The London School of Economics and Political Science

Maps into Nations:
Kurdistan, Kurdish Nationalism and International Society

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores how Kurdish nationalists generate sympathy and support for their ethnically-defined claims to territory and self-determination in international society and among would-be nationals. It combines conceptual and theoretical insights from the field of IR and studies on nationalism, and focuses on national identity, sub-state groups and international norms. In so doing, this thesis presents a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the self-determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups and their interaction with international society. Such assertions for the control of a specific territory typically embrace, either implicitly or explicitly, ethnic conceptions of national identity. A three-fold argument is proposed and developed to explain why these ethnic claims to self-determination gain sympathy and support. Firstly, political assertions regarding the identity of a specific piece of land and its cartographical depictions are powerful in influencing outsiders' perceptions because of the normative context in which they are framed. The norms related to sub-state nationalist groups involve both a specific interpretation of self-determination and the norms of human rights and democracy. Secondly, such claims are further reinforced by the perception that the history of a territory is identical to the history of the people living on it. Although a political association between a people and a territory is a relatively novel link, such associations are often assumed and accepted to exist throughout all of history. Kurdish nationalists use the maps of Kurdistan effectively to convey the message. Finally, the diasporal activities of nationalists who, thanks to their location outside the homeland and their ability to communicate their ideas directly to international society, play an important role in asserting the rightfulness of their demand for self-determination and in promoting the idea of an ethnic territory.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis addresses an important question in the studies of nationalism and international relations, namely: how can we explain the success of ethnically-defined claims to territory and national self-determination in generating sympathy and support from among would-be nationals and in international society?[1] The ethnicist understanding of nations in the academic and non-academic literature implies that a territory is more or less a given feature of groups. The meaning sub-state nationalist groups attribute to self-determination and territorial identity is linked to a specific normative context that embraces a belief in democracy and human rights for groups with distinct cultural, linguistic and ethnic characteristics. Framing their self-determination claims to territorial autonomy or independence based on their distinct cultural and ethnic characteristics helps them to maximise their legitimacy and influence within international society. Considering the large number of such struggles – the Kurds, Tamils, Chechens, Abkhazians, Sikhs, and others – the question of why ethnically-defined claims to territory and national self-determination generate sympathy in international society emerges as an important issue that requires explanation.

This thesis addresses this issue by examining the political and international ideational context in which sub-state groups interact with other international actors in international society. It draws on the literatures of different fields, particularly International Relations (IR) and nationalism studies, and looks more closely at the territorial component of nationalisms. It shows that insights from nationalism theories regarding the meanings and roles of nations and nationalism is necessary in understanding the challenges nationalist separatist movements pose to state sovereignty,

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[1] 'International society' means 'a group of state (or, more generally, a group of independent political communities) which not merely form a system, in the sense that the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of the others, but also have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognise their common interest in maintaining these arrangements.' Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, 1. This definition enables the incorporation of institutions and rules, ideas and other forces, such as nationalism, in the study of international politics. For instance, Mayall, defines international society as 'a society of states' and looks at the influence of nationalism on international society. James Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 2. This thesis adopts a more general meaning of international society, which is not only limited to states as the key actors that constitute the international society and involves domestic and international non-state actors. The terms 'international community' or 'world society' are not used here because, although these concepts encompass the non-state domain, these concepts imply 'some form of moral collectivity of humankind which exists as an ethical referent even if not organized in that way, and those who see it as some kind of agent possessing the capacity for action.' Barry Buzan and Gonzalez-Pelaez, ''International community' after Iraq', *International Affairs*, 2005, 81 (1): 31-52, 32.

territorial stability, and regional and international security.[2] This thesis aims to contribute to IR and studies by offering a conceptual analysis of the concept of 'self-determination' and by providing a specific definition of this concept in relation to sub-state nationalist claims to independence or autonomy on a specific territory. It explains the success of ethnically-defined claims of sub-state nationalist groups to territory and self-determination by analysing Kurdish nationalism and Kurdistan. It contributes to the literature on Kurdish studies by providing a systematic and eclectic theoretical and analytical approach to understanding Kurdish nationalists' use of territorial features and its implications for the relationship between Kurdish nationalism and international society.

Kurdish nationalism and its ideal national homeland, Kurdistan, is a good case to use in explaining how such groups frame their self-determination claims to territorial autonomy or independence based on their distinct cultural and ethnic characteristics in order to help them to maximise their legitimacy and influence in international society. The ethnicist assumptions in relation to territory and national self-determination are at their most prominent in the notion of Kurdistan, which encompasses sections of the territories of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia. Additionally, these ethnicist assumptions underpin maps depicting Kurdistan. Kurdish activists in the region and in the diaspora have unfailingly promoted the idea of Kurdistan to international society, typically framing their promotions using the language of human rights and self-determination to make their claims as legitimate as possible to those democratic countries whose influence they are trying to gain. They have been quite successful in generating support among Kurds and in generating sympathy for their cause in international society. Their long-standing promotion of Kurdistan and Kurdish identity has enjoyed some success compared to other ethnic groups' claims to distinct identity in the same region such as the Assyrian Christians and Turkmens in Iraq.

The concept of a national homeland for all Kurds and maps depicting this unifying homeland stand in stark contrast to the actual divided status of the Kurdish nationalist parties. Each of the main Kurdish political parties – namely the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Iraq, the Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK) and the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI) – and Kurdish societies in these

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[2] Griffiths argues that these challenges require a deeper understanding of these issues than dominant IR approaches have provided so far. Martin Griffiths, 'Self-determination, international society and world order', *Macquarie Law Journal*, 2003, 3: 29-49, 29.

states face different problems that have emerged as a result of the distinct political, social, historical and economic circumstances of each state. Today Kurdish parties in Iraq have been enjoying a considerable degree of autonomy since the formation of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).[3] Iran is the only country where a Kurdish state, the Mahabad Republic, which was established in 1946 and lasted only eleven months. The ongoing tension and conflict between Kurdish tribes, Kurdish intellectual elites and the Iranian state does not look likely to end in the near future. The Kurds in Syria continue to be severely suppressed and have been denied citizenship for years, and their future status remains ambivalent due to current turmoil in Syria.

Turkey is where the most seemingly complicated and pressing Kurdish challenge presently seems to lie. The PKK and the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), the pro-Kurdish party with representatives in the Turkish Parliament, repeatedly state their desire for Kurdish autonomy within Turkey. In recent years they have become more assertive in their insistence that they are ready to negotiate a solution as long as their currently imprisoned leader, Abdullah Öcalan who was captured by Turkish armed forces in 1999, is released and the Turkish government agrees to sit at a negotiation table with him.[4] However, as long as the government continues to declare publicly that they refuse to negotiate with what they consider a terrorist organisation, there is no immediate sign of a solution.

Given this picture, it is a fair statement to say that each Kurdish nationalist organisation typically defines its goals and problems in a way that is strictly limited to the country in which they reside and in a way that excludes the Kurds and Kurdish parties in other states. No contemporary Kurdish nationalist party in the Middle East so far has made an explicit demand to establish a greater Kurdistan that would unite all the Kurds living in different states within a new single political entity and each nationalist movement has its own understanding of the boundaries of the territory they wish to have control over.

Yet Kurdish nationalism has been quite successful in the promotion of the notion of Kurdistan and its maps to international society. Kurdistan, the homeland of Kurds, and its maps are commonly used in the rhetoric of almost all Kurdish nationalist

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[3] The Iraqi Kurdistan Regional President and leader of the KDP, Massoud Barzani, receives official receptions from other state leaders, including the US and Turkey. Jalal Talabani, the leader of the PUK has been the President of Iraq since 2005.

[4] For a recent update see 'Öcalan is leader not criminal', *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22 May 2012, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ocalan-is-leader-not-criminal-bdp-deputy.aspx?pageID=238&nid=21293&NewsCatID=338, last accessed 28 May 2012.

organisations and activist groups, both in the region and in the diaspora. While all Kurdish nationalists have claimed ownership of this territory since 4,000 BCE, contemporary Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora are particularly attached to the idea of greater Kurdistan probably because of the absence of a Kurdish state or a clearly definable Kurdish homeland.[5] This is evident from the fact that Kurdish activists in the diaspora have produced many historical, sociological and political texts to legitimise and prove the Kurdish right to statehood and have created and distributed multiple maps of Kurdistan. Maps are useful for presenting ethnicist views because, a territory with clear boundaries depicted on the map gives the message that the people inhabiting the territories within the borders of the map is homogenous. Some examples of these cartographical depictions are the maps produced by the Kurdish Institute of Paris and the maps of Kurdish historian Mehrdad Izady.[6]

Figure 1.1: Kurdish Institute of Paris Map of Kurdistan[7]
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Figure 1.2: 'Administrative Units of Contemporary Kurdistan' by Mehrdad Izady
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For any sub-state nationalism seeking autonomy or independence, it is essential to have a territory. This territory usually has two components: a more or less existing territory (a state, administrative region, or geographical region); and the aspirant territory showing what the state is imagined to look like. The 'existing territory' in the Kurdish case refers to: (1) the Kurdistan used as the name of an administrative region during the Ottoman and Selcuklu states; (2) the Kurdistan plans and maps or territorial definitions prepared by Kurdish intellectuals and tribal leaders in the early twentieth century, which relied on the maps produced by colonial army officers and travellers in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century; and (3) the small 'Kurdistans' that emerged after the establishment of Turkey, Iraq and Syria in the 1920s referring to the areas inhabited by

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[5] Van Bruinessen, *Transnational Aspects of the Kurdish Question*, Italy: European University Institute, RSC No. 2000/22, Mediterranean Programme Series, 2000, 7.
[6] Izady's maps are available at the Kurdish Institute of Paris website, http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama/map_of_kurdistan.php, last accessed 14 September 2011. Izady's maps display a green coloured area indicating regions where the majority of the population is Kurdish. The boundaries of the green shade are very similar to the boundaries of the aspirant territory of Kurdistan.
[7] Kurdish Institute of Paris, http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama/map_of_kurdistan.php, last accessed 14 September 2012.

Kurds in each state, such as Iraqi Kurdistan (northern Iraq), Turkish Kurdistan (south-eastern and eastern Turkey), Iranian Kurdistan (south-western Iran) and Syrian Kurdistan (a small piece of land in north-east Syria).

The aspirant territory, on the other hand, is the extensive area cutting across multiple countries as depicted in the map of greater Kurdistan. It relies on the assumption that 'the political and the national should be congruent'.[8] It represents an ambitious territorial assertion encompassing territories from five regional states, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia (and sometimes Azerbaijan). Kurdish nationalists insist on the Kurdish right to ownership of this territory as opposed to the Armenian, Assyrian, Turkish and Arab aspirations. Like all other nationalists, Kurds have a subjective view of their existence that goes back to 'time immemorial' and deploys past geographic/administrative terms and definitions to promote the idea that a Kurdish nation existed centuries ago. In so doing, they associate pre-modern meanings of concepts to the contemporary uses of national, territorial and political identity.[9] Thus, there are two Kurdistans: one that exists today or historically existed in the past, and one that is politically aspired.[10]

Today both Kurdish nationalists and their sympathisers use the aspirant idea of Kurdistan to refer to the region. For them, notions such as 'eastern Turkey' or 'northern Iraq' appear as insufficient or inappropriate titles to refer to the region. This understanding of Kurdistan has moved beyond the discourse of Kurdish nationalists and become embedded in the language used by other influential groups. Some officials from certain states have adopted similar conceptions when supporting the Kurdish cause and encouraged their states to put pressure on regional governments, particularly evident in the cases of Turkey and Iraq.[11] For instance a report prepared by the Congressional Research Service, a research centre that works for the US Congress and provides policy and legal analysis for the members of the House and Senate, included a map entitled 'Kurdish area', which depicted the same boundaries and territories as

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[8] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism,* 2nd ed., Introduction by John Breuilly, Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, 6.

[9] Maria T. O'Shea, *Trapped Between the Map and Reality: Geography and Perceptions of Kurdistan*, London: Routledge, 2004, 2-3; David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1996, 3.

[10] These two interpretations of the term do not refer to other current uses of Kurdistan, such as the Kurdistan Regional Government in northern Iraq, or other non-official uses such as Iranian Kurdistan, Turkish Kurdistan, Iraqi Kurdistan and Syrian Kurdistan.

[11] See US Congressmen Bob Filner and Frank Pallone's speeches, http://capitolwords.org/date/1997/05/01/H2152-2_self-determination-for-the-kurds/, last accessed 25 May 2012.

indicated in the aspirant Kurdish nationalist map.[12] Although it is well established that these maps overlook the heterogeneous character of the population inhabiting the area as well as the political boundaries of the existing states, they appear in almost all types of sources, from Kurdish websites to non-Kurdish academic works, journals and newspapers.[13] They typically refer to the region as 'Kurdish populated areas' or the 'Kurdish region'.[14]

Consequently, Kurdish nationalism has been successful in disseminating the aspirant Kurdistan map as the most prominent feature and symbol of Kurdish national identity. They have become synonymous with 'Kurdistan' in the minds of the Kurds and become the most significant feature of Kurdish nationalist discourse. The 'aspirant Kurdistan' has come to be seen as the 'existing Kurdistan' in the eyes of Kurdish nationalists and many members of international society. These groups take the existence of Kurdistan, as indicated by the aspirant map of Kurdistan, for granted and see this map as the cartographical reflection of Kurdish territory. Kurdish sympathisers, Kurdish and non-Kurdish scholars, certain state departments, state representatives, and some international newspapers adopt and utilise maps of Kurdistan to indicate Kurdish territories in their speeches, reports and publications.

Figure 1.3: Kurdish Inhabited Areas, *The Washington Post* in 1999 and 2009.
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Map available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpsrv/inatl/daily/feb99/kurdprofile.htm

Figure 1.4: Kurdish Populated Areas, by Laris Karklis, *The Washington Post*, 12 October 2007
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Map available at
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/linkset/2007/10/12/LI2007101201754.html

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[12] Kenneth Katzman, 'The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq', *Congressional Research Centre*, 3 June 2009, 9. http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/125932.pdf, last accessed 18 June 2012.
[13] http://www.economist.com/node/21551111; http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/daily/feb99/kurdprofile.htm, last accessed 28 May 2012.
[14] Jongerden points to this tendency and indicates that it is necessary to be careful not to attach identities to geographical regions because this would be a reification of the nationalist view (Interview with Dr Joost Jondergen, 4 February 2011, London). Dr Jongerden is a rural sociologist working on the Kurds in Turkey at Wageningen University, The Netherlands. Retired Swedish diplomat and Ambassador Dr Ingmar Karlsson, says that most of the Swedish public sees it as natural for every nation to have their own state. He states that there is no understanding of the divided cultural structures of nations and ethnic groups, and Kurdish nationalist groups in Sweden have been influential in creating the perception among the Swedish public that Kurds are a united people and that Kurdistan is an existing national homeland (Interview with Ingmar Karlsson, 7 December 2009, London). Karlsson wrote a book entitled 'Kurdistan Landet Som Icke Ar' [When I asked, a Swedish scholar translated the title as 'Kurdistan: Land that is not']. This book is published in Turkish as *Bir Diplomatın Gözüyle Kürt Sorunu* [The Kurdish Problem from the Perspective of a Diplomat], İstanbul: Homer, 2008.

Figure 1.5: 'Kurdish-populated area'[15]
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Map available at http://www.economist.com/node/21551111

Figure 1.6: Map of the Middle East Before[16]
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Map available at http://www.democracyinlebanon.org/Documents/CDL-World/Better-ME-Peters06.htm

Figure 1.7: Map of the Middle East After[17]
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]
Map available at http://www.democracyinlebanon.org/Documents/CDL-World/Better-ME-Peters06.htm

Figure 1.8: Kurdish Inhabited Area[18]
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Map available at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kurdish_86.jpg

Figure 1.9: Kurdistan Map in Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1998[19]
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Map available at http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama/map_of_kurdistan.php

A Brief Outline of the Literature on Kurds

The literature on Kurds is mainly composed of in depth historical analyses of the Kurds and histories of the development of Kurdish national identity and Kurdish nationalism. These studies provide an alternative historical account of the region and its people, different from the historical narratives and arguments of the regional states. Their observations on the social structure and political organisation of Kurdish society give

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[15] 'Rebellious days: A Fresh wave of protests shows how far Turkey is from pacifying its Kurds', *The Economist*, 24 March 2012. A similar map also appears under the title 'Predominantly Kurdish Areas', in *The Economist*, 16 December 2006, 63, Issue 8508.

[16] Ralph Peters, printed in Ralph Peters, 'Blood Borders: How A Better Middle East Would Look', *Armed Forces Journal*, June 2006.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Map of Kurdish Lands, 1992. An earlier CIA map is published in a report: Central Intelligence Agency, *The Kurdish Minority Problem*, 8 December 1948, p. 16. Another maps titled 'Kurdish Areas in the Middle East and Soviet Union' produced in 1986 shows Kurdish settlement in a wider area.

[19] Maps indicating similar boundaries for Kurdistan are also produced by non-Kurdish scholars such as David McDowall, one of the leading scholars in Kurdish studies. O'Shea draws attention to the similarity of McDowall's maps to the Kurdistan map of Kurdish Institute of Paris and the maps produced by the CIA and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. O'Shea, p. 166. The 1998 Encyclopaedia Britannica map also manifests a similarity to those maps.

detailed accounts of a case usually neglected in the academic and non-academic literature examining regional states. Among these, the most significant and reliable sources have been written by Martin Van Bruinessen, David McDowall and Denise Natali and Hussein Tahiri. Combined these works locate the longevity and power of Kurdish nationalism in the regional and local historical events, particularly the WWI, when the Kurds came closest to a possible Kurdish state in their history. Additionally, they emphasise that their peripheral location has given Kurdish tribal leaders in the past some degree of authority in their internal affairs. Therefore, centralisation, assimilation or exclusion policies of the new states led Kurdish leaders to react and mobilise dissident movements against the states they are located. These reactionary movements have enabled the endurance of Kurdish nationalism.

Martin Van Bruinessen's *Agha, Shaikh and the State* is one of the most influential historical and sociological studies undertaken on the Kurds.[20] This work examines the social and political structures of Kurdistan and deals with the role of tribal loyalties within Kurdish societies. Van Bruinessen tackles the question of how tribal and primordial loyalties transform into national loyalties in the Kurdish case, and emphasises the role of economic and political circumstances in this transformation. Through a detailed analysis of the sheikhly and tribal order among Kurdish society and through his observations from his fieldwork in the region, Van Bruinessen's provides significant insights into the internal structures of Kurdish society and how they have responded to the formation of new states in the region and to economic, social and political changes.[21]

Moreover, Van Bruinessen has provided detailed accounts of Kurds in Iraq and Turkey and the relationship between Kurdish groups and their host states.[22] Van Bruinessen has also undertaken studies on social processes that affect Kurdish society and Kurdish nationalism, particularly focusing on migration, refugees, and transnational relations. Considering the impact of Kurdish nationalism on the Kurdish cause, Van Bruinessen has argued that Kurdish nationalist movements have focused on territorial nationalism and political independence without an accurate awareness of the political and economic circumstances of the states and societies they live in, and this has

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[20] Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*, New Jersey: Zed, 1992.
[21] Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, states and tribes', in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (eds.), *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East*, London: Saqi, 2002, 165-183.
[22] Martin Van Bruinessen, *Kürtlük Türklük Alevilik* [Kurdishness, Turkishness, Alevism], İstanbul: İletişim, 2002; *Kurdish Ethno-nationalism versus Nations-building States: Collected Articles,* İstanbul: The İsis Press, 2000.

rendered their aims unrealistic.[23] Van Bruinessen's detailed account of different aspects of Kurdish society and politics, and his consideration of Kurdish nationalism as an outsider within the context of external factors have informed the way this thesis understands the impact of tribal structure on the development of Kurdish society and the territorial focus of Kurdish nationalism.

McDowall's *A Modern History of the Kurds* represents a comprehensive historical account of the Kurdish society in the Middle East and their interactions with the regional states they inhabit. In this book, McDowall traces the problems experienced by the Kurds back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the policies of the Ottoman and Iranian empires towards their Kurdish populations, and provides useful insights in understanding the internal and external dynamics that shape Kurdish nationalism.[24] In the report he prepared for the Minority Rights Group, McDowall explores the issues that affect the identity and political development of the Kurds. He argues that although Kurds have mainly blamed the states they inhabit for their inability to create their own state, and that this is indeed a contributory factor, in addition Kurdish tribal structure and internal rivalry at the beginning of the twentieth century (which is a more or less continuing feature of Kurdish society) also defined the political progress of the Kurdish society.[25] McDowall indicates that the map of Kurdistan he has included in the report is not a political map, but merely indicates the location of the Kurds. He also acknowledges the heterogeneous composition of the population in this region.[26]

Denise Natali's work is another insightful work on the Kurds. Natali provides an analytically sophisticated and comparative analysis of the Kurdish societies in the Middle East and the implications of state formation processes on the development of the Kurdish identity in each state. Natali emphasises the development of transnational Kurdish nationalism, but argues that this has not managed to unite the Kurds under one movement.[27] Another significant work providing a historical account of past and contemporary Kurdish society and Kurdish nationalism is Wadie Jwaideh. This is a

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[23] Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish society, ethnicity, nationalism and refugee problems,' in Philip G. Kreyenbroek and Stephen Sperl (eds.), *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview*, London: Routledge, 1992, 33-67; Van Bruinessen, *Transnational.*

[24] McDowall, *Modern History of the Kurds.*

[25] McDowall, *The Kurds*, London: The Minority Rights Group International, 1996, p. 4.

[26] McDowall, *Kurds*, 5-6. But interestingly, although the density of the Kurdish population has been indicated in the map, the external boundaries of the map are strikingly similar to the aspirant Kurdistan map.

[27] Denise Natali, *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran,* New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005.

piece of work that is clearly normatively sympathetic with the Kurdish cause and it draws on a substantive amount of archival sources to provide a very detailed account of the origins and development of Kurdish nationalism.[28] In addition to these studies mentioned looking at Kurds and Kurdish nationalism, there are many other studies looking at the development and structure of Kurdish society and Kurdish nationalism in a regional context or more local contexts.[29] Most of these studies perceive a pervasive Kurdish identity that led to the emergence of Kurdish nationalism back in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and explain the endurance of Kurdish nationalism based on this assumption.

Although the literature on the Kurds is mainly constituted of historical and sociological studies, there is also a considerable number of studies that aims to construct a connection between Kurdish nationalism and international politics. Some of these studies look at the influence of the problems encountered by Kurds and the activities of Kurdish nationalists on Middle Eastern politics and vice versa. Among these, Robert Olson's work is particularly important because of his focus on the centrality of the Kurds to understanding Middle Eastern politics in international relations, particularly in relation to Turkey and Iraq.[30] Olson looks at the policies of regional states, particularly Iraq and Turkey, towards the Kurds and the Kurdish parties' response to those policies. He discusses the relationship between Kurdish political parties and regional states and the implications of these on the wider Middle Eastern politics, and he addresses the issue of Kurdish independence only in relation to the Kurds of Iraq.

There are also studies that provide regional political and foreign policy analyses or international political historical analyses of the region in relation to the Kurdish case. They analyse the impact of the Kurdish problem and the activities of Kurdish political parties on the foreign policy of the regional states toward each other and non-regional states. The studies that look at the Kurds in Turkey are particularly abundant and

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[28] Wadie Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006.

[29] Other examples that look at the political and social history of Kurds and Kurdish nationalism are Edgar O'Ballance, *The Kurdish Struggle, 1920-94*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995; Hassan Arfa, *The Kurds: An Historical and Political Study*, London, Oxford University Press, 1966; Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880-1925*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989; Hussein Tahiri, *Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish state*, Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2007; Christopher Houston, *Kurdistan: Crafting of National Selves*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008; Kamal Madhar Ahmad, *Kurdistan during the First World War*, London: Saqi, 1994; William Eagleton Jr., *The Kurdish Republic of 1946*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

[30] Robert Olson, *Blood, beliefs and ballots: the management of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey, 2007-2009*, Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2009; Robert Olson, *The Goat and the Butcher: Nationalism and State Formation in Kurdistan-Iraq since the Iraqi War*, Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2005.

provide useful insights to understanding the Kurdish issue from an international political perspective.[31] Among these Kirişçi and Winrow look at issues related to politics and security, as well as using the notions such as nationhood, ethnic group, self-determination to shed light on the analysis of the case. They argue that ethnic conflict in Turkey can only be resolved through political solutions and provide alternative policy or administrative solutions to the problem.[32] There is an increasing number of sources looking at the international political aspect of the Kurdish problem and providing alternative views.[33]

Other works in the literature that look at the Kurdish case from an international politics perspective are the ones undertaken on the Kurds of Iraq and the formation of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Among these Gunter's and O'Leary, McGarry and Salih's works are particularly insightful. Gunter has contributed to the literature on Kurds with insightful political analysis in relation to the Kurds of Iraq as well as Turkey.[34] He considers the developments taking place in Turkey and Iraq as having a positive impact on the status of the Kurds. In Iraq, the KRG has achieved autonomy with the potential for independence in the case of a failing Iraqi democracy, while in Turkey, the EU accession process has provided Kurds with increased cultural and democratic rights. Focusing on the achievability of a political solution to the Kurdish problem, Gunter argues that in Turkey this is possible through integrating the Kurds into the Turkish political system.[35] Gunter seems to envision the possibility of a solution that focuses on a democratic solution for Turkey in general rather than on territorial-ethnic autonomy for Kurds. Therefore, he seems to be less supportive of politics formed around ethnic and cultural distinctiveness.

O'Leary et al's edited book, on the other hand, discusses the future of Kurdistan in Iraq and argues that a Kurdistan within a federal and united Iraq best serves the interests of the Iraqis, other states in the Middle East and other states. This book is

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[31] Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998; Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma*, Boulder, Colombia: Westview Press, 1990; Robert Olson (ed.), *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996; Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Turkey, Europe and the Kurds after the Capture of Abdullah Öcalan', in Martin Van Bruinessen, *Kurdish Ethno-nationalism versus Nation-building States. Collected Articles*, İstanbul: The İsis Press, 2000;

[32] Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict*, London: Frank Cass., 1997.

[33] Marianna Charountaki, *The Kurds and US Foreign Policy: International Relations in the Middle East since 1945*, London: Routledge, 2011; Robert Lowe and Gareth R. V. Stansfeld, *The Kurdish Policy Imperative*, London: Chatham House, 2010.

[34] Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

[35] Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey*, 2nd edition, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

important because of its theoretical contribution to the literature. It incorporates the debates on national identity into the analysis of the Kurds in Iraq and argues that a political system that acknowledges the distinctive cultural and ethnic characteristics of its constituent 'nations' within a 'plurinational' federation is the best solution for avoiding conflict in multi-ethnic societies.[36] Their argument constitutes an example of the sympathetic view to understanding sub-states nationalist groups' ethnically-framed claims to territory and to autonomist or separatist national self-determination. Such views reify the importance of ethnic and cultural distinctiveness of such groups and they associate the improvement of these groups' social and political status with cultural rights and democracy.

