his arrest or detention, if proven innocent.

5. A person who is apprehended or arrested has the right to contact his family and his lawyer before he is interrogated, unless it is impossible to do so or there is a convincing or compelling reason to speed up the interrogation.

Article (29). People's homes are sacrosanct and cannot be entered or searched except within the limits and the procedures prescribed by law.

Article (30). Work is the right and responsibility of every citizen and a source of pride. It is required by the necessity of contributing to the rebuilding, protection, and development of Kurdistan. The regional government shall make every effort to provide employment for everyone able to work. No one shall be forced to work without pay.

Article (31). By law the Kurdistan Regional Government provides the citizens with social security and other safeguards against illness, disability, and old age.

Article (32). The Kurdistan Regional Government guarantees the region's citizens the right to an education. Elementary education shall be compulsory and the regional government shall seek to combat illiteracy by all legal means.

Article (33). The Kurdistan Regional Government shall guarantee the freedom of scientific and academic research and shall provide the means for

its advancement. It will develop and encourage excellence, creativity, and ingenuity in scientific, cultural, and intellectual areas.

Article (34). 1. Private property shall be protected by the Kurdistan Regional Government and regulated by law.

2. Private property cannot be taken away unless it is in the public interest to do so, in which case there will be fair compensation.

Article (35). 1. A citizen's right to travel within and without Kurdistan is guaranteed and his movement or residency cannot be restricted except in cases prescribed by law.

2. No citizen shall be banished from Kurdistan, or barred from returning to live there, except in cases prescribed by law.

Article (36). The right of citizenship is the most basic right and cannot be taken away for any reason whatsoever.

Article (37). 1. The right of political asylum is guaranteed to anyone persecuted in his own country and especially to those of Kurdish origin. The law shall regulate the conditions of political asylum and the rights and responsibilities of anyone who is granted such asylum.

2. The extradition of political refugees for any reason whatsoever is prohibited.

Article (38). Every adult citizen, whether man or woman, residing permanently in Iraqi Kurdistan has the right to elect, and to be elected, and to participate in plebiscites and in public life in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the law.

CHAPTER TWO: CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THEIR REGULATION

Article (39). 1. Religious freedom is guaranteed to all, provided it is not incompatible with the provisions of the law.

2. The right to perform religious rites is guaranteed.

Article (40). The right of peaceful assembly and demonstration is guaranteed within the limits of public law and order and so long as it does not violate the rights and liberties of others. Law will regulate this right.

Article (41). The right to strike and to withhold labor is guaranteed within the limits of the law.

Article (42). Freedom of thought and the right of expression by means of cultural and mass media are guaranteed. Law will regulate these freedoms.

Article (43). Freedom of the press, printing, and publishing is guaranteed within the law. There will be no censorship of newspapers and other publications except within the provisions of the law.

Article (44). The media shall operate freely within the provisions of the law and without any violation of individual freedoms and privacy.

Article (45). The right to form political parties and the freedom to join them are guaranteed to all. Law will regulate this.

Article (46). The right to form organizations, associations, and trade unions and the freedom to join them are guaranteed by law.

Article (47). Forming political parties, associations, and organizations whose charters, programs, methodology, and conduct are undemocratic is prohibited. Political parties, organizations, and associations must conduct their activities openly and without the use of force or violence. They are prohibited from possessing weapons under any circumstances.

Article (48). Political parties, organizations, and associations are prohibited from engaging in racial or sectarian propaganda or in any other act that might inflame racial or religious hatred.

Article (49). Political parties are forbidden to engage in political or partisan activities in the armed forces and the security forces and among the members of the judiciary.

Article (50). Political parties, trade unions, organizations, and associations are not allowed to receive any domestic or foreign assistance or any movable or immovable property, in violation of the law.

PART THREE: THE REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

CHAPTER ONE: THE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY (THE PARLIAMENT)

Article (51). Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Parliament represents the people of the region and it alone has the right to pass regional laws, to decide the overall policies, to approve the budget, and to plan for economic development. It also maintains supervision over the government. This will all be done in the manner stated in this constitution.

Article (52). The members of parliament shall be elected by secret ballot by the citizens of the region, according to law.

Article (53). The law shall determine the requirements to be met by the parliamentary candidates. Anyone who participated in the planning of the crimes of the oppressive, dictatorial regime of Iraq, or who cooperated in the implementation of those plans, shall not be eligible for candidacy.

Article (54). A member of parliament shall devote his time to his parliamentary work, and his previous job will be kept for him.

Article (55). A member of parliament shall take the following oath before taking office: “I do solemnly swear by God that I will protect the unity of the people and territory of Iraqi Kurdistan, and that I will protect the vital interests of the people and uphold the constitution and the law.”

Article (56). Members of parliament will receive a salary set by law.

Article (57). The term of office of parliament shall be four years from the date

of its first session. Preparations will be made during its final forty days of the election for a new parliament.

Article (58). Parliament shall arbitrate in the authenticating of the membership of its members. Kurdistan's High Court shall investigate the legitimacy of any challenges to parliament after the speaker refers those challenges to it. The result of the investigation and the court's decision will be presented to parliament. Membership will not be invalid except by a decision of a two-thirds majority of the members of parliament.

Article (59). A member of parliament is prohibited from buying or renting public property and from selling, bartering, or renting out his property to the state, or concluding a deal with the regional government as an importer, concessionaire, or contractor.

Article (60). No member of parliament shall be stripped of his membership unless he fails to meet any of the requirements or to carry out the duties of membership. A decision to strip away membership requires a two-thirds majority in parliament

Article (61). Parliament is the only authority able to accept the resignation of its members.

Article (62). Opinions or ideas expressed by members of parliament during the performance of their parliamentary duties, or while serving on its committees, cannot be held against them.

Article (63). Unless apprehended in the commission of a crime, no criminal proceedings can be taken against a member of parliament except by prior permission of parliament. If parliament is not in session, the speaker's permission must be obtained and parliament will be notified of any measures taken at its first meeting on reconvening.

Article (64). The region's chief executive must call parliament to its regular annual sessions before the second of October. If not called to session, it will convene in accordance with the constitution on the above-mentioned date and will continue its regular sessions for a minimum period of eight months. Parliament will not adjourn before passing the region's general budget.

Article (65). In exceptional circumstances, the region's chief executive shall call Parliament to an extraordinary meeting at the request of the region's cabinet or by a request signed by no less then one-third of the members of parliament.

Article (66). The region's cabinet, or ten members of parliament, may introduce a bill. No bill can be discussed by parliament before being examined by the appropriate committee. Any bill, once rejected by parliament, cannot be reintroduced in its current session.

Article (67). The region's annual budget must be submitted to parliament within one year from the end of the fiscal year. Likewise, a final annual

report and the observations of the region's auditors must be submitted to parliament, who may request from them additional reports or information. In case of delay in the approval of the general budget, monthly expenditures shall not exceed one-twelfth of the previous year's general budget.

Article (68). The region's government is not permitted to borrow money or to commit itself to a project that would incur further expenditure by the treasury at a future date without the approval of parliament.

Article (69). Every member of parliament has the right to address questions to the prime minister and the members of the cabinet within their areas of competence. Such questions shall be answered by the prime minister, or the members of the cabinet, or by persons appointed to represent them. Members of parliament also have the right to cross-examine them and to hold them accountable.

Article (70). The deputy prime minister and ministers may be members of parliament. Those who are not members may attend its meetings and committees.

Article (71). Once having taken the oath of office, a member of parliament shall devote all his time to his parliamentary work.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

Section One: The Region's Chief Executive

Article (72). Iraqi Kurdistan's parliament shall choose a chief executive for the region who shall serve for a period of four years after taking the oath of office. His term of office cannot be renewed more than once.

Article (73). In addition to the provisions of article 53 of this constitution, the candidate for the post of the region's chief executive must meet the following requirements:

1. He/she must be a citizen of Iraqi Kurdistan and permanently resident there.
2. He/she must be accorded all civil and political rights and must have reached forty years of age.

Article (74). 1. The date of the election of the region's chief executive shall be set by Parliament and announced through the media.

2. Every citizen of the region who meets the requirements specified in article 73 above has the right to stand as a candidate by submitting a written application to the speaker of parliament within fifteen days of the announcement of the date of the election. It must be signed and endorsed by ten members of parliament and supported by the appropriate legal documents.

3. A high commission appointed by parliament at the time of its an-

nouncement of the date of the election for the chief executive shall make a decision on the applications within five days of their submission and shall notify the applicants of its decisions within two days.

4. An applicant has the right to challenge the high commission's decision before Iraqi Kurdistan's high court within two days of being notified of it.

5. The high court will make a definitive decision about the challenge within two days. All candidates will be considered to have been notified of the above-mentioned decisions as from the date of their announcement on the court's bulletin board.

Article (75). 1. Gaining a two-thirds majority in a secret ballot shall elect the region's chief executive by the region's parliament.

2. In the event of a failure to elect the chief executive on the first ballot, and where there are two or more candidates standing for election, the second and subsequent ballots will be limited to the two candidates who received the most votes on the first ballot.

3. In the event of a failure to gain the required two-thirds majority on the second, third, fourth, and fifth ballots, which must be held within fifteen days, Parliament shall elect the chief executive on the sixth ballot, within three days, by a simple majority.

Article (76). The region's chief executive shall take the oath of office before parliament within two days of his election in the following manner: " I do solemnly swear by God that I will protect the unity of the people and territory of Iraqi Kurdistan, and that I will protect the vital interests of the people and uphold the constitution and the law."

Article (77). The salary of the region's chief executive shall be set by parliament.

Article (78). The region's chief executive shall assume the following responsibilities:

1. Commander-in-chief of the region's armed forces.
2. Summoning the region's parliament for regular, as well as extraordinary, sessions.
3. Appointing the region's prime minister from the majority party in parliament in accordance with the constitution.
4. Issuing of decrees regarding the appointment of the region's prime minister and his cabinet.
5. Endorsing any regional laws passed by parliament within ten days of receiving them.
6. Signing death sentences or commuting such sentences to life imprisonment with hard labor.
7. Issuing special clemencies after consultation with the region's supreme legal council.

8. Issuing decrees, with the approval of the region's cabinet, to deal with emergency situations requiring immediate action when parliament is not in session. These decrees have the force of law and must be presented to parliament for ratification as soon as it reconvenes.
9. Calling general elections to elect the region's parliament within fifteen days of the end of its term, or of a decision to dissolve itself.
10. Issuing decrees regarding the appointment, dismissal, or acceptance of the resignation of high-ranking officials, directors general, judges, members of the public prosecutor's office, or those of equal rank.
11. Selecting, appointing, dismissing, and accepting the resignation of his advisors.

Article (79). The prime minister's approval is necessary for decrees issued by the chief executive.

Article (80). The provisions of article 59 of this constitution are applicable to the region's chief executive while he remains in office.

Article (81). Parliament shall elect a new chief executive of the region no earlier than thirty days before the expiry of the current chief executive's term of office.

Article (82). 1. If, for any reason, the chief executive's position falls vacant, parliament shall elect a new chief executive within thirty days. The prime minister shall assume the chief executive's responsibilities during this period.

2. In the case of the chief executive's absence or disability, the prime minister shall act for him for a period not exceeding three months.

3. If the chief executive is unable to resume his work at the end of the period specified in section 2 above, Parliament has the right either to extend the time for a further three months or to elect a new chief executive in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

Section Two: The Cabinet (the Government)

Article (83). 1. After consultation, the region's chief executive will appoint a member of the majority party in parliament to form the cabinet.

2. The prime minister designate shall present to parliament the names of his cabinet, together with his government's program and policies, within a period of not more than fifteen days from the date of his appointment, to win a vote of confidence by parliament.

Article (84). Within seven days of winning a vote of confidence in parliament, the prime minister and the cabinet shall be appointed to their positions by a regional decree.

Article (85). Any member of the cabinet must be a citizen of the region, at least thirty years of age, and must be accorded all his civil and political

rights. He must not have been convicted of a nonpolitical crime or misdemeanor, in addition to meeting all the requirements mentioned in article 53 of this constitution.

Article (86). The cabinet is the region's supreme executive and administrative authority and is responsible for enforcing the laws, protecting the rights and liberties of the citizens, and maintaining peace and stability in the region. It is responsible specifically for:

1. Deciding the overall policy of the region.
2. Preparing draft legislation and introducing them to parliament for passage into regional law.
3. Proposing the names of the region's representatives for membership of the federal council (senate) of the federal parliament for its approval.
4. Issuing rules and regulations in accordance with the law.
5. Making executive and administrative decisions in accordance with the law and ensuring their enforcement.
6. Overseeing the appropriateness of the directives issued by individual ministers to facilitate the enforcement of laws and regulations.
7. Preparing the region's general budget and monitoring its implementation after its approval by parliament.
8. Preparing the economic development plan for the region and monitoring its proper implementation after its approval by parliament.
9. Nominating advisors and high-ranking officials, directors general, judges, and members of the public prosecutor's office, and presenting their names to the region's chief executive to ratify their appointments by regional decrees.