Most studies mentioned in the previous pages provide insightful and helpful analysis and arguments on the Kurdish case at a domestic and regional context from a mainly historical or sociological perspective, or they provide analysis in relation to state domestic and foreign state politics. Apart from a couple of exceptions, such as O'Leary et al, their analytical focus does not directly incorporate the theoretical and conceptual tools of Nationalism or IR studies. They incorporate the international aspect either through linking their accounts to developments in international history, or to the foreign policies of regional states in a regional or international context, and the foreign policies of powerful states, such as the British or the US, toward regional states. This aspect of the international is important and has provided a great degree of insights, however, also remains limited because these studies do not directly look at the Kurds in an international context, but look at them through regional states and their domestic and international politics.

On the other hand, there are a rich number of sources that look at the Kurdish case from a nationalism perspective. These works provide interesting insider's views and look at the injustices that Kurdish society has endured throughout its history. Most of these works usually take Kurdistan and Kurdish nationalism as given and study its development within the framework of human and cultural rights of ethnic communities. They mostly adopt an ethnicist understanding of Kurdish identity and consider Kurdish national identity to have existed in the pre-modern age. They take ethnicity as an

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[36] Brendan O'Leary, John McGarry and Khalid Salih (eds.), *The Future of Kurdistan in Iraq*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. For other studies that look at Iraqi Kurds see Denise Natali, *The Kurdish Quasi-state: Development and Dependency in Post-Gulf War Iraq*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010; Helena Cook, *The Safe Haven in Northern Iraq: International Responsibility for Iraqi Kurdistan*, London: Kurdistan Human Rights Project, 1995; Olson, *The Goat and the Butcher*; Mahir A. Aziz, *The Kurds of Iraq: Ethnonationalism and National Identity in Iraqi Kurdistan*, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011.

important factor in contemporary Kurdish politics.[37] For instance, the Kurdish scholar Entessar analyses Kurdish nationalism in regional and international politics in relation to the Kurdish people's rights to self-determination and human rights. He casts doubt on the possibility of the social and political integration of Kurdish people into the nation-states in which they live, and he considers 'Kurdish ethnonationalism' as a challenge to the nation-state system in the Middle East.[38]

In addition to these rather subjective but informative analyses on the difficulties Kurdish people have gone through because of their distinct identity, there are also insightful historical and political studies that underplay the ethnic factor. These studies more effectively link the Kurdish case to wider debates on nationalism. For instance, Vali's edited work involves different theoretical analyses of the Kurdish national identity and its origins.[39] Halliday suggests the application of modernist nationalism theories to explaining the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism within a historical context that takes into account political, military, economic and ideological developments.[40] Janet Klein draws theoretically and empirically informed conclusions on Kurdish activities in the late Ottoman era and argues that Kurdish elites of this era were 'Kurdists' not nationalists in the sense we understand today. Although the leaders individually might have adhered to Kurdish nationalism in their mind, rather than adhering to the idea of a unified Kurdish nation, they had their own individual political agendas and they considered themselves as members of a multi-national Ottoman state. Klein's insights on this period have been useful in developing the argument of this thesis on the emergence of Kurdish nationalism.[41]

[37] Fernandes Desmond, *The Kurdish and Armenian Genocides: From Censorship and Denial to Recognition?*, foreword by Robert Phillipson, epilogue by Khatchatur I. Pilikian, Sweden: Apec Press, 2008; Charles G. MacDonald and Carole A. O'Leary, *Kurdish Identity: Human Rights and Political Status*, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007; Catherine Pierse, *Kurdish Rights: Cultural and Linguistic Rights of Turkish Kurds*, Belfast: Centre for International & Comparative Human Rights Law, 1997; Kendal Nezan, 'The Kurds: Current Position and Historical Background', in Philip Kreyenbroek and Christine Allison (eds.) *Kurdish Culture and Identity*, London: Zed, 1996; Gerard Chaliand, *The Kurdish Tragedy*, London: Zed, 1994; Stan Newens, *The Kurds: A People's Struggle for Peace and Justice*, London: Liberation, 1994; F. D. Andrews (ed.), *The Lost Peoples of the Middle East: Documents of the Struggle for Survival and Independence of the Kurds, Assyrians and other Minority Races in the Middle East*, Salisbury: Documentary Publications, 1982; Amir Hassanpour, *Nationalism and Language in Kurdistan 1918-1985*, San Francisco: Mellon Research University Press, 1992; Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, *People without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan*, London: Zed Press, 1980; Richard Sim, *Kurdistan: The Search for Recognition*, London Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1980.
[38] Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Politics in the Middle East*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010; Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.
[39] Abbas Vali (ed.), *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda, 2003.
[40] Halliday, 'Can we write a modernist history of Kurdish nationalism?', in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (eds.) *The Kurds: Nationalism and Politics*. London: Saqi, 2006, 11-20.
[41] Janet Klein, 'Kurdish Nationalists and Non-nationalist Kurdists: Rethinking Minority Nationalism and the Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-9', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2007, 13 (1): 135-153. Other

Other important source Kurdish nationalism is the journalistic writings that provide interviews, observations and dynamic stories. For instance Laizer's book provides a detailed and lively descriptive account of Kurdish life through descriptions of songs, customs and daily routine both in the villages and cities.[42] Hasan Cemal's work provides an account of his interview with key representatives of Kurdish nationalists and his insights on the issue.[43] As in all nationalist literatures, there are also works that are quite superficial and propagandist in nature, written by Kurdish nationalist scholars and outsiders, reflecting the perspectives of the Kurds or the regional states. The Turkish sociologist Kongar argues that most of the studies on Kurdish nationalism in Turkey are generally political and historical analyses, and some are sponsored by the state or non-governmental organisations that dominate the general political view in Turkey defending the unitary structure of the state.[44] Moreover, Henze suggested that both Turks and foreigners are discouraged, even sometimes obstructed by the state from making in-depth studies.[45] This has started to change and indeed there are increasing numbers of studies in Turkey undertaken on the Kurds. Additionally, some partisan studies have been undertaken by non-regional writers.[46] For instance, Kaplan argues that the actual border between Iran and Turkey means nothing, since *everyone* on both sides is a Kurd and describes Atatürk's statue in Doğu Beyazıt – a town with a mixed population in the east of Turkey – as having the face of the occupier rather than of the nation builder.[47]

Although there are some biased accounts on Kurds and Kurdistan the studies on Kurds and Kurdish nationalism have largely explored key aspects of Kurdish society,

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studies that provide theoretical insights are Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish Paths to Nation', in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (eds.) *The Kurds: Nationalism and Politics*, London: Saqi, 2006, 21-48; Ali Kemal Özcan, *Turkey's Kurds: A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan*, London: Routledge, 2006; David Romano, *Kurdish Nationalist Movements: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004; Farideh Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran: Pastoral Nationalism*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

[42] Sheri Laizer, *Into Kurdistan: Frontiers Under Fire*, New Jersey: Zed, 1991. For a similar travel account, see Kevin McKiernan, *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006.

[43] Hasan Cemal, *Kürtler* [The Kurds], İstanbul: Doğan, 2003.

[44] Emre Kongar, *21. Yüzyılda Türkiye: 2000'li Yıllarda Türkiye'nin Toplumsal Yapısı* [Turkey in the 21st Century: Turkey's Social Structure in the 2000s], İstanbul: Remzi, 2000. One such study Kongar talks about is the *Eastern Report* (Doğu Raporu) prepared by Doğu Ergil of Ankara University SBF and issued by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB).

[45] See Paul B. Henze, 'Turkey: Towards the 21st Century' in Ian O. Lesser and Graham E. Fuller, (eds.), *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1993, 1-46, 28.

[46] Robert D. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth: From Togo to Turkmenistan, from Iran to Cambodia – A Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy*, 1997, New York: Vintage Books.

[47] *Ibid.*, 158-160. A slightly less biased and personal account of the region is by Christopher De Bellaigue, *Rebel Land: Unraveling the Riddle of History in a Turkish Town*, New York: Penguin Books, 2011.

its history and its current status, and its relation with the regional states. All these studies have contributed to the establishment and growth of a relatively new and developing body of literature, and have effectively explained the endurance of Kurdish national identity and Kurdish nationalism. Therefore, the existing literature on this topic has been very helpful and has greatly informed this thesis, but what largely remains understudied in this literature is the study of Kurdish nationalism as a sub-state nationalism within an international context.

Most of the existing work has projected an international perspective through the examination of the status of Kurds in each state and looked at how this influences the domestic, regional and international relations of these states. However, Kurdish nationalist groups, both in the region and in the diaspora, engage with international society and their interaction does not necessarily take place through their regional host-states. Moreover, these groups' interactions with international society occur within an international normative and political context that influences both the non-state actors and international society. Therefore, any complete understanding of Kurdish nationalism and Kurdistan requires a consideration of the international context in a way that combines an IR theoretical perspective with theoretical understandings of the politics of nationalism from nationalism theories.

This thesis focuses on the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism in particular. Territory and territorial identity are not only important for nationalism in justifying their self-determination claims, but they are also important component of the contemporary international system which is based on territorially defined national units. Despite the prominent role of territory in the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism and its centrality to understanding Kurdish nationalist groups' activities today, the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism remains understudied and it has not been problematised in the academic literature. Although many of the above-mentioned studies acknowledge the importance of the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism, they usually merely describe this feature and what it means for Kurdish national identity and depict the history of the region as the history of Kurdistan. In other words, most of these studies see the history of Kurdistan as identical to the history Kurdish nationalism.[48] They see the territorial feature as merely linked to essential and historical

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[48] See Amir Hassanpour, 'The Making of Kurdish Identity: Pre-20th Century Historical and Literary Sources', Abbas Vali (ed.) *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda Publishers, 2003, 106-162. Here Hassanpour talks about Kurdish territorial identity, but only in relation to the history of the Kurdistan and without locating this into a broader theoretical framework.

ethnic identity. They overlook the political claims behind this feature and underestimate its political implications for Kurdish nationalism and other regional and international actors. This thesis aims to take territory as an independent factor in influencing the way Kurdish nationalism evolved and the way it carries out its activities today. It provides a theoretical perspective informed by IR and nationalism studies to sub-state Kurdish nationalists' claims to territory and territorial identity using the notion self-determination.

Kurdistan and its maps are the most significant and visible aspects of Kurdish nationalism. This is partly because, when defining their national identity, Kurdish nationalists often draw upon the territorial characteristics of a Kurdish way of life and the importance of geographic features in its culture. But, most importantly, usually using the rhetoric of human rights and democracy, Kurdish nationalists often state that territorial autonomy or independence is the only way to end the suffering of the Kurdish people and bring justice to the region. Therefore, the idea of Kurdish habitation in a clearly definable territory has been the most important feature of the nationalist discourse and historiography. Despite this, the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism is a largely unexplored area. An exception to this general trend in studies of the Kurds is social geographer Maria T. O'Shea's study which analyses the social structure of Kurdish society from a geographical perspective.[49] Although O'Shea does not link her examination to the theories of nationalism in a systematic way, her work presents a very good background for studies that seek to analyse Kurdish nationalism from a territorial aspect. O'Shea's insights have provided a significant basis and inspiration for this thesis.

O'Shea focuses on the territorial aspect of Kurdish national identity and Kurdish nationalism. She considers maps of Kurdistan as a discourse and as symbols of the effort to construct a Kurdish nationalist myth based on historical and territorial perceptions or imaginations. She takes these maps and historical narratives about the origins of the Kurds as constructions created in order to produce a sense of solidarity and unity in the minds of the people in the region and to enable them to connect their identity to the territory they inhabit. She argues that the history and present condition of Kurdistan are bound up with its geography and this geography influences Kurdish

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[49] O'Shea. For a similar discussion with a more limited scope, see Karen Culcasi, 'Locating Kurdistan: Contextualizing the Region's Ambiguous Boundaries,' in Alexander C. Diener and Joshua Hagen (eds.), *Borderlines and Borderlands: Political Oddities at the Edge of the Nation-State*, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010, 107-120.

people's perception of themselves and their territory. She uses the term 'geography of nationalism' and considers the map of Kurdistan as a 'propaganda map' and as an obvious aspect of the Kurdish nationalist mythology.[50] However, O'Shea argues that the Kurdistan map does not reflect the realities of Kurdish society or of the region as a whole.

This thesis agrees with O'Shea's argument that the map of greater Kurdistan is a propaganda map and that it has an unrealistic basis. Building on her argument, this thesis argues that the promotion of the Kurdistan map as the Kurdish homeland has a strong role in the success of Kurdish nationalists in drawing sympathy among would-be nationals and in international society for their ethnically-defined claims to territory and national self-determination. The parallels between the way Kurdish nationalists understand the concept of Kurdistan and its maps, and the way in which some government representatives, scholars, journalists and writers in international society use this notion and map are striking. The ways these two groups conceive Kurdistan are similar, because both groups attribute an ethnic identity to the territory of Kurdistan and its map. One of the reasons for this is the influence of the international political and normative framework – particularly self-determination for ethnic groups, human rights and democratic rights – on both groups' perceptions. In this framework, self-determination appears to justify the right to autonomy or statehood for groups with distinct ethnic, cultural, linguistic and territorial features. There is an increasing tendency within international society to interpret self-determination in a similar way, especially if the separatist or autonomist group claims that the government of the state in which they reside abuse their human, cultural or democratic rights. Kurdish nationalists effectively use this interpretation of self-determination to further their pursuit for independence, and their claims fit well with the prevalent norms in international society in relation to the territorial and ethnic identity of sub-state nationalist groups and their right to democracy. With this in mind, this thesis offers an analysis that deals with issues, particularly self-determination claims for territorial autonomy or independence, which intersect the fields of IR, Nationalism and Kurdish studies.

Analytical and Theoretical Focus

As mentioned in the previous pages, this thesis argues that a combination of the insights of IR and Nationalism provides a useful, more holistic and encompassing approach to

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[50] O'Shea, 4.

understanding the issues in question. It focuses on the activities of sub-state nationalist groups and their interaction with international society. The case of Kurdish nationalism and its promotion of the notion of Kurdistan within international society illustrate and prove the necessity for adopting an approach that brings together different fields and perspectives for the study of sub-state nationalist actors, their territorial claims and their relationship with international society. Moreover, the analysis of the territorial claims of sub-state nationalists from a theoretical perspective is largely neglected both in the studies of nationalism and IR. Therefore, through the study of the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism, this thesis aims to show the necessity of overcoming this neglect.

International Relations

In IR there is a lack of substantial research dealing with self-determination and nationalism with a focus on territorial demands. Mainstream IR theories usually treat the domestic and the international spheres as separate and consider nationalism as an ideology related to the domestic sphere and see the principle of self-determination as mainly related to international law.[51] Considering nationalism as a domestic phenomenon and understanding self-determination merely in terms of its legal implications rather than its political implications limits the ability to incorporate these phenomena into the study of IR theory.

Self-determination is a policy, a norm, a goal and an institution that is located at both the domestic and the international levels. The international normative context informs and shapes domestic and sub-state actors and their activities by providing a framework for what is legitimate and what is not. Three different theoretical perspectives in the existing IR literature will be used in a complementary way in order to achieve an international analysis of sub-state nationalists and their interactions with the international soviety. These three theoretical views are realist IR theory that is informed by historical sociological methodology, the English School's international society approach (particularly Mayall), and Risse and Sikkink's constructivist view.

Realism and neo-realism see the 'international' as defined by the relations between states and by the structure of the international system. Power and interest define the norms and rules states adhere to and the behaviours they follow. Therefore, neo-realism would be explanatory in understanding how and why the 'external' meaning

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[51] Martin Griffiths and Michael Sullivan, 'Nationalism and International Relations Theory', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 1997, 43 (1): 53-66, 53. Chapter 3 will explain this aspect in more detail and the reasons behind the choices of the theoretical framework for this thesis.

of self-determination has begun to be used in relation to the human and democratic rights of sub-state groups.[52] A rational choice perspective assumes that a particular usage of self-determination serves the political and economic interests of the actors that use it. But this approach cannot explain how this norm has come to be interpreted in this way or what has changed in the 'international' to create new norms and principles.

A historical sociological interpretation of the neo-realist theory allows a better contextual understanding of what goes on within the state and how this influences the international, as well as providing increased awareness of the historical context.[53] Historical Sociology in IR shows the interconnectedness between the domestic and the international spheres by questioning the dominant understanding of the 'international' as being separate from other spheres and questioning assumptions about the unchanging character of international relations.[54] The historical sociology of international relations acknowledges the role of domestic political, social and economic structures and non-state actors, as well as international structures, and looks at long-term historically contingent structural factors.[55] Still, a historical sociological interpretation of neo-realist theory would not provide a complete answer to why sub-state groups that make ethnically-defined territorial claims and demand self-determination in the form of autonomy or separation succeed in generating sympathy in international society. Therefore, this thesis also incorporates a constructivist view of the relationship between ideas and politics.

Constructivists emphasise the role of norms and ideas in shaping the actions of political actors. As such, constructivist theorists assume that politics is socially constructed and that specific occurrences do not take place independently from the international constitution in which more or less recognised principles and ideas exist.[56] Risse and Sikkink's constructivist approach is particularly useful for the purposes of the thesis. Based on the general constructivist argument, they argue that international

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[52] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley; Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York: Knopf, 1956.

[53] For an overview of Historical Sociology and its explanatory power in international relations see John M. Hobson and Stephen Hobden (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

[54] John Hobson, George Lawson and Justin Rosenberg, 'Historical Sociology', originally published in Robert A. Denemark (eds.), *The International Studies Encyclopaedia*, 2010, Wiley-Blackwell; International Studies Association.

[55] See Fred Halliday, 'For an international sociology', in John M. Hobson and Stephen Hobden, *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, 2002, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 244–64.

[56] Emanuel Adler, 'Seizing the middle ground: Constructivism in world politics', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1997, 3: 319-363, 340; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

democratisation is central to understanding the norms of socialisation.[57] Risse and Sikkink, through an analysis of a number of cases, look at the conditions under which international human rights norms are implemented.[58] Therefore, this thesis adopts the argument of Risse and Sikkink to understand the use of Kurdish sub-state nationalist groups' use of self-determination in relation to human rights and democracy discourses.

However, politics cannot be explained purely through reference to the socialisation process and constructivism somewhat overlooks the importance of the contingent historical and political context in the domestic and international realms. The English School of IR, particularly international society thinking, provides the possibility of studying sub-state groups' activities within an international context with an emphasis on the common interests, rules, norms and values in inter-state relations that influence the states' and other actors decisions and behaviour.[59] According to this view, ideas seem to disseminate not only through interactions between states but also they become part of a set of international institutions that are separate from individual states.[60] The international society approach to understanding international relations sees international society as the result of shared interest and identity among states which creates and maintains norms, rules and institutions.[61] Therefore, the English School's international society approach provides the conceptual and theoretical tools to study and understand why self-determination in relation to human rights and democracy is increasingly used by sub-state groups and why international society provides a normative framework for this use. Mayall's analysis is particularly useful for the purposes of this thesis because he argues that nationalism and international society historically have been in interaction with each other and concepts such as self-determination, state formation/legitimacy and sovereignty have evolved as a result of this interaction. This enables the analysis of the nationalist goals and activities of sub-state groups in relation to international society.

Overall, these theories assume that norms, rules and patterns of behaviour disseminate among states and transnational actors, but the way they explain the formation and dissemination of norms and shared behaviour vary. When taken as complementary explanations, these theories and arguments in IR provide a more

[57] Thomas Risse & Kathryn Sikkink 'The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction', in Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink, K. (eds.), *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*, 1999, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1-38, 11.
[58] *Ibid.*, 1.
[59] Bull and Watson, 1.
[60] *Idem.*
[61] Barry Buzan, 'The English School: An Underexploited Area in IR', *Review of International Studies*, 2001, 27 (3): 471-488, 475.

complete analytical and conceptual framework to understand the relationship between sub-state nationalist groups and international society. However, the study of nationalism as an international phenomenon is largely neglected in IR studies. A small number of scholars, namely, Griffiths and Sullivan, Halliday and Mayall acknowledge the importance of understanding nationalism in IR and see nationalism as an international phenomenon.[62] Following these scholars, and using the IR conceptual and theoretical frameworks explained above, this thesis considers self-determination as an international political principle with normative implications. It understands sub-state nationalist movements with self-determination claims as international actors. Sub-state nationalist separatist groups influence and are influenced by international political circumstances as well as by international normative frameworks. Such a perspective provides instructive insights not only into the analysis of sub-state groups and how they develop, but also into understanding how sub-state nationalist groups interact with international society. In more general terms, it also highlights the importance of understanding domestic conditions and structures when studying international relations, and the significance of taking into consideration the international political and normative context to understand the motives of non-state international actors.

Social geographers and political sociologists have often argued that the concept of 'territory' is a taken for granted issue in the mainstream IR literature, particularly realist and liberal IR theories. Most prominently, Agnew challenges the geographical assumptions IR scholars employ concerning the role of territory in political and economic life and argues that these assumptions lead social scientists to take the territorial extension and boundaries of state power for granted.[63] The IR scholar Ruggie argued that modern territorial space is based on 'territorially disjoint, mutually exclusive, functionally similar, sovereign states'.[64] Similar to Agnew, Ruggie argues that IR scholars tend to take space and time for granted as 'self-evident attributions'.[65] Brenner and

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[62] Griffiths and Sullivan; Fred Halliday, 'Nationalism' in John Baylis and Steve Smith (ed.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 2nd. ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 2001, 440.

[63] John Agnew, 'The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory', *Review of International Political Economy*, 1994, 1 (1): 53-80. The assumptions Agnew draws upon are that states have full sovereignty within the boundaries of their territorial jurisdiction and that there is a clear divide between the domestic and international realms.

[64] John Gerard Ruggie, 'Territoriality and Beyond: Problematising Modernity in IR', *International Organisation*, 1993, 47 (1): 139-74, 151.

[65] *Ibid.*, 147. Here Ruggie refers to David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990, 201.

Elden, argue that the question of territory has been 'oddly undertheorized in the post-1970s literatures on international relations'.[66]

Although Agnew, Ruggie, Brenner and Elden mainly focus on state territories, their arguments are also applicable to non-state groups, particularly sub-state groups. Ruggie argues that politics is about rule, and in the modern world this rule is based on 'territorially defined, fixed, and mutually exclusive enclaves of legitimate dominion'.[67] However, he criticises the assumption that states have political and economic authority over their jurisdictional territory. Deriving from this it could be argued that sub-state nationalist groups desire to have their own territorial dominion because they also embrace the idea that the modern world is based on territorially defined entities. They do this through attributing a national/ethnic identity to the territory they claim and to the people inhabiting that territory. If politics is about rule then, in the case of separatist nationalisms, politics is about the attempt to self-rule. A sub-state nationalist group aims to create, in Ruggie's terms, their 'territorially defined, fixed, and mutually exclusive enclaves of legitimate dominion'.[68] Moreover, in achieving their aim they use the discourse and methods of politics, such as collective security and international legitimation through reference to human and democratic rights. This shows the need and possibility to study sub-state nationalist groups from an IR perspective and this thesis, through analysing the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism from a combined IR and nationalism perspective, aims to illustrate the need to further open up the issue of territory in IR theory.

Nationalism

Nationalism and ethnicity studies generally look at sub-state separatist movements from a historical, sociological or political perspective and refer to the international context usually only in relation to international political history. These studies generally look at elements as language, culture, ethnicity, state institutions and territory in order explain the phenomena of nations and nationalism. For culturalist primordialists and perennialists, for instance, nations can be identified through their distinctive way of life,

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[66] Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, 'Henri Lefebvre on State, Space, Territory', *International Political Sociology*, 2009, 3: 353-377, 454.
[67] Ruggie, 151. Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism: Vol. 1 Power, Property and the State*, London: Macmillan, 1981, 45.
[68] Ruggie, 151.

their attachment to a territorial homeland and their struggle for political autonomy.[69] On the other hand, ethno-symbolists concentrate on the myths and memories, sacred territory, collective destiny and the golden age as important determinants in explaining nationalisms.[70] For instance, Smith accepts that territory is socially constructed and that it is humans who give meaning to that territory, but he also seems to assume that specific territorial associations asserted by nationalists are given and argues that their assertions should have an implication on the political life of a group of people.[71]

Scholars that study nations and nationalism from a modernist perspective, however, do not offer clear-cut definitions of nations and nationalism. Instead they take them as novel processes of modernisation that are used to mobilise and unite populations in new ways to cope with modern conditions.[72] They are interested in ethnicity, territory, culture and identity primarily as consequences and necessities of the modern processes of capitalism and imperialism, industrialisation, print-capitalism and state-formation, or as suitable instruments for the states, elites and nationalists in order to impose their ideology on the people. For instance, according to Gellner, territorial attachment is something that loosens as a result of the culture of industrialism and with the emergence of a unified state.[73] He argues that whether nations have ethnic pasts or not is irrelevant to understanding nations today because the reason for their emergence is due to modernisation processes rather than their given or constructed cultural, ethnic, territorial or linguistic traits.[74] Anderson offers some insights on the territorial aspect that help to create the 'imagination' of nation-states and considers the census, the map and the museum as three institutions that shaped colonial states' imagination of their territory. For Anderson, the census showed the nature of the human beings the states

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[69] Steven Grosby, 'Religion and nationality in antiquity: the worship of Yahweh and ancient Israel', *European Journal of Sociology*, 1991, 32 (2): 229-65, 236-37; Steven Grosby, 'Territoriality: The Transcendental, Primordial Feature of Modern Societies,' *Nations and Nationalism*, 1995, 1 (2): 143-162, 154; Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 3.

[70] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*, London: Routledge, 1998, 188.

[71] Anthony D. Smith, 'Culture, Community, and Territory: The Politics of Ethnicity and Nationalism.' *International Affairs*, 1996, 72: 445-458, 454; In the Serbian case, for instance, the key territorial feature is the Battle of Kosovo that took place in 1389 after which the Balkans fell under Ottoman rule. In the late twentieth century and early twenty first century Serbian national and political identity was still shaped in terms of the Kosovo myth. Adrian Hastings, 'Holy lands and their political consequences', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2003, 9 (1): 29-54, p. 42. For primordialist and perennialists views on the link between territories and peoples, see Grosby, 'Territoriality'; Adrian Hastings, 'Special Peoples', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1999, 5 (3): 388-92.

[72] Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 244.

[73] Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964, 152-62.