Article (87). Before taking office, members of the cabinet shall take the following oath before the region's chief executive: "I do solemnly swear by God that I will protect the unity of the people and territory of Iraqi Kurdistan, and that I will protect the vital interests of the people and uphold the constitution and the law."

Article (88). The provisions of article 59 of this constitution shall apply to the prime minister and the members of his cabinet while in office.

Article (89). 1. The prime minister shall direct and coordinate the work of the ministries and monitor their performance.

2. The ministers share the responsibility to parliament for the cabinet's general policies, and each minister is personally responsible for his actions.

Article (90). The minister has overall responsibility for his ministry. He sets the policy of his ministry within the region's general policy and implements it.

Article (91). It is possible for one-quarter of the members of parliament to request a vote of confidence in the cabinet or in one of the ministers. No vote can be taken on the issue of confidence before one week has elapsed since its introduction to parliament. The voting will be public and held within two days of the completion of discussion of the issue. A vote of no confidence shall not be conclusive unless it is by a simple majority of all the members of parliament. A vote of no confidence in the cabinet will result in the resignation of the entire cabinet, and a vote of no confidence in a minister will result in the resignation of that minister.

Article (92). In the event of the death of the prime minister, or in other circumstances which would render his post vacant, his deputy shall assume his responsibilities until such time as a new prime minister is appointed in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

Article (93). Ministers are accountable for any felonies or misdemeanors they commit while discharging, or as a result of, their responsibilities.

Article (94). Parliament has the right to bring charges against a minister before a special tribunal for crimes he commits while discharging, or as a result of, his responsibilities. These charges must be based on a proposal by at least one-quarter of the members of parliament. The verdict to convict shall be by a simple majority of the members of parliament.

Article (95). A minister who is accused shall be suspended from his post until a decision is made. He shall not be dismissed without a formal charge or the instigation of legal proceedings. A minister's trial, the procedures of the trial, its safeguards, and the punishments shall be in accordance with the law. The provisions of this law shall also apply to the deputy ministers and others of equal rank.

CHAPTER THREE: THE JUDICIARY

Article (96). No one is above the law, and the judiciary must be allowed to administer justice without interference. Judges are free to make their decisions in a manner that would enable them to discharge their duties in the best way possible.

Article (97). The rule of law applies to everyone in its general and particular terms.

Article (98). The right to a fair trial is guaranteed to all. The law defines the procedures necessary for exercising this right.

Article (99). The law shall determine the manner of establishing courts, their types, their hierarchy, and the areas of their responsibility.

Article (100). Court sessions shall be public unless public welfare dictates, in the opinion of the court or at the request of the prosecution, that they be held in secret to preserve public order or to maintain decorum.

Article (101). The courts' decisions and verdicts shall be pronounced in the name of the people.

Article (102). Extraordinary tribunals shall not be established unless there is the threat of an external attack on the region or a serious threat to its internal security. They will be established by a regional decree from the region's chief executive at the suggestion of the cabinet. The work of these tribunals shall cease with the end of the unusual situation that necessitated them. Law will regulate all this.

Article (103). The public prosecutor's office shall represent the public in defending justice and in protecting individual and family freedoms and property in Iraqi Kurdistan.

PART FOUR: THE SUPREME LEGAL COUNCIL

Article (104). The Supreme Legal Council of the region is the body that the region's chief executive and the prime minister will consult on matters relating to the constitution and its provisions. Specifically, it looks into:

1. Proposals concerning the amendment of one or more of the articles of the constitution.
2. The drafting of bills, rules and regulations.
3. Legal matters referred to it by the region's chief executive, prime minister, and ministers.

Article (105). The council shall be composed of five members of senior rank appointed by a regional decree based on a proposal by the region's cabinet. They will be chosen from among the outstanding jurists of the region known for their competence, honesty, integrity, and dedication.

Article (106). 1. Holding membership of the council and membership of parliament or the cabinet concurrently is prohibited.

2. A member of the council can hold membership in the federal council (senate) or any federal institutions concurrently.

PART FIVE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article (107). This constitution shall be effective after its enactment by parliament by a two-thirds majority vote.

Article (108). The region's cabinet or one-third of the members of parliament have the right to request the amendment of one or more articles of this constitution provided that the number of articles to be amended, and the reasons, are mentioned in the request.

Article (109). The proposal to amend the constitution shall be presented to the region's supreme legal council for its views, before being presented to parliament.

Article (110). Any amendment to the constitution requires the approval of a two-thirds majority of members of parliament.

Article (111). The provisions of the legislation in effect before the adoption of this constitution remain in effect in the region until abolished or amended by a decision of parliament, with the exception of any legislation shown to be incompatible with the provisions of this constitution.

Article (112). The legislation, rules, and regulations issued by the "Kurdistan Front's" political leadership and Kurdistan's institutions before the adoption of this constitution, shall also remain in effect unless shown to be incompatible with its provisions.

Article (113). The laws, rules, and regulations shall be published in the region's official register/gazette and will be effective as from the date of their publication, or as from the date specified in those same laws, rules, and regulations.

Iraqi Kurdistan's parliament,
Written in Erbil on __/__/ 199

Concerning the Proposed Constitution for Iraqi Kurdistan

Federalism is, for the most part, regarded as the ideal system for democratic states, which are made up of a multiplicity of nations. This principle of federalism was unanimously endorsed by the freely elected parliament of the Iraqi Kurdistan region (IKR) on 4 October 1992. The decision was supposed to have been followed by the complementary and necessary step of a legal constitution for the IKR. However, this poses the question of whether it is possible to draw up a constitution for the IKR before there is a federal constitution for Iraq as a whole. This would be a reasonable question even for a country which had not suffered the harrowing events and brutal tragedies which have prevailed in Iraq, where a succession of military coups d'état have ensured the continuing power of dictatorial regimes. For decades, the Kurdish people have borne a far greater share of oppression and racist atrocities than the rest of the Iraqi population. This has been particularly true since Saddam Hussein's regime intensified its oppression by the use of chemical weapons and by the implementation of the genocidal Anfal campaign in which more than 180,000 innocent Kurds perished and more than 4,000 villages and dozens of small Kurdish towns were razed. This was accompanied by the mass expulsion of Kurdish populations and by the ethnic cleansing of their areas, as occurred in the Kurdish regions of Kirkuk, Khanikeen, Sinjar, Sheikhan, and others, all of which still remain under the control of the dictatorial regime of Iraq.

The Kurdish parliament adopted the principle of federalism for two reasons: first, to safeguard the Kurdish people in Iraq from further atrocity, as the

federal system contains provisions available in neither decentralized nor autonomous systems and, second, to emphasize the desire of the Kurdish people in Iraq to maintain the integrity of Iraq, alongside the Iraqi Arabs, while exercising their right to self-determination. For this reason, the parliament has demanded neither independence nor confederation.

In its demand for the establishment of a democratic, federal state that fully protects human rights, the parliament of Kurdistan was inspired by the examples of some federal systems in the West, while taking into account the specific issues relating to Iraq and the particularity of the Kurdish people as a distinct nation with its own language, culture, and heritage and its legitimate ambition to enjoy the right of self-determination. These principles should form the basis of any future constitution of a federal, democratic Iraq in which the Iraqi political parties are clearly defined. The establishment of such a state must be based on a contractual agreement between Kurdistan and the Arab Iraqi region.

As the legally authorized representative of the people, the parliament of the Iraqi Kurdistan region has adopted the principle of federalism and has proposed it to Arab Iraq. If the authorized Arab representative body were to adopt this principle, it would represent a major and positive step toward a bright future for Iraq. However, should they refuse it, no other arrangement could be imposed on the Iraqi Kurdistan region by the central government, since it holds no mandate to enforce any measures on the Iraqi Kurdistan region. It would be contrary to the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people in Iraq, which is an inviolable entitlement that should, and must, be exercised by the Kurds alone.

In an important development in the recent political history of Iraq, this principle of federalism and the right to self-determination as a constitutional framework for post-Saddam Iraq was accepted and endorsed in October 1992 by the Iraqi National Council (INC), which was, at that time, the umbrella organization representing all the main politically effective factions of the Iraqi opposition. There are, of course, other groups in the Iraqi opposition who do not accept it and who object either directly or indirectly. They do not, however, represent active or effective parties among the Iraqi opposition and, in any case, they are a minority. Democracy accepts the views of the majority.

It is important to emphasize that the establishment of federalism as a legal, contractual agreement between two parties, Kurdistan and the Arabic part of Iraq, would mean that both regions would have equal rights, irrespective of geographic or demographic size or economic capabilities, and must enjoy extensive powers. The concept of federalism implies complete equality on both sides of the federal union, including equal participation in the central administration of the federal state and equal membership of the upper house. The

latter would form one of two main pillars of the central legislative authority with wide powers to decide common policies of the federal state. The administration of the federal state must be based on democratic elections and on the protection of all aspects of human rights. To ensure this, a high court must be created, accessible to all parties, groups, and individuals, and its decisions must be binding on all. All these points, as well as a definition of the boundaries of the two regions, must be clearly specified in any future Iraqi constitution.

Here we must return to the question: is it possible to legislate a constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan region, though now free of the regime, before there is a new constitution for Iraq, especially since the Baath Party is still in power? Should we wait until this regime is removed and replaced by another that believes in democracy and federalism? If so, then for how long should the parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan wait before legislating a constitution for the region, especially since there is nothing clear on the political horizon to suggest that the regime is likely to fall, even though several years have elapsed since the Gulf war and despite its internal, regional, and international isolation and the economic embargo imposed on it? Is it logical that every institution of the Iraqi Kurdistan region, including the parliament, regional government, and judicial bodies, should remain without a constitution to regulate their authority and power on the pretext that no constitution exists for the whole of Iraq? It should be remembered here that the power to legislate a constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan region belongs to the regional parliament and the people of Kurdistan alone, not with the federal parliament or the whole population of Iraq.

For all the foregoing reasons, we believe that we must proceed with legislating such a constitution without further delay. This is now being urged by all Kurdish lawyers and legal and judicial authorities, as well as by a large number of members of the Kurdish parliament. The sad events of May 1994 and later, which led to the armed conflict between the two main Kurdish political parties, served only to prove that the lack of a constitution for the region ensured that only the dictatorial regime in Baghdad and other neighboring states benefited. It seems that the fear of being accused of separatism—an accusation made against the Kurds for decades by the Iraqi regime and other neighboring countries, as well as from certain sections of the Iraqi opposition—has caused the Kurdish leaders to abandon the idea of a constitution despite the pressure by Kurdish jurists mentioned before.

In mid-1992, as a personal initiative, after studying most of the federal systems in the world and their development, I began to draft a constitution for Iraqi Kurdistan in the hope that it would stimulate discussion among the legal profession and political parties. This document was eventually passed to an

official legal committee in Kurdistan, of which I was a member, before being presented to the Kurdish government and parliament in its final draft. I will attempt to highlight some of the bases and contents of the proposed constitution. The document contains a preamble and five parts in 113 articles.

The preamble summarizes the conditions prevailing in Kurdistan at the end of World War I and explains how Kurdistan, the Arab countries, and Armenia—all part of the Ottoman Empire—were specified by Woodrow Wilson in his proposal to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, in which he asked for all to be put under an international mandate. It mentions the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, which agreed to the formation of a Kurdish state from northern and southern Kurdistan. It also explains how these decisions were excised by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 following the assumption of power in Turkey by General Mustafa Kemal. Britain, which at that time held a mandate on Iraq, supported the newly created Iraqi state in annexing the Mosul vilayet to it as large quantities of oil had been discovered there. So Kurdish oil became the principal reason for the division of Kurdistan. From then on, successive Iraqi regimes have used this source of wealth to destroy rather than to build Kurdistan. Most of Iraq's oil is produced in Kirkuk, the town from which I come; a town which the regime has turned into an Arab settlement after the expulsion of most of its Kurdish inhabitants and the settling of tens of thousands of Arab families there, with massive financial and other privileges.

Also described in the preamble is the joint declaration, in an official document of the British and Iraqi governments on 24 December 1922, of their recognition of the right of the Kurds to enjoy wide autonomy, including the creation of a Kurdish government within the newly created state of Iraq. It now seems that this declaration, which was never acted upon, was simply a ploy to persuade the Kurds to join the Kingdom of Iraq. The tragedies and atrocities suffered by the Kurds ever since southern Kurdistan was made part of Iraq in December 1926, especially from 1963 onward, are also described. It points out that the UN charter supports the Kurdish people in their claim to the right to self-determination. It states also that recognition of this right does not necessarily mean its separation from Iraq, but rather reinforces the concept of participating with the Arabs of Iraq in a free union within a democratic, federal, and nontotalitarian state. The preamble concludes by stating that "the enjoyment by the people of Kurdistan of their constitutional rights must be regarded as a prerequisite of the federal system."

The main body of the constitution consists of five parts that deal with the nature of the political system in the IKR and its relationship with the central authorities, civil rights and freedoms, the regulation of the regional authorities, and the remit of the supreme legal council. The fifth part deals with some general provisions. I give here a brief explanation of some of its main points

relating to the peculiar circumstances of the IKR and its relationship with the central authorities.