[74] For a debate on whether ethnic and cultural pasts are important for the formation of nations see Ernest Gellner, 'Do nations have navels?' *Nations and Nationalism*, 1996, 2 (3): 366-370, with reply by Anthony D. Smith following on pp. 371-388, 367.

ruled, the map illustrated the geography of their domain and museums represented the legitimacy of their ancestry.[75]

Nationalism theories provide significant insights to understand cultural, political, ethnic, and linguistic sources of nation formation and the role of nationalism in affecting the political and social structure of societies. Therefore, particularly the modernist theories of nationalism have greatly informed this thesis. But most theories of nationalism neglect the impact of the structure of international society and the role of international norms and rules in creating or leading to certain movements and in shaping their political behaviour. The institutions and structure of international society provide the context for nationalism and its politics, and international norms give legitimacy to certain ideas and behaviours. Sub-state nationalist groups, like any international actor, act within a framework of internationally legitimate or illegitimate rules and ideas. Therefore, their activities and the consequences of their activities in regional and international settings cannot be studied without an awareness of wider regional and international politics as well as the norms that constitute the international normative framework.

Additionally, within studies on nationalism territory is usually mentioned as one of the key dimensions of national identity, together with language, culture, ethnicity and religion. Most nationalism scholars seem to agree that there is a connection between territory and nations. For primordialists and ethno-symbolists the connection is more organic than constructed, while for others it is mostly a consequence of modern nations' need to define their territorial boundaries for the purposes of economic, political and administrative efficiency.[76] In any case, the connection between territory and national identity is often acknowledged in Nationalism theories, but the reasons for this link and its implications for the formation and development of nationalist movements are typically neglected. Furthermore, in nationalism theories, the territorial dimension is usually seen as a feature related to political authority and, compared to other features, it is understood as a less problematic feature of nations and nationalisms and as dependent on other factors such as politics, economics or geographical characteristics.

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[75] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 'Census, Map, Museum', London: Verso, 2006, 163-64.
[76] Grosby, 'Territoriality'; Smith, 'Culture, Community, and Territory', E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Social geographers emphasise the importance of a more extensive study of the territorial aspect of nationalism.[77] They argue that nationalism is a territorial form of ideology firmly rooted in territory, place and space, and that nationalist movements construct alternative geographies and histories upon place and time. These scholars emphasise the significance of territory in nationalist ideologies, politics and strategies, which have generally been underestimated and passed over in writings on nationalism. They see nationalism as a territorial and political response to the changing world.[78] 'Territoriality' is 'the attempt by an individual or group to influence, affect or control objects, people and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area'.[79] This definition is applicable to many nationalism cases, including Kurdish nationalism, which has a very visible territorial aspect both in its emergence and throughout its development.

In short, 'territoriality' provides a key to the analysis of nations and nationalism and territory should be appreciated as the basis and political source of nation-building in a world of states.[80] Surely the territorial basis of nationalisms cannot be understood completely detached from factors such as history, politics, economy and international politics. Nevertheless, studying sub-state nationalist groups' attempts to attain autonomous or independent authority on a particular territory requires more careful study of the territorial feature than has been done so far. Therefore, this thesis aims to show this necessity through a close examination of the notion of Kurdistan, its role in the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism, and its use in the promotion of Kurdish nationalist claims to the outside world.

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[77] See R. J. Johnston, David B. Knight and Eleonore Kofman (eds.), *Nationalism, Self-Determination and Political Geography*, London: Croom Helm, 1998; John Agnew, 'Is There a Geography of Nationalism? The Case of Place and Nationalism in Scotland' in Colin H. Williams and Eleonore Kofman (eds.), *Community Conflict, Partition and Nationalism,* London: Routledge, 1989; David B. Knight, 'Identity and territory: geographical perspectives on nationalism and regionalism', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 1982, 72: 514-531; Jim McLaughlin, 'The political geography of "nation-building" and nationalism in social sciences: structural and dialectical accounts', *Political Geography Quarterly*, 1987, 5 (4): 299-329. For some recent case studies that attempt to link the issue of territoriality and boundaries see the conference programmes of 22nd Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism Conference *Nationalism, Ethnicity and Boundaries,* London School of Economics and Politics, 26-28 March 2012 and the 15th Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities *Nations and States: On the Map and in the Mind* Columbia University, 15-17 April 2010.
[78] Johnston, et.al., 14; James Anderson, 'Nationalist Ideology and Territory' in Johnston, Knight and Kofman (eds.) *Nationalism, Self-Determination and Political Geography*, London: Croom Helm, 1988, 18-39, 19-20.
[79] Johnston et.al., 5.
[80] *Ibid.*, 1

Kurdish nationalism

This thesis perceives Kurdish nationalism from a modernist perspective and emphasises the crucial role of international, historical and political factors in the construction of national identities and in the formation of the Kurdish nationalist movement. Most of the studies on the Kurds adopt an essentialist and primordialist view, and overlook the modern and constructed character of Kurdish identity and the socially constructed nature of its features. Kurdish national identity did not emerge in a context defined by most modernist theories that typically focus on industrialised and developed contexts, and there was no existing Kurdish state to forge a Kurdish national identity. Therefore, the argument that nations and their attachments, like culture and territory, are given and primordial and that these primordial features precede all social and political interaction, appear to be strong in the Kurdish case.[81]

Nevertheless, modernist approaches to understanding nations and nationalisms have significant implications for the study of the Kurdish case.[82] A number of scholars have drawn attention to the necessity of a more direct application of the debates on nationalism to the nationalisms of the Middle East.[83] Fred Halliday offers a modernist reading of the history of Kurdish nationalism, applying four broad processes of modernism – war and conflict, state building, ideology and socio-economic change.[84] His analysis provides a vision for incorporating the political and historical development of nationalist movements within a theoretical framework and challenges the general assumption that modernism is not explanatory in understanding how nationalism emerges in less developed or less industrialised contexts.[85]

Vali, in his attempt to understand the emergence of Kurdish nationalism from the perspective of nationalism theories, also adopts a modernist perspective for the analysis of Kurdish nationalism. Vali argues that Kurdish nationalism is 'a product of modernity' that is associated with the application of the modern nation-state system in the Middle East.[86] He argues that although an established nation-state did not directly

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[81] Jack David Eller and Reed M. Coughan, 'The poverty of primordialism: the demiystification of ethnic attachments, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1993, 16 (2): 183-202, 187.
[82] Halliday, 'Can we write', 14.
[83] See Chapter 2 in Fred Halliday, *Nation and Religion in the Middle East*, London: Saqi, 2000.
[84] Fred Halliday, 'Can we write', 11-20.
[85] *Ibid.*, 13.
[86] Abbas Vali, 'Genealogies of the Kurds: Construction of Nation and National Identity in Kurdish Historical Writing' in Abbas Vali (ed.) *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda Publishers, 2003, 58-105, 63, 67, 105.

create Kurdish nationalism, the institution of the nation-state led and contributed to its creation through assimilationist policies towards their minorities.[87]

Building on Halliday's and Vali's insights this thesis argues that Kurdish nationalism emerged as a result of the formation of nation-states in the region. This is not only because newly formed states imposed their chosen identity on their populations, which caused reactions, but also because the idea of creating their own state defined the purposes of many political organisations in that period and after.[88] The WWI period, and the state building processes that followed it, had the most important impact on the emergence of Kurdish nationalism. Here, John Breuilly's explanation on the politics of nationalism and its relation to the nation-state institution is particularly useful in understanding the role of the state in the emergence of Kurdish nationalism. Breuilly argues that 'nationalism as politics is distinctively modern' and 'nationalism is inconceivable without the state and vice versa.'[89] The goal of nationalism is the desire for autonomy, usually in the form of a sovereign state, on behalf of the nation on a national territory.[90] Especially in the twentieth century, after which clear examples of nation-state formations had taken place and the nation-state was accepted as the political norm, popular nationalist movements began to emerge without existing state institutions.[91] Based on this, it could be assumed that a modern and political conception of nationalism not only applies to state nationalisms but also to sub-state nationalisms. In this sense, the idea of a national territory, which emerged as a result of the establishment of the nation-state system based on nation-state territories, provided a context for the emergence of Kurdish nationalism.[92]

Based on this background, for the study of Kurdish nationalists' political activities and their interactions with international society, this thesis uses, (1) IR theory

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[87] For further details of Vali's arguments see Abbas Vali, 'Introduction: nationalism and the question of origins', in Abbas Vali (ed.) *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda Publishers, 2003, 1-13; Abbas Vali, 'The Kurds and Their 'Others: Fragmented Identity and Fragmented Politics', in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod. eds., *The Kurds: Nationalism and Politics*, London: Saqi, 2006, 49-78.

[88] As will be explained in Chapter 4, the most important factor in the formation of Kurdish nationalism is the Kurdish elite's aim to attain power and authority through forming a Kurdish state.

[89] John Breuilly, 'The state and nationalism', in Montserrat Guibernau and John Hutchinson, *Understanding Nationalism*, Cambridge: Polity, 2001: 32-52, 49 and 32. Also see John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993.

[90] Breuilly, 'State and nationalism', 32.

[91] *Ibid.*, 50.

[92] Breuilly argues that the modern state has provided a way of contextualising nationalism. He writes, 'The formation of the specialized, sovereign, territorial, public state is the institutional context within which the idea of nationalism appears appropriate as ideology, both in intellectual terms and as a way of mobilizing support.' *Ibid.*, 51. In the case of Kurdish nationalism, although there is no existing Kurdish state that provides that context, the idea of a Kurdish state or the desire to form that state has provided the context for Kurdish nationalism to emerge and develop.

with a wider definition of international actors, encompassing not only states but also other non-state actors, and acknowledging the role of international institutions and norms;[93] (2) a modernist understanding of nations and nationalism, with a focus on the territory and the state as political institution; and (3) a modernist interpretation of Kurdistan and Kurdish nationalism.

To sum up, the issue of sub-state nationalist groups' demands for territorial autonomy and independence is undertheorised and understudied. Considering the general status of the Nationalism and IR literatures in relation to self-determination and sub-state nationalist groups, this thesis contributes to these literatures by studying and problematising the role of Kurdistan as an independent factor in the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism, and the implications of Kurdish nationalists' promotion of their right to self-determination for territorial autonomy or independence on international society.

Summary of the Argument and the Chapters

This thesis suggests that the perceptions of Kurdistan as an ethnic territory in the eyes of both Kurdish nationalists and sections of international society are enabled by three features of international society and Kurdish case. Chapters 2 and 3 analyse the first feature, Chapters 4 and 5 analyse the second feature and Chapter 6 analyses the third feature.

1: Kurdistan is perceived as an ethnic territory due to the intertwining of the internationally prominent principle of self-determination with Kurdish nationalist claims.

The normative assumptions behind the principle of self-determination combine ethnicist understandings of national identity with democratic rights, and the manner in which self-determination is utilised to further Kurdish nationalist claims influences the way outsiders perceive the ideal homeland of Kurdistan. Political assertions regarding the identity of a specific piece of land and cartographic depictions of that territory are powerful in influencing outsiders' perceptions because of the normative context in which they are framed. There is an association between sub-state nationalist groups' claims for autonomy or independence based on a specific territory and the human rights

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[93] IR theoretical framework will be explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

and democratic rights rhetoric in the international normative context. This association can be observed in the articles and resolutions of some international legal and political covenants and organisations, and in the actions and decisions of sections of international society. This international normative context influences the perceptions of outsiders towards the nationalist groups' territorial assertions and their maps.

Chapter 2 (*Self-determination, Nationalism and Liberal Democracy*) analyses the relationship between the key concepts of the thesis, namely self-determination, nationalism and liberal democracy. It provides a general conceptual definition for the central theoretical argument of the thesis in relation to self-determination (which is set out by Chapter 3): self-determination can be understood as a principle that simultaneously incorporates ethnic, territorial and cultural definitions of nationhood on the one hand along with liberal democratic principles related to human and democratic rights discourses on the other. This connection has emerged as a result of the way self-determination is linked to liberal democracy and nationalism, defined and understood in relation to the separatist claims of sub-state nationalist groups.

Chapter 3 (*A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for Understanding Self-Determination*) sets out the theoretical argument of the thesis and the theoretical framework that is best suited to generating such an argument. The argument developed in this chapter has two parts: (1) The realm of international norms, common understandings and activities deployed by actors in the international arena provides a framework for the promotion of ethnic territorial claims and the way in which these claims are received by outsiders; and (2) The principle of self-determination today reflects a condensed amalgamation of two contrasting principles: an idealist/liberal view of the achievability of peace through self-determination and a culturally defined national identity that reflects ethnic conceptions of nationhood and primordial/perennial perceptions of the territorial origins of nations. With this critique in mind, the chapter provides a historical, legal, and conceptual account of the development and evolution of the principle of self-determination in a way that is applicable to sub-state nationalist groups and their ethno-territorial claims. This argument concerning sub-state groups' use of self-determination and how their usage fits within the international normative context needs a theoretical perspective drawing from multiple fields, such as IR, Nationalism and History, and requires the complementary use of three different theoretical perspectives in IR. These three theoretical views are: realist IR informed by historical sociologicy; Risse and Sikkink's constructivist view; and, the English School's

international society approach, particularly Mayall's work on the implications of nationalism on international society.

2: The perception that Kurdistan is a given ethnic territory is facilitated through the generally accepted assumption that the history of territory in question is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation.

This assumption is at its most prominent in the use of the idea of Kurdistan and its map by Kurdish nationalists in relation to their self-determination claims. There are two reasons for the way in which they perceive and use the notion of Kurdistan. Firstly, the Kurdish nationalist discourse and some of the non-Kurdish academic historiography on the Kurds project contemporary conceptions of national territory on to historical notions of Kurdistan. Their contemporary conceptions of national territory are loaded with ethnicist and primordial interpretations of national identity. The ethnicist and primordialist understandings of nations in the academic and non-academic literature, which sees territory as a given feature of groups, strengthens and gives credibility to the Kurdish nationalist statement that Kurdistan is a historical and ethnic homeland. Linked to this, Kurdish claims on a historical and ethnic homeland fit in well with the resonance of the notion of territoriality in the contemporary international system, which is based on territorial nation-states, combined with the political power of maps as propaganda tools for promoting the idea of a 'natural' or 'given' border.

These arguments are developed across both chapters 4 and 5, each of which deals with a different time frame in the history of Kurdistan (Chapter 4 - *Kurdistan and Kurdish Nationalism until WWI* and Chapter 5 - *Kurdistan and Kurdish Nationalism since WWI*). The main reason for the division into two time periods is related to the argument of the thesis that Kurdish nationalism emerged as a political movement only after WWI. Chapter 4 looks at the historical uses of the concept of Kurdistan until WWI and explains the territorial and tribal structure of Kurdish society. This led to the emergence of a form of nationalism that is defined in territorial terms. However, competition between different Kurdish tribal elites led to a divided Kurdish nationalist movement, which hindered the emergence of a unified or coherent Kurdish nationalism. Chapter 5 looks at the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism during and after WWI and the attempts by Kurdish nationalist movements to use the notion of Kurdistan and maps of Kurdistan in the twentieth century.

3: The assumption that Kurdistan is an ethnic territory is facilitated through the constant use of maps of Kurdistan by Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora.

Thanks to their location outside the homeland and their ability to communicate their ideas directly to international society, Kurdish activists in the diaspora have played an important role in publicising the rightfulness of Kurdish nationalists' demand for self-determination and promoting the idea of an ethnic Kurdish territory to international society. These actors are particularly effective in using the contemporary international normative context embodying human and democratic rights, particularly the right to self-determination, to promote the legitimacy of their pursuit of an independent Kurdistan. The increasing role of diasporas in international affairs, their growing ability to mobilise (due to developments in technology, communication and transport) and their role in influencing (through lobbying) their host-state's foreign policies and regional and international affairs, gives strength to their propaganda.

This argument is developed in Chapter 6 (*Kurdish Nationalism in the Diaspora*). This chapter will show that Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora are long-distance nationalist actors. They act in an international sphere and use transnational methods. They have played a crucial role in the development of Kurdish nationalism both inside and outside the region thanks for their direct access to the international political arena due to their location. Therefore their lobbying, together with an increased appreciation of ethnic struggles in the name of democracy and justice, has enabled the Kurdish nationalist activists in the diaspora to promote the idea of Kurdistan as the ethnic territory of the Kurds. They have used the rhetoric of suffering, the incidents of human rights abuses and their right to statehood to manipulate the way host-states, other states, international organisations, scholars, journalists and the international media perceive their case.

Chapter 2: Self-determination, Nationalism and Liberal Democracy

Introduction

This chapter concerns the relationship between the key concepts of the thesis, namely self-determination, nationalism and liberal democracy. It aims to provide a general conceptual basis for the central theoretical argument of the thesis in relation to self-determination: self-determination can be understood as a principle that simultaneously incorporates ethnic and cultural definitions of nationhood on the one hand along with liberal democratic principles related to human rights and democratic rights on the other. The chapter will show that the right to self-determination for smaller units has become an increasingly widely accepted idea. This has been made possible by the manner in which self-determination is connected to liberal democracy and nationalism, the two most widely accepted political ideologies in the contemporary world.

The connection between self-determination, liberal democracy and nationalism can take different forms depending on the way nationhood is understood. Nationhood can be defined in two main forms: a civic and solidarist understanding of nationhood that emphasises citizenship, or an ethnic form of nationhood that emphasises the common 'objective' traits of a group of people. This chapter focuses on the inter-connection between self-determination, liberal democracy and a form of nationalism that is based on a mainly ethnically defined nationhood. The first half of the chapter examines notions of nationalism and liberal democracy, giving a general overview of each concept from the perspective of the overarching argument of the thesis and explaining how and why they are related to each other. The second half of the chapter offers a brief account of the historical and political origins of the principle of self-determination, explaining self-determination's roots as a political principle that seeks to obtain sovereignty.

Nationalism and Liberal Democracy

This section looks at the interconnection between nationalism and liberal democracy in relation to the activities of sub-state nationalist groups or movements. Traditionally, liberal democracy is associated with positive and progressive notions such as individualism, freedom and development. In contrast, nationalism is associated with both positive and negative implications: on one hand, it has the potential to bring

individuals together in the name of national unity for developing together, and on the other hand, it has the potential to create differences and conflict between groups. Yet particular interpretations of these notions complete each other and provide a suitable international conceptual context for understanding self-determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups.

Nationalism

Nationalism is one of the most significant modern ideologies that shaped the modern international system. It has been a key cause in the transformation of monarchical and colonial empires into new states since the eighteenth century within the context of the collapse of monarchical and colonial empires and wars.[94] In the last two hundred years more than 140 new states have formed, all taking the form of nation-states.[95] In the late eighteenth century the British colonies in North America rejected the monarchical authority of the British Empire and declared an independent United States of America which took the form of a sovereign nation. Similarly, in Europe the French Revolution was based on the ideas of nationhood, republicanism and liberty. Both revolutions saw the nation as the legitimate sovereign as opposed to their hitherto monarchical rule. Latin American independence movements followed in the early nineteenth century against the Portuguese and Spanish colonial empires which also led to the creation of new nation-states.

The first half of nineteenth century Europe witnessed many nationalist rebellions, but only Belgium and Greece actually achieved independence, and later German and Italian unifications were realised.[96] After WWI the dissolution of the Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman empires led to the formation of new states based on the principle of nationality. During the nineteenth century and early twentieth century nationalisms were commonly opposed to multi-ethnic empires to avoid competing against each other's territory.[97] At this point in time, nationalism was recognised as a strong ideology and nationality became an internationally recognised legitimate principle

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[94] Andreas Wimmer and Yuval Feinstein, 'The rise of the nation state across the world, 1816-2001', *American Sociological Review*, October 2010, 75 (5): 764-790, 764.

[95] The number of states increased eight times in the last 200 years. The biggest increase happened in the twentieth century when the number of states grew three times. In 1800 there were about 20 states, by 1900 there were about 50 states and by 1960 the total number of states in the world reached to about by 1990 to 140. Since the collapse of the USSR new states emerged in ex-communist states in the Balkans, Caucasus, and Central Asia, and other parts of the world. Today there are about 160 states in the world.

[96] J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin, 'The state and the nation: changing norms and the rules of sovereignty in international relations', *International Organization*, 1994, 48 (1): 107-130, 119.

[97] Chris Brown, Terry Nardin, and Nicholas Rengger (eds.), *International Relations in Political Thought: Texts from the Ancient Greeks to the First World War*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 476.

for the new states. The formation of new states in other parts of the world followed in the decolonisation period at the end of WWII and following the collapse of the USSR.

In the post-WWI and post-WWII periods and post-USSR era the concept of self-determination was used more widely than Mill's 'nationality principle'. Self-determination referred to forming nation-states out of colonial and communist empires based on existing administrative territorial rules. Today national self-determination is more often seen as the legitimate principle for the creation of new nation-states out of existing nation-states. This meaning of the principle is extensively used by sub-state nationalist groups or movements who adopt a particular interpretation of national identity that sees nations as constituted of given and objective features.

There are a number of different strands of thinking within the diverse body of literature that comprise the academic field of nationalism studies, each embodying somewhat different interpretations of the meaning of the term 'nation'.[98] This literature offers a rich debate between 'Modernism' and 'Primordialism/ Perennialism/ Ethnosymbolism' on the origins of nations. The latter three approaches are variations of one approach which mainly contends that nations have an essential, *a priori* core. The differences between primordialism, perennialism and ethnosymbolism derive from how much prominence they attribute to this core. In contrast, the key premises of modernist approaches are that nations and nationalism are modern phenomena which only emerged within the last two centuries and that nations have no preceding existence. In short, nationalism created nations.

Modernism perceives both the nation and nationalism as contingent and dependent on historical, political and economic circumstances. This approach has many variants focusing on different aspects of modernity, such as industrialisation, capitalism, print-capitalism, the state and its political institutions.[99] Primordial and perennial approaches, on the other hand, claim that nations existed before the modern era and that the division into nations and the content of their nationalisms are given or historically fixed. Primordialists perceive nations as natural and given, while perennialists see them as communities that have always existed in different forms throughout human

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[98] One of the most widely adopted definitions is Seton-Watson's: 'a community of people, whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a national consciousness.' Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1977, 1.

[99] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*; John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.

history.[100] Ethnosymbolists are seen to offer a middle position between modernist and primodialist/perennialist approaches. Smith, the main proponent of this approach, argues that the modern nation has a pre-modern and perennial basis in the form of an *ethnie* and a territorial attachment. Smith states that, *ethnie* is a community of common myths and memories and the six main attributes of *ethnie*s are 'a collective proper name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more differentiating elements of culture, an association with a specific 'homeland', a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population.'[101] On one hand, he seems to contend the modernity of nations, yet on the other, he links the nation to primordial attachments.[102] Smith sees the transition from *ethnie* to nation as a natural process which became possible as a result of the emergence of the modern ideology of nationalism and the historical circumstances of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Consequently, this framework predisposes sub-state nationalists to prefer primordialist, perennialist or ethnosymbolist conceptions of national identity rather than modernist explanations given that they offer more succour to their aspirations for statehood.

The debate on civic-ethnic nationalism, another significant debate in nationalism studies, is useful in contextualising the conceptual preference of sub-state nationalisms. Here the civic form of nationalism (the classic historical example of which is taken to be France) is generally associated with modern democratic notions of citizenship, individual choice and democracy, and the willingness to be part of a nation, whereas the ethnic form is generally linked to features of nationhood that are perennially and objectively ascribed, thus overriding the choices of individuals.[103] Ethnic types of

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[100] Grosby argues that the idea of 'the nation' existed in the ancient world (Israel and Egypt) and explains territoriality as a transcendental and primordial attachment. Grosby, 'Territoriality', 144. Armstrong sees the nation as a modern equivalent of a pre-modern ethnic identity, which has become a predominant force for constituting independent political structures in the nationalist era. John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill: University of South Carolina Press, 1982, 4. Connor stresses kinship ties and sees the nation as a more developed form of an ethnic group. Walker Connor, *Ethno-Nationalism: The Quest for Understanding,* Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994; Walker Connor, 'A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a …' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1978, 1(4): 377-400, 379.
[101] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity,* London: Penguin, 1991, 21, 40.
[102] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, 32; Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 188.
[103] The civic-ethnic dichotomy in the literature is also known as civic-cultural or western-eastern dichotomy on nationalism. Hans Kohn used the notion of cultural nationalism to describe East European nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He considered Eastern nationalism as more ethnic and authoritarian compared to West European nationalism, which he considers as more civic and liberal. Hans Kohn, *A History of Nationalism in the East*, translated by Margaret M. Green, London: Routledge & Sons, 1929. For a discussion on the civic-ethnic dichotomy see Peter Alter, *Nationalism*, London: Edward Arnold, 1985; Oliver Zimmer, 'Boundary mechanisms and symbolic resources: towards a process-oriented approach to national identity', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2003, 9 (2): 173-193; Craig Calhoun, 'Inventing the opposition of ethnic and civic nationalism: Hans Kohn and the idea of nationalism', in Craig Calhoun, *Nations Matter: Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream*, London: Routledge, 2007, 117-146.

nationalism (the classic historical example of which is taken to be Germany) generally claim a long historical and perennial existence of a distinct group, whereas civic nationalisms make reference to state institutions and political culture in constructing groups collective identities. In other words, modernist scholars perceive cultural, linguistic and ethnic features as constructed or as factors that influence the character of nationalist movements, rather than seeing these features as essentially determining the past, present and future of these groups.

There are many problems with this ideal civic-ethnic dichotomy due to overlaps between the two forms of nationalism and due to prominent exceptions to these ideal types, especially in the contemporary world. These exceptions and overlaps make the association between liberal and civic as opposed to that between dictatorial and ethnic debatable.[104] This is particularly obvious in the case of sub-state nationalisms. Although sub-state nationalist groups make reference to the historical existence of their distinct identity and ethnicity, in line with the ethnic type of nationalism, they also attempt to justify their cause by invoking the liberal and democratic principles that are prominent in the contemporary world, particularly self-determination. This exemplifies the combination of ethnic and civic forms of nationhood. Sub-state nationalism assumes a pre-determined ethnic identity while, at the same time, resembling voluntaristic forms of nationalism because of their emphasis on the freedom of choice of a group to decide on their political rule. Therefore, sub-state nationalist goals are not usually perceived as incompatible with liberal democracy and its associated principles.

In the case of sub-nationalist groups, primordially defined ethnic and cultural indicators of nationhood are believed to define 'the people' or 'the self' in self-determination. This association they construct between the right to self-determination and their self-identification as a historically given and bounded distinct group leads to their assertion that they possess a democratic right to form their own states. Therefore, the definition of these common characteristics and their recognition by others as given features of a people rationalise their democratic project within a specific territory.[105] The general adopted view, even by modernist scholars, is that human communities evolve from smaller units to larger units, and that the cultural and linguistic uniformity brought by nationalism enables individuals to become part of a process of economic growth and

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[104] Zimmer discusses this issue in detail in his article and proposes a reformulation of this dichotomy, Oliver Zimmer, 'Boundary mechanisms and symbolic resources', 177-181.

[105] Ghia Nodia, 'Nationalism and Democracy', in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.), *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994, 3- 22, 7.

political development.[106] Therefore, considering the historical role of nationalism in forging nation-states and the claim of sub-state nationalist movements on a particular territory appears normal and rational.

Liberal Democracy

As stated at the beginning of this section, the other idea at the core of self-determination is liberal democracy. The connection between liberal democracy and nationalism is important for understanding the way sub-state nationalist groups and their external supporters perceive the meaning and usage of self-determination. Democracy, in Schumpeter's words, is 'the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote'.[107] Liberalism is an intellectual and political philosophy that embraces individual human liberty and equal rights as key political values. There are several strands within liberalism, but its overarching core is a belief in the unconstrained individual. The adjacent and peripheral aspects of a liberal ideology are a belief in those institutional arrangements that ensure the freedom of the unconstrained individual, such as constitutional government, human rights, equality and the right to private property.

Nationalism and liberalism are sometimes interpreted as contradicting notions in the literature. Liberalism singles out the individual and therefore divides the community, while nationalism singles out national communities and therefore divides humanity. Liberalism aims to enhance of individual liberty, nationalism aims to create a coherent national and communal identity and tends to overlook the differences within a defined national community. Therefore, some scholars perceive nationalism to be in conflict with liberalism.[108] Nineteenth century classical liberals saw popular sovereignty and the general will of the people as the best and only option against dynastic rule. The general will could only be realised within a democratic state since only state power could guarantee and protect the rights of individuals which also had to be organised on national lines.[109] An important historical period that put liberalism and nationalism at odds was when racist forms of nationalism and later the appropriation of the national

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[106] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 33.
[107] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, 5th ed., London: Routledge, 1976, 250.
[108] David Resnick, 'John Locke and liberal nationalism', *History of European Ideas*, 1992, 15 (4-6): 511-17, 511.
[109] Nodia, 13.

principle by the Soviet state for administrative purposes became central during the interwar period and after 1945 respectively.[110] The experience of fascism and Nazism led most liberals after WWII to denounce nationalism.[111] Another historical reason for liberalism's denunciation of nationalism is the association between national self-determination and the Third World due to the decolonisation process. This led many liberals to portray nationalism as a 'backward ideology' given the underdeveloped and seemingly tribal nature of these new states.[112] Yet it would be a mistake to assume that all scholars see nationalism and liberalism as being fundamentally at odds. This is particularly the case when considering the fact that both national acts and liberation movements are seen to be undertaken in the name of protecting individual rights due to the connection between the collective right of self-determination and individual freedom.[113]

Nationalism's link to liberalism derives from the idea that nationalism provides the collective ideology and legitimacy for the state to undertake the endeavour to accomplish individual freedom through institutional arrangements at the state level. In this sense, liberal nationalist thought sees self-determination as a liberal principle, and its roots, according to Mayall, go back to Grotian solidarity, to Kant's visions for peace through republican federalism, to Wilson's definition of collective security and to the UN Charter.[114] Liberals envision the possibility of a community bound together through common memories, therefore they see nationalism as a benign force. But, liberals overlook the historical and emotional aspect of nationalism. Whereas historicist nationalists, Mayall argues, see use of force as legitimate and war as an ethical act for freedom.[115] This distinction that Mayall draws between liberals and historicists echoes the distinction between civic and ethnic understandings of nationhood.

With regard to the creation of democratic nation-states in ethnically diverse geographies, a distinct national identity and the desire for self-rule are essential for setting a rational route to establish any new democratic system. For example, according to Fukuyama a democracy can only thrive when accompanied by moderate or tolerant nationalism, especially within the context of the post-communist nations of the East

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[110] Resnick, 511.
[111] Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, 4. There is a debate in Nationalism literature on the question of whether fascism and Nazism are extreme forms of nationalism or they were specific types of political movements and ideologies. Following Breuilly's argument, I believe fascism and Nazism were extreme forms of nationalism.
[112] Nodia, 14
[113] Resnick, 511.
[114] Mayall, *Nationalism*, 30.
[115] *Ibid.*, 31-32.

with their authoritarian histories. But he also argues that in societies where ethnicity has become politicised, democracy and nationalism are incompatible.[116] Similarly, Nodia perceives liberal democracy as compatible with civic forms of nationalism, but not compatible with ethnic forms. For him, nationalism should be a component of liberal democracy and as such nationalism needs democracy. Some scholars even argued, rather provocatively, that the coexistence of nationalism and liberal democracy has worked best in countries where the dominant culture is more or less racially and culturally homogeneous.[117] Some sections of international society have even openly supported the formation of homogeneous states or regional autonomies to stave off ethnic conflict, as seen in the cases of Bangladesh, Eritrea, Kosovo, and the KRG in Iraq, amongst others.

Within the context of the above discussion, in some cases, the link between liberal democracy and separatist nationalism emerges in a way in which the source of governing becomes 'the collectivity' or 'ethnic group', and democracy appears to be achievable only through giving these groups their right to govern. Recent studies in political theory indicate a 'shift of interest from universalist forms of argument towards favouring communities or groups … or collective forms of particularity'.[118] Therefore, the emphasis on group over individual in eighteenth and nineteenth century thinking has been revitalised. This revitalisation has revealed itself as a shift towards 'communities, nations, cultures and ethnic groups.'[119] Then, if liberal democracy is interpreted in relation to nationalism, it refers to the collectivist forms of identities, rather than individualistic forms as the source of governing.

Consequently, democracy and nationalism complement each other because of their relation to liberalism, especially in the case of nationalist groups claiming their own state or some form of political authority. Nationalist groups or movements who claim self-determination see this right as a democratic collective right.[120] By definition, the democratic enterprise has always been based on a defined group of people and for the last couple of centuries this group has been understood to be the nation. As a result, constructing and defining a distinct nation came to be seen as a prerequisite for the

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[116] Francis Fukuyama, 'Comments on Nationalism and Democracy,' Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.), *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994, 23-28, 26-27; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Free Press, 2006, 23-39. Dahl argues, although not necessarily in the context of race and ethnicity, that the more homogenous a polity is the easier it is to establish and consolidate liberal democracy. Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971, 108-113.

[117] Fukuyama, 'Comments on Nationalism,' 26-27.

[118] Andrew Williams, *Nationalism and Particularity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 1.

[119] *Ibid.*, 3.

[120] Nodia, 4-6, 8-9.

formation of a democratic state. In turn, determining who belongs to the 'we' and who should form the nation is seen as a prerequisite for this democratic endeavour.[121] Building a democratic state based on a claimed distinct identity is perceived as a rational route due to the belief that it brings solutions to political problems and it provides suitable political and social circumstances for the advancement of freedom of thought and civil liberties. In this context, self-determination as a political principle is understood as a democratic right of peoples with distinct ethnic, national, cultural or religious identities. The next section focuses on the notion of self-determination and how it became a principle, explaining how it is linked to nationalism and liberal democracy in the case of sub-state nationalist groups.

Self-determination

The international ideational context that created the discourse of self-determination and enabled its application in the twentieth century was defined by nationalism, liberalism and democracy.[122] The relationship between these ideas represents a tension between the collectivist approach of nationalism and the liberal emphasis on individual freedom and democracy.[123] Self-determination's relevance to sub-state nationalist groups or movements derives from a particular way of interpreting these notions. For nationalist groups and their supporters within international society, national self-determination is interpreted as a means for resolving ethnic conflict and promoting democracy, human cultural creativity and diversity. It is believed to imply the right to determine the future of a specific territory and a people's entitlement to establish their own state in a territory where they constitute the majority.[124] It is generally understood as a doctrine with the following assumptions: humankind is divided into nations and this division is natural, the denial of the right of self-determination to a nation means a denial of fundamental human rights, and every nation has a right to constitute a separate state.

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[121] Yet, history shows that the act to determine who belongs to the nation has resulted in non-rational actions, such as dictatorial or extreme forms of nationalism that utilised suppressive and non-democratic methods on people. *Ibid.*, 8.

[122] Anthony Whelan, 'Wilsonian Self-determination and the Versailles Settlement', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, January 1994, 43: 99-115, 99-100.

[123] This goes back to the way the contrast between Fichte and Herder collectivist view and Kant's more individualistic view.

[124] Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz, 'National self-determination', *Journal of Philosophy*, 1990, 87: 439-61, 440; Yoram Dinstein, 'Collective Human Rights of Peoples and Minorities.' *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 1976, 25: 102-200, 102 mentioned in Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 57.

Sovereignty

Understanding and explaining sub-state nationalist groups' perception and use of self-determination requires explaining self-determination's relation to the notion of sovereignty, because national self-determination derives its meaning from the idea of popular sovereignty. Sovereignty is a concept 'without which modern international relations does not exist.'[125] International political rules and norms are centred on a complicated relationship between sovereignty and self-determination in the international system for the last couple of centuries. Sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is territorial control or supreme authority within a territory.[126] Self-determination is the peoples' right to 'freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.'[127] The difficulty in defining 'the people' is the reason why self-determination poses a challenge to sovereignty.[128] If the national boundaries of a people are compatible with the boundaries of the state, in theory no conflict arises between self-determination and sovereignty. The problem arises when a group claims that their national boundaries are different from the state/s they live in. This causes a tension between a people's right to self-determination and a state's right to territorial integrity, depending on how the people are defined.[129]

Definitions of sovereignty vary widely from the absolute sovereignty defined by Hobbes and Bodin to Rousseau's popular sovereignty and to modern sovereignty defined in national covenants of states and international law.[130] Krasner's definition of types of sovereignty is useful in understanding this concept as it reflects the transformation of the meaning and function of sovereignty throughout history. Krasner distinguishes between four types of sovereignty: domestic sovereignty, Westphalian sovereignty, interdependence sovereignty and international legal sovereignty.[131] The first refers to the classical meaning of sovereignty – the control of domestic affairs and territory.[132] It could be argued that this meaning of sovereignty is linked to the Weberian sociological sovereignty that sees the state as the institution with the monopoly of coercive and administrative control over a specific territory. Westphalian sovereignty

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[125] Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, 16.

[126] *Ibid.*, 16.

[127] Article 1, 1966 UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

[128] Mayall, *Nationalism*, 51.

[129] Linda Bishai, *Forgetting Ourselves: Secession and the Impossibility of Territorial Identity*, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2004, 7.

[130] Philpott, 16.

[131] Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999, 9-25.

[132] *Ibid.*, 11-12.

alludes to the historical importance of sovereignty as a concept in IR and international history.[133] It goes back to the 1648 Treaties of Westphalia and Osnabrück where a state's domestic administrative, political and economic control over its territory together with the idea of the sanctity of its borders and immunity from external intervention was adopted. Therefore the only difference between Westphalian sovereignty and domestic sovereignty is the emphasis on the international dimension. Interdependence sovereignty refers to a state's ability to control its boundaries and particularly in the context of increasing globalisation.[134] It describes state's decreasing ability to control movements and issues that cut across its boundaries mainly due to the increasing accountability and responsibility of states to the outside world through individual petition processes, international organisations, limits on issues such as use of force, greenhouse gas emissions and human rights abuses.[135] Most states perceive these processes as resulting in a weakening of their sovereignty. Krasner's fourth type of sovereignty, international legal sovereignty, refers to the issue of the international recognition of a state,[136] which is particularly important for the purposes of this thesis especially due to the development of 'popular sovereignty' and its contemporary conflation with self-determination.

The notion of sovereignty discussed until now referred to the different kinds of sovereign power a legitimate state can enjoy. Popular sovereignty, on the other hand, is a concept about the legitimacy of a state. This is related to Krasner's fourth type of sovereignty, international legal sovereignty. Popular sovereignty is a product of French and democratic revolutions, moulded into the nineteenth century concept of nationalism. Since its emergence in the eighteenth century, the idea of popular sovereignty has increasingly implied national sovereignty and become connected to self-determination. It emerged as a principle in Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau's writings on the social contract and general will. The principle of popular sovereignty's emphasis on the consent of the governed and the general will was perfectly applicable to a political rule that relied on a wider social stratum and the principle has been crucial in the transition towards democratic political regimes within Europe. Over the course of the

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[133] *Ibid.*, 20-23.
[134] *Ibid.*, 12-14.
[135] Alexis Heraclides, 'Ethnicity, secessionist conflict and the international society,' *Nations and Nationalism*, 1997, 3 (4): 493-520, 501; Joshua Castellino, *International Law and Self-Determination: The Integrity of the Politics of Territorial Possession with Formulations of Post-Colonial 'National' Identity*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2000, 97. From the view of transformationalists this need not necessarily entail a weakening of state power, but rather indicates a change in the role of states. See David Held, A. McGrew, D. Goldblatt & J. Perraton, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999, 7-14.
[136] Krasner, *Sovereignty*, 14-20.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the meaning of sovereignty evolved from the sovereignty of monarchs to the sovereignty of people.[137] What is important here is recognising the shift over the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to popular sovereignty which was the result of the replacement of monarchical rule with republican political systems. Here the people, or the nation, came to be seen as the source of state power and established itself as one of the rights in the 1789 Declaration of Rights of Man and of Citizen by the National Assembly of France: 'The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty; nor can any individual, or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.'[138] This meaning and usage became internationally widespread particularly after the dissolution of the empires following WWI and during the wave of decolonisation in the 1960s and 1970s.[139]

The development of popular sovereignty and Krasner's notion of international legal sovereignty, when discussed together, highlight the importance of the link between people and territory. Within this historical evolution, a state's absolute control transformed from control over a specific territory to control over a specific territory filled with national meaning, which directly associates people with that territory.[140] The understanding of sovereignty as absolute control over a determinate people and a determinate territory implies the existence of a clearly definable territory. If Krasner's international legal sovereignty refers to the recognition of a state's legitimacy of its rule over a specific territory and people, then issues arise regarding over which people a state is entitled to wield legitimate authority.

The association of sovereignty with a specific group of people, the nation, brought with it challenges to the notion of sovereignty and led to the further transformation of the concept of sovereignty in a way directly connected to the principle of self-determination. Sovereignty is today understood as having 'more to do with the concept of independence in arriving at decisions rather than exclusive and absolute power in making them'.[141] Its key aspect is the independence of a people in making its own decisions. Therefore sovereignty is increasingly defined in terms of the

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[137] Especially throughout the nineteenth century these different types of sovereignties co-existed. For a historical analysis of the evolution of the doctrine of sovereignty see Lauren A. Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 1-2.
[138] http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/Paine/rightsIII.html, last accessed 18.04.2012.
[139] Philpott, 3, 28.
[140] Alan James, 'The practice of sovereign statehood in contemporary international society', *Political Studies,* 1999, 47 (3): 457-473, 458-59, 469-70; Stephen D. Krasner, 'Rethinking the sovereign state model', in Michael Cox, Tim Dunne and Ken Booth (eds.), *Empires, Systems and States: Great Transformations in International Politics,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 17-42.
[141] Castellino, 94.

principle of self-determination (meaning the right of people to make their own political decisions). This has led to a conflation between the meanings and functions of sovereignty and self-determination. This conflation has become particularly prominent with the expansion of claims to self-determination from states to sub-state groups. Claims of separatist nationalist groups to their right to self-determination began to mean a *right to sovereignty*. An inevitable consequence of this has been most visible in the political arena – an increased contradiction between existing sovereignties and new claims for self-determination. In these cases, the goal of nationalism is the desire for autonomy, usually in the form of a sovereign state, on behalf of the nation on a national territory.[142] Groups or movements that challenge the sovereignty of one particular state, such as those in Kosovo or Palestine, do so in the name of establishing their separate sovereignty.

Sub-state national groups aspiring to become their own sovereigns perceive a strong link between national identity and territory. For them, sovereignty over a defined territory should be exercised by the people due to their alleged territorial identity. Here territory is seen as a material necessity to enforce laws and policies in order to help protect the national/cultural identities of peoples.[143] In relation to sub-state groups or movements, such as the Kurds, Tamils, Kosovars, or Chechens, their claim to a national territory relies on national sovereignty and identity.[144] From the sub-state nationalist groups' perspective, this implies that the claimed territory exists with clearly defined boundaries or else that it is possible to draw clear boundaries that coincide with the 'natural' boundaries of the group. Their argument draws its legitimacy from ethnic nationalist claims as well as from a specific interpretation of the principle of self-determination, namely, that the territorial boundaries of a state should coincide with the boundaries of ethnic or national groups. In this sense, the argument goes that territorial sovereignty should be exercised by a government that represents a national identity.[145]

As a result, the concept of popular sovereignty and a specific reading of the principle of self-determination become entwined and difficult to differentiate. The

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[142] Breuilly, 'State and Nationalism', 32.

[143] George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory: Constructing Group Identity in Southeastern Europe*, Canham: Rowman & Littlefied, 2000, 22.

[144] Arie Marcelo Kacowicz, *Peaceful Territorial Change*, Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1994, 7. For a debate on morally justifiable circumstances for secession see Allen E. Buchanan, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1991, and Allen E. Buchanan, *Justice, Legitimacy, and Self-determination: Moral Foundations for International Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

[145] Tamir, Kacowicz and White adopt a similar view on the relationship between national identity and political/territorial control.

conflation of sovereignty and self-determination weakens the idea of a state's sovereignty as absolute jurisdiction over a land.[146] Griffiths argues that although secession might be a solution in some cases, it remains limited in avoiding civil wars and collective violence. He argues that the only solution to this problem is through cutting the historical links between self-determination, nationalism and territorial sovereignty.[147] Therefore, claims for territorial change pose a big challenge to the traditional understandings of domestic sovereignty, to territorial integrity and to the maintenance of the existing boundaries and thus to the protection of international stability in general. However, claims for self-determination do not wish to displace sovereignty entirely but rather only to advance a particular understanding of sovereignty, namely sovereignty for a self-defined nation.

Self-determination: History and Meaning

Self-determination is a critically important concept in international relations and politics. Historically, national self-determination has become one of the most crucial international norms in relation to nationalist claims to justify separation from empires, gaining independence through decolonisation, and in shaping borders during the dismemberment of the communist states at the end of the Cold War, as well as in more recent secession claims from existing nation-states. Self-determination as a concept is widely discussed in the literature, and one thing that is agreed upon is the difficulty in defining this concept. Self-determination has multiple meanings in three specific fields: legal, political and analytical. It is a principle of international law and defined in a way that prioritises the stability of the international system and protects the sovereignty of states. International lawyers, the UN and states adopt and implement this meaning. Politically it is interpreted in a way that justifies the rights of people to determine their political future. Nationalist groups and their supporters (lobby groups, diasporas, states, some international organisations) are proponents of this meaning of self-determination. Lastly, self-determination as an analytical concept is used to understand state formation, nation building, ethnic conflict, nationalist political movements and other issues related to nationalism, especially in the fields of international relations, nationalism and conflict resolution.

Discussions concerning nationalism and self-determination are certainly not new, and these were discussed by thinkers like Mazzini, Mill, and Lord Acton at the

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[146] Mayall, *Nationalism*, 50-69.
[147] Griffiths, 'Self-determination', 29.

height of the wave of romantic nationalism when it swept through central and Eastern Europe and spread to the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. The first examples of self-determination under the label of a 'nationality principle' go back to the separation of the American colonies from the British, Portuguese and Spanish colonial empires in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries. The 'national idea' emerged in the nineteenth century, especially in the writings of Mazzini and Mill. Mazzini argued that the individual has an intimate connection to the people with whom s/he shares a common identity, and that the community or nation has a common and homogeneous nature and this collective existence needs to be recognised.[148] Mazzini put special emphasis on the connection between the individual and national self-esteem. He saw nations as given units of humanity and assumed that individual identity can only be realised within a national community and a country.[149] From a Mazzinian perspective, the nation is a community that shares objective features based on culture and national consciousness and members of a nation have the right to protect their distinct existence within a communal life in line with their distinct identity.

Mill adopted a more civilizational interpretation of the 'nationality principle' and argued that not all peoples are ready to self-governance. Only when they reach a required level of civilizational development should the nationality principle apply to a people.[150] According to Mill's perspective the nation refers to a group of individuals living under the same system of rule and self-determination is the right of the governed to participate in the governing process. Therefore, it is clear that Mazzini attributed a natural existence to the nation whereas Mill had a civic, liberal and individualistic view of the concept; however both saw it as *the* legitimate source of political rule. But, eventually, both seems to assume that the division of mankind into collective units is a given.[151]

By the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of a national identity had become prominent in relation to the state and popular sovereignty.[152] In the nineteenth century self-determination was perceived as a principle of independence against the imperial

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[148] Guiseppe Mazzini, from *On the Duties of Man*, in Brown et.al., 481-82.

[149] Mazzini writes: 'The *individual* is too weak, and Humanity too vast. . . God gave you a Country . . . he divided Humanity into distinct groups upon the face of our globe, and thus planted the seeds of nations . . . Without Country you have neither name, token, voice, nor rights, no admissions as brothers unto the fellowship of the Peoples. You are the bastards of Humanity.' Mazzini, in Brown, et.al. 480-81.

[150] See John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1872, 284-293.

[151] See Mayall, *Nationalism*, 51.

[152] Mill also highlighted the difficulties in applying the national idea. The main difficulty he raised was geographic since in many places members of different nations are so mixed that it is almost impossible to divide them geographically.

powers, such as the Habsburgs and the Ottomans, and as a justification for overthrowing the ruler or ruling class and for separation to establish a new state. When independence movements achieve separation they would be deemed nations and thus be able to realise the ideal of popular national sovereignty.[153] This national idea played an important role in the formation of new states in the nineteenth century in Europe and South America.[154] In the first half of the nineteenth century the emergence of new states in Central and South America, and in Europe (Greece and Belgium) were based on the nationality principle. In the second half of the nineteenth century many new states were formed in Europe and elsewhere in the world emanating from suppressed nationalisms. Although self-determination did not enjoy widespread general acceptance as a political principle at this time, it was clearly being applied in a growing number of cases by the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century.[155] Popular sovereignty became understood as national sovereignty and the idea that 'popular sovereignty belongs to the nation' became widely accepted. Especially since the early twentieth century, nationalist ideology and self-determination have become important components of popular sovereignty and modern liberal democracy.[156] A combination of Mazzini's and Mill's views of the nation – the nation's natural existence combined with a democratic right for political recognition – gave national self-determination its meaning in the post-WWI era and throughout the rest of the twentieth century.

Throughout the twentieth century the meaning and use of self-determination varied mainly within the context of three different key political events with wide ranging international implications: WWI and its legacy; the process of decolonisation following the end of WWII; and, the political and geographical alignments post-1989. The use of national self-determination in these periods reflected the system of the empires that dissolved – monarchical, colonial and communist empires respectively – and the way nationhood was defined under these imperial systems. New states formed on the territories of these empires referred to self-determination in a way that reflected the constitutional, administrative and political status they enjoyed under the empire. Decolonisation period in the 1960s and 1970s did not include an application of self-

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[153] David B. Knight, 'Territory and people or people and territory? Thoughts on postcolonial self-determination' *International Political Science Review*, 1985, 6 (2): 248-272, 252 and for a brief account of the history of the use of self-determination in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries see 248-50.

[154] Wimmer and Feinstein provide a detailed account of the history of the formation of states in the last two hundred years and discuss the reasons behind the proliferation of nation-states. Wimmer and Feinstein, 778-786. Also see John W. Meyer, 'The world polity and the authority of the nation-state,' in Albert Bergesen (ed.), *Studies of the Modern World System*, New York: Academic Press, 1980, 109-138.

[155] Knight, 'Territory and People', 253

[156] Diamond and Plattner, xii.

determination in the form of secession, except in the case of Bangladesh. Rather the secessions that took place in formerly communist countries were mainly result of administrative and legitimacy crises that manifested themselves in some of the multi-ethnic communist regimes (USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia).

Self-determination sat at the centre of the international relations agenda in 1917 and afterwards, and was one of the key principles that shaped the post-WWI order imagined by Woodrow Wilson. At the beginning of the twentieth century Lenin supported self-determination movements in the colonial and imperial territories and defined the concept as 'the right to existence as a separate state'.[157] The Bolsheviks adopted self-determination and talked specifically about national self-determination, but this was done for administrative purposes and it was only anticipated as lasting until socialism was achieved and states ceased to exist. It is indeed interesting to note that Wilson borrowed the term self-determination itself from the language of the Bolsheviks. It was during the WWI period when self-determination became internationalised and was eagerly adopted by the peoples of the world from the Americas to Europe and East Asia. Its institutionalisation was part of a newly forming international order based on self-rule, in which the nation-state was the primary legitimate political form. In this period self-determination heavily permeated requests for self-rule in the old Habsburg and Ottoman territories, and partly permeated claims for independence from Western colonial rule.[158]

The emergence of self-determination as a modern democratic entitlement dates from the 1919 Paris Peace Conference by Wilson in his capacity as the main instigator of the new post-war order.[159] He had developed his plans for the post-war world before the War had ended and he was successful in convincing other state leaders at the Conference to support the implementation of these policies. But, of course, Wilson's ideas were not uncritically endorsed by all world leaders. Many European leaders in particular were quite critical of the ideas in the address.[160] Wilson and his team had

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[157] Vladimir I. Lenin, 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination', in *Collected Works. Vol.20*, December 1913-August 1914, London: Lawrence & Wishart. 1964, 393-454, 394.

[158] It is also important to note that, by the end of WWI, self-determination also began to refer to a world where rival nationalist claims for self-determination were in play. These claims were not related to the attempts to free from the oppression of the colonial rulers or dynastic empires, they were claims against other nationalists' political projects. For example, the Kurdish Delegation's memorandum presented to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference made an appeal against Armenian self-determination claims in eastern Anatolia, not against the Ottoman rule. Kurd Delegation to the Peace Conference, *Memorandum on the Claims of the Kurd People*, prepared by General Şerif Pasha, 3.

[159] Castellino, 8-12.

[160] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 24. Also mentioned in A Cobban, *National Self-*

already begun publicly declaring plans for a new order as early as 1916. By 1917 his speech 'Peace without Victory' provided the first clear description of his vision for a new order and was disseminated to the world throughout the war and was extensively discussed.[161]

Wilson's most famous speech was his 18 January 1918 address to the Congress, also known as 'Fourteen Points', which set out clearly Wilson's plans for the post-War peace. Wilson's introduction to his Fourteen Points began: 'What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression.'[162] Two of the three key components of Wilson's plan for the future international order were 'equality of nations' and 'right over might'. The equality of nations meant that all states - small, big, weak or powerful - would have the same rights.[163] Later the League of Nations and the mandate system were created to enable the developed powers to observe and support populations to reach a stage where they can govern themselves. 'Right over might' emphasised the importance of law and voluntary and peaceful means, such as international mechanisms, in resolving problems, and avoiding other methods, such as resorting to war or conflict.[164]

'Consent of the governed' – a third key component of Wilson's plans for future international order – was the one that was particularly related to self-determination. It meant that peoples should be free to determine their type of government and it implied that all international arrangements should receive the consent of the group of people concerned. According to this principle, for the attainment and maintenance of international peace no nation should try to dominate another.[165] Wilson later started to call this principle 'self-determination', although in his *Fourteen Points* speech he did not mention the term 'self-determination' at all.[166] Less than a month later, in a speech given to the US Congress on the 11 February 1918, Wilson used 'the rights of peoples to self-

determination, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945, 57-58; Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative*, Boston: Houghton Miffin, 1921, 103-104; Knight, 'Territory and People', 255.