Definition of the Borders of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region

Article 1 of the draft constitution states that the IKR includes the governorates of Erbil, Dohuk, Sulaimaniyya, and Kirkuk as recognized by its administrative borders before 1976, in addition to the Kurdish districts and subdistricts of Mosul, Diyalah, and Al-Koot. This definition may appear strange to those unacquainted with Iraqi affairs during the latter part of this century. For instance, the definition relating to the Kirkuk governorate is not without good reason. Ever since the Baath Party assumed power in 1968, they have pursued a systematic campaign to change the demography of this governorate where most of Iraq's oil is produced. Their policies have included:

1. Changing the name of the governorate from Kirkuk to the Arabic name of Al Ta'meem (following the nationalization of the oil industry) so as to obscure its historic name.
2. Annexing four of the seven districts of Kirkuk and linking them with other, adjacent governorates so that the Kurds become a minority in the Kirkuk governorate.
3. Forcibly expelling tens of thousands of Kurdish families and replacing them with Arab families brought from central and southern Iraq who enjoyed privileges in housing, employment, and other financial rewards.
4. Forcibly deporting all Kurdish farmers from 778 villages in the governorate of Kirkuk and settling Arab tribes in some of these villages who were armed and given all the agricultural land there.

The same methods were used in all Kurdish districts and subdistricts within the governorates of Mosul, Diyalah, and Al-Koot. It is, therefore, essential that these actions should be reversed and that the Kirkuk region, as well as the other Kurdish areas still under the control of the Iraqi regime, must become part of the IKR. We could have asked to return to the well-documented historical and geographical facts (including those from some Arab authorities) to define the borders of the IKR, but in order to avoid the charge of separatism, we chose to use the official borders of the governorate as they were before the policy of ethnic cleansing began. In the accord of 11 March 1970 between the Kurds and the central government, a decision on the fate of the Kirkuk governorate, which was under the control of the regime, was postponed in order that a special census would be taken there in a specified time. During this time, the regime implemented its policy of ethnic cleansing, contrary to that accord. However, even with the demographic changes resulting from this policy, it

became clear that any census held there would not be in the regime's favor. For this reason, the census was never organized, and this led to the armed conflict between Kurds and the regime that recommenced in March 1974. From that time the regime's policy of ethnic cleansing has been intensified in all regions under its control. This is why the Kurds refuse to accept the resulting demographic changes. The only basis for the definition of Kurdistan's borders must be the official census of 1957.

The Iraqi Kurdistan Region Is Part of Kurdistan

Article 2 of the proposed constitution states that the IKR is part of Kurdistan. This statement was included because all constitutions of Iraq since that of 1958, including the present one, as well as Arab sectors in Iraq, have regarded Iraq as part of the pan-Arab state. This implies that Iraqi Kurdistan is part of Arab land, as though the Kurds live on Arab land and not on land of their own known as Kurdistan, which means the "land of the Kurds." The Arab nationalistic ideology defines the pan-Arab state as "all countries in which Arabs form a majority," and by this they deny the existence of the Kurds on their own land. The wording of article 2 resolves this confusion. It is important to insert a similar statement in the new Iraqi constitution, that is, a statement to the effect that Iraq includes a part of the Arab land and a part of Kurdistan, thereby defining the rightful position based on historical, geographical, social, and political facts.

Definition of the Legal Basis for the Formation of the Federal State of Iraq

The present state of Iraq was formed in 1921 from the two Ottoman vilayets of Baghdad and Basra by a decision of the British, who had also selected Prince Faisal ben Hussein as king of Iraq. The Ottoman vilayet of Mosul (which constituted most of the present IKR) was added to it in December 1926—an action dictated by British political and economic interests and contrary to the wishes of the Kurds who form the vast majority of the inhabitants of this vilayet. It is, therefore, important from this historical viewpoint to restructure the legal relationship between Arabs and Kurds in Iraq on new grounds based on a free and mutually desired coexistence. If any state is created on the enforcement of one side by the other, it will be ill founded and liable to disintegrate. Therefore, article 4 of the proposed constitution states that the people of Kurdistan enter into a voluntary union with the Arabs of Iraq within the framework of a federal, democratic republic, thus emphasizing that the state is based on the concept of a bilateral contract.

Definition of the National and Religious Identity of the People of Kurdistan

Article 4 of the proposed constitution defines the identity of the people of Kurdistan and indicates that they are mainly Kurds with others of Turkoman, Assyrian, and Arab origin who are all permanently resident in Kurdistan. The same article also guarantees the full protection of minority group rights in the IKR.

Definition of the National Characteristics of the IKR

As the Kurds form the absolute majority in the region, Kurdish is regarded as the official language, with Arabic to be in all communications with the central government. Article 9 states that the IKR has its own flag, national anthem, and emblem, to be used alongside the flag, national anthem, and emblem of Iraq. The first day of spring (21 March) of each year (Nawruz) is to be regarded as the National Day for the region as it has been for the Kurds for thousands of years.

Guarantees for the Continuing Existence and the Future of the IKR

The Kurds have suffered greatly under the various Iraqi regimes, particularly since 1963. This has resulted in a lack of confidence that will continue for a long time to come. It is, therefore, crucial that the region should have solid guarantees, secure enough to prevent any possible attempts by the central government to threaten it, to interfere illegally in its affairs, or even to abolish it. To this end, the proposed constitution states that the region, or any part of it, cannot be abolished or joined with another region without the consent of its people. It also states that deploying Kurdish armed forces outside the region, or sending Iraqi armed forces into the region, without the written agreement of the regional government, is illegal. This is to prevent the IKR being subject to threats of attempts of forced military change by the central government.

Definition of the Financial Status of the IKR

Recognition of the existence of the region and of its constitutional power will be incomplete if the IKR does not have its own financial resources by imposing its own taxes and excise duties. Therefore, article 14 states that it is the responsibility of the parliament alone to identify the circumstances and amounts of both regional and central taxes and excise duties within the IKR. A certain percentage of these taxes collected from within the IKR must be allocated to

the regional budget. It is also necessary to allocate a percentage of the central government budget to the regional budget, which is to be fixed at 25 percent and represents the ratio of the population of Kurdistan to that of the whole of Iraq. This is not excessive given the destruction suffered by Kurdistan for decades, which have resulted in virtually complete economic paralysis. In return, the constitution states that the wealth of the IKR, including oil and minerals, will not be for the region alone but will be shared equally between it and the central government. This demonstrates clearly that the Kurds wish to base their relationship on mutual coexistence and not on economic gain.

The Iraqi regime and some of the so-called Iraqi opposition, who persist in claiming that these resources of oil in the region must be allocated solely to the central government, are attempting to base the relationship between Kurds and Arabs on economic domination. This is also the reason for their insistence that the Kirkuk region must remain under the control of the central government or have special status, contrary to the historical and geographical evidence that it is part of Kurdistan.

Definition of Remits and Responsibilities of Central and Regional Authorities

Most federal constitutions are inclined to define these for the central authorities, leaving the rest as regional remits, and this is what the proposed constitution does. For central authorities, these were matters defined as foreign policy, international relations, defense, issuance of national currency, citizenship, customs and excise, and the administration of ports, international airports, postage, and central telecommunications.

This is a summary of the main contents of the proposed Constitution for the IKR. The remaining articles do not differ from those of similar constitutions in the civilized world, particularly those relating to civil rights and the regulation of the relationship between legislative, executive, and judicial authorities in the region.

Appendix 2

Valuing the Identity of Others

ABDUL AZIZ SAID

We need vision to deal with the Kurds' search for identity.[1] Permit me to present to you ten points:

1. Why do we need vision? Vision helps to avoid drift and self-centeredness in order to allow the best imagination and energy of leaders and followers to emerge, to widen, and deepen the sense of mutual responsibility.
2. External players should stop messing up the situation. The Kurds should stop focusing on their navel and look outside to learn how others resolve their conflicts. They must try to develop a favorable situation on the issue of the Kurds.
3. NATO can write a position paper on the Kurds' search for identity.
4. The United Nations can do scientific studies about the Kurds.
5. The United States can support the establishment of centers for Kurdish studies.
6. A permanent documentation center must be established for the storage of documents, information, and resources on the Kurdish people.
7. A Kurdish Endowment for Peace can be created.
8. Dialogue among the Kurds as well as dialogue between the Kurds and regional governments must be sustained on the following issues: deciding to engage to reach agreement; mapping out relationships; exploring the dynamics of relationships; building scenarios; and acting together to develop implementation strategy.
9. The legitimacy of cultural differences must be recognized by instituting structures with local geographical authority in social and religious matters. The nation-state today has proven inadequate. We need to explore "peoplehood" and rights of the people, rather than the conceptual regime of "statehood" and state rights.
10. New visions of pluralistic societies beyond the nation-state and globalization (super-nationalism) are needed. The collapse of distance has resulted in the domestication of international politics and internationalization of domestic politics. These changing conditions underscore the

value of pluralism, tolerance of the other, and ultimately a provision for diversity. Valuing the identity of others is absolutely vital at the individual as well as group level. The politics of identity are complex. Unity has become plurality—the global One and the cultural Many.

Notes

Chapter 1. Kurdish Identity

1. See John Limbert, "The Origins and Appearance of the Kurds in Pre-Islamic Iran," *Iranian Studies* 1 (Spring 1968): 41–51.

2. One of the most authoritative sources on the various peoples of the Middle East is Great Britain's Geographical Handbooks series. For example, see the general physical description of the Kurds in Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Persia*, BR525 (Restricted) Geographical Handbook series, September 1945, 323–26.

3. See discussion in Charles G. MacDonald, "The Kurdish Question in the 1980s," in *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, ed. Milton J. Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 239–40.

4. The ethnic conflict between the Kurds and the Arabs contributed to the genocide against the Kurds following the Iran-Iraq war in the Anfal campaign. Degrees of ethnic conflict have resurfaced in issues such as the ethnic makeup of Kirkuk. Some of the fighting of the United States–supported Iraqi army against insurgents in Sunni Arab areas in the central part of Iraq have also raised the issue of ethnic conflict, since many of the Sunni Arabs had departed the Iraqi army, leaving a majority of Kurds, in some cases, to fight against the Sunni Arabs.

Chapter 4. Perspective of Shafiq Qazzaz, Minister of Humanitarian Assistance and Cooperation, Kurdistan Regional Government

1. The editors note that the use of *Kurdistani* pertains to someone (namely, a Kurd) from the historic region of Greater Kurdistan.

2. The editors note that the expression "Iraqi opposition" during Saddam's rule pertained to an internal mix of Sunni and Shi'a Arabs, including former military figures, as well as various ethnic and religious minority groups. The Kurds were perhaps the most formidable of the internal opposition groups. Of course, Saddam had his external enemies as well.

Chapter 6. Öcalan's Capture as a Catalyst for Democracy and Turkey's Candidacy for Accession to the European Union

1. For background, see Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998); Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 1997); and Paul White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers? The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey* (London: Zed Books, 2000). Also see İsmet G. Imset, *The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey (1973–*

1992) (Istanbul: Turkish Daily News Publications, 1992); and İsmet G. Imset, "The PKK: Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?" *International Journal of Kurdish Studies* 10, nos. 1–2 (1996): 45–100. I published an earlier version of this present article as "The Continuing Kurdish Problem in Turkey after Öcalan's Capture," *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 ((2000): 849–69.

2. For details, see the statement by Dylan Semsi Kilic, a close associate of Öcalan's and an eyewitness to his capture, broadcast over the PKK's MED-TV and accessed over the Internet, 21 February 1999; Tim Weiner, "U.S. Helped Turkey Find and Capture Kurd Rebel," *New York Times*, 20 February 1999; Marcus Gee, "The Odyssey of a Kurdish Hot Potato," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 24 February 1999; Helena Smith, Chris Morris, and Ed Vulliamy, "Global Plot That Lured Kurds' Hero into Trap," *Observer* (London), 21 February 1999; and Ismet Berkan, "The Story of Apo's Capture," *Radikal* (Istanbul), 17 February 1999. Turkish prime minister Bülent Ecevit declined to elaborate on any of the details and merely cited a Turkish proverb: "Let us eat the grape and not ask where it came from."

3. "Osman Öcalan's Statement about the Arrest," 18 February 1999, accessed over the Internet.

4. "MED-TV Reports More on PKK Statement on Congress Results," London MED-TV in Turkish, 1900 GMT, 4 March 1999, as cited in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service—Near East/South Asia* (FBIS-WEU-1999-0304).

5. "PKK Members on Mountains Pitted against Those in Europe," *Hurriyet* (Istanbul), 14 March 1999, as cited in *FBIS-WEU-1999-0314*.

6. "Experts: Execution Possible in PKK Member's Disappearance," Ankara Anatolia New Agency in Turkish, 0826 GMT, 18 March 1999, as cited in *FBIS-WEU-1999-0318*, 18 March 1999. Yet another report claimed that Cemil Bayik had been named the "highest authority in the organization." "Öcalan Removed, Bayik Tasked," *Hurriyet,* 3 March 1999, 14, as cited in *FBIS-WEU-1999-0303*.