[161] Manela, 16
[162] *The Text of the Fourteen Points*, New York: The Woodrow Wilson Foundation, 1943.
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] Manela, 23-25.
[165] *Ibid.*, 22.
[166] *The Text of the Fourteen Points*.

determination' publicly for the first time.[167] In this speech, which is also known as *Four Points*, the president called for respect for national aspirations and the right of peoples to be dominated and governed only by their own consent. Wilson also added that only well-defined national aspirations that did not create conflict would receive serious consideration, but he did not come up with criteria to delimit claims.

The Versailles territorial settlement starkly highlighted the difficulty in implementing Wilson's new vision of a world based on the principle of self-determination. Although the principle was presented and perceived as a universal ideal applicable for all nations, it was not applied universally. Plebiscites were mostly not applied even in territories where self-determination was implemented.[168] Although implementation of self-determination was limited to Europe, this did not stop the leaders of other communities and colonised peoples elsewhere from perceiving self-determination as legitimating their claims for statehood, but their hopes ended in vain.[169] Wilson stressed the burden on the peace conference to deal with territories related to Europe – such as Italy, Turkey, Austro-Hungary, Poland, Romania, Montenegro, Serbia and other Balkan states and said that un-responded claims would be taken up later by the League of Nations.[170] Knight states 'even Wilson himself eventually questioned the principle because, as he put it, nationalities began appearing everywhere.'[171]

It is also argued that the Versailles treatment of self-determination was not consistent because of French and Italian opposition and due to Wilson's 'unequal sympathies for different nationalities.'[172] Self-determination was applied in accordance with the pragmatic necessities of drawing lines for new political entities in the post-empire territories. As a result, members of the same ethno-national group potentially became either members of a coherent nation or minorities in an adjacent nation, depending on where the line was drawn.[173] Therefore, it actually served as a political principle rather than as a universal rule and was implemented in accordance with the political circumstances of the time.

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[167] Knight, 'Territory and People', 254; Manela, 24.

[168] Plebiscites were applied for instance in an East Prussian region populated by Masurians in Prussia (July 1920: voting to belong to Germany rather than Poland) and part of Upper Silesia (again a vote between belonging to Germany or Poland).

[169] Manela, 4. Manela explains in detail the way the principle was received by non-European communities and their disappointment.

[170] *Ibid.*, 5.

[171] Knight, 'Territory and People', 255.

[172] Whelan, 101.

[173] *Ibid.*, 103. Whelan writes, 'Poland's economic and security needs, and France's pride and historic claim, took precedence over the inhabitants' wishes in Danzig and Alsace-Lorraine respectively'. 101.

The difficulty in implementing the principle of self-determination also derived from the difference between the way the principle was presented and the way it was implemented. The principle was presented as a democratising principle that provided distinct national and cultural groups with the ability to determine their own political future. Self-government 'implied people's right to select their own *democratic* government', but it required that the people or the nation were ethnically identifiable.[174] This necessitated the identification of specific groups that would be granted the right to self-determination. As a result, the principle implied a call for differentiating between groups on the basis of language, culture, race, religion, and aspirations. However, Wilson did not come up with a clear plan on how this principle would be implemented in Europe, let alone throughout the world.

Hence the question that emerged was 'who are the people in question?'. Wilson's Secretary of State, Robert Lansing wrote in April 1921 in the *Saturday Evening Post*, 'When the President talks about "self-determination", what has he in mind? Does he mean race, a territorial area, or a community? Without a definite unit which is practical, application of this principle is dangerous to peace and stability.'[175] In his narrative of the peace negotiations he argued that while it was a desirable principle in theory, self-determination was practically almost impossible to implement without causing trouble because it legitimated anti-government movements.[176] Sir Ivor Jennings, another critic of the principle, was aware that its implementation required, most importantly, a definition of the 'self': '[o]n the surface it seemed reasonable: let the people decide. It was in fact ridiculous because people cannot decide until someone decides who the people are'. Due to this impossibility Jennings found Wilson's doctrine ridiculous and he was puzzled by its wide acceptance.[177]

Self-determination spread across the world within a legal context during the process of decolonisation in the 1960s and 1970s. These legal definitions of self-determination indicate that since the end of WWII the meaning of self-determination has gradually become more encompassing. Initially 'the people' referred to the citizens of a nation-state and self-determination was seen as their right to participate in the governing process. Until the 1970s self-determination functioned within the decolonisation context where coherent units sought to attain self-government in the

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[174] Whelan, 100, 108.
[175] Robert Lansing, *Self-determination*, in the Saturday Evening Post, 9 April 1921, 7 as quoted in Whelan, 102.
[176] Lansing, *Peace Negotiations*, 96 -104.
[177] Ivor Jennnings, *The Approach to Self-Government*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956, 55-56.

colonised lands of Africa and Asia. The aim was the 'freeing of colonial peoples from their colonial masters, and their right to govern themselves'[178] rather than defining ethnically or culturally distinct peoples and their states. Self-determination was granted to the peoples of the already existing colonial entities within the existing colonial administrative boundaries.

The implementation of self-determination during colonial independence and its definition in the UN Charter and other international covenants transformed self-determination into a widely recognised international norm. Here the application of self-determination was strictly limited to the colonial territories and was territorially defined in a way that guaranteed the distinct identity of the colony and enabled legal recognition of its territorial unit. The aim was to maintain territorial stability as much as possible.[179] In this historical and legal context the implementation of self-determination in non-colonial territories was prohibited and the sovereignty and self-determination of the state was emphasised. The 1945 UN Charter explicitly refers to self-determination in Articles 1(2), 55 and 73(b). Article 1 (2) states that one of the purposes of the UN is 'To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal right and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace'.[180] Higgins interprets the context in the Article to be related to the rights of peoples of one state to be protected from interference by other states or governments.[181]

From 1945 onwards self-determination was defined in several international legal covenants. Again, none of these legal uses explained what constitutes a nation or provided criteria for defining who has the right to self-determination. A more encompassing meaning of self-determination appeared in the twin UN 1966 Covenants, Article 1, which was adopted from the United Nation General Assembly Resolution 1514 (1960) that provided a more comprehensive statement on self-determination: 'All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of their right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.'[182] According to Castellino, the Resolution had contradicting aspects: it affirmed the norm of self-determination, linking it to 'better standards of life and larger

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[178] Castellino, 22

[179] Shaw, 481. Up until the collapse of the USSR and the re-definition process of the post-Communist territories, the right to self-determination was not granted to any unit, except Bangladesh in 1971.

[180] http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter1.htm, last accessed 4 November 2011.

[181] Rosalyn Higgins, *Problems and Process: International Law and How We Use It*, *International Law and How We Use*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, 114.

[182] http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm, last accessed 20 September 2009.

freedom' on one hand, but it emphasised 'stability' on the other.[183] Resolution 1541 (1960) defined a full measure of self-government: '[i]t must result in a decision where the people concerned vote in free and fair elections to decide whether to, (a) constitute themselves as a sovereign independent state; (b) associate freely with an independent state, or (c) integrate with an independent state already in existence'.[184] Although these resolutions seemed to provide a basis for the implementation of self-determination to form a new state, in actuality the emphasis in international law was on maintaining international order.[185] Another important aspect of these resolutions was that they focused on territory and accorded the right of independence to the inhabitants of a territory, not nations.

The 1966 International Covenants of 'Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' and 'Civil and Political Rights' laid down the foundations of what has subsequently developed as International Law of Human Rights. However, Franck argues that Article 1 is unlikely to be interpreted as self-determination requiring governments to accept readily the demands of secessionists. He also says that Article 27 of the Covenants permits minorities the right 'to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language' but not to secede.[186] The 'Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples' (1960), 'General Assembly Resolution 2625' (1970), and the 'Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations' (1970) also make similar statements.[187]

After the 1970s, the right to self-determination began to expand to cover all peoples – people of a state, people within one state and a group people that reside in more than one state. People without a state were increasingly deemed to possess the

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[183] Castellino, 26. Resolution 1514, Clause 6: 'Any attempt aimed at partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.'

[184] Castellino, 28; Shaw, 480. Shaw lists other UN resolutions that called for the application of the principle for specific territories and the International Court of Justice decisions on the applicability of the principle of self-determination for specific cases: 'GA Res. 1755 (XVII), 1962; 2138 (XXI), 1966; 2151 (XXI), 1966; 2379 (XXIII), 1968; 2383 (XXIII), 1968; and SC Res. 183 (1963); 301 (1971); 377 (1975) and 384 (1975). … *Namibia* [note 8: ICJ Reports (1971) 16, at 31, *Western Sahara* [Note 9: ICJ Reports (1975) 12, at 31. See also the *Burkina Faso/Mali* case, ICJ Reports (1986) 554, at 567 and *Guinea-Bissau v. Senegal*, 83 *ILR* 1, at 24 *et seq.*] and *East Timor* cases [note 10: ICJ Reports (1995) 90, at 102.' Shaw, 480.

[185] Castellino, 28.

[186] Thomas M. Franck, 'Postmodern Tribalism and the Right to Secession', in Catherine Brölmann, René Lefeber and Marjoline Zieck (eds.), *Peoples and Minorities in International Law*, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993, 3-29, 17. Article 27 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: '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 the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.' http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm, last accessed 18 June 2012.

[187] Shaw, 480.

right to form their own political entity. However, the implementation of self-determination in the ex-communist territories after the end of the Cold War was based on existing administrative divisions, that of the non-Russian republics, which themselves were nationally defined. The question therefore remained whether the principle of self-determination could be applied to cases that are not part of a decolonisation process or of the dismemberment process of the ex-communist states.[188] As mentioned above, the compliance of the incumbent state with the principles mentioned in the UN Charter is considered as a criterion in deciding on the legitimacy of a secessionist group that attempts to separate from that state. Based on this, it is often indicated that outsiders, third states or international society, generally expressed through the UN, decide on the legitimacy of secessionist movements based on an evaluation of the actions of the incumbent state. If the secessionist movement has developed as a result of human rights or minority rights violations, international society or the UN is more likely to recognise the independence of these movements.[189]

The 1990 Charter of Paris repeated similar statements.[190] These statements are in line with the 1970 'Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations' which had stated that the territorial integrity of states should be respected as long as those states act in compliance with the principle of self-determination and therefore have 'a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction as to race, creed or colour.'[191] More recently, the 2004 UN Security Council Resolution 1542 stated that self-determination is only applicable 'in respect of a territory which is geographically separate and is distinct ethnically and/or culturally from the country administering it'.[192]

As a result of the above-described process, legal definitions of self-determination indicate that since the end of WWII the meaning of self-determination has gradually become more encompassing. Initially, 'the people' referred to the citizens of a nation-state and self-determination was seen as their right to participate in the governing process. Until the 1970s self-determination functioned within the decolonisation context where coherent units sought to attain self-government in the colonised lands of Africa and Asia. The aim was the 'freeing of colonial peoples from their colonial masters, and their right to govern themselves' rather than defining

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[188] *Ibid.*, 481.
[189] *Ibid.*, 483.
[190] *Ibid.*, 482.
[191] *Ibid.*, 482-83.
[192] Franck, 'Postmodern Tribalism', 10.

ethnically or culturally distinct peoples and their states.[193] Self-determination was granted to the peoples of the already existing colonial entities within the existing colonial administrative boundaries. Recently, the cultural/ethnic distinctiveness of a group coupled with bad treatment at the hands of state government have become a recognised basis for the self-determination claims.

Still, a legal definition of the norm of self-determination has remained quite limited in terms of encouraging sub-state nationalists to use the legal meaning for their political goals. These legal documents do not provide a set of principles that specify the criteria necessary to comprise a territory or people worthy of being granted independence by international society. Rather the legal framework was developed in an *ad hoc* way under the shadow of decolonisation and the aftermath of the Cold War. However, in the course of international society using self-determination as a legal tool for dismantling colonial and communist empires, sub-state nationalist groups also saw this principle as a device for breaking up states that have already attained independence from imperial systems.[194]

Political expressions of self-determination are far broader thank its legal expressions and have wider implications. Political self-determination emerged within the currents of nationalism and democracy in the nineteenth century, and by the time of WWI, it had evolved into an international political principle related to minority and mandate regimes.[195] The political use and expression of self-determination is more extensively used by sub-state nationalist groups. The formation of new states based on the principle of self-determination outside the context of post-imperialism, post-colonialism and post-communism is not clearly defined in international law but is generally seen as linked to human rights discourse and democratisation in ethnically diverse societies.

Due to the resurgence of competing ethnic and national identities since the end of the Cold War ethnic conflict has become an urgent issue. Franck calls these resurgent movements 'postmodern tribalism', which he defines as a movement that seeks to promote both a political and a legal environment conducive to the breakup of the existing sovereign states.[196] Postmodern tribalism promotes the transfer of defined parts of the populations and territories existing in multinational or multicultural states in

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[193] Castellino, 22.
[194] Shaw, 481-482.
[195] *Ibid.*, 479-480.
[196] Diamond and Plattner, 'Introduction', ix-xxx, xvii.

order to constitute new uni-national and uni-cultural states – that is, postmodern tribal-states. These movements indicate a new context, according to Franck, which allowed self-determination to be defined as a valid criterion for the redefinition of territories.[197] Higgins, commenting on Franck's work on 'postmodern tribalism', argues that the shift to acknowledging legitimacy of uni-national and uni-cultural societies is indicating a move towards illiberal formations, therefore, she favours multicultural societies.[198]

Beginning in 1991 with the collapse of the USSR and the former Republic of Yugoslavia the world witnessed a series of declarations of independence based on the principle of self-determination, both within the territory of these empires and beyond, such as Eritrea, East Timor, and Yemen. Secessionist nationalist movements claiming their right to self-determination have frequently used the denial of this right as a justification for their engagement in armed conflict and civil war. This has been an increasingly common phenomenon since the early 1980s in cases as diverse as the Kurds, the Tamils, the Sudanese, East Eritreans, the Chechens, the Catalans, the Basques, East Timorians, the Abkhazians, the Sikhs, and republicans in Northern Ireland.

Throughout the above-explained historical and legal evolution of the principle of self-determination, the two concepts 'consent of the governed' and 'self-determination' (even though Wilson used them as referring to the same principle) have had different implications.[199] The notion of the 'consent of the governed' came to reflect the civic and modernist conception of nations because 'consent' implied a people's ability to approve or reject policy decisions or choose the representatives to take the decisions on their behalf. 'The governed' seems to refer to the people or citizens of an existing political entity. It was even possible to detach 'consent of the governed' from national connotations.[200] On the other hand, self-determination came to embody an ethnic and primordial conception of nationhood in relation to separatist nationalist groups. The term 'determination' implied deciding on a policy from its outset or creating a new policy, and the term 'the self' did not necessarily refer to an existing group of people and was much more ambiguous. Therefore, although Wilson saw 'self-determination' and 'consent of the governed' as identical, actually self-determination

[197] Franck, 'Postmodern Tribalism', 15.
[198] Rosalyn Higgins, 'Postmodern Tribalism and the Right to Secession: Comments', in Catherine Brölmann, René Lefeber and Marjoline Zieck (eds.), *Peoples and Minorities in International Law*, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993, 29-35, 35.
[199] Here the aim is not to claim that they are distinct concepts, but only to indicate the possibility of understanding these notions as slightly different from each other.
[200] An example is the ethnically Polish Masurians that voted for membership of Germany in 1920.

posed a bigger challenge to the system and had more potential to change or disrupt the status-quo than the original version of the concept.

Ultimately the debate boiled down to the debate on defining the 'nation' and the civic-ethnic dichotomy. If the nation is defined as a given, primordial, constant and homogenous entity with clear territorial and cultural boundaries, deciding who has the right to self-determination would be a straightforward endeavour. However, as modernists argue nations are formed as a result of contingent historical, political, economic and social processes of modernisation and the state and its institutions have the determining role in the development of nations. The way self-determination was defined and implemented in the aftermath of WWI, as well as in later periods, reflected the difficulty in differentiating these different understandings of the nation.

The civic-ethnic dichotomy also relates to the classification of self-determination into internal and external types. Internal self-determination is linked to internal democracy and participation in governing processes.[201] This reflects what Knight calls 'territory over people'. In the post-colonial context, international law and international covenants generally prioritise territory over people.[202] External self-determination refers to the idea of a state government's legitimacy within the international society of states. In relation to sub-state nationalist groups this offered the possibility of a process by which sub-state groups could break away from a state in order to gain entry to the international society of states through secession or irredentism.[203] The emergence of new sub-state groups, such as groups based on regional identities, autonomous nationalisms and ethno-regional movements in the postcolonial period, challenges the traditional definition of self-determination which prioritises territory over people. Sub-state regionalism is potentially the most divisive of these new formations in its desire for self-determination.[204] Originally, by definition, self-determination implied the transfer of identity from the group to a delimited territory but Knight, writing in the 1980s, saw an increasing tendency to return to prioritising people over territory due to the increasing demands of sub-state or regional nationalist groups for self-determination.[205]

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[201] Hurst Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996, 48-49.
[202] Knight, 'Territory and People', 251-52.
[203] Castellino, 14; Mayall, *Nationalism*, 50-59.
[204] Knight, 'Territory and People', 248-50, 250.
[205] *Ibid.*, 251-52, 269. Some scholars regard this process as the transformation of self-determination into a legal right to democracy, rather than secession. See Franck, 'Postmodern Tribalism', 20-21. Franck calls this perception of democracy an 'emerging consensus of self-determination'.

Therefore, the meaning of self-determination that this thesis focuses on is today's contemporary evolution of the concept from its original formulation in 1919 and through the conditioning events of WW1, decolonisation and the end of the Cold War. Today it is clearly and directly linked to democratic rights and human rights discourse, but this democratic right is increasingly understood as the representation of the distinct character of a community within governing institutions.[206] It is also particularly related to minority group claims to liberal democracy based on the primordial definition of themselves as a distinct group. The Human Rights Committee Report in 1979 illustrates this link clearly: 'How could there be self-determination without freedom of opinion? Article 1 of the Covenant referred to the right of self-determination of peoples, not of Governments.'[207] For instance, Turkey's limited granting of Kurdish political participation is used as a precedent for Kurdish claims to their democratic right to self-determination. The Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) based in London is one of many diaspora groups around the world that works to promote this idea. As a result it could be argued that the political transformation of self-determination has been more decisive than its legal evolution, particularly in relation to the increasing demands of sub-state groups for external self-determination.

Conclusion

Nationalism's relation to popular sovereignty is at the core of the connection between democracy and self-determination when it comes to the claims of sub-state nationalist groups for autonomy or statehood. Traditionally, nationalism is founded on popular sovereignty which relies on the requirement to obey laws that have been self-imposed. Self-determination has been heralded as the principle that rationalises this requirement. Today, the self-determination claims of sub-state groups are perceived and promoted as claims to form culturally homogenous states. Human rights and democracy discourses are enmeshed with this principle, as manifest in many post WWII international covenants. As such, the way these groups define their identity is related to primordial and ethnic understandings of nationhood and it is a mistake to assume they are purely rooted in liberal modern and civic conceptions of national identity. The groups seeking

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[206] Ian Brownlie, 'The Rights of Peoples in International Law', in James Crawford (ed.), *The Rights of Peoples*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, 1-16, 1 mentioned in Shaw, 484.

[207] Shaw, 484. Also see Thomas M. Franck, 'The Emerging Right to Democratic Governance', *American Journal of International Law*, 1992, 86 (1): 46-91; Patrick Thornberry, 'The democratic or internal aspect of self-determination with some remark on federalism', in Christian Tomuschat (ed.), *Modern law of Self-Determination*, London: M. Nijhoff Publishers, 1993, 101-138 mentioned in Shaw, 484. Also see Knight, 'Territory and People', 263.

self-determination emphasise their racial, ethnic and cultural differences and claim that their territory is homogenous and deserves to be considered distinct from the overall state's territory. Nationalism, liberal democracy and self-determination are related, however, as I have demonstrated, this connection is predominantly assumed only to exist between tolerant and civic forms of nationalism and liberal principles. Yet there is also a strong and more recent connection between liberalism and the ethnicist-primordialist form of nationalism that has been largely under-explored.

Chapter 3: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for Understanding Self-Determination

Introduction

The meaning of self-determination in relation to sub-state nationalist groups is influenced by the international context of commonly accepted policies, rules and norms. This context influences the perceptions and activities of sub-state groups, states and other actors in international society when it comes to defining rights to self-determination and who can exercise these rights. Within contemporary international politics, the range of acceptable and legitimate policies, activities, rules and norms are defined by the spheres of democratic rights and human rights. This is particularly evident when examining international society's approach to exploring solutions to ethnic conflict, which are overwhelmingly framed with the discourses and mechanisms of human and democratic rights.

This chapter develops two interrelated arguments. Firstly, international norms, common understandings and activities deployed by actors in the international arena provide a framework for the promotion of ethnic territorial claims. Secondly, it argues that the principle of self-determination today reflects a condensed amalgamation of two contrasting notions: an idealist/liberal view on the achievability of peace through self-determination and a culturally defined national identity that embodies ethnic conceptions of nationhood and primordial/perennial perceptions on the origins of nations. This chapter aims to justify the theoretical choices made in this thesis. It explains how the specific meaning of self-determination adopted in this thesis provides a suitable framework for a sub-state group's promotion of a distinct ethnic territorial identity. It will be shown that this form of self-determination is already seen as an international norm by scholars such as Berlin, Tamir and White who all associate ethnic understandings of national identity with liberal democratic principles. In short, the chapter defines self-determination claims of nationalist groups within a theoretical context.

These two arguments provide the overarching theoretical background for the subsequent arguments developed in the following three chapters. The development of Kurdish nationalism with a specific territorial focus, Kurdish nationalists' claims to self-determination based on a direct reference to the notion of Kurdistan, and the Kurdish diaspora's efforts in promoting the Kurdish cause to international society, can all be

understood within an international normative context that combines the norms of democratic and human rights with ethnic conceptions of nationhood. This highlights how certain norms influence international politics and the relationship between the international normative context and sub-state political movements. However, norms are not the only determinants of the way international politics develop in relation to sub-state groups and movements. The international historical context, the relationship of a sub-state group with the state in which it is located, internal power structures within a group, and the way these groups interact with international society are also important determinants that need to be taken into account. Combining these factors leads to a comprehensive explanation of the way Kurdish nationalists see and use the notion of Kurdistan and the way international society perceives Kurdistan.[208] This chapter does not claim that the right to self-determination of all ethnic groups has become an international norm accepted by all members of the international society, but rather it highlights the emergence, acceptance and application of a specific meaning of self-determination in international politics which has significant parallels with the way sub-state nationalist groups interpret self-determination.

The Necessity of Adopting a Multi-Theoretical Approach to Understanding Sub-State Nationalist Groups' Self-Determination Claims

Sub-state nationalist groups are non-state actors which are not typically a direct focus of analysis in mainstream IR theories. Therefore, insights from theoretical perspectives that look at units other than states are necessary when trying to understand the behaviour and motivations of sub-state actors. Moreover, the notion of self-determination is also important in many fields beyond international relations. Self-determination is linked to the historical evolution of the contemporary international system, to state nationalism and separatist nationalism, to the development of international law and to the political and legal discourses of cultural rights, minority rights and human rights. Therefore study of self-determination requires a combination of historical, legal, sociological and political analyses. As such, understanding sub-state nationalists groups' use of a particular meaning of self-determination and its international implications requires a theoretical perspective that combines different views.[209] Self-determination is a policy, a

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[208] The historical context in which Kurdish nationalism emerged and developed, and Kurdish movements' relationship with the states they are located in, with other states, Kurdish groups and international actors will be explained in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

[209] The study of nationalism and its international impact remains, particularly in theoretical terms, limited, in IR apart from the following works: Mayall, *Nationalism*, 5. Some of the other works that analyse the

norm, a goal and an institution that is located in both domestic and international levels. Consequently, sub-state groups' use of self-determination and how their usage fits within the international normative context[210] needs a theoretical perspective that draws from multiple fields. Three different theoretical perspectives will be used in a complementary way in order to achieve this. These three theoretical views are realist IR theory as informed by an historical sociological methodology, the English School's international society approach (particularly Mayall), and Risse and Sikkink's constructivist view.

Realism and neo-realism see the 'international' as defined by the relations between states and by the structure of the international system. Power and interest, and according to Waltz, the anarchical structure, define the rules states adhere to and the behaviours they follow.[211] Therefore, whilst it would be unfair to say that the realism of Carr, Morgenthau, and the neo-realism of Waltz underestimate the importance of ideas, they do primarily see norms as developed and disseminated through the interactions between states and their competing political, economic and military interests.[212] Neo-realism would be explanatory in understanding how and why the 'external' meaning of self-determination has begun to be used in relation to the human and democratic rights of sub-state groups. A rational choice perspective would be useful because it would be able to explain the relationship between the adoption of a particular usage of self-

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relationship between nationalism and international relations are Francis H. Hinsley, *Nationalism and the International System*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973; William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; Kristen P. Williams, *Despite Nationalist Conflicts: Theory and Practice of Maintaining World Peace*, Westport Praeger, 2001; James Summers, *Peoples and International Law: How Nationalism and Self-determination Shape a Contemporary Law of Nations*, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007; Rajit Ganguly, *Understanding Ethnic Conflict: The International Dimension*, New York: Longman, 1998.

[210] This international normative context informs and shapes actors and their activities by providing a framework for what is legitimate and what is not.

[211] Waltz, 39-59, 93, 131; Morgenthau, 4-6.

[212] Neo-liberalism, like neo-realism, is a problem solving theory that use rational choice framework in explaining actions of the international actors. But neo-liberalism is less relevant to this thesis because of its different focus. Neo-liberal theory attributes an unchanging character to the system and a conceptual unity to the state and fails to explain the changes in the way units interact with each other. For a critique of mainstream IR theories see Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 1981, 10 (2): 126-155. For a critique of Waltz's neo-realims see Robert W. Cox (ed.), *Neo-Realism and its Critiques*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. Liberal theories of the inter-war period, and neo-liberalism in the second half of the century emphasise the economic relations and trade between the states and the importance of institutions, international regimes and cooperation that regulate economic, political and social relations. For these theories, the relations and processes define what 'international' is and states are not the sole actors in defining these relations. Transnational organisations, international organisations and trade are influential actors in international politics. Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 49-63; Robert O. Keohane and Joseph Nye (eds.), *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.

determination by actors and their political and economic interests. But this approach cannot explain how this norm has come to be interpreted in this way or what has changed in the 'international' to create new norms and principles.