7. "Presidency Council Replaces Apo," *Milliyet* (Istanbul), 27 February 1999, as cited in *FBIS-WEU-1999-0227.*

8. *FBIS-WEU-1999-0318.*

9. "Turks vs. Kurds: Turning Point?" *New York Times,* 21 February 1999, 8.

10. "Statement from PKK Leader Abdullah Öcalan," released via his lawyers, 18 March 1999, accessed over the Internet.

11. "Sezer: 'Thought Crimes' Have No Place in a Democracy," *Briefing* (Ankara), 3 May 1999, 10–12. See also "Human Rights in the Republic of Turkey: Testimony of the Honorable Harold Hongju Koh, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe" (mimeographed), 18 March 1999.

12. "They Called It Another Earthquake," *Briefing*, 13 September 1999, 9–12.

13. Pelin Turgut, "Kurd Rebels See Turkish Change of Tack," *Reuters*, 7 September 1999.

14. Michael M. Gunter, "Interview: Abdullah Öcalan, Head of the PKK," *Middle East Quarterly* 5 (June 1988): 79–85. In this interview, Öcalan broached many of the ideas he developed during his trial in June 1999.

15. Derk Kinnane, *The Kurds and Kurdistan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 32–33; Ismail Besikci, *Kurdistan and Turkish Colonialism: Selected Writings* (London: Kurdistan Solidarity Committee and Kurdistan Information Centre, 1991), 34.

16. For background, see Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey,* 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), and Stanford Shaw and Ezel Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1805–1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

17. Kamran Qurrah Daghi, "Öcalan Explains Peace Overtures," *Al-Hayah*, 17 March 1993, 1, 4, as cited in *FBIS-WEU-1993-0322*, 42.

18. Michael M. Gunter, "Susurluk: The Connection between Turkey's Intelligence Community and Organized Crime," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-intelligence* 11 (Summer 1998): 119–41.

19. Abdullah Öcalan, *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*, trans. Kurdistan Information Centre (London: Mesopotamian, 1999), 85.

20. Stephen Kinzer, "Turkish Premier Hints at New Approach If Rebel Kurds End Violence," *New York Times,* 22 February 1999.

21. Kurdistan Information Centre, "Press Statement Issued by the PKK Presidential Council on the Trial of Kurdish National Leader Abdullah Öcalan," London, 2 June 1999.

22. PKK Executive [Presidential] Council, "Statement to the Press and General Public," 29 June 1999, accessed over the Internet.

23. "PKK Presidential Council Statement," 6 July 1999, accessed over the Internet.

24. "Interview with PKK Commander Duran Kalkan," *Kurdish Media*, 19 July 1999.

25. Mehmet Ali Birand, "Turkish Public Opinion Is Softening toward the Kurds," *International Herald Tribune,* 8 July 1999.

26. "Öcalan Urges Kurd Rebel Peace as Clashes Rage," *Reuters*, 4 August 1999. September 1 is observed as World Peace Day.

27. Elif Unal, "Turk PM Says 'Time Will Tell' on Öcalan Call," *Reuters*, 4 August 1999.

28. "PKK: Defeat and Retreat or Master Stroke?" *Briefing*, 9 August 1999, 11.

29. The following citations were taken from "Opening Statement of Harold Hongju Koh," press conference at U.S. embassy, Ankara, Turkey, 5 August 1999, accessed over the Internet.

30. "PKK: Defeat and Retreat or Master Stroke?" 12.

31. For background on the trials and tribulations of recent legal Kurdish parties in Turkey, see Nicole F. Watts, "Allies and Enemies: Pro-Kurdish Parties in Turkish Politics, 1990–94," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (November 1999): 631–56.

32. The following citations were taken from Ilnur Cevik, "Military Not Mellowing on Kurdish Rights," *Turkish Daily News*, 10 September 1999.

33. Pelin Turgut, "Kurd Rebels See Turkish Change of Tack," *Reuters*, 7 September 1999.

34. "Kurdish Rebels Hail Turkish General's Words as Goodwill Gesture," *Agence France-Presse*, 6 September 1999.

35. "Top General's Remarks Misinterpreted, General Staff Says," *Agence France-Presse*, 11 September 1999.

36. "PKK Rejects Turkish Call for Surrender, Rules Out Further Concessions," *Agence France-Presse*, 29 September 1999.

37. PKK Presidential Council, press release, 26 September 1999.

38. "Rights—Turkey: Media Is Latest Venue for Talks on the Kurds," *Inter-Press Service*, 13 September 1999.

39. "Army Launches Cross Border Operation and Rejects PKK Peace Call," *Turkey Update*, 1 October 1999.

40. "Letter from the PKK Central Committee to the President of the Republic of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel on 1 October 1999," accessed over the Internet. The letter was dated 20 September 1999.

41. "Letter to the OSCE and the International Public,"15 November 1999, accessed over the Internet.

42. Abdullah Öcalan, "Letter to the Presidency of the OSCE," 18 November 1999, accessed over the Internet.

43. "No Plans to Execute Öcalan, but Still Trying to Come Out on Top in the Situation," *Briefing*, 6 December 1999, 8.

44. "11 December 1999 PKK Presidential Council Statement," accessed over the Internet.

45. "Yilmaz: Road to EU Passes through Diyarbakir," *Turkish Daily News*, 17 December 1999. Diyarbakir is the largest city in Turkey's southeast and has long been considered the unofficial capital of the Kurdish provinces in Turkey.

46. "The Road to the EU," *Briefing,* 20 December 1999, 11.

47. "Interview with PKK's Murat Karayilan," *Ozgur Politika* [*Kurdish Observer]*, 11 January 2000.

48. Ertugrul Ozkok, "Let Us Try Not Hanging," *Hurriyet*, 11 January 2000.

49. Amberin Zaman, "Turks Find It in Nation's Interest to Befriend Foe," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 January 2000.

50. Ismet Berkan, "Peace Would Be Threatened," *Radikal*, 11 January 2000.

51. Stephen Kinzer, "Turkey Delays the Execution of Rebel Kurd," *New York Times*, 13 January 2000.

52. "Kurdish Rebel Leader Öcalan at the Mercy of the PKK," *Agence France-Presse*, 13 January 2000.

53. "Abdullah Öcalan's Public Statement: Press Release, 16 January 2000," accessed over the Internet.

54. "PKK Central Committee Pledges Support," 14 January 2000, accessed over the Internet.

55. Stephen Kinzer, "Government Refuses to Deal with Öcalan on Kurdish Issue," *New York Times*, 18 January 2000.

56. Cited in Steve Bryant, "Turkey's Demirel Hails Öcalan Decision," *Reuters*, 13 January 2000.

57. "Do Not Create Chaos," *Ozgur Politika,* 11 January 2000.

58. "Brief Statement on PKK 'Peace Project,'" released by the Kurdish Information Centre (London), 4 April 2000, accessed over the Internet.

Chapter 7. Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey

1. For background on Kurdish ethnonationalism, see M. Hakan Yavuz, ed., *The Kurdish Question in Turkey*, special issue of *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998); M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkey's Fault Lines and the Crisis of Kemalism," *Current History* 99 (January 2000): 33–39; M. Hakan Yavuz and Michael Gunter, "The Kurdish Nation," *Current History* 100 (January 2001): 33–39; David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1996); Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998); Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); and Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 1997). Also see İsmet G. Imset, *The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey, 1973–1992* (Istanbul: Turkish Daily News Publications, 1992); and İsmet G. Imset, "The PKK: Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?" *International Journal of Kurdish Studies* 10, nos. 1–2 (1996): 45–100; Nicole F. Watts, "Allies and Enemies: Pro-Kurdish Parties in Turkish Politics, 1990–94," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (November 1999): 631–56; S. Mutlu, "Ethnic Kurds in Turkey: A Demographic Study," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28 (1997): 517–44.

2. See David Held, "The Development of the Modern State," in *Modernity*, ed. Stuart Hall et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 55–69.

3. Tom Nairn explains the formation and diffusion of nationalism in terms of uneven economic development. In the case of Kurdish nationalism, one also needs a particular ethnic identity to translate these regional economic disparities into a nationalist movement. Tom Nairn, *The Breakup of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: New Left Books, 1977).

4. For more on the role of "entrepreneurs," see Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 28, 45–46.

5. There is no doubt that the Kurdish cultural identity existed before the modern era. One finds a necessary "ethnic core," from Anthony Smith's perspective, in the premodern tribal structure of the Kurds. However, this "ethnic core" was politicized and turned into nationalism as a reaction to the invasive inroads (imposing direct rule and the penetration of capitalism) that Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqi nationalist movements made against the Kurdish communities after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Kurdish nationalism has been heavily influenced by the premodern tribal social structure. I fully agree with Hecter that nationalism is an outcome of the centralizing state policies. For more on the theoretical approach to nationalism, see Michael Hecter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

6. For instance, Mesut Yeğen assumes there was a full-fledged Kurdish nationalism, and he focuses on the state strategies rather than on the problems of Kurdish national-

ism. See Yeğen, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse," *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 4 (1999): 555–68.

7. *Ağa* means landlord and usually the head of the tribe; *Şeyh* is the leader of a Sufi order; and *Seyyid* is believed to be coming from the prophet Muhammed's genealogy. They have different roles, but they are the integrating personalities of Kurdish society. Necdet Subaşi, "Şeyh, Seyyid ve Molla: Güneydoĝu Anadolu Örneĝinde Dinsel Itibarin Kategorileri," *Islamiyat* 2, no. 3 (1999): 121–40.

8. Middle East Watch, *Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign against the Kurds* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993). This book details Saddam Hussein's attacks against the Kurds.

9. For more on the Alevi identity, see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Değişim Sürecindeki Alevi Kimliği/Die alewitische Identitat in Veranderungsprozeß," *Aleviler: Identitat und Geschichte* 1 (Hamburg: Deutsche Orient-Institut, 2000): 75–95; Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, "Kurds, Turks, or a People in Their Own Right? Competing Collective Identities among the Zazas," *Muslim World* 89, nos. 3–4 (1999): 439–54.

10. Ismail Kara, "Kürt Medreseleri Gündeme Gelecek mi?" In Kara, *Seyhefendinin Rüyasındaki Türkiye* (Istanbul: Kitab, 1998), 69–72; Martin van Bruinessen, *Mullas, Sufis, and Heretics: The Role of Religion in Kurdish Society* (Istanbul: ISIS, 2000).

11. Ismail Göldaş, *Lozan: "Biz Türkler ve Kürtle*r" (Istanbul: Avesta, 2000).

12. Halil Şimşek, *Şeyh Sa'id Isyanı ve PKK* (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri, 2000). This book was written by an active duty general who examines the Şeyh Sa'id Rebellion as an ethnic movement. According to Şimşek, although Şeyh Sa'id used Islam, his real goal was to "carve an independent Kurdish state" (31). For more on the changing views of the Turkish military, see Genel Kurmay Başkanliği, *100 Soru ve Cevapta Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri ve Terörle Mücadele* (Ankara: Genel Kurmay IGHD Başkanliği, 1998), 1–45.

13. Robert Olson, "Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism," *Die Welt des Islams* 40 (2000): 67–94.

14. Umit Cizre Sakallioğlu, "Kurdish Nationalism from an Islamic Perspective," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998): 73–90; Burhanettin Duran, "Approaching the Kurdish Question via Adil Düzen: An Islamist Formula of the Welfare Party for Ethnic Coexistence," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998): 111–28.

15. "Türkiye ahalisine din ve ırk farkı olmaksızın vatandaşlık itibariyle Türk itlak olunur."

16. Ismail Besikci, *Doĝu Mitingleri'nin Analizi (1967*) (Ankara: Yurt, 1992).

17. Mehmet Ali Birand, *Apo ve PKK* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1992), 83.

18. *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Dava Dosyası* (Ankara: Komal, 1975), 25–29. This book provides the best picture about the Turkish state discourse on the Kurdish question, along with the publications of DDKO, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. DDKO played an important role in the construction of Kurdish political consciousness.

19. During the government of Bülent Ecevit, many MHP-oriented teachers and schools were forced to different parts of the country. One of my sisters, a student in the Nenehatun Teacher School in Erzurum, was forced to continue her education in Van. Her new school was under the control of a group of Kurdish leftists, known as Rizgari

(Liberation). The school was the center of an ideological struggle between Rizgari and Kawa (Maoist). In late 1978, the Rizgari controlled the schools and subjected all students and teachers to ideological training. Every morning Rizgari forced everyone to attend propaganda meetings and never allowed the national anthem to be aired. In other words, unlike the claims of some journalists and scholars, there was a separatist movement before the military coup in 1980. The coup oppressed this aggressive separatist movement. There is a new trend in Turkey to explain separatist nationalism and Islamic radicalism in terms of the policies of the 1980 coup. For instance, see Ömer Laciner, *Kürt Sorunu: Henüz Vakit Varken* (Istanbul: Birikim, 1991). According to Laciner, the source of the radicalization of the Kurdish identity is the repressive policies of the 1980 coup. Öcalan's interview with Mehmet Ali Birand indicates that Kurdish separatism was a powerful force in southeastern Anatolia before the 1980 coup. The PKK established hegemony in several localities; see *Apo ve PKK* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1992). In this book, Öcalan explains his journey from his village to the head of the PKK.