Neo-realism is also criticised for its neglect of the domestic context and for its ahistoricity. It assumes more or less unchanging and repetitive historical conditions and functionally identical units, which renders the domestic context irrelevant for explaining the international. Incorporation of the insights of historical sociology into realist theory allows realism to have a better understanding of what goes on within the state and how this influences the international, and provides an increased awareness of the historical context.[213] Historical Sociology in IR shows the interconnectedness between the domestic and the international by questioning the dominant understanding of the 'international' as being separate from other spheres and questions assumptions on the unchanging character of international relations.[214] The historical sociology of international relations acknowledges the role of domestic political, social and economic structures and non-state actors, as well as international structures, and looks at long-term historically contingent structural factors.[215]

Constructivism, on the other hand, emphasises the role of norms and ideas in shaping the actions of political actors. Constructivists argue that ideas and political actions are socially constructed and they give legitimacy to institutions and provide a social theory of international relations.[216] As such, constructivist theorists assume that politics is socially constructed. Adler, explains how socially constructed ideas become institutionalised and how these institutions begin to be taken for granted as part of the natural order of the world. He argues that more or less recognised principles and ideas exist and function within an international constitution. Therefore, according to Adler, specific occurrences do not take place independently from the international constitution.[217] Risse and Sikkink's constructivist approach is particularly useful for the

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[213] For an overview of Historical Sociology and its explanatory power in international relations see Hobson and Hobden, particularly, John Hobson, 'What's at stake in bringing Historical Sociology *back* into international relations,' in Hobson and Hobden, pp. 3-41.

[214] Hobson, Lawson and Rosenberg.

[215] See Halliday, 'For an international sociology', pp. 244–64. For an evaluation of Halliday's concept of 'international historical sociology' see Benno Teschke, 'Advances and impasses in Fred Halliday's international historical sociology: a critical appraisal', *International Affairs*, 2011, 87 (5): 1087-1106.

[216] Wendt, 92-138. Also see Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics', *International Organization*, 1992, 46 (2): 391-425.

[217] Emanuel Adler, 'Seizing the middle ground: Constructivism in world politics', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1997, 3: 319-363, 340. There are various strands of thoughts in Constructivism. Wendt ontologically sees the course of ideas in the 'social', but argues that this ontological stance is compatible with a rational and positivist approaches. See Alexander Wendt, 371-372. Whereas Kratochwil rejects the possibility of reaching objective knowledge while adopting an ontological stance that argues all

purposes of this thesis. Based on the general constructivist argument that normative structures are as important as material structures, they argue that international democratisation is central to understanding the norms of socialisation states use for providing international recognition and the domestic human rights frameworks groups use to criticise their governments.[218] Risse and Sikkink's arguments can be applied to sub-state nationalist groups' use of self-determination in relation to the norms of human rights and democratic rights. However, politics cannot be explained purely through reference to the socialisation process. Constructivism somewhat overlooks the importance of the contingent historical and political context in the domestic and international realms. Still constructivism, especially Risse and Sikkink's framework, helps to explain how a normative framework that gives legitimacy to certain actors and their political behaviour emerges and how it influences state and non-state actors alike. In this case, international democratic and human rights norms provide useful guidance to explain sub-state nationalist groups' normative framework as well as understanding the attitude of international society towards these groups.

Lastly, the English School's international society approach has the potential to provide a comprehensive and compelling explanation on why self-determination in relation to human rights and democracy is increasingly used by sub-state groups and why international society provides a normative framework for this use. It looks at historical processes and acknowledges the importance of key international actors and states in shaping international society as well as the constituent role of institutions, norms and rules. The English School of IR encompasses a variety of approaches and scholars. It adopts methodological pluralism and uses three notions for describing the 'international': the international system, international society and world society.[219] The international system puts more emphasis on states and their interests in constituting the international system. World society is a more progressive notion that implies the possibility for international society to develop into a world society where interests of different units may potentially converge. International society represents a middle way between an international system and world society and implies the existence of an

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politics is socially constructed and emphasises intersubjectivity. See Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Constructing a new orthodoxy? Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics* and the Constructivist challenge', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 2000, 29 (1): 73-101, 81-82.

[218] Risse and Sikkink, 11-18.

[219] The three concepts as the basis of the English School goes back to Wight's attempt to distinguish between Hobbesian, Grotian and Kantian strands of English School. Buzan associates the ideas of international system, international society and world society with these three strands. Martin Wight (edited by Brian Porter and Gabriele Wight), *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, Leicester: Leicester University Press/Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991; Buzan, 'The English School', 473-476.

international whole, related but separate from its constituents. Bull and Watson define international society as 'a group of states (or, more generally, a group of independent political communities) which not merely form a system, in the sense that the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of the others, but also have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements'.[220]

International society offers the idea that the society of states is composed of common interests, rules, norms and values in inter-state relations.[221] According to this view, ideas seem to disseminate not only through interactions between states but they also become part of a set of international institutions that is separate from individual states.[222] The international society approach to understanding international relations sees international society as the result of shared interest and identity among states, which creates and maintains norms, rules and institutions.[223] James Mayall's thoughts on the interaction of nationalism with international society, and his historical approach to the evolution of concepts such as self-determination, state formation and sovereignty, are especially useful for the purposes of this thesis. Mayall argues that nationalism both challenged and accommodated itself to the traditional model of a society of states.[224] The traditional model of a society of states, particularly prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of states within a legal system and the undisputable control of a state over its people and territory. Mayall provides an account of how nationalism impacted the traditional model and how it played a role in transforming monarchical states into nation-states. Today it is difficult to think of an alternative political model to the nation-state. Therefore, Mayall argues that nationalism challenged the traditional model. However, he also states that nationalism did not manage to transform the international system, it merely accommodated itself to the existing structures of power.[225] Based on this, Mayall argues

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[220] Bull and Watson, p.1.

[221] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002, 51-73; Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, Leicester: Leicester University Press in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977.

[222] For a closer look to the notion of international society see Bull and Watson; Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society*, 1992, London: Routledge; James Mayall (ed.), *The Community of States: A Study in International Political Theory,* London: Allen & Unwin, 1982; Cornelia Navari, *The Condition of States: A Study in International Political Theory,* Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1991.

[223] Barry Buzan, 'The English School', 475.

[224] Mayall uses concepts such as 'world of states', 'society of states' and 'community of states' to emphasise the important functions of states and of formal and legal principles, therefore rejects the idea of an international society without states. Mayall, *Nationalism*, 2, 18; Mayall (ed.), *Community of States:* 'Introduction', 1-11, p. 11.

[225] Mayall, *Nationalism*, 25-26.

that, although the role of nationalism in shaping the modern nation-state system is obvious, little is said about how the transformation from the traditional model of state-system to the modern model took place. He suggests that this transformation can be explained through studying how the principles of sovereignty and national self-determination adapted to each other and led to the creation of new states formed throughout the twentieth century.[226]

All these theories metioned above suggest that norms, rules and patterns of behaviour diffuse between states and transnational actors. But, the way these theories explain the formation and dissemination of norms and shared behaviour vary. For realists, the dissemination and formation of these rules and norms take place through relations of power; for liberals or liberal institutionalists it takes place through international interaction and cooperation; for the English School this process takes place through institutions, norms and rules that emerged historically out of interactions between political units at the international level, while for Constructivists they are socially constructed and have an independent role in affecting international politics.

Therefore, a combination of the international society perspective (that the international is shaped by norms, rules and institutions), the historical sociological approach to international relations and Risse's framework on legitimacy, informs this thesis in its attempt to explain sub-state groups' use of a particular interpretation of the principle of self-determination. The main premise of the argument of this thesis is that the behaviour and aims of actors (such as Kurdish nationalists) can best be explained, from a realist perspective, by looking at their political motivations and calculations of expected gains. But at the same time, it argues that their political aims and calculated gains are shaped by the normative framework that legitimises or prohibits certain political activities. Norms and shared behaviours constitute an influence upon international politics, as Carr argued in the 1930s, since ideas and interests are directly connected to each other.[227] This thesis also argues that understanding why sub-state nationalist groups adopt a particular meaning of self-determination and how international society perceives the goals of sub-state nationalist groups requires an appreciation of the interaction between grand historical processes, the normative

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[226] *Ibid.*, p. 35. Mayall explains this argument in Chapters 2 and 3, 35-70.
[227] Carr argued that international politics are shaped by the interaction between ideas and interests, or idealism and realism Edward H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, Introduction by Michael Cox, New York: Palgrave, 2001, 'Introduction', 53.

framework that defines what is legitimate or not, and the historically, politically and socially contingent factors that affect individual cases.

Halliday's concept of 'international society as homogeneity' involves components of the above mentioned historical sociological contribution to neo-realism, Mayall's interpretation of international society in relation to nationalism, and Risse's constructivist argument on the influence of the international normative context. Halliday considers 'international society as homogeneity' as similar to the above-discussed approaches in terms of the definition of 'international' as this notion implies the existence of shared values and the diffusion of ideas. The difference between Halliday's 'international society as homogeneity' and other approches is that, it entails a direct or indirect imposition of ideas and values – by great powers, states, media, international organisations, government institutions, or schools.[228] In an international society approach and in a constructivist approach, as well as in problem solving theories, shared norms rely on the idea that members of the international should be homogeneous, should believe in the same values and should have similar domestic governmental systems.[229] However, international homogeneity implies totality. This means that the domestic structures of states are directly connected to the interactions between states and to international society. As a result of the totality between the domestic and international spheres, states are under pressure to organise their political and social structure in a way that is similar to each other.[230]

International society as homogeneity, and the values and norms it creates and carries, shape and influence international interactions, policy decisions and the domestic structures of states, as well as the activities of non-state groups and organisations. It defines the prevalent values, norms and ideologies through which actors understand the world around them and interact with it. Certain values and norms created within globally powerful societies are reproduced within other societies and international or local organisations and this leads to the dissemination and reproduction of ideas and the similarity of social and political structures.[231] Global actors, such as international

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[228] Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, London: MacMillan, 1994, 122-23.

[229] *Ibid.*, 94-5.

[230] *Ibid.*, 95.

[231] *Ibid.*, 91, 122. Halliday's notion of 'international society as homogeneity' develops upon three historical ideas: Burke's argument that the political and social norms of societies and stability rely on the common acceptance of these norms in domestic arrangements; Marx's spread of capitalism that renders individual societies alike, in other words, reproduces similar societies; and, Fukuyama's force of culture, dissemination of Western values and spread of the belief that Western is more successful. Fred Halliday, 'International Society as Homogeneity: Burke, Marx, Fukuyama,' *Millennium- Journal of International Studies*, December 1992, 21: 435-461; 114-119. The contemporary assumption, that states with internal structures

organisations, define international values and ideas, as well as utilising and enforcing them. International organisations formed after WWII, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, were based on the interwar ideas of liberal internationalism. But they also have contributed to the institutionalisation of those ideas and principles. Therefore, 'international society as homogeneity' explains the conditions for a sub-state nationalist group or movement to challenge a state's policies or jurisdiction through engaging in international actions and seeking international support. In order to do this, these groups use the dominant international ideas and norms to justify their cause and actions.

Daniel Philpott's 'constitution of international society' is another concept that is useful in explaining how sub-state nationalist groups are linked to the international level through the rules and norms available at the 'international'. Looking at three historical periods where the interaction of ideas played a particularly important role in bringing about change, such as the periods of Westphalia, the Reformation and decolonisation, Philpott describes the constitution of international society as a set of norms that are mutually agreed by political actors in the system and which define the relationships between polities in the system and their policies, and the conditions for authority and legitimacy.[232] Halliday also makes a similar point on the recognition and reproduction of norms and principles, however he approaches it differently. He assumes that ideas and norms are actually imposed, and whether they are followed or believed is less important. By imposition he does not mean that they are openly forced. Rather he says that these ideas are presented as the best way of doing things. Therefore there is an indirect, but equally effective, imposition. But for Philpott the ideas and norms are more consensual.

According to Philpott, constitutions of international society could take the form of a system of equal and independent states, or the form of supranational organisations such as the European Union. Constitutions have norms, such as 'stateless nations may become states', 'states may have colonies', 'colonies should achieve independence' or 'intervention in the affairs of another state is necessary and acceptable'.[233] Constitutional norms could be codified and regularly reaffirmed in official documents of international organisations, protocols, pacts and treaties, such as the UN Declarations, the Treaty of

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based on liberal democratic principles have peaceful interactions, echoes Doyle's theory, which builds on Kant's thinking (or a particular interpretation of his thinking) on the possibility of peace. Michael W. Doyle, 'Kant, liberal legacies and foreign affairs', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1983, 12 (3): 205–235 (Part I) and 12 (4): 323–353 (Part II).

[232] Philpott, 6, 12.

[233] *Ibid.*, 6, 22, 27.

Rome and the Maastricht Treaty. Sometimes norms are not codified and are not written in the texts of the treaties, but they could be embedded in the shared understandings of the parties that signed it, such as the idea of sovereign statehood during the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia.[234] There are also customary norms that are created as a result of certain actions. For example, intervention has become a permissible action since the end of the Cold War even though it has not been codified. It has gained legitimacy through the UN Security Council's approval. Therefore, for uncodified and customary constitutional norms to be effective they should be legitimate in the eyes of all international society and should be practiced.

Norms and ideas exert their influence on politics by converting people to new identities through 'reason of reflection' as a result of which people request new political conditions. Initially, entrepreneurs of ideas create new ideas or come up with new ways to utilise existing ideas, then these ideas start to diffuse through several channels such as discussions, writings, and speeches.[235] Ideas also affect the political decisions and aims of the heads of governments, lobbies, parties, unions, military groups, the armies they create, and the statements made by rulers of polities.[236] Ideas exert their influence on politics through publics (intellectual communities), government institutions, and the international context (a cosmopolitan layer of diplomats, national government officials, and officials from international organizations).[237] For example, self-determination was disseminated by Wilson and his team before, during and after the Paris Peace Conference that followed the end of WWI. This fits in well with Philpott's argument that heads of government have a particularly important role in creating and disseminating ideas. Manela explains the dissemination of the principle of self-determination during and after the WWI era by placing a strong emphasis on the role of President Wilson. In his compelling account of the Wilsonian Moment, he explains how Wilson's ideas for the post-war international order were formed and disseminated to the

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[234] *Ibid.*, 23.

[235] *Ibid.*, 53. This reminds Stage-A of Hroch's theory on nationalist movements. At Stage A ideas are created by the individuals and elites. Stage B is that of an elite political movement. Mass mobilisation takes place at Stage C. Hroch's Stage A and Philpott's 'reason of reflection' could explain how the idea of Kurdistan became part of Kurdish national identity. Miroslav Hroch, 'From national movement to the fully-formed nation: the nation-building process in Europe', *New Left Review*, March/April 1993, I/198: 3-20; Philpott also elaborates on this, 46, 71. For the diffusion of ideas look at Emanuel Adler and Peter Haas 'Conclusion: epistemic communities, world order, and the creation of a reflective research program,' *International Organization*, 1992, 46 (1): 367-390.

[236] Philpott, 46, 71

[237] *Ibid.*, 69-70. Philpott gives examples to these groups: intellectual communities – Protestant theologians or colonial nationalists in European universities); activist networks – preachers and town leaders who spread the Reformation ideas or anticolonial lobbies in Britain.

rest of the world.[238] According to Manela, the nationalist activists inside and outside Europe in the post-WWI era adopted Wilson's rhetoric. They adjusted Wilson's principles to their own perceptions, goals, and circumstances and disseminated them via publications, pamphlets, and newspapers within their community.[239]

Overall, a combination of an historical sociological understanding of the domestic aspects of states and non-state actors, acknowledging the role of interest and power in shaping politics, an international society approach that emphasises the role of norms, institutions and rules in the constitution of the international, and Risse's constructivism that assigns a greater role for independent norms and the ideational context, is necessary to explain the multi-faceted cases of self-determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups. This thesis does not aim to make any normative statement.[240] It merely seeks to show the validity and necessity of incorporating multiple theoretical views to understand and explain why some sub-state groups use self-determination in connection with human rights and democracy discourses.

Through adopting an eclectic approach, the thesis aims to make a number of different insights. Firstly, it argues that the meaning of self-determination associated with the norms of human rights and democratic rights is adopted by some sub-state nationalist groups because there is an emerging international normative framework that perceives the use of this meaning of self-determination as legitimate. This normative framework can be observed in the way international legal documents and UN resolutions have evolved. Secondly, through adopting a realist perspective, it shows that this international normative framework fits in well with the political interests and aims of the Kurdish leadership. Thirdly, it emphasises that a sufficient understanding of the case of Kurdish claims for self-determination requires an awareness of historically contingent economic, political and social factors. This view challenges the assumption that Kurdish nationalism has been a consistent and unchanging movement throughout history. Additionally, an historical focus helps to explain the causes for the changes Kurdish nationalism has gone through and analyses these reasons within a domestic and

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[238] Manela, 1-7.
[239] *Ibid.*, 13. Manela, looking at the WWI process, discusses the dissemination of the Wilsonian principle of self-determination and the ideas and policies related to this principle. By adopting this principle, many groups of peoples who requested the recognition of their right to self-determination acted as couriers in the dissemination of the idea of self-determination. *Ibid.*, 8. Also see Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*, New York: Random House, 2002, 410-426 mentioned in Manela, 33-34.
[240] For a discussion on the moral and ethical aspects of self-determination and nationalism see Cherry Bradshaw, *Bloody Nations: Moral Dilemmas for Nations, States and International Relations*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

international political and normative context.[241] This chapter now turns to elaborating on the argument in relation to self-determination by using the varied theoretical framework explained in the previous pages. Other points will be illustrated in the next chapters.

The Conceptual Framework to Understand Sub-State Nationalist Groups' Self-Determination Claims

Self-determination has had different political, legal and philosophical meanings since it first emerged as a concept in direct connection to popular sovereignty and nationalism in the late eighteenth century. The focus here is on a particular meaning of self-determination that gives legitimacy to the break-up of nation-states for the formation of new states or for the establishment of new administrative systems (in the form of autonomous regions, federal systems or local political authorities) within a state. Claims for the application of this meaning of self-determination are usually justified by making a claim to ethnic, linguistic and cultural distinctiveness by the sub-state nationalist groups that seek self-determination (e.g. Kurds, Kosovars, South Ossetians, Sikhs, and others). Therefore, this focus on the notion of self-determination in relation to Kurdish nationalism excludes understandings of self-determination used in the post-imperial, post-decolonisation, and post-USSR contexts.

Such a conceptual focus reflects the aim to understand and explain the parallel between the way sub-state nationalist groups define their right to self-determination and the way certain members of international society (the UN, certain government officers, some scholars and international newspapers) perceive ethnically-defined self-determination claims. Sub-state nationalist groups and certain members of international society understand self-determination in the context of the norms of human and democratic rights. Since the early decades of the twentieth century, national self-determination has been the key route to changing status for the Kurdish nationalist elite and many other nationalist groups. They have seen self-determination as a principle that could potentially make them rulers and, in their view, liberate them and bring recognition to their national identity. They have seen democratic struggle as necessary for their national, as well as individual, dignity, and perceive a close connection between their dignity as human beings and the recognition of their existence as a distinct

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[241] Barkin and Cronin argues that the rise in nationalist claims of sub-state groups and their ability to challenge the sovereign integrity of states happens during periods when international order changes rapidly. Barkin and Cronin, 114.

community. Therefore, for nationalists, their national struggle is crucial to satisfy their desire for recognition.[242] Only a liberal democratic system would enable such recognition, for it provides the most suitable conditions for the needs of these groups.[243] In this context, self-determination appears as a liberal, democratic and progressive route for aspiring nations. Almost all nationalist groups, including Kurdish nationalists, justify their aspiration to form a state or to attain autonomy through reference to democratic national self-determination.

However, a struggle for democracy that is directly linked to protecting a specific identity entails also an exclusion of other identities from the future planned territory because the task of 'self-redefinition' for peoples involves division and the creation of smaller units.[244] In relation to sub-state nationalist groups' claims, self-determination refers to an ethnic, primordial and perennial interpretation of nationhood, rather than a modern and civic interpretation.[245] Nationalist movements that derive their understanding of nationhood from ethnic and primordial conceptions use self-determination to seek democratic liberation. Achieving this aspiration entails international recognition as a distinct identity with a specific territory and exclusion of other identities from claims to that territory as a homeland. Sub-state separatist groups claiming their right to statehood through self-determination pitch the territory they claim as an ethnic territory, as a space to which they attach their identity and desire full control over it.[246]

In this sense, liberal democratisation and primordialist/ethnicist nationalist assumptions become indispensable for each other. Therefore, in the case of sub-state nationalist groups' claims for self-determination, a link emerges between liberal democracy and ethnic nationalism. This link is revealed in legal definitions of the right to national self-determination and in the norms of democratic rights and human rights, as well as in the sub-state nationalist groups' use of this conception of self-determination for their political purposes. Hence, this thesis argues that primordial and ethnic interpretations of national identity are deeply embedded within national self-

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[242] Halliday, *Rethinking*, 118.

[243] Nodia, 15-16.

[244] Bishai, 117. Bishai provides a normative reading of the relationship between secession, self-determination and liberalism and emphasises the 'exclusionary character of self-determination'. She argues that this exclusionary character is in contrast with the inclusionary character of liberal democracy. Also see Thomas M. Franck, 'Tribe, nation, world: self-identification in the evolving international system', *Ethics and International Affairs*, 1997, 11: 151-169, 152.

[245] Scholarly perspectives on the meaning of nation explained in Chapter 2.

[246] Knight, 'Identity and territory', 526. Knight argues that most claimants of self-determination right embrace such an understanding of territory, which is 'clearly provocative'. Knight, 'Territory and people', 251.

determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups. In this sense, sub-national, minority or ethnic groups' desires to determine their political future in order to have a political entity congruent with their identity,[247] and presenting this using claims to liberal democracy, is connected with an ethnic/primordial self-projection.[248]

This thesis uses 'ethnic territories' to refer to the territories claimed by groups that define their identities in ethnic terms. The notion of 'ethnic territory' can be explained by the increasing popularity of the understandings of nationhood that see the nation as a primordial and universal ethnic entity. Such understandings serve as a suitable intellectual justification for Kurdish nationalists and other sub-state nationalists.[249] Vali argues that, in the Kurdish case, the primordialist and ethnicist conception of nationhood is 'nurtured by an established trend in nationalist scholarship' that perceives the political claims of Kurdish nationalists as the objective manifestation of the national will latent in history'.[250] As explained in Chapter 2 ethnicist approaches in nationalism studies also adopt similar conceptions. For instance, Smith perceives the core of ethnic communities as ancient social formations that have persisted in modern times and admits that his conception of ethnicity is mildly 'primordialist'.[251] This conception is particularly obvious in the way Smith perceives the territorial features of nations and their right over their claimed territory.

Smith's argument regarding the importance of territorial memories in the construction of national identities is quite convincing. The territory and its past are indeed central to nationalism, and nationalists see the territory as the holder of the past.[252] Smith calls this the 'territorialisation of memory' in which specific places such as sacred sites, mountains, battlefields, tombs and monuments come to define definite territories and 'ethnospaces'.[253] Smith accepts that territory is socially constructed and that it is humans who give meaning to that territory. But he seems to assume that

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[247] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.
[248] Whether this link is auspicious or not is another question. Offering assumptions on the possible detrimental implications of this link is beyond the scope of this thesis.
[249] Vali, 'Genealogies', 60, note 2. An example of such perceptions from a recent study on the Kurds: 'As inhabitants of the same land for 4,000 years, the Kurds are recognized for their distinctive characteristics.' Charaountaki, 32-33.
[250] Vali, 'Genealogies', 61.
[251] Anthony D. Smith, 'States and homelands: the social and geopolitical implications of national territory', *Millennium*, 1981, 10: 187-202, 188 and see endnote 7 in p. 200. In this endnote Smith states that he adopts a mildly 'primordialist' definition and departs from anthropologists and sociologists such as Barth. Barth is critical of defining ethnicity as a given. See Fredrik Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969. Hobsbawm criticises such conception of ethnicity and argues that it has a racial constituent stemming from common origin. Hobsbawm, 63.
[252] James Anderson, 'Nationalist ideology', 24.
[253] Smith, 'Culture', 454.

specific territorial associations asserted by nationalists are given and he argues that their assertions should have an implication on the political life of a group of people. Smith does not consider this as particularly destabilising. Contrarily, he argues that the failure to implement the national ideal is what provokes instability.[254] Other scholars also have argued that ethnic group identity should be the decisive factor in re-drawing territorial boundaries, and that new political maps should accommodate the nationalist aspirations of new peoples and create boundaries that make the political and ethnic boundaries consistent.[255] Within this framework, creating homogenous ethnic boundaries appears as the best way for the establishment of stable democratic regimes that are respectful to the human rights of collectivities and individuals.

There is a reasonably large body of literature that illustrates this connection. An example is Yael Tamir's *Liberal Nationalism*.[256] Tamir argues that the doctrines of nationalism and liberalism are actually based on a broad consensus. They '[b]oth share the view that free, rational, and autonomous human beings are capable of exercising full responsibility for the conduct of their lives, and both share a belief in the human ability to attain self-rule, self-expression, and self-development.'[257] The capabilities of an autonomous and free individual can be better supported within a cultural community where belonging, loyalty, and solidarity are experienced and where individuals are allowed 'to live within the culture of their choice, to decide on their social affiliations, to re-create the culture of the society they belong to, and to redefine its borders', and requests to have such a cultural space is at the core of the right to self-determination.[258] Tamir supports the use of cultural interpretations of nationhood and the abandonment of the civic interpretation. She argues that civic nation states ignore the existence of different national groups within their jurisdictions. Therefore, she advocates the creation

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[254] Smith writes, "habitat, folkways, extent and location as territorial 'givens', the objective data, so to speak, from which the nationalist, who wants to create or sustain a 'nation', must set out and with which he must work if he is to succeed in his self-appointed task." Smith, 'States and homelands', 191, 199.

[255] See Tamir; White, 19. The examples White gives for these cases are '[r]eunification of Germany, de facto secession of Kurdistan from Iraq, the possible secession of East Timor from Indonesia, the possible unification of North and South Korea, of Moldova and Romania, the secession of Eritrea from Somalia, dismemberment of the Soviet Union, secession and independence of Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia, secession and independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina from Yugoslavia, the partition of Czechoslovakia, the possible secession of Quebec from Canada.' 242. However, the world does not consist of hundreds of individually homogenous nations with clearly bounded territories. Even the existing nation-states are rarely culturally homogenous. Peter J. Taylor (ed.), Introduction, *Political Geography of the Twentieth Century: A Global Analysis*, 1993, London: Belhaven Press, 5-6.