20. The studies usually focused on Öcalan and the leadership. They ignored the sociological issues of "framing" identity claims, economic divisions, and urban, rural, and transnational networks of the organization.

21. In *Apo and PKK*, 36, 121. Öcalan explains how he punished his bird and dog because he perceived their acts as disloyal. There is a fine analysis of Öcalan's mind-set by Vamik Volkan, *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), 168–80.

22. *PKK Terrorism* (Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), 13. This booklet is prepared to inform the public opinion about the PKK activities.

23. Naki Özkan's interview with Yasin Aktay, "'Ölüm estetize ediliyor," *Milliyet,* 31 October 2000; Aktay, "Güneydoğu'da Intihar: Kalan Sağlar Bizimdir," *Tezkire*, no. 18 (2001): 33–48. Aktay examines the reasons of high suicide rate in Batman. He identifies the weakening of traditional ties and the new culture of violence that celebrates death as a way of "purifying the self." He makes implicit links between the conflict and the new culture.

24. Zeynep Gökçe Akgür*, Türkiye'de Kırsal Kesimden Kente Göç ve Bölgeler Arası Dengesizlik (1970–1993)* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1997), 67–69; Mert Gözde, "Parliamentary Commission Reports on Migration; 4,000 Villages Evacuated, 1 Million People Displaced," *Turkish Daily News*, 30 January 2001. The parliamentary report said that "during a 14-year process in the course of which the security forces fought with the militants of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), some 4,000 villages and hamlets had been evacuated in the East and the Southeast and that 1 million people had migrated from the region."

25. Human Rights Watch, "What Is Turkey's Hizbollah?" 16 February 2000.

26. For details, see the statement by Dylan Semsi Kılıç—a close associate of Öcalan's and an eyewitness to his capture— broadcast over the PKK's MED-TV and accessed over the Internet, 21 February 1999; Tim Weiner, "U.S. Helped Turkey Find and Capture Kurd Rebel," *New York Times*, 20 February 1999; Marcus Gee, "The Odyssey of a Kurdish Hot Potato," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 24 February 1999; Helena Smith, Chris Morris, and Ed Vulliamy, "Global Plot That Lured Kurds' Hero into Trap," *Observer*

(London), 21 February 1999; and Ismet Berkan, “The Story of Apo’s Capture,” *Radikal* (Istanbul), 17 February 1999. Turkish prime minister Bülent Ecevit declined to elaborate on any of the details and merely cited a Turkish proverb: “Let us eat the grape and not ask where it came from.”

27. “Turks vs. Kurds: Turning Point,” *New York Times,* 21 February 1999, 8.

28. “MED-TV Reports More on PKK Statement on Congress Result,” Foreign Broadcast Information Service–Near East/South Asia, *FBIS-WEU-1999-0304*.

29. Abdullah Öcalan, *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*, trans. Kurdistan Information Centre (London: Mesopotamian, 1999), 18.

30. The European Court of Human Rights has passed twenty-six successful judgments in cases brought by the London-based Kurdish Human Rights Project, headed by Kerim Yıldız, the majority of which have centered on the right to life (article 2), prohibition of torture (article 3), right to a fair trial (article 6), right to an effective remedy (article 13), and freedom of expression (article 10). The ECHR was set up in Strasbourg in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights. On 1 November 1998 a full-time court was established, replacing the original two-tier system of a part-time commission and court.

31. Most of the Kurdish intellectuals and politicians support Turkey’s membership in the EU. See “Serafettin Elci Discusses Kurd Party with Swedish Foreign Minister,” *Turkish Daily News*, 22 February 2000.

32. “Yilmaz: Road to EU Passes through Diyarbakir,” *Turkish Daily News*, 17 December 1999. Diyarbakir is the largest city in southeast Anatolia, and most of its residents are Kurds.

33. “The Road to the EU,” *Briefing*, 20 December 1999, 11.

34. For more on Asparuk’s comments, see *Financial Times*, 17 February 2000; Sükrü Elekdaĝ, “DPT'nin Siyasi Kriterler Raporu,” *Milliyet*, 6 March 2000. In order to organize legal changes according to the Copenhagen criteria, the State Planning Organization (DPT) prepared a report on 28 February 2000 that included major constitutional and legal reform in Turkey.

35. For more on the reaction to “minority rights,” see Onur Öymen, “Bu Sevr korkusu yersizdir,” *Radikal,* 11 September 2000.

36. See *Milliyet,* 28 November 2000; *Turkish Daily News*, 29 November 2000. In his interview, Atasagun said, “The Turkish Republic was unable to win over their [Kurdish] mothers. According to some studies, 60 percent of the mothers in the region do not know Turkish. We never set up a system to win them over. This state did not know how to address the mothers. Had we been able to win them over, the issue would not have lasted until today. We noted this for many years, but we could not get anything achieved.”

37. *Hurriyet,* 29 November 2000.

38. *Turkish Daily News*, 15 November 2000.

39. EU membership is likely to offer proof that a Kurd in modern Turkey need not diminish his identity at the price of worldly achievement or consider such ethnic identity alone a replacement for the crucible of public life. Turkey has been confronted with the Copenhagen criteria and the 28 February processes. For instance, after the

EU decision, a number of European initiatives to highlight the Kurdish problem raised the suspicion of Ankara. The state security court arrested and released four prominent Kurdish mayors. The trial of twenty-two suspects including the mayors of Diyarbakir, Siirt and Bingol provinces continued at Diyarbakir State security court (DGM) no. 2 in August 2000. Eight arrested suspects attended the court session while the fourteen other free suspects were not present at the courtroom including Feridun Celik, the Diyarbakir mayor, Siirt mayor M. Selim Ozalp, Bingol mayor Feyzullah Karaaslan, and Diyarbakir deputy mayor Ramazan Tekin. The mayors are all from the People's Democracy Party (HADEP). Abdulkadir Guzel, one of the suspects, said that he was regretful, adding that he helped the state after he was captured and the statements he issued about the suspects were true. The other suspect, Hayrettin Aktepe, said that he surrendered to the security forces voluntarily, adding that he told all the things he knew to the security forces and requested his release.

40. *Agence France-Presse*, 15 November 2000.

41. *Hurriyet*, 7 December 2000.

42. Avni Özgürel, "Sessizlik ve sonuçları," *Radikal*, 4 August 2000.

43. "Elçi: We Want the Right to Education and Broadcasting in Kurdish," *Turkish Daily News*, 29 August 2000.

44. For full text, see http://www.mersina.com/special/article.asp?cid=39#1.2.9.

45. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

46. M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkey's Fault Lines and the Crisis of Kemalism," *Current History* 99 (January 2000): 34.

47. There are three institutional solutions to the Kurdish ethnic movements: consociationalism, electoral systems, and federalism. The most likely outcome in the case of Turkey is the electoral solution: allowing Kurds to vote for any party, including the ethnic party. The representation may be based on the proportion of votes that candidates receive. Turkey has to realize that too much centralization causes rebellion, and too little centralization causes fragmentation. Turkey needs to develop a balance between centralization and decentralization, between the imposition of direct and indirect rule. OHAL has been the major motivating force of Kurdish nationalism.

48. Talabani has been critical of the KNK as a "front organization" of the PKK. See FBIS translated text in *Washington Kurdish Institute News Bulletin,* 7 September 2000 (www.kurd.org/kurd).

49. For more on Erbaş, see his interview in *Milliyet,* 30 September 2000.

Chapter 8. Perspectives on Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation

1. On the theoretical conditions for the analysis of ethnopolitical mobilization and conflicts, see Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 3–26; Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 77 ff.

2. For more details, see Gülistan Gürbey, "Auf der Suche nach einer Lösung der Kurdenfrage in der Türkei: Optionen und Hindernisse," *Hessiche Stiftung Friedens- und*

Konfliktforschung Report 4 (Frankfurt am Main 1995), 3–18 (Hessiche Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung henceforth cited HSFK); Robert Olson, ed., *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky,1996), 9–37; Olson, "Wandel in der Kurdenpolitik? Die Türkei zwischen Dogma und Liberalisierung," *Internationale Politik* 1 (January 1998): 39–44.

3. For more details concerning the banning of HEP (Workers' Party of the People) and DEP (Party of Democracy), see Gürbey, *HSFK Report* 4 (1995): 25–29. About DEP, see A. Osman Ölmez, *Türkiye Siyasetinde: Depremi* (Ankara 1995). HEP was founded on 7 June 1990 and got into parliament due to a joint list with the Social Democrats (SHP, CHP today) in the 1991 general elections. In May 1993, after the party had been banned, some of its members formed DEP. It was banned by the Constitutional Court on 16 June 1994. Four of the convicted DEP MPs are still in prison; two were released in late October 1995. Another six fled abroad before the ban. To date from HEP to HADEP (Democracy and Workers' Party of the People), 105 politicians have been murdered. A list of the killed members of HEP, DEP, and HADEP appears in the HADEP Solidarity Office Brussels, ed., *Party of Democracy of the People Information Booklet* (Brussels, September 1996), 19–25. About HADEP, see Henri J. Barkey, "The People's Democracy Party (HADEP): The Travails of a Legal Kurdish Party in Turkey," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 1 (1998): 129–38.

4. *Briefing*, no. 1228, 1 February 1999, 10.

5. The political ambivalence of Kemalism consists in the fact that it postulates the formal equality of all citizens as some sort of modernization Jacobinism while also championing ethnic and cultural homogenization.

6. HADEP won the majority of the 1999 vote in the following provinces (in %): Agri 33.72; Batman 43.49; Diyarbakir 45.45; Hakkari 46.11; Igdir 29.75; Kars 17.67; Mardin 25.28; Mus 32.02; Siirt 22.29; Sirnak 24.12; Van 35.67. Four towns elected female mayors: Kiziltepe, Derik (Mardin), Dogubeyazit and Diyadin (Agri). In the big western cities HADEP scored fewer votes (in %): Istanbul 4.91; Ankara 1.72; Izmir 5.12; Bursa 1.72; Kocaeli 3.18. See *Resmi Gazete*, no. 23678, 27 April 1999; *Hurriyet* and *Milliyet*, 20–23 April 1999.

7. See *Ozgür Politika*, 3, 5 June 1999.

8. See *Hurriyet*, 11, 25, 29, 30 September 1999, 6, 9 October 1999, 5, 17, 21 January 2000; also see *Milliyet,* 5 August 1999.

9. See *Hurriyet*, 4, 5 September 1999, 18, 19 February 2000; also see *Milliyet,* 26 December 1999; *Financial Times*, 17 February 2000.

10. For example, see Sükrü Elekdag: "Tabulari yikalim," *Milliyet*, 14 June 1999; "Derselbe: Kimlik Sorunu," *Milliyet*, 21 June 1999; "Derselbe: Güneydogu'da dönüm noktasi," *Milliyet*, 16 August 1999; "Derselbe: Atilmasi zorunlu adimlar," *Milliyet*, 13 September 1999; "Derselbe: Güneydogu'ya 'master' plan mi?" *Milliyet*, 21 February 2000; "Derselbe: Büyük ve cesur düsünme," *Milliyet*, 7 June 1999; "Derselbe: Azinlik Haklari," *Milliyet*, 14 March 2000; "Bülent Tanör und Ergun Özbudun," *TÜSIAD: Insan Haklari. Demokratik Standartlarin Yükseltilmesi Paketi. Tartisma Toplantilari Dizisi* 5 (Istanbul: Subat, 1998), 42, 50; Mehmet Ali Birand, "Güneydogu'ya gereken dikkat gösterilmiyor," *Hurriyet*, 23 February 2000; Ismet Berkan, "Demokrasi pesinde," *Hurriyet*, 19 Janu-

ary 2000; Taha Akyol, "Etnik sorun," *Milliyet*, 4 September 1999; Tuncay Özkan, "Tek yol barismak," *Hurriyet*, 4 July 1999; Hasan Cemal, "Yol ayrimindaki Türkiye'nin isi cok," *Milliyet*, 4 March 1999; Sahin Alpay, "AB dayatmasi," *Milliyet*, 26 February 2000; *TÜSIAD: Perspectives on Democratisation in Turkey. Progress Report 1999. Executive Summary* (Istanbul, October 1999).

11. For more details, see *Nützliche Nachrichten* (Cologne, January 2000).

12. For more details concerning the decisions of the 7th PKK-Congress (2–23 January 2000), see *Ozgür Politika*, 14 September 2000; *Hurriyet*, 12 October 2000; Adullah Öcalan, *Kürtler Demokrasinin Motor Gücüdür: PKK 7. Olaganüstü Kongresı*: Serxwebun, Ocak 2000, Yil: 19, Sayi: 217.

13. See Gülistan Gürbey, "Autonomie—Option zur friedlichen Beilegung des Kurdenkonfliktes in *der Türkei*," *HSFK Report* 5 (1997).