[256] For other examples see Isaiah Berlin, *John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life*, London: Council of Christians and Jews, 1960; Claude Galipeau, *Isaiah Berlin's Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; Kacowicz; White.

[257] Tamir, 4, 16-17.

[258] *Ibid.*, 5-9.

of new political entities in the form of new states, autonomous regions or pluralistic societies that adopt liberal nationalism which appreciates both the particular (cultural) and the universal (human rights) rights of the individuals.[259]

Since Tamir believes that it is only through the preservation of their distinct cultural identity that individuals can protect and maintain their national identity and rights, she argues that the idea of a homogeneous nation-state can no longer meet the political and social challenges of the twenty-first century, such as social, economic and political upheavals, migrations and minorities.[260] Even though members of national minorities in liberal democracies – Quebecois and the Indians in Canada, the Aborigines in Australia, or the Basques in France – enjoy political rights, such as participation, speech, press, assembly and association, they may still not feel part of the society they live in because their government reflects a different political and communal culture than their own. Therefore, for Tamir, the expression of communal identity in a relevant political space is necessary for an individual to have a meaningful life and security of one's communal identity. In short, a political culture that members can identify with, is necessary.[261]

This form of nationalism and a desire for self-determination is very similar to the goals followed by what Franck defines as '*tribalist*-nationalism'. Tribalist-nationalism aims to reconstruct states 'along the lines of a dominant or exclusive mutually

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[259] *Ibid.*, 4, 57, 69-70, 143-44. For explanation on civic-ethnic distinction see Chapter 2.

[260] *Ibid.*, 58- 62, 76-77, 83-84. Tamir argues that existence of different specific nations should be appreciated and their aim to attain recognition should be understood as an effort to become equal members of the family of nations. 90. This idea is also developed in Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983, 159.

[261] Tamir, 72-74. Indeed, especially in societies where severe ethnic divisions are prevalent, exclusion from the decision-making processes is generally seen as exclusion from the community. Donald L. Horowitz, 'Democracy in divided societies', in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.), *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994, 35-55, 35. However, cultural self-determination may become a manipulative tool in the hands of authoritarian leaders, or, ethnic and national feelings can be used to gain popular support as happened in many old communist countries, or in Germany when national socialists were in power. Vesna Pešić, 'The cruel face of nationalism', Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.), *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994, 132-135, 133. Even though Tamir attempts to distinguish 'liberal nationalism' from extreme ideologies of the 1930-40s, a focus on cultural self-fulfilment and recognition of distinct characteristics bears the potential to instigate ethnicist-racist perceptions within societies. Tamir, 144. Moreover, for Tamir nation is based on objective cultural characteristics, such as blood, shared history, defined territory, race, and individual self-consciousness of belonging to a distinct identity. Such a conception of national identity has the potential to trap individuals in a political context defined by their bio-cultural circumstances, which goes against the liberal idea of 'individual choice.' Lastly, Tamir does not offer any criteria in defining objective characteristics to nations, which is in itself an almost impossible task anyway. As a result, liberal nationalism appears as a method to create ethnically pure communities, which has the potential to cause political and ethnic polarisation, as well as deportations and refugees. For an analysis of the refugee-creating effect of attempting to create homogenous national states since the end beginning of the nineteenth century see Aristide Zolberg, 'The formation of new states as a refugee-generating process', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, May 1983, 467 (1): 24-38, 28.

compatible ethnonational community' such as the Quebecois, the Ashanti (Ghana), the Sikhs, or the Bavarians, the Serbs, the Hutus, the Scots, the Welsh, the Kashmir region, the Karen region of Burma, the Basques.[262] Franck defines the term 'tribe' as a substitute for 'nation' because he states that tribe also means a community that is conscious of their common ethnic, social and cultural identity, and 'tribalism' means a community's 'desire to preserve, enhance, and give political content to their perception of group identity'.[263] Franck argues that many of these nationalisms are driven by the idea of creating a single homogenous nation rather than being in response to injustices.[264] He draws attention to the UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali's warning of the possibility of 'brutal ethnic, religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife' caused by these types of movements.[265]

Notions of liberal nationalism and cultural self-determination illustrate the link between liberal democracy and ethnic/primordial conceptions of national identity. This link is suitably applicable to sub-state nationalist groups' claims about their identity and desire for self-determination. In this context, the 'consent of the governed' is seen as the 'consent of the distinct people'. Ethnic, national, and cultural characteristics are perceived as natural or given characteristics. The purpose of self-determination appears not only as the determination of the political but, more importantly, as the assertion of the national (defined in ethnic and cultural terms) existence and the aspiration for international recognition. In this sense, defining the self becomes crucial for sub-state nationalist groups. Identifying the distinctiveness of a community requires the division, differentiation and particularisation of peoples along ethno-cultural-national lines. Therefore, the self-determination principle in relation to sub-state nationalist groups appears and functions in a way that implies the 'determination of the self' or the right to express and deploy a linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic or territorial 'self-national identity'. Moreover, a sub-state nationalist group's self-determination claim derives its justification from universal human rights and political and cultural rights.[266] Such groups argue that their nation can have a meaningful life only if their cultural and ethnic distinctiveness is recognised in a political environment compatible with their identity and which gives them the chance to experience and cherish their distinctiveness and gain entry to the international world of states as a recognised distinct national identity.

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[262] Franck, 'Tribe, nation', 162-66.
[263] *Ibid.*, 160.
[264] *Ibid.*, 166
[265] *An Agenda for Peace*, A/47/277 and S/277, June 17, 1992, 3 quoted in Franck, 'Tribe, nation', 166.
[266] Mayall, *Nationalism*, 41.

As explained in the previous chapter, the evolution of the meaning and interpretation of self-determination in legal documents also seems to indicate an increasing emphasis on the cultural and human rights of communities linked to their claims for self-determination. The 1975 Helsinki Accord also builds upon the UN Charter and makes it clear that self-determination is a right of peoples. Principle VIII says that 'participating States will respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination … all peoples have the right, in full freedom, to determine, when and as they wish, their internal and external political status, without external interference, and to pursue as they wish their political, economic, social and cultural development'.[267] However, it is not clear what is meant with 'people' in the articles of these international covenants - a population of a state or any group that includes minorities and ethnic groups?

The principle of self-determination is further strengthened by some other recent international texts. Principles IV and VIII of the Helsinki Accord talk about respecting the territorial integrity of each of the participating states. But on the other hand, Principle VII requires that states should respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, should act in conformity with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and with the relevant norms of international law. The 1990 Charter of Paris repeats similar statements.[268] These statements are in line with the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations which states that the territorial integrity of the states should be respected as long as those states act in compliance with the principle of self-determination and therefore have 'a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction as to race, creed or colour.'[269] More recently, UN Security Council Resolution 1542 (2004) stated that self-determination is only applicable 'in respect of a territory which is geographically separate and is distinct ethnically and/or culturally from the country administering it'.[270] Overall, since the 1970s and through these documents the secessionist potential of self-determination has been highlighted in a way that challenges existing sovereign structures. In this sense, these legal statements imply that when

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[267] Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States, *International Legal Materials* 1975, 14, p. 1292.
[268] Shaw, 482.
[269] *Ibid.*, 482-83.
[270] Franck, 'Postmodern tribalism', p. 10.

internal self-determination is not achievable, external self-determination in the form of secession could be acceptable. [271]

The political uses of the concept of self-determination also seem to indicate an increasing emphasis on the cultural and human rights of peoples claiming national self-determination.[272] These uses of self-determination can be understood through the concept of 'international society as homogeneity' which, as already discussed, indicates that certain values and norms are globally created and reproduced within other societies and international or local organisations.[273] Global actors contribute to the process of defining and deploying certain values over others. In return, other actors, both state and non-state, use or reject these norms and values for their own political aims and interests. These rules, and norms disseminate and become part of the political decisions and interactions between state officials in international negotiations, conferences and treaties, and therefore come to define legitimate or illegitimate political entities and actions.

Developments and trends in the international political arena occur not only within the context of contingent historical, political, economic and social determinants but also within an international context of rules, values, norms and institutions. As Hedley Bull argues, the international is not only constituted by states and organisations, but also by rules, norms and institutions that are embedded into the international order and shape and affect the behaviour of its actors.[274] Rules, common practices and norms define what is just or unjust conduct and the rights that states, individuals and groups are entitled to in the international arena.[275] As certain ideas and norms are adopted by states and international organisations, and the more they are expressed in their official and political statements and declarations, the more these ideas and norms become part

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[271] Shaw, 'Peoples, territorialism and boundaries', p. 483. Also see Antonio Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 120. Self-determination refers to 'participatory democracy: the right to decide the form of government and the identity of rulers by the whole population of a state and the right of a population group within the state to participate in decision making at the state level. Internal self-determination can also mean the right to exercise cultural, linguistic, religious or (territorial) political autonomy within the boundaries of the existing state. By external self-determination (described by some as "full" self-determination) is meant the right to decide on the political status of a people and its place in the international community in relation to other states, including the right to separate from the existing state of which the group concerned is a part, and to set up a new independent state.' pp. 12-13 ('The Implementation of The Right to Self-determination as a Contribution to Conflict Prevention', International Conference of Experts, organised by the UNESCO Division of Human Rights, Democracy and Peace and the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia, 21-27 November 1998, Barcelona.

[272] For a discussion on the differences and similarities between the legal right to self-determination and the political expression of the doctrine see Shaw, 'Peoples, Teritorialism and Boundaries', p. 479.

[273] Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, p. 122.

[274] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 51-73.

[275] Terry Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of Sates*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, 34.

of a reification and institutionalisation process.[276] Self-determination for nationalist groups has become one such norm.[277]

In this context, self-determination claims by sub-state nationalist groups and movements have become more acceptable, especially when these claims are connected to the abuse of human rights and the cultural, political and economic rights of the group, and the non-democratic policies of the state they reside in. Some scholars argue that liberal postulates are becoming linked to the interests of all states and international society. For instance, Kegley argues that liberal and idealist assumptions are now more respected by states. Therefore, he suggests that international political theory should aim to develop 'neo-idealism' in order to re-define realism in line with liberal and idealist values.[278] The neo-idealism he talks about is linked to Wilsonian idealism which saw self-determination as directly connected to international stability and foresaw an international mechanism as being necessary for the protection of human rights and minority rights.[279] International stability in Wilsonian thought is linked to the type of government at the domestic level, not to the structure of the international system or the relationship between the states.[280]

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[276] Adler, 'Seizing the middle', 340.

[277] Barkin and Cronin argue that when nationalist claims do not meet the jurisdictional borders of the state, national self-determination provides legitimation for the alteration of borders. Barkin and Cronin, 111. Barkin and Cronin use the concept of 'legitimation' defined by Claude. According to Claude in particular eras different concepts of legitimation may become dominant, such as balance of power or dynastic conservatism in the past. In the modern era national self-determination has become the basis for a legitimate state authority. Inis L. Claude, Jr., 'Collective legitimization as a political function of the United Nations', *International Organization*, September 1966, 20: 367-169, 367.

[278] Charles W. Kegley, Jr., 'The neoidealist moment in international studies? Realist myths and the new international realities", *International Studies Quarterly*, 1993, 37 (2): 131-146, 142.

[279] As defined by Kegley, 134-142. Also mentioned in Peter Wilson, '*The Twenty Years' Crisis* and the Category of 'Idealism' in International Relations', in David Long and Peter Wilson (eds.), *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, 1-24, 11. The Wilsonian idealism or liberalism is linked to the inter-war liberalism or 'Utopianism' as defined by Carr who provided a realist critique of the utopian thinking of inter-war liberal internationalists. Carr, 25-36. Most significant thinkers that are considered within the liberal internationalist thinking of the inter-war era are Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion: A Study of the Relation of Military Power to National Advantage,* London: Heinneman, 1933; Leonard Woolf., *International Government*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1916 and Leonard Woolf (ed.), *The Intelligent Man's Way to Prevent War*, London: Gollancz, 1933; Alfred E. Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law*, 1918-1935, London: Macmillan, 1936. Their ideas were followed by supporters of scientific methods to studying international politics after WWII. Morgenthau defines this trend as 'contemporary utopianism' and argues that scholars who pursue this method believe that 'the world is thoroughly accessible to science and reason' and harmonious cooperation is possible when science detects the elements that lead to cooperation. Morgenthau, p. 43. The terms such as 'good frontier', 'scientific tariff', 'plebiscites', 'geopolitics' reflect these scientific propositions that were widely accepted since WWI. Morgenthau, 46.

[280] See Michael Doyle, 'Liberalism and world politics revisited', in Charles W. Kegley Jr. (ed.), *Controversies in International Relations Theory: Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995, 83-106. Waltz's neo-realism theory is based on the assumption that the structure of the system defines the relations between the units of the system. Waltz's theory assumes that all units are identical and their domestic structure is irrelevant to the working of the international system. Waltz, 40.

Today the resurgence of Wilsonian idealism in international politics can be observed in the invocation of the Wilsonian paradigm by Western governments in order to justify international interventions such as Iraq in 1991 and 2003 and Serbia in 1999.[281] Lynch indicates that nationalist leaders and their democratic supporters in Slovenia, Croatia and the Baltic states have often used the Wilsonian paradigm to legitimize and mobilize support from Western countries for their secession in the early 1990s.[282] Therefore, Wilson's attempt to create a new international order after WWI, his ability to convince other great powers about his world vision, the appeal of his ideas to groups and peoples outside Europe, and the creation of the League of Nations (and subsequently the UN) are relevant to understand and explain issues today and they are very important factors in showing 'the relationship between democracy and nationalism.'[283] This relationship is particularly obvious in the increase in the number of issues related to self-determination in the last few decades. Wilson's call for self-determination for small nations about a century ago has turned into a framework that justifies micro-nationalisms since 1990s.[284] Lynch draws a parallel between Wilson and his supporters and post-Cold War liberals in the way they respond to nationalism cases.[285]

Moreover, the legitimacy of border alterations or changing the administrative system from a unitary state to a federal one, are perceived as related to the aim of achieving improvements in the areas of human rights and democratic governance based on ethnic distinctions. Therefore, there are parallels between the legitimacy of external self-determination and human rights and the statehood or autonomy claims of sub-state nationalist groups or movements based on a distinct cultural and ethnic identity. The national ethnicist interpretation of national identity is transforming into a notion that is widely accepted as the source of the nationalist sentiments of sub-state nationalist groups. There is increasing support for such cases from outsiders, particularly liberal Western states.[286]

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[281] Allen Lynch, "Woodrow Wilson and the principle of 'national self-determination': a reconsideration," *Review of International Studies*, 2000, 28: 419-436, 419.
[282] *Ibid.*, 421.
[283] *Idem.*
[284] Bruce Cumings, 'Still the American Century,' *Review of International Studies*, 1999, 25 (5): 271-299, 288.
[285] Lynch, 421-22.
[286] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, 11. Additionally, Hinsley argued that the nation as an ethnic or cultural group is primordial. Hinsley, 20. Moynihan and Hinsley support the idea that ethnic attachment is an important determinant in international politics.

The relationship between the norms of democracy and human rights and national self-determination can be observed in the support provided by some of the states, international organisations, lobbies, media and scholars to the humanitarian interventions in Northern Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. Interventionists presented these instances, as well as the Afghanistan and Iraq interventions, as humanitarian liberal actions.[287] For instance, Iraq is composed of different and conflicting sects and ethnic groups, and this division is reified through power-sharing between these groups in order to stabilise and democratise post-intervention Iraq. Behind this justification lies the liberal democratic assumption that the redivision of nation-state territories based on ethnic or cultural homogeneity is more suitable for creating and maintaining democratic regimes in multi-ethnic societies because it helps the establishment of democratic institutions that would enable avoiding the tyranny of the majority.[288] Therefore, the creation of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in Northern Iraq is generally seen as a positive step for the establishment of a liberal democratic regime in this region.

Humanitarianism and the implementation of self-determination for increasingly smaller communities have become widely accepted methods for realising those values and rules such as democratisation, peace building, enforcement of human rights and elections. The 1990 Conference on Security and Cooperation 'explicitly associated internal self-determination with Western-style democracy'.[289] The European Community declared that they would recognise the new republics emerging in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in the Soviet Union territories as long as their peoples enjoyed the right to internal self-determination.[290] The US announced that it expected self-determination claims to be based on a democratic political process in the dissolution of the USSR and Yugoslavia.[291] The European Community declared that it would recognise the new republics if they followed the rule of international law, human rights and democracy as described in the main international covenants, such as the UN

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[287] Michael Mann, 'The first failed empire of the 21st century,' *Review of International Studies*, 2004, 30: 631-653, 632.
[288] For an illustration of such arguments see Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. Gareth Stansfeld, 'Governing Kurdistan: The Strenghts of Division', in O'Leary e.al, *The Future of Kurdistan in Iraq*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, 195-218.

[289] Russell A. Miller, 'Self-determination in international law and the demise of democracy?', *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, 2003, 41 (3): 601-648, 624-627.
[290] Morton H. Halperin, David Sheffer and Patricia L. Small, *Self-Determination in the New World Order*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1992, 25-39.
[291] *Ibid.*, 31.

Charter, Helsinki Act and Charter of Paris.[292] Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and all the republics of the Soviet Union accepted these conditions and received international recognition.[293]

As a result, international recognition of self-determination as a principle that protects and maintains cultural identity and political freedom has practically become an international norm in practice.[294] This is evident especially in the last 20 years from cases such as parts of Eastern Europe as well as nationalist and secessionist or autonomist minority groups in modern states such as the Kurds, the Basques and the Catalans, East Timor, Eritrea, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, South Ossetia, Tamil Eelam, Abkhazia, and Somaliland.[295] Many of these groups demand independence claiming their dissatisfaction about their political status in the country in which they reside. According to Fabry, these demands correspond to the historical period starting from the 1950s, in which statehood through self-determination began to be understood as a legal right, whereas since 1895 statehood through self-determination was a de-facto process.[296] They correspond to what Doyle describes as a set of universal values that should be at the basis of all political organisations. The main value is peoples' right to express their identities in public forms, which requires national independence, the recognition of cultural identity and pluralism, and according to Doyle this value is directly related to democracy, participation, equality and self-determination.[297] States that fit in with these international norms, in other words, states that have achieved a balance between democracy, liberalism and nationalism, are deemed to be successful. Therefore, becoming like them and attaining a liberal democratic sovereign state, is seen as the only way to be part of international society and receive recognition.[298] As a result, international society perceives the democratic struggle of groups for national autonomy or independence as legitimate and progressive within a democracy and human rights

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[292] *Ibid.*, 33.

[293] *Ibid.*, 30-31. The remaining two republics, Serbia and Montenegro, formed a new federation of Yugoslavia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which 'regarded the disintegration of the SFRY as a process of serial secession' and 'claimed to be the exclusive legal and political continuator of the SFRY.' Carsten Stahn, 'The agreement on succession issues of the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia', *American Journal of International Law*, 2002, 96 (2): 379-397, 379-80.

[294] R. A. Mullerson, *International Law, Rights and Politics: Developments in Eastern Europe and the CIS*, London: Routledge, 1994, 61.

[295] Mikulas Fabry, *Recognizing States: International Society and the Establishment of New States since 1776*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, Electronic.

[296] Fabry argues it is hard to see a basis for group to attain their own state other than de facto statehood. Fabry, *Recognizing States: International Society and the Establishment of New States since 1776*.

[297] Michael Doyle, 'A more perfect union? The liberal peace and the challenge of globalization', *Review of International Studies*, 2000, 26 (5): 81-94, 92-94.

[298] Nodia, 21. Echoes Halliday's idea of 'international society as homogeneity.'

framework. This helps to explain the levels of international support and sympathy for the Kurdisth cause and their claims to national self-determination through autonomy or secession. For instance, the KRG was created with the support of international society, and federalism based on a regional or ethnic basis is often suggested by the EU as a solution to Turkey's Kurdish issue.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the meaning sub-state nationalist groups attribute to self-determination is linked to a specific international normative context defined by the norms of democracy and human rights for groups with distinct cultural, linguistic and ethnic characteristics. This chapter advocated the use of multiple theoretical frameworks for understanding such cases. Firstly, sub-state nationalist groups are active within an international context. This international context reflects the totality of domestic and international spheres. It involves norms and rules that define legitimate and illegitimate actions and reflects the interaction of states, non-state actors and international norms. Self-determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups and the way their claims are received by actors in international society cannot be understood without an awareness of the norms and rules that legitimates international actors and their activities. This also requires a definition of the concept of 'international actor' in a broad sense so that it incorporates states and all types of non-state actors (including sub-state groups and diasporas) in international society. Therefore, a theoretical approach that allows, on one hand, an awareness of individual social, political and historical structures and the context in which sub-state groups exist and, on the other hand, an awareness of the grand historical context in which movements and ideas emerge, evolve, and change is required.

In relation to the key concept of the thesis - national self-determination - the chapter argued that national self-determination relies on liberal principles such as self-rule and democracy, but at the same time it reifies primordially defined features of national identity. Liberal democracy and national self-determination are two important principles enshrined within current international affairs, both in legal and political contexts. Powerful state governments, heads of committees of international organisations, lobbies, powerful individuals and companies that have interests in certain policy decisions of states, international media, and scholars carry and generate the ideas, values and norms prevalent in the international framework. Dominant norms adopted

by most of international society, especially the right to self-determination, perceive nation-states with liberal democratic regimes as legitimate and respectable members of international society. However this particular meaning of the self-determination principle seems to refer to national identity as a cultural and ethnic phenomenon, especially in relation to sub-state nationalist groups. The meaning of self-determination adopted by these groups and some of international society legitimates the claims to form new political entities based on distinct cultural characteristics. As a result, this normative framework provides suitable conditions for the promotion of such claims and sometimes also creates the circumstances for their realisation. This is why Kurdish nationalists that promote Kurdish claims, especially those in the diaspora, and the map of Kurdistan as the Kurdish homeland, manage to generate support and sympathy for their cause among would-be nationals and in international society.

Chapter 4: Kurdish Nationalism and Kurdistan Until WWI

Introduction

This chapter is about Kurdish society and the concept of Kurdistan in the history until WWI, and how Kurdish nationalists and the scholarship interpret the historical events related to the Kurdish society and historical uses of the notion of Kurdistan. It aims to illustrate the historical, political and social reasons for why territorial feature is prominent for Kurdish nationalists and to show the importance of territory and tribal structure in the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism.

Kurdish nationalists have a strong attachment to their place of origin and, to a great extent, to the concept of Kurdistan. The concept of Kurdistan has served as an influential instrument for Kurdish nationalist ideology. Kurdish nationalists, similar to other nationalist groups, interpret any past data that indicates Kurdish ethnic existence in a way that applies to a wide territory and to a very long and continuous Kurdish habitation in this area. They imagine this territory as a unified territory that has remained more or less unchanged in its extent and content throughout history, but which was unfairly divided by the emergence of modern states in the last century. This perception is generally adopted by Kurdish nationalists and by some outsiders alike, including Kurdish sympathisers, some scholars, journalists and certain government agencies in international society. This claim is facilitated through the general assumption that Kurdistan is a given feature of Kurdish identity, not a national aspiration, and that the history of the region is identical to the history of Kurdish nation.

Kurdish and non-Kurdish academic historiography on the Kurds deploy contemporary conceptions of national territory on the concept of Kurdistan that was used in the past to define administrative or geographic regions. Their contemporary conception of national territory is loaded with ethnicist interpretations of Kurdish territory and national identity. Ethnicist understandings of nations see territory as a given feature of national groups, therefore strengthen and give credibility to the Kurdish nationalist claim that Kurdistan is a historical and ethnic homeland. This chapter does not discuss the credibility of the Kurdish nationalist claims on Kurdistan but merely aims to show that ethnicist assumptions on nations and their territories facilitate positive reception of Kurdish claims by providing a historical background for the imporantcec of territory in Kurdish society and its importance for Kurdish nationalism. This

historical context will help explain why Kurdish nationalists' claim to an ethnically-defined territory and national self-determination has generated support among would-be nationals and in international society.

This chapter looks at the status of Kurds and the region they resided in the Ottoman Empire and discusses territorial and tribal attachments in Kurdish society. It argues that territorial focus of the Kurdish elite and the tribal structure led to the late emergence of Kurdish nationalism. It argues that, Kurdish nationalism emerged out of a negotiation between tribal leaders' understandings of their interest over a territory and nationalist ideas about the idea of a Kurdish state within the context of the transformations in the region before and during WWI. Additionally, Kurdish elites' aim for territorial control and their frustration over inability to have control over that territory have been the main drivers of Kurdish nationalism.[299]

The first section of the chapter examines the definitions and uses of Kurdistan in the history and the debates in the literature on the origins of Kurds and the emergence of Kurdish nationalism and shows that Kurdish tribal leadership's strong attachment to their own tribal territorial dominion was a highly important factor in the timing and development of Kurdish nationalism.[300] It also discusses major Kurdish activities until 1918, particularly the Kör Muhammed, Bedirhan and Ubeydullah movements, with the aim to show the importance of desire for control within a defined territory among the Kurdish leadership. The second section of the chapter looks at the process through which Kurdish nationalism emerged and diversified, and provides an account of the way in which Kurdish nationalist movements have used the concept of Kurdistan. Following on this, Chapter 5 discusses the emergence of Kurdish nationalism in the early post-WWI period in the midst of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Great powers' intervention in the region and the debates that took place on the creation of a Kurdistan along the lines of the old Ottoman territories.

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[299] Kurdish nationalist historiography considers the existence of certain Ottoman administrative regions governed by local tribal elites and the existence of the notion of Kurdistan in historical texts as indicators of existence of a distinct Kurdish national identity in the past, which justifies their claims for a future Kurdish state. Overall, in the related literature territorial claims can be justified in mainly three ways: 1) Through decolonisation and *uti possidetis*; 2) Through effective control of the area through annexation; 3) Through claims on distinct ethnic identity therefore self-determination right in the form of secession. Kurdish claims for the creation of Kurdistan primarily fall into this last category.

[300] Tribal territorial mentality, although less prevalent now, still influences the contemporary situation of Kurdish nationalism as observed in the Barzani-Talabani rivalry in Northern Iraq until recently.