14. By the end of the 1980s, Turgut Özal ushered in a hint of change in the prevailing Turkish policy on Kurds. As president, especially under the influence of the second Iraq war, he oversaw the first "change" in the history of the Republic. This change in politics, apart from repression and control by the military and state, also offered the option of introducing a liberalization in the field of culture, developing economically the areas predominantly populated with Kurds, and extending the competencies of local administration by comprehensive administrative reform and politically integrating the PKK. See Gülistan Gürbey, "Auf der Suche nach einer Lösung der Kurdenfrage in der Türkei: Optionen und Hindernisse," *HSFK Report* 4 (1995): 9–10.

15. Considering the results of the TOBB report, one can note that most people prefer a federal solution within existing borders: 40 percent interviewed want a federation, 12.1 percent favor autonomy, 18.4 percent desire reforms pertaining to local self-government and providing for a say of the local population, and 12.2 percent prefer a state of their own. Most people, 89.7 percent, thought a political and administrative restructuring of the state was necessary. See TOBB Report 1995, "Dogu Sorunu, Teshisler ve Tesbitter" (Ankara), 39–41.

16. For more details concerning the peaceful settlement of the conflict through autonomy, see Gülistan Gürbey, *HSFK Report* 5 (1997).

17. See Hans-Joachim Heintze, ed., *Moderner Minderheitenschutz: Rechtliche oder politische Absicherung?* (Bonn: Dietz, 1998); Heintze, *Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker, Herausforderung der Staatenwelt: Zerfällt die internationale Gemeinschaft in Hunderte von Staaten?* (Bonn: Dietz, 1997); Stefan Oeter: "Minderheitenschutz in internationalen Abkommen," in *Minderheiten- und Antidiskriminierungspolitik: Alternativen zur Integration?* (Bonn: Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, September 1994), 27–42.

18. See *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: Menschenrechte: Dokumente und Deklarationen* (Bonn 1991), 45–75.

19. See Heintze, *Moderner Minderheitenschutz*, 280–94.

20. See ibid., 150–51.

21. See *EU-Kommission: Regelmäßiger Bericht 1999 der Kommision über die Fortschritte der Türkei. Auf dem Weg zum Beitritt.*

22. See *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: Menschenrechte*, 315–40; Peter

Schlotter, "Die Mühen der stillen Diplomatie: Konfliktprävention und Krisenmanagement durch die OSZE," in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte: Beilage zur Wochenzeitung das Parlament*, Bonn, B 5 (26 January 1996), 27–31.

23. See *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: Menschenrechte*, 341–56.

24. See also Gülistan Gürbey, "Die 'Europäisierung' des Kurdenkonflikts: Eine Chance für den Frieden?" *Internationale Politik,* nos. 2–3 (February/March 1999): 101–2; Gürbey, "Die Europäisierung des Kurdenkonflikts," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 4 (1999): 404–7.

Chapter 9. Turkey-Iran Relations and the Kurdish Question, 1997–2000

1. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996); Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989).

2. See Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998); Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 1997) and its Turkish translation, *Kürt Sorunu: Kö keni ve Gelişimi*, trans. Ahmet Fethi (Istanbul: Tarih Vakf_ Yurt Yayınları, no. 47, 1997); Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Robert Olson, ed., *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Question and Turkish-Iranian Relations: From World War I to 1998* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda, 1998).

3. For the two countries' policies toward the Kurds in the interwar period, see McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds,* 184–230; Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 11–48; Kirişci and Winrow, *Kurdish Question,* 67–88; and Olson, *Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism.*

4. For a more detailed account of these developments, see Olson, *The Kurdish Question*, 3–27.

5. Steven R. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (1991): 233–56. The next few pages rely on the argument I made in *The Kurdish Question*, 11–14, with some changes.

6. For a review of these models, see Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). For a brief review of the relevant literature, see Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy*, no. 111 (Spring 1998): 29–46.

7. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," 253.

8. In a previous study, I analyzed Turkey-Iran relations from the assumption to power of the Islamic Republic in 1979 up to the ouster of Necmettin Erbakan and his Welfare Party on 18 June 1997 and the election of Mohammed Khatami as president of Iran in August 1997.

9. *Hurriyet*, 10 June 1997.

10. *TRKNWS-L* (Anatolia News Agency), 17 February 1998.

11. *Hurriyet*, 4 February 1998.

12. *Hurriyet*, 3 March, 1998.

13. *Hurriyet*, 5 March 1998.

14. Ibid.

15. "Chronology," *Middle East Journal* 43, no. 3 (1989): 504.

16. *TRKNWS-L*, 16 March 1998.

17. *Hurriyet*, 6 May 1998.

18. The ECO is an organization to facilitate economic development comprising Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizistan, and Tajikistan.

19. *TRKNWS-L*, 11 May 1998.

20. *TRLNWS-L*, 18 June 1998.

21. *Hurriyet*, 27 June 1998.

22. *TKRNWS-L*, 30 June 1998.

23. *Hurriyet,* newspaper accounts for the month of June.

24. *TRKWNS-L,* 21 March 1998.

25. *TKRNWS-L* 17 June 1998.

26. *TRKNWS-L*, 30 August 1998.

27. *TRKNWS-L*, 7 September 1998.

28. The United States bombed Usama bin Laden's camps on 20 August 1998.

29. The latest Turkish incursion into northern Iraq/Iraq Kurdistan before this chapter was published occurred in June 2001.

30. *TKRNWS-L*, 14 September 1998. Cem was alluding to the diplomats killed by ASALA, the Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, which started in the early 1970s.

31. *Hurriyet,* 13 October 1998.

32. *Iran Times*, 13 October 1998.

33. *TRKNWS-L*, 26 September 1998.

34. *Hurriyet*, 15 September 1998.

35. *TRKNWSS-L*, 9 May 1999

36. *TKRNWS-L*, 10 May 1999.

37. For a range of views on the causes and importance of the student riots, see *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (November 1999).

38. *Iran Times*, 16 July 1999; Associated Press, 16 July 1999: *Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP),* Special Report from Iran, 15 July 1999; *New York Times*, 15 July 1999.

39. *Kurdish Media Research Unit*, 17 July 1999. I received this report via the Washington Kurdish Institute link.

40. *Iran Times*, 16 July 1999; *Hurriye*t, 14 July 1999.

41. *Hurriyet*, 20 July 1999.

42. *Hurriyet*, 30 July 1999; *Iran Times*, 30 July 1999.

43. *Tehran Times*, 20 July 1999.

44. *Iran Times*, 18 June 1999.

45. Eshaq Niknava, head of the Jewish Society of Shiraz, told the Associated Press that the imprisoned included "merchants, a 17-year-old boy, rabbis, and two civil servants." *Iran Times*, 7 January 2000.

46. *TRKNWS-L*, 10 August 1999.
47. *TKRNWS-L*, 14 September, 18 October 1999.
48. *TRKNWS-L*, 20 October 1999.
49. *TRKNWS-L*, 23 October, 1999.
50. *UPI*, 28 October 1999.
51. *Tehran Times*, 24 October 1999.
52. *TRKNWS-L*, 7 November 1999.
53. On this topic see Robert Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations, 1991–2000: Kurds, Israel, and 'Undeclared War,'" *Orient* 42, no. 1 (2001).
54. *Hurriyet*, 22 January 2000.
55. *Hurriyet*, 24 January 2000.
56. *Hurriyet*, 21 January 2000.
57. *Hurriyet*, 24 January 2000.
58. *Hurriyet*, 20 January 2000.
59. Olson, *Kurdish Question*, 56–58.
60. *Hurriyet*, 9 May 2000.
61. *Hurriyet*, 9 May 2000.
62. *Hurriyet*, 14 May 2000.
63. *Hurriyet*, 17 May 2000.
64. *TDN*, 18 May 2000.
65. *Hurriyet*, 18 May 2000.
66. *TKRNS-L*, quoting *Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 18 May 2000.
67. *Hurriyet*, 18 May 2000.
68. *Hurriyet*, Sedat Ergin's editorial, 31 May 2000.
69. *Hurriyet*, 30 May 2000.
70. Behbahani was the subject of CBS's *60 Minutes* program on 4 June 2000.
71. *Kurdish Media*, 5 June 2000.
72. Associated Press, 9 June 2000.
73. Olson, *Kurdish Question*, 77–87.
74. This account of Kurdish politics in Iraq Kurdistan relies on personal communication (24 January 2000) with Gareth Standsfield, a PhD candidate at Durham University, UK, who has done extensive fieldwork in Iraq Kurdistan since 1996. I want to thank him for allowing me to quote him.
75. *Kurdish Media*, 6 June 2000.
76. Ehteshami and Hinnebush, *Syria and Iran,* 19.

Chapter 11. The Iraqi State, the Opposition, and the Road to Reconciliation

1. The term *garrison state* is borrowed from I. William Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995).
2. Nassif Al-Jabouri, "Fi Dou' Al-Kasf Aljawi 'ala Al-Irak," *Azzaman* 4, no. 856 (2001): 7.
3. Ibrahim al-Marashi, "Iraq Security and Intelligence Network: A Guide and Analysis," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6, no. 3 (September 2002).

4. Elizabeth Jones, principal deputy assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (23 June 1999), stressed that U.S. policy is "containment plus regime change," adding that as long as Saddam is in defiance of UN resolutions, "we will never allow it to regain control of Iraq's oil revenues." www.state.gov.policy_remarks/1999/990623_jones_iraq.ht.

5. Rasha Saad, "It's Called Genocide," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 6 July 2000, http://www.alharm.org.eg/weekly/2000/489/focus.htr. For analysis of the economic impact of sanctions, see Abbas Alnasrawi, "Iraq: Economic Sanctions and Consequences, 1990–2000," *Third World Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (April 2001): 205–18.

6. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi,* 21 December 2000, 1.

7. Arshi Khan, "Unfinished War and Bombing of Iraq," *Jordan Times* (21 February 2001).

8. Hoda Tawfiq, "War Drums Herald Powell Tour," *Al-Ahram* (22 February 2001), on-line edition.

9. I say this because the Iraqi regime led by Saddam Hussein has hardly suffered, while the Iraqi people have carried the heavy burden of the sanctions for over a decade. See Bruce Finley, "Refugees Say Sanctions Don't Work," *Denver Post* (14 February 2000).

10. Keith Jaggers, "War, the Three Faces of Power: War Making in Europe and the Americas," *Comparative Political Studies* 25, no. 1 (1992): 29.

11. For the most informed study about the Shi'a opposition in Iraq, see Faleh Jaber, *The Shi'ite Movement in Iraq* (London: Saqi, 2003); also Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

12. Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 104.

13. Harold Lasswell, *Essay on the Garrison State* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Press, 1997), 61–62, 64.

14. Chibli Mallat, "Iraq," in *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism,* ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 73.

15. Graham E. Fuller and Rend Rahim Franke, *The Arab Shi'a: The Forgotten Muslims* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

16. Hanna Batatu, "Iraq's Underground Shi'a Movements: Characteristics, Causes, and Prospects," *Middle East Journal* 35, no. 4 (Autumn 1981): 589. For an exhaustive and highly systematic discussion on Hizb al-Da'wa al-Islamiya, see Joyce N. Wiley, *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shi'as* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

17. Mallat, "Iraq," 76.

18. For a detailed analysis of this period, see Jaber, *Shi'ite Movement in Iraq*, 225–34.

19. For an appreciation of al-Sadr's mobilization efforts, see Talib M. Aziz, "The Role of Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr in Shi'a Political Activism in Iraq from 1958–1980," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 207–22.

20. Batatu, "Iraq's Underground Shi'a Movements," 591.

21. Fuller and Franke, *The Arab Shi'a*, 102.

22. Amatzia Baram, “A Culture in the Service of Wataniyya: The Treatment of Mesopotamian-Inspired Art in Bathi Iraq,” *Asian and African Studies* 17 (1983): 265–313.

23. Amatzia Baram, *Culture, History, and Ideology in the Formation of Ba'thist Iraq, 1968–78* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), 27.

24. Ibid., 34.

25. Oles M. Smolansky with Bettie M. Smolansky, *The USSR and Iraq: The Soviet Quest for Influence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

26. Baram, *Culture, History, and Ideology,* 141.

27. Fuller and Franke, *The Arab Shi'a*, 103.

28. Batatu, “Iraq’s Underground Shi'a Movements,” 592.

29. See Edmund Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1981); Edgar O’Balance, *The Kurdish Revolt, 1961–1970* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973); Sa'ad Jawad, *Iraq and the Kurdish Question, 1958–1970* (London: Ithaca Press, 1981); and Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992). Three broader books that deal well with the Kurdish question in the region are Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992); Gerard Chaliand, ed., *People without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan,* trans. Michael Pallis (London: Zed Press, 1980); and Stephen C. Pelletiere, *The Kurds: An Unstable Element in the Gulf* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984). See also Hanna Y. Freij, “A Tribal Identity and Alliance Behavior among Factions of the Kurdish National Movement in Iraq,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 3, no. 3 (Autumn 1997): 86–110; Michael M. Gunter, “A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq,” *Third World Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1993): 295–319; and Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999).

30. Martin van Bruinessen, “The Kurds between Iran and Iraq,” *Middle East Report* 16, no. 4 (July/August 1986): 19; Marion Farouk Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1990), 188.

31. The Iraq Foundation more recently reported that ethnic cleansing was taking place in Kirkuk (January 26, 2001).

32. Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 235.

33. Ibid., 236.

34. *Washington Post*, 18 October 1984.

35. Frederick Axelgard, *A New Iraq? The Gulf War and Implications for U.S. Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 35.

36. *Middle East* (London), September 1985, 11–12.

37. Jean Leca, “Opposition in the Middle East and North Africa,” *Government and Opposition* 32, no. 4 (Autumn 1997): 571.

38. Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1999), 36.

39. A detailed listing of the various opposition groups can be found in *Al-Muharrir*, FBIS, 26 October 2000; International Crisis Group, *Iraq Backgrounder: What Lies Beneath*, 1 October 2002.

40. Leca, “Opposition in the Middle East and North Africa,” 559.

41. For greater details about this group, see International Crisis Group, *Iraq Backgrounder*, 34–35.

42. *Washington Post*, 2 November 1999, A-15.

43. Barbara Crossette "Looking Past Hussein, U.S. Is Peering at a Pretender," *New York Times,* 3 January 1999, 10.

44. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament*, 50.

45. *Azzaman* 5, no. 1364 (14 November 2002): 2.

46. Khaled Issa Taha, "Hal Tafwad' al-Mu'arada ma' al-Nitham al-Iraki Whowa Hiwar lil-Tourshan," *Al-Quds Al-Arabi,* 28 June 2000, 18.

47. Ibid.; Jonathan Landay, "U.S. Seeks to Prosecute Iraqi Leaders for War Crimes," *San Jose Mercury News,* 3 August 2000.

48. Michael Gunter makes a similar point in *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq*.

49. Fuller and Franke, *The Arab Shia,* 99–109.

50. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi,* 8 July 2000, 1.

51. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament,* 54–57.

52. Fuller and Franke, *The Arab Shia*, 112–13. A participant from the Kurdish delegation who prefers not to disclose his name indicated to this author that the SCIRI leadership in Iran has felt uncomfortable with the attitudes of the Iranian leadership toward them and at times have felt humiliated by Iranians leaders.

53. Leca, "Opposition in the Middle East and North Africa," 559.

54. Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 52.

55. Nitham Mardini, "Iraqi Federalism: The Program, the Dream, and the Silence," *Al-Hayat*, 12 August 2000, 8.

56. Freij, "Tribal Identity and Alliance Behavior."

57. *Al-Hayat*, 15 September 1998, 4.

58. *Agence France Press*, 5 February 2000, Internet edition.

59. The last time the Kurds had such an opportunity was during the short-lived Mahabad Republic of 1946 in the western Kurdish region of Iran.

60. Freij, "Tribal Identity and Alliance Behavior," 86–110; Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament,* 67–109.

61. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* 12, no. 3654 (12 February 2001): 3.

62. Majed Ahmed Al-Samarra'i, "Those Who Control Kurdistan Have the Final Say for Change," *Azzaman* 4, no. 855 (23 February 2001): 7, makes a similar point on the limitations of the Kurdish situation and prospect of a coup.

63. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi,* 26 February 2001, 1.

64. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament,* 43.

65. Jim Hoagland, "Pretend Iraq Policy," *Washington Post*, 2 July 2000, B-7.

66. *Daily Telegraph*, 13 December 2000, Internet edition.

67. *Reuters,* 10 February 2001, and *Al Quds Al-Arabi* 12, no. 3414 (3 May 2000): 3.

68. *Agence France Press*, 2 November 2000, Internet edition.

69. Anton La Guardia, "Hain U-turn on Criticism of French Iraq Policy," *Daily Telegraph,* 9 November 2000.

70. *Independent,* 11 November 2000.

71. Joseph Fitchett, "U.S.–France Enmity over Iraq Sanctions," *International Herald Tribune*, 21 February 2001.

72. *BBC News,* 13 November, Internet news.

73. Cameron W. Barr, "Iraq Trades Its Way into Arab Fold," *Christian Science Monitor,* 23 February 2001.

74. *Al-Hayat*, 19 February 2001, 1.

75. Ashraf Al-Ashri, "Crumbling Embargo, U.S. Position Viewed," *Al-Ahram al-Arabi*, 7 October 2000, 26–27.

76. George Gedda, "Iraq Hardliners in White House," Associated Press, 21 February 2001.

77. Barry Schweid, "Powell to Recommend Easing Sanctions," Associated Press, 26 February 2001.

78. Giovanni Sartori, "How Far Can Free Government Travel?" *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 3 (July 1993): 103.

79. Richard H. Solomon, "Bringing Peace to Cambodia," in *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World,* ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela Aall (Washington, D.C: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1999), 293. Emphasis is in the original.

80. Ibid., 289.

Chapter 15. Ottoman Lessons for a Federal Iraq

1. For an article on the daunting challenges to Iraqi unity at present, see Vernon Loeb and Thomas Ricks, "For Army, Fears of Postwar Strife: Iraq's Historic Factions May Severely Test a U.S. Occupying Force," *Washington Post*, 11 March 2003.

2. See Said Naficy, "Sharaf al-Din Khan Bidlisi," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960–2005).

3. See Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 123–27, for a discussion of the Ottoman decline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

4. See Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 47.

5. For a thorough and persuasive study of the particular dynamics of social change in Mosul during this period, see Dina Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

6. For a concise discussion of the constant popular unrest in Iraq's shrine cities, see Juan Cole and Moojan Momen, "Mafia, Mob, and Shi'ism in Iraq: The Rebellion of Ottoman Karbala, 1824–1843," *Past and Present* 112 (August 1986): 112–43.

7. Juan Cole, "'Indian Money' and the Shi'a Shrine Cities of Iraq, 1786–1850," *Middle Eastern Studies* 22, no. 4 (1986): 461–80.

8. One example was Muhammad Isma'il Khan, the Iranian governor of Kirman, who funded canal projects around Najaf in the late nineteenth century. See Yitzhak Nakash, "The Conversion of Iraq's Tribes to Shi'ism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26, no. 3 (August 1994): 448.

9. For discussion of this trend, see Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 25–48.

10. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), 59.

Chapter 17. Communalism and the Future of Iraq

1. Linda Layne, *Home and Homeland: The Dialogics of Tribal and National Identities in Jordan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). Dale Eickelman, *The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1998).

2. Layne, 3.

3. Ibid., 4.

4. Eickelman, 48. Also referenced in Layne, 4.

5. Layne, 4.

6. See Emrys L. Peters, "Aspects of Rank and Status among Muslims in a Lebanese Village," in *Mediterranean Countrymen*, ed. Julian Pitt-Rivers (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 159–202. Peters's subsequent reanalysis appears in his "Shifts of Power in a Lebanese Village," in *Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East*, ed. Richard Antoun and Iliya Harik (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1972), 165–97. *Recantation* is Dale Eickelman's term. See Eickelman, 59.

7. See Andrew Shryock and Sally Howell, "'Ever a Guest in Our House': The Emir Abdullah, Shaykh Majid al-'Adwan, and the Practice of Jordanian House Politics, as Remembered by Umm Sultan, the Widow of Majid," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 248. Shryock suggests that the so-called primordialist motifs of tribalism, familism, *'asabiyya*, blood-based identity politics, and patriarchal authoritarianism are part of the tradition of Orientalist scholarship.

8. Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 3.

9. Ibid., 3–4.

10. Ibid., 82. As Anderson indicates, Czarist Russification is perhaps the best known example of *official nationalism*. See his footnote that refers to Hugh Seton-Watson's *Nations and States* (1977), 148, wherein the term is first used.

11. Ibid., 83.

12. Ibid.

13. See Ali Mirsepassi, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization: Negotiating Modernity in Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Chapter 1.

14. Arjun Appaduri, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture* 2 (1990): 5.

15. Ibid., 5–6.

16. Martha L. Cottam and Richard W. Cottam, *Nationalism and Politics: The Political Behavior of Nation States* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2001), 17. This study provides a comprehensive review of approaches to the study of nationalism, national identity, and the nation-state.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 195.

19. Ibid., 197.

20. Adeed Dawisha, "Identity and Political Survival in Saddam's Iraq," *The Middle East Journal* (1999): 553–67, and Shafeeq N. Ghabra, "Iraq's Culture of Violence," *The Middle East Quarterly* (2001): 39–49.

21. Kanan Makiya, *Republic of Fear: The Politics of Modern Iraq* (Berkeley, Calif.:

University of California Press, 1998), originally published in 1989 under the pseudonym *Samir al-Khalil*.

22. See Dawisha on how the ruling elite in Iraq has defined and redefined national identity, particularly under Saddam Hussein.

23. Makiya, 215.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 170–75.

26. Ibid., 152–55, 216–19.

27. This section draws heavily from my article "The Kurds of Iraq: Recent History, Future Prospects," *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal* 6, no. 4 (December 2002).

28. The idea of a federal Iraq divided into five federal units was first raised in the Autumn of 2002, in the context of the Democracy Principles Working Group meetings (part of the State Department's Iraq Project) held in the U.K. in Autumn 2002. See O'Leary 2002.

29. Brendan O'Leary, "Right-sizing and Right-peopling the State: Regulating Ethnic and National Differences." Keynote Address presented at the University of Southern Denmark, Odense, 30 November 2002, at the international conference entitled "Iraqi Kurdistan: Ten Years of Self-Rule and Future Prospects."

30. The Constitutional Referendum in Iraq was held on October 15, 2005. The draft Constitution was approved by an overwhelming majority of voters, although it was defeated in two of Iraq's eighteen governorates (Anbar and Salahadin).

31. See Michael Rubin's article on "Federalism and the Future of Iraq" in *How to Build a New Iraq*, ed. Patrick Clawson (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2002).

32. See O'Leary 2002 for an analysis of the construction that I have termed a *Kurdistani* identity in the KRG-administered region that complements but does not supercede Kurdish, Assyro-Chaldean, and Turkoman ethnic identities.

33. See the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) of March 2004, which sets forth the steps for the transitional political process in Iraq, including the drafting of a new constitution in 2005. The constitutional drafting process began in earnest in July 2005, under the auspices of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, headed by Dr. Humam Hamoudi (a leading member of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SCIRI] party). Elections for a permanent, four-year Council of Representatives were held on December 15, 2005. The new council was given three months to amend the constitution—something that has yet to happen. The new council must also clarify more than fifty key issues through legislation, including oil and gas distribution, formation, conditions and competencies of the Federation Council, procedures to form federal regions, and regulation of powers devolved to the federal regions. As of July 2007, the Iraqi parliament has been unable to pass any significant laws, with the exception of a SCIRI-sponsored law on the formation of new federal regions that passed on October 11, 2006, but with an 18-month moratorium on implementation.

34. O'Leary, 6.

35. Ghabra, 39.

Chapter 18. Kurdish Nationalism in Iran

1. For an in-depth view of Kurdish nationalism, see Abbas Vali, "Introduction: Nationalism and the Question of Origins," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism* (Kurdish Studies Series no. 4), ed. Abbas Vali (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda, 2003).

2. Charles G. MacDonald, "The Kurds," *Journal of Political Science* 19 (1991): 124–35.

3. John Limbert, "The Origins and Appearance of the Kurds in Pre-Islamic Iran," *Iranian Studies* 1 (Spring 1968): 41–51.

4. The extent of the Kurdish region in Iraq has been and is a point of contention between the Kurds and the rest of Iraq. Today this is readily illustrated by the status of Kirkuk.

5. Speech by Abdullah Hassanzadeh, secretary general of the KDPI, at the 21st Congress of the Socialist International, Paris, 8–10 November 1999. (www.pdk-iran.org)

6. KDPI, speech by Abdullah Khosrow, "The Situation in Iranian Kurdistan," presented at the International Conference on Forced Deportation and Displacements of Kurdish Civilian Populations, Paris, 10 March 2001. (www.pdk-iran.org)

7. A. R. Ghassemlou (Abdulrahman Qasemlou), "Kurdistan in Iran," in *People without a Country*, ed. Gerard Chaliand (London: Zed, 1980), 118.

8. See William Eagleton Jr., *The Kurdish Republic of 1946* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), and Archie Roosevelt Jr., "The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad," in *People without a Country*, 135–52.

9. As a footnote to history, the author was told by an American statesman, Herman Eilts (who was posted to Iran at this time), that the United States was told by Iran that Qazi Mohammed would not be harmed. The United States did not expect him to be hanged. Also, Qazi Mohammed's son told the author that the action was taken by an Iranian military commander who held a grudge against his father.

10. For Shaykh Huysani's eight demands of Mahabad, see *New York Times*, 21 January 1980.

11. For a discussion of the relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kurds in the first decade of the revolution, see Charles G. MacDonald, "The Kurdish Challenge and Revolutionary Iran," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 13 (Fall/Winter 1989), 52–68.

12. See Charles G. MacDonald, "Kurdish Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Iran," in *Kurdish Exodus: From Internal Displacement to Diaspora*, ed. Mohammed M. A. Ahmed and Michael M. Gunter (Sharon, Mass.: Ahmed Foundation for Kurdish Studies, 2002), 63–69.

13. See esp. Bill Frelick, *Mass Exodus: Iraqi Refugees in Iran* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee on Refugees, 1991). See also U.S. Committee on Refugees, "Country Reports: Iran." (www.refuges.org/world/countryrpt/mideast/iran.htm)

14. Khosrow, "The Situation in Iranian Kurdistan," 2001.

15. Amnesty International, "Iran: Threats against Kurdish Human Rights Defenders Must Stop," *News Service,* no. 52, 3 March 2005.

16. United Nations, Economic and Social Council, "Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran," prepared by the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights, Maurice Danby Copithorne, pursuant to Commission Resolution 2001/17, E/CN.4/2002/42, 16 January 2002.

17. United States Department of State, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Iran—2000," 23 February 2001.

Chapter 19. Competing National Identities

1. *Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Walker Connor, "The Politics of Ethnonationalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 27, no. 1. For further information, see, e.g., Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The* (1973), 1–21; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983); Dov Ronen, *The Quest for Self-Determination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Anthony D. Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); Crawford Young, *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay?* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 3–35; Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nation and States: An Inquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977); Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981); E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). Also see Chimene I. Keitner, "National Self-Determination in Historical Perspective: The Legacy of the French Revolution for Today's Debate," *International Studies Review* 2, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 3–26; David Brown, "Ethnic Revival: Perspectives on State and Society," *Third World Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (October 1989): 1–16.

2. Seton-Watson, *Nation and States,* 5.

3. Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 15.

4. Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 5.

5. Mustafa Vaziri, *Iran as Imagined Nation: The Construction of National Identity* (New York: Paragon House, 1993).

6. For details, see Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 11–14.

7. For details of the Mahabad Republic and its aftermath, see ibid, 14–23, and Archie Roosevelt Jr., "The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad" in *People without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan,* ed. Gerard Chaliand (London: Zed Press, 1980), 135–52. For an excellent study of the rise and fall of the Autonomous Government of Azerbaijan, see Touraj Atabaki, *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2000), 129–78. For an interesting firsthand account of the campaign against the Azerbaijan uprising, see Ali Akbar Derakshani, *Khaterat-e-Sartip Ali Akbar Derakshani* [The memoirs of General Ali Akbar Derakshani] (n.p., 1994), 19–50; 313–60.

8. Hassan Arfa, *The Kurds: An Historical and Political Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 102–3.

9. For an analysis of the role of language in Kurdish nationalism, see Amir Hassanpour, *Nationalism and Language in Kurdistan, 1918–1985* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), 1–48, 102–47. For a conceptual analysis of dissimilative and assimilative ethnic factors in the Middle East, see Nader Entessar, "Ethnicity and

Ethnic Challenges in the Middle East," in *Ethnicity and Governance in the Third World,* ed. J. M. Mbaku, P. O. Agobese, and M. S. Kiymeni (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2001).

10. Abdulrahman Qasemlou, "Kurdistan in Iran," in Chaliand, *People without a Country,* 122.

11. Nader Entessar, "The Kurds in Post-Revolutionary Iran and Iraq," *Third World Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (October 1984): 923–24.

12. Qasemlou, "Kurdistan in Iran," 124.

13. Ibid., 125.

14. Islamic Republic of Iran, *Matn-e-Kamel-e Qanoon-e Assassi-e Jomhoori-e Eslami-e Iran* [The complete text of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran] (Tehran: Hamid, 1983), 28.

15. Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 73.

16. Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, *Matn-e Kamel-e Khaterat-e Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri* [The complete text of the memoirs of Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri] (Spanga, Sweden, Vicennes, France, and Essen, Germany: Union of Iranian Editors in Europe, 2001), 252–53.

17. Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali, *Khaterat-e Ayatollah Khalkhali, Avalin Hakim-e Shar'-e Dadgahaye Enghelab* (Memoirs of Ayatollah Khalkhali, the first religious judge of the Revolutionary Courts) (Tehran: Sayeh, 2001), 293–94.

18. For the complete text of Khomeini's 16 November 1979 letter to the Kurds, see *Ettelaat*, 17 November 1979.

19. Nasser Mohajer, "Ensheab dar Hezb-eDemokrat-e Kordestan-e Iran" (A division within the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran), *Aghazi,* no. 7 (Summer 1988): 25–29.

20. For a complete account of the Mykonos verdict and documents related to this case, see Mehran Payandeh, Abbas Khodagholi, and Hamid Nozari, *Hanooz dar Berlin Ghazo Hast: Terror va Dadghah-e Mykonos* (There Is Still a Judge in Berlin: Terror and the Mykonos Court), (Essen, Germany: Nima, 2000), and Parviz Dastmalchi, *Mykonos: Matin-e Ra'ye Dadghah* (Mykonos: The Court's Verdict) (Los Angeles: Dehkhoda Bookstore, 2001).

21. For details, see "Jonbesh-e Moqavemat-e Khalq-e Kurd va Komala" (The resistance movement of the Kurdish masses and the Komala), document series no. 2 (1980): 1–9.

22. Mohammed Khatami, *Islam, Liberty, and Development* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Institute of Global Cultural Studies, Binghamton University, 1998), 4.

23. For a selection of President Khatami's speeches on this and similar topics, see Mohammed Khatami, *Tose'-e Siyasi, Tose'-e Eghtesadi va Amniyat* (Political Development, Economic Development, and Security) (Tehran: Tarh-e No, 2000), 55–97.

24. Islamic Republic News Agency, 9 April 2001.

25. *Asr-e Azadegan,* 6 March 2000.

26. Mohammed Ali Zakariaee, ed., *Konferanc-e Berlin: Khedmat ya Khiyanat* (The Berlin conference: Service or treason) (Tehran: Tarh-e No, 2000), 211.

27. See Abdulrahman Qasemlou's interview in *MERIP Report*, no. 98 (July/August 1981): 17. Also see KDPI, "Barnameh va Assassnsameh-e Hezb-e Demokrat-e Kurdistan-e Iran" [The platform and constitution of the KDPI], Third Congress, 1973, and

"Asnad-e Kongereh-e Dahom-e Hezb-e Demokrat-e Kurdistan-e Iran" [The documents of the Tenth Congress of the KDPI], April 1995.

28. See *Kurdistan* (organ of the Central Committee of the KDPI), no. 278 (December 1999): 4.

29. Mustafa Chamran, *Kurdistan* (Tehran: Foundation of Mustafa Chamran, 1985), 153.

30. Hamid Reza Jalaipour, *Kurdistan: Elal-e Tadavom-e Bohran-e an pas az Enghelan-e Eslami* (Kurdistan: Causes for the Continuation of Its Crisis after the Islamic Revolution) (Tehran: Institute for Political and International Studies, 1993), 164–65.

31. For details see *Kurdistan,* no. 294 (6 October 2000): 1–5; *Kurdistan*, no. 297 (20 November 2000): 1–3; *Kurdistan*, no. 305 (5 March 2001): 1–5.

Chapter 20. The Human Rights of Kurds in the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. United Nations, Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, UN Doc. A/CONF.157/23, 7 December 1993, article 2.

2. Tom Hadden, "The Rights of Minorities and Peoples in International Law," in *Nationalism, Minorities, and Diasporas: Identities and Rights in the Middle East*, ed. Kirsten E. Schultze, Martin Stokes, and Colm Campbell (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996).

3. United Nations Economic and Social Council, UN Doc E/CN, 4/Sub 2/384/Rev. 1 (New York, 1979).

4. United Nations, UN Doc E/CN, 4/Sub 2/384/Rev. 1 (New York, 1981).

5. See Hadden, "Rights of Minorities," 16, for Critescu Report, paragraph 270.

6. United Nations, *Bernard Ominayak, Chief of the Rubicon Lake Band v. Canada*, communication no. 167 (1984), UN Doc. A/42/40, 106. Also see Hadden, "Rights of Minorities," 18.

7. The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Right was adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution 2200 A (XXI), 16 December 1966.

8. Nondiscrimination and the rights of "persons belonging to minorities" to full equality before the law are set out in article 4(1) of the declaration. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, ratified by Iran on 28 August 1968, also upholds the principles of nondiscrimination and equal treatment before the law.

9. See Dr. Hossein Khaligi, London, 11 February 1997, in Human Rights Watch, *Iran: Religious and Ethnic Minorities, Discrimination in Law and Practice* (New York: Human Rights Watch, September 1997), 20.

10. Distributed by the Washington Kurdish Institute (wki@kurd.org), 25 March 2000.

11. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Radio Tehran, 17 December 1979, as quoted in David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), 271.

12. For Khatami's advisor, see "Kordestan Is an Inseparable Part of Iran," *Islamic Republic News Agency*, 7 June 2000, as reported by WKI, 29 June 2000 (emphasis added).

13. See, e.g., the statements of the deputy to the Majlis from Kordestan Province, Bahaoddin Adab, *Sobhe Emrouz*, 17 April 2000.

14. See Houshman interview by Islamic Republic News Agency, 7 June 2000.

15. " Iranian Kurdistan Governor Zadeh: Kurds Prefer Democracy over Autonomy," *Al-Sharq al-Aswat*, 24 June 2000 (as reported by WKI, 29 June 2000).

16. Anthony Hyman, "Elusive Kurdistan: The Struggle for Recognition" (London: Center for Security and Conflict Studies, 1988), 26.

17. Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 1990* (London 1990), 125.

18. See Houshman interview.

19. The Council of Guardians is a body of twelve theologians and religious jurists, half appointed by the leader of the Islamic Republic and half by the Majlis. In addition to overseeing elections and vetoing candidates for electoral office, their task is to guarantee the conformity with Islamic principles of legislation passed by the Majlis.

20. See statement of Abdullah Saharebe, representative of the city of Maravan: "Canceling the Results of the Voting in Saqqez and Baneh Is Hurting the Feelings of 90 Thousand Muslims of Saqqez and Baneh," in KurdishMedia.com (London, 7 July 2000).

21. Voice of Islamic Republic of Iran, radio, 6 August 2000.

Chapter 21. Economic Transition of Kurdish Nationalism in Iran

1. Peter Laslett, "Face-to-Face Society," in his *Philosophy, Politics, and Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), 157–84.

2. Ann K. S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 285.

3. Camilla Toulmin, *Economic Behavior among Livestock-Keeping People*, University of East Anglia Development Studies Occasional Paper, no. 25 (Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1983), 5.

4. Tehran University has published a number of studies regarding the land reform program:

- Mostafa Azkia, *Khushnishinan-i Kurdistan* [Landless peasants of Kurdistan] (Tehran: University, 1976). Azkia studied 49 randomly chosen Kurdish villages, 232 landless or *Khushnishin* households, and 200 landholding or *zara'* households.
- Tehran University, Institute of Social Study and Research, *Barisi-i Natayj-i Islahat-i Arzi dar Haft Mantaqi* [Study of the result of the land reform in the seen regions] (Tehran: University, 1969). The study included the result of the land reform program in two Kurdish regions, Sanandaj and Qasrishirin.
- Shahla Rafi'y and Shadab Vajdi, *Sharkat-i Sahami-i Zera{hy]-yi Farah: Sanandaj* [Farah Farm Corporation: Sanandaj] (Tehran: University, 1969). In 1971, Ghullam-Hassan Babayi Hamati published the results of his study of land reform and the Farah Farm Corporation.
- Tehran University, Plan and Budget Organization, *Moqadimeh-i bar Shenakht-i Masail-i Iqtesad-i va Ijitma'-i Jama'-i A'shayer-i Kurdistan* (Introduction to the economic and social problems of tribal societies of Kurdistan) (Tehran: University, 1979).

5. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London: Penguin Books, 1969), 30–40.

6. Ann K. S. Lambton, *The Persian Land Reform, 1962–1966* (Oxford: Clarendon

Press, 1969), 121, 169; Azkia, *Khushnishinan-i Kurdistan,* 12. All Iranian villages are divided into six parts, or dangs. Shishdang referred to a whole village.

7. Tom Nairn, *The Breakup of Britain,* 2nd ed. (London: NLB and Verso Editions, 1981).

8. W. G. Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice: A Study of Attitudes to Social Inequality in Twentieth-Century England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

9. Tehran University, Plan and Budget Organization of Iran, *Majmu'I-i Barisi va Shenakht-ı Vaz'e Moujoud dar Ostan-i Kurdistan* (Collection of studies on the current conditions in the province of Kordestan), vol. 1 (Tehran: University, 1987), 494.

10. Ibid., 472, 480, tables 164 and 168.

Chapter 24. An American Diplomat's Perspective

1. The editors note that while there was no near-time television, it was the film from Iranian television that eventually broke that tragic reality of Halabja to the world.

Chapter 25. The Kurdish Identity

1. See Dexter Filkins, "Iraqi Kurdish Leaders Resist as U.S. Presses Them to Moderate Their Demands," *New York Times*, 24 February 2004.

2. For documents, see the Kurdistan Regional Government Web site: www.krg.org.

Appendix 2. Valuing the Identity of Others

1. These are the concluding remarks from "The Kurds: Search for Identity—An International Conference," held at American University, 17–18 April 2000.

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