Kurdish Society and the Use of the Notion of Kurdistan in the Ottoman Empire

Brief Historical Background

The earliest use of the term Kurdistan in historical documents goes back to the twelfth century when Selçuklu Sultan Sancar created a province (administrative unit) called Kurdistan in 1157.[301] This province was located in the eastern parts of the Zagros Mountains. Its capital was Bahar and it encompassed the *vilayet*s of Sinjar, Shahrazur, Dinawer and Kermanshah.[302] It was governed by the Sultan's nephew Süleyman Shah as the Selçuklu Empire preferred to administer its provinces through Turkoman officers.[303] The province covers parts of the territories of modern Iraq and Iran and indicates a very small area compared to the desired borders of Kurdistan today.[304]

The Mongol invasion that started in the twelfth century was the beginning of a period of departure and nomadic life for many people in the region.[305] During the Mongol devastations throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and Tamerlane's

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[301] Houston, 19-20. The Selçuklu State was the dominant power in the area, encompassing today's more or less Eastern Anatolia, Syria, the Arabian peninsula, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Selçuklu dominance began after Alp Arslan's victory over Armenia and Byzantium in the 1071 Malazgirt War. There are also arguments in the literature for an even earlier use of the concept of Kurdistan. The Kurdish scholar Pirbal argues that Ali Kashari, a Central Asian geographer, used the notion of 'the land of the Kurds' as early as in 1076 and provided a cartographic definition of this land. O'Shea, 165 from Farhad Pirbal, *A Cartographic Reading of Colonialism in Kurdistan* in Kurdish (Rebwun, No. 6, 1993). O'Shea writes that Ali Kashari's map was reproduced in G. Chailand & J.-P. Rageau, *A Strategic Atlas: Comparative Geopolitics of the World's Powers*, tr. T. Berrett, London: Harper Collins 1983, 62 in O'Shea, Note 11, 114. Nonetheless, there is a general agreement in the literature that the first official use of the term was the Kurdistan province created by the Selçuklus.

[302] Nezan, 10; McDowall, *Modern History*, 23.

[303] Nezan, 23.

[304] There are different interpretations in the literature on the creation of a Kurdistan province under Selçuklu rule. Kendal Nezan argues that this province was created because Sultan Sancar was already aware of the distinctive personality of the Kurdish people. Nezan, 10. Even though most scholars (Kurdish and non-Kurdish) often refer to Kendal Nezan's work as an academic source, Nezan does not have an academic career (he is a nuclear physicist by profession). He is an active Kurdish nationalist in the diaspora and is the president of the Kurdish Institute of Paris and a board member of the Washington Kurdish Institute, two most active Kurdish political institutions founded by Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora. However, Özoğlu, argues that the creation of the Kurdistan province was not due to ethnic considerations. Özoğlu refers to the accounts of Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazvin, who indicate that the province did not include major Kurdish populated towns and that it simply was an administrative arrangement. Özoğlu argues that it is unclear why the Selçuklu State called the province Kurdistan but it is clear that the Kurds themselves did not create the term. Özoğlu, 26-27. Also see Baki Tezcan "The Development of the Use of "The development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a geographical description and the incorporation of this region into the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century", in Kemal Çiçek (ed.), *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, Vol 3, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000, 540-53. Özoğlu, referring to Hasan Arfa, draws attention to the fact that Arabs gave the name to the people inhabiting the area, and the tribes in the region during the Arab invasions used the 'tribal or clan name of the particular region or valley they were living [in], or from the mountain chain along which they were nomadizing. Özoğlu, 27 quote from Arfa, 7. The earliest known historical documents on the region that Kurdish nationalists claim to be Kurdish homeland are the chronicles of Arab dynasties. These Arabic sources did not use the term 'Kurdistan' and referred to the region as Jibal (Mountain), Zozan (Summer Pastures), Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Özoğlu, 26.

[305] Chaliand, 23.

campaigns in the fourteenth century, many Kurdish and non-Kurdish tribes rejected urban civilisation, and at the same time agriculture declined. Therefore nomadic culture became dominant for centuries.[306] During this period the Kurds and other tribal communities spread out to the north and west, reaching both Greater and Lesser Armenia, and the Anatolian plateau.[307] This explains the existence of disparate and scattered small Kurdish tribal communities in southeast and northeast Anatolia. A nomadic way of life continued longer in this region than in surrounding areas because of constant upheaval and instability. A shift in the trade routes was another reason for the continuity of nomadicism because it resulted in the loss of economic importance of the region.[308] Due to more or less constant nomadic life until at least the mid-twentieth century, institutions and relations that would transcend the current fragmented status (linguistic, cultural and religious) of the Kurdish society did not emerge.

Until the sixteenth century, historical accounts do not indicate any significant development regarding the Kurds. From the mid-fifteenth century until the mid-sixteenth century the Ottomans and the Safavids had been in conflict for the control of Eastern Anatolia. After the Ottoman victory at Çaldıran (1514) over the Safavid Empire[309], the Ottoman Sultan Selim gained control of most of the region. He entrusted the integration of the Kurdish tribes into the Ottoman imperial system to Kurdish diplomat İdris Bitlisi. Following approaches through İdris Bitlisi before the conquest, many Kurdish emirs had already declared their allegiance in advance of Selim's invasion.[310] In the period after the occupation of eastern Anatolia and the victory at the Çaldıran war against the Safavids and the establishment of Ottoman authority in these areas, the rivalry between the Ottoman and Safavid empires defined the role of Kurdish tribes in this region. Kurdish tribes benefited from this rivalry, and some tribal confederations even enjoyed semi-autonomous status during the competition between the Ottomans and Safavids until mid-seventeenth century.

With the signing of the 1639 Zohab Treaty between the Ottomans and the Safavids, a clear borderline was drawn which has remained almost unchanged until today, apart from some small adjustments as a result of the 1980-1988 wars between

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[306] McDowall, *Modern History,* 24-5.
[307] O'Shea, 78; McDowall, *Kurds*, 8.
[308] McDowall, *Kurds*, 8.
[309] The order of the dynasties in Iran (also known as Persia) since the sixteenth century is as follows: Safavid 1501–1722; Afsharid 1735–1750; Zand 1750–1794; Qajar 1794 – 1925; Pahlavi 1925 – 1979 followed by the Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran.
[310] O'Shea, 80.

Iraq and Iran.[311] It was the first mutual acceptance of a broad border (over 100 miles) from the Zagros in the east to the Tigris in the west. This broad border is often considered as having provided a peripheral location for the Kurdish tribes.[312] This interpretation has become one of the key assumptions in Kurdish nationalist historiography.

After the consolidation of power in their peripheral territories, both the Ottomans and the Safavids gradually increased their dominance over the Kurdish tribes and principalities. Their centralisation policies were completed by late 1870s in the territories of both the Ottoman and Safavid Empires.

Past Uses of the Concept of Kurdistan

Kurdish nationalist historiography assumes that a nationalist state of mind has existed in history independent from the development of the Kurdish political ideology. It perceives Kurdish identity as a constant and distinct identity on a historic Kurdish territory that has been unjustly partitioned.[313] There is thus a clear attempt to link Kurdish identity etymologically to the historical inhabitants of the region. This is why the history of Kurdistan and the history of the Kurdish people are fused.[314] In the Kurdish case, as in almost all other nationalist ideologies, it is possible to observe the construction of an historical link between an ideal territory and people, and a reading of historical texts with today's conceptual framework.

The two issues widely debated in the literature on Kurdish nationalism are the origin of the Kurds and the emergence of Kurdish nationalism, and both these issues are directly connected to the territorial identity of Kurdish people.[315] For some scholars, defining the origin of the Kurds is crucial in analysing Kurdish identity and nationalism, because they believe that the historical origin of a nation is what actually determines it.[316] These scholars see a clear connection between an alleged Kurdish ethnic self-

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[311] Chaliand, 24.

[312] It is even argued that the Treaty of Zohab divided Kurdistan into two regions and allowed the empires to colonise and exploit the Kurdish people and their land. This perspective assumes that Kurdistan was an existing and united national territory but eventually divided by the Treaty of Zohab. Houston also raises a similar point on the reading of the Treaty from an ethnic point of view. Houston, 46-47.

[313] Cecil J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1971, 6 (1): 87-106, 88.

[314] They claim that the historical continuity of Kurdish people goes back to the time of the Medes and even to Gutis, even back to the Neanderthals. O'Shea, 65-66, 74. Izady's book is a striking example for such views. Mehrdad R. Izady, *The Kurds: A Concise Handbook*, Washington: Taylor and Francis International Publishers, 1992, pp. xiii-xiv, 32-72.

[315] Abbas Vali judiciously elaborates on this debate. Vali, 'Introduction', *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, 1-39.

[316] Such as Chaliand, Hassanpour, Izady, Jwaideh and Nezan. Abbas Vali defines them as the 'nationalist scholarship'. Vali, 'Genealogies', 59-60.

consciousness in the past and a Kurdish identity and nationalism at present. For instance, two historical texts – *Şerefname* (1596) and *Mem u Zin* (1695) – are widely used as indicators of the existence of a nationalist state of mind (awareness of distinct national identity) back in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to show that historically Kurds were aware of their distinct ethnic and national identity.

Şerefname, written by Şerefhan Bitlisi – ruler of the Bitlis Emirate of the Ottoman Empire – is one of the most significant historical sources on the Kurdish chiefdoms and emirates and also of Ottoman-Safavid relations in the sixteenth century. It was completed in 1596 immediately after the Ottoman authority in the eastern territories of Anatolia was fully established. *Şerefname* has become one of the most important features of contemporary Kurdish nationalist historiography due to its definition of the areas inhabited by the Kurds: 'The Boundaries of the Kurdish land begin at the sea of Hürmüz [the Persian Gulf] and stretch on an even line to the end of Malatya and Maraş. The area north of this line includes Fars, Irak-ı Acem [the Khuzistan region of southwest Iran], Azerbaijan, and Little and Great Armenia. To the south, there are Irak-ı Arab, Mosul, and Diyarbakır…'[317] Kurdish nationalists see *Şerefname* as proof of the existence of Kurdish ethnicity and Kurdish ethnic territory. For example according to Kurdish scholar Hassanpour, Şerefhan had a Kurdish 'geo-ethnic entity' in mind when defining the areas where Kurdish families lived and *Şerefname* was a nationalist text against the control of non-Kurdish powers. He argues that Şerefhan's verbal definition of Kurdistan was a 'symbolic creation of such a country/state'.[318]

Another historical source often mentioned in Kurdish nationalist historiography is *Mem u Zin* written by Ahmed-i Hani.[319] *Mem u Zin* is a love story that involved references to Kurdish people and their political status at that time. It is argued that Hani demonstrated a clear group consciousness when he distinguished Kurds from Arabs, Turks, and Iranians, and that he was an early advocate of national self-determination. Hani was critical of the division and rivalry among Kurdish leaders. He did not try to define the borders of Kurdistan, but he assumed that Kurdistan was a coherent

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[317] As quoted in Özoğlu, 28. Interestingly, Şerefhan writes that many Kurdish families originally belonged to the Arabic dynasties of the Umayyad and Abbasid.

[318] Hassanpour, 'Making of Kurdish identity', 114-115. Although Şerefhan Bitlisi uses the word 'Kurd', he does not clearly explain what this term means. It seems to indicate a collective identity linked to a geographical region, Kurdistan. Özoğlu, 27.

[319] Hani's use of the terms 'Kurd' and 'Kurdish land' has been presented as Kurdish ethnic self-consciousness in the sixteenth century by the Kurdish nationalists.

territorial unit, if not politically united.[320] He described Kurdistan as a region lying in the middle of Persian (Ajam), Ottoman (Rum), Arab, and Georgian land.[321]

Another document that mentions Kurds and Kurdistan is by Evliya Çelebi, an Ottoman traveller who conducted his travels in the region between 1640 and 1656 and wrote his extensive observations about the area in his *Seyahatname*.[322] He used the notion of Kurdistan to define the area: 'Kurdistan is a vast land. It includes Erzurum, Van, Hakkari, Cizre, Imadiyye, Mosul, Şehrizor, Harir, Ardalan, Baghdad, Derne, [and] Derteng. Until it reaches Basra, this land which includes seventy stages is regarded as the rocky land of Kurdistan…if six thousand Kurdish tribes and clans did not constitute a powerful block between Irak-ı Arab and the Ottomans, it would be very easy for the Iranians to invade Anatolia…Kurdistan's width is not as great as its length…'[323] Although Çelebi uses the notion of Kurdistan, his account of the inhabitants of the region indicates a culturally and religiously mixed population,[324] his *Seyahatname* has been used by Kurdish nationalists as another historical text that proves the existence of a Kurdish ethnic territory in the past.

Another historical source used to show the existence of Kurdish nationalist state of mind is the writings and poems of the Ottoman intellectual Haji Qadir Koyi (1817-1897). Koyi was a Kurdish writer and is considered the earliest intellectual proponent of Kurdish nationalist ideas.[325] He came up with a detailed description of the boundaries of Kurdistan which encompassed a very large area: 'Iskenderun and the Taurus mountains to the west, Black Sea, Ardahan and the River Aras to the north, Alvand peaks and the River Aras, Euphrates to the east and Hamrin Mountains, Sanjar and the Nassibin road

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[320] O'Shea, 168.

[321] Özoğlu, 32. O'Shea, 168-9. Van Bruinessen argues that Hani cannot be declared Kurdish nationalist. He did criticise the division and disagreements among the Kurds but we cannot speak of a Kurdish nation, or any nation, in Hani's time. Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Ehmedî Xanî's Mem û Zîn and its role in the emergence of Kurdish national awareness', in Abbas Vali (ed.), *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda, 2003, 40-57, 41, 54-56.

[322] Özoğlu, 33-34.

[323] As quoted in *Ibid.*, 34.

[324] For example in Çelebi's account Bitlis had seventeen Muslim and eleven Armenian Christian quarters. Houston, 59. Van Bruinessen provides a detailed analysis of Celebi's *Seyahatname* in Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdistan in the 16th and 17th centuries, as reflected in Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatname*', *The Journal of Kurdish Studies*, 2000, 3: 1-11.

[325] Edmonds, 89. Jwaideh argues that Kurds had a national identity before Kurdish nationalism emerged because he considers the election of Saladin (believed to be ethnic Kurdish) to the vizierate as an indicator of Kurdish national consciousness. Jwaideh also sees the efforts of İdris Bitlisi, the Kurdish Ottoman diplomat, in forming alliances between almost twenty Kurdish tribes and Ottomans against the Safavids. Jwaideh, 291. However there is no proof that Saladin politically emphasised his Kurdish identity and that İdris was flagging Kurdish national interests. İdris was an Ottoman official rather than a nationalist leader. Moreover, interestingly, many Kurdish nationalists believe that Saladin and İdris Bitlisi are traitors because they failed to serve, or even betrayed, the Kurdish cause, and hence cannot be considered Kurdish. Hassanpour, 'Making of Kurdish identity', 147.

to the south.'[326] Another description of Kurdistan in the same period is by a famous non-Kurdish Ottoman intellectual Şemseddin Sami. In his *Kamus-ul Alem* he talks about Kurdistan: 'Kurdistan is a large land in western Asia. Most of it remains in the Ottoman Empire, but some of it belongs to Iran. It is called Kurdistan, for the majority of its inhabitants are Kurds. However, this name does not have political or administrative connotations at the present time. In the past the name Kurdistan was given to a territory where currently the Ottoman Empire and Iran have established 'the province of Kurdistan.'[327] Koyi's and Sami's accounts are widely used in the Kurdish nationalist historiography.

Kurdish nationalists and non-Kurdish scholars and writers interpret historical official and unofficial accounts and descriptions of the region via concepts loaded with modern meanings. Many scholars working on Kurds conceptualise and perceive the terms Kurd and Kurdistan in primordial and ethnic terms.[328] Overall, most of the literature on the Kurds is convinced that a more or less unified, continuous and historical Kurdish identity can be demarcated on a clear territory, although there are disagreements, even among the Kurds, about who constitutes the Kurdish community.[329] This scholarly perception is based on essentialist theories that place emphasis on revealing the origin of Kurdish identity, which is believed to lie in their language, culture and territory, and it provides a strong foundation for Kurdish

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[326] O'Shea, 170-71.

[327] Quotation in Özoğlu, 37. Şemseddin Sami, *Kamus-ul Alem,* 5: 3840.

[328] Examples of such assumptions can be found in Hassanpour, 'Making of Kurdish identity', 106-162, 115; Larry Everest, *Oil, Power and Empire: Iraq and the US Global Agenda*, Canada: Common Courage, 2004, p. 46; Charaountaki, 32-33; Tahiri, 2; Edmonds, 87. Similar assumptions exist in most primary non-Kurdish scholarly work on the Kurds, such as McDowall's and Natali's; and works of other Kurdish academics and writers, Jwaideh and Ghassemlou.

[329] Özoğlu, 21. Kurdish nationalists consider the Lurs, who live in the Lorestan (the land of the Lurs) province in Iran, as Kurds as indicated in the 1947 map (the first very detailed map of Kurdistan's territorial extent), which includes Luristan and the area between Luristan and the Persian Gulf within the territory of Kurdistan. O'Shea, 45. *Sharafnameh*, written by Bitlisi in the sixteenth century and the first historical texts on the origins of the Kurds and Kurdish society, considers the Lurs a branch of the Kurds. But it is argued that Luri tribes in Iran cannot be considered as Kurds because Luris speak a language that is related to modern Luri, and that Luri and Bakhtiari (Bakhtiaris is another group considered as Kurds by Kurdish nationalists) are more 'closely related to Persian than to Kurdish.' See John Limbert, 'The origins and appearance of the Kurds in pre-Islamic Iran,' *Iranian Studies*, 1 (2): 41-51, 47. Alevis in Turkey are another significant group generally appropriated into Kurdish identity. Kurdish nationalist discourse and academic literature considers the Dersim rebellion in 1937 instigated by Zaza-speaking Alevis in Dersim (Tunceli is the official name given to this province in Turkey today) as a Kurdish independence revolt. However, today, there is a tendency among the Lurs, Alevis, Zazas and other groups such as Yezidis, Kaka'is and Guranis to consider themselves as distinct, and many scholars, social anthropologists and philologists seem to confirm these groups' distinctiveness from Kurdish identity.

nationalists and their primordialist understandings of Kurdish origin.[330] Another aspect of this view, labelled as 'ethnicist' by Vali, is that it associates ethnic origins with national origins. It treats a 'uniform Kurdish identity' as an expression of a nationalist claim, as presented in historical rebellions, awaiting realisation.[331]

Some scholars, on the other hand do not presume a linear history for the nations in which an ethnic group develops its self-consciousness, becomes a nation and, then, logically deserves to have its own nation-state.[332] They perceive nations, as well as their features such as territorial attachment, language, culture and ethnicity, as contingent, and as developed and changed as a result of historical factors and circumstances.[333] According to this view, whether nations have common distinct features or not is not important in understanding and explaining nationalisms.[334] These scholars emphasise the modern and constructed character of Kurdish identity and nationalism and mostly argue that tracing and finding some linguistic, cultural or ethnic origins for a group of people do not automatically explain their nationalist political activities and goals. This thesis agrees with this view on the modernity of nations and nationalism. Identity or consciousness are not the key defining factors in the formation of nationalist movements and the existence of distinct cultural, linguistic, religious or historical features in the past is not the main driver for the emergence of nationalisms and nations.

Kurdish identity is a modern phenomenon constructed with the political purpose of nation building and achieving sovereignty, but it is associated with several features emphasising a historic continuity, particularly that of a Kurdish homeland, Kurdistan.[335] Kurdish nationalists argue for Kurdish habitation in the area since ancient times assuming that the history of the territory of Kurdistan reflects the history of the

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[330] O'Shea, 148; Vali, 'Genealogies', 59. Smith's conceptualisation of the *ethnie* also provides a theoretical foundation for the essentialist arguments. According to Smith nations had pre-modern identities called *ethnie* based on linguistic, cultural, religious and territorial commonalities. Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, 191.

[331] Vali, 'Genealogies', 61-62. Ethnicist understandings of Kurdish identity involve claims to a direct ethnic link to ancient peoples of the region (Medes) and see Kurds as the indigenous people of this geographic area. For these arguments see Houston, 16. Some claim descent from groups existed before Median domination such as the Guti and the Lullbi. Edmonds, 88.

[332] Some of these scholars are Halliday, Özoğlu, Vali, Van Bruinessen, and Bozarslan, 'Kurdish nationalism in Turkey: from tacit contract to rebellion (1919-1925)', in Abbas Vali (ed.) *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, California: Mazda Publishers, 2003, 163-190. Halliday provides an interesting direction for a modernist analysis of Kurdish nationalism by applying four broad processes of modernism – war and conflict, state building, ideology and socio-economic change and argues that modernist approach recognises the ideological force of political claims to issues such as territory, definitions of culture, independence. Halliday, 'Can We Write', 12-13.

[333] Halliday, *Nation and Religion*, 39.

[334] Gellner, 'Do nations have navels?', 366-370, 367-368.

[335] Vali, "The Kurds and Their 'Others'", p. 49; Vali, 'Genealogies', 67-68; Charaountaki, 36; Jwaideh, 291.

Kurdish people.[336] The historical and present existence of Persians, Arabs, Turks, Assyrians, Jews, Armenians and others in the region is an often-mentioned problem in relation to this identification. Typically, Kurdish nationalists label this territory as 'Kurdistan' with today's notions of ethnicity and nation and attribute national character to this region throughout history. Some scholars challenge this assumption and claim that, until the twentieth century, neither 'Kurd' nor 'Kurdistan' had political meanings.[337] But this doesn't change the fact that the idea of Kurdistan has today become the most obvious and important aspect of Kurdish nationalism.

The importance of the territorial element, Kurdistan, partly derives from a strong attachment to place of habitation and physical environment in the Kurdish culture. These features have played an important role for the creation and maintenance of a Kurdish national identity.[338] Environmental, geographical, and rural features serve as strong expressions of identity not only for Kurds in the region, but also for Kurds in the cities or diaspora. Children are often named after names of rivers and mountains, or rural symbols. Many Kurdish proverbs say 'the Kurds have no friends but the mountains', 'level the mountains and in a day the Kurds will be no more'.[339] Jwaideh labels incorporation of geographic features into the social life of the Kurdish community as 'mountain culture' and he states that where Kurmanji and the Dimli (Kurdish dialects) accompany this mountain culture, the people are considered Kurds and the land is labelled as Kurdistan.[340] Another important aspect of the territorial feature is, as explained above, the way concepts of Kurd and Kurdistan in the historical

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[336] Vali, 'Genealogies', 67; O'Shea, 74.

[337] O'Shea, 4; Özoğlu, 27.

[338] O'Shea, 4-5. Although language and religion are considered as important sources of Kurdish identity, this chapter does not discuss linguistic and religious aspects of Kurdish identity due to its focus on territorial features. G. R. Driver, 'The Name Kurd and Its Philological Connexions', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1923, 393-403 cited in Özoğlu, 23-25. Minorsky argues that various Kurdish dialects – Kurmanji, Zaza, Sorani, Gorani, Luri and others – show a unity that could only be the result of a single language spoken by a large people, the Medes (728-550 BCE). Vladimir Minorsky, 'Les Origines des Kurdes', *Actes du XXe Congrès International des Orientalistes*, Louvain, 1940, 143-52 cited in Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 24-25. Here Bruinessen argues that, due to substantial differences, Kurdish dialects might even be considered as separate languages.). MacKenzie writes that Kurdish dialects have very few common traits. D. N. MacKenzie, 'The Origins of Kurdish', *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1961, cited in Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish Paths', 24. Some philologists have recently started to deny the Kurdishness of Dimili, Zaza and Luri. Hassanpour, 'Making', 117. Like language, religious culture is also quite varied among the Kurds. The majority of Kurds are Sunni Muslims. Shi'i Islam is widely practiced amongst the Kurds in Iraq and Iran. Some of the Kurds in Turkey are Alevi and some in Iraq practice Ahl-i Haqq. Tahiri, 5. Again, in very small areas in Iraq, Armenian Republic, Syria and Turkey there are Kurds who adhere to the Yezidi religion. Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish Paths to Nation' 25-26. Linguistic and religious variety among Kurdish society is generally attributed to the very mountainous geography of the region, which made contact and communication very difficult. Also, the absence of a Kurdish political entity in the history hindered creation of a common literature. Edmonds, 88.

[339] O'Shea, 5.

[340] Jwaideh, 291.

texts are used by Kurdish nationalists today. Consequently, in the literature on Kurds there are three general assumptions: (1) that the population living in Kurdistan has been more or less homogenously Kurdish; (2) that the boundaries of Kurdistan are clear; (3) that the region called Kurdistan was once united in history (as the claim on its current division implies previous unity).

Kurdish Tribal Structure within the Context of the Ottomans' Local Administration System

It is difficult to understand whether the presumed identity of the people has defined Kurdistan or the perceived territorial boundaries Kurdistan (which is continuously expanding) define who the Kurds are. Today the concept of 'Kurd' has mainly linguistic and territorial meanings and it is attributed to the speakers of Kurdish and people who live in the 'Kurdish region'.[341] Concepts such as 'Kurdish region', 'Kurdistan', 'areas inhabited by Kurds' are abundantly used in the literature despite the difficulty in identifying the relationship between people and their claimed territory in the Kurdish case. The primary tribal character of social structure makes it difficult to define who the Kurds are.

Kurdish tribal structure is mostly based on culturally distinctive large families centred on kinship and common descent. A significant aspect of this structure is the hierarchical order of the society. Tribes, *ashirets*, in this area were typically composed of 'a leading lineage, a number of commoner clans/lineages, client lineages and subject non-tribal peasantry'.[342] The Ottoman rulers considered the non-tribal peasantry as non-Kurd, or as *köylü* (peasant) or *reaya* (Ottoman term for commoners). The non-tribal peasantry has been of a very heterogeneous background, including Kurdish, Turkish, Arabic, Armenian speaking and religiously diverse groups.[343] In the Ottoman era they could not carry arms and worked as labourers in the land of their *bey*s (owners of the land). It has been suggested that peasants often consisted of the old populations of these territories who were now subject to new lords.[344] For instance, Claudius James Rich wrote in 1836:

> I had to-day confirmed by several of the best authorities, what I had long
> suspected, that the peasantry in Koordistan are a totally distinct race from the
> tribes, who seldom, if ever, cultivate the soil; while, on the other hand, the

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[341] O'Shea, 149.
[342] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, states and tribes and states', online source,
http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurds,%20states,%20tribes.htm,
last accessed 01 November 2011.
[343] *Idem.*
[344] O'Shea, 36-37.

peasants are never soldiers. The clannish Koords call themselves Sipah, or military Koords, in contradistinction to the peasant Koords; but the peasants have no other distinguishing name than Rayah or Keuylees, in this part of Koordistan.[345]

In addition to the tribal and non-tribal division of Kurdish society, there has been a considerable degree of overlap between different levels of identity and this complicates the divisions within the society even today. For instance, *ashiret* leaders (*bey* or *agha*) could be Kurdish, Turkish, Ottoman, Sunni or Arab simultaneously. At a wider level, some tribes over time have become Kurdish, or have changed their religion, and therefore their identity. Armenians who converted to Islam have become either Turkish or Kurdish.[346] Another type of division is between 'townspeople' and 'rural' folk. Like non-tribal peasants, the identity of the townspeople living in the region has been ambiguous. Van Bruinessen quotes from Ziya Gökalp who wrote at the beginning of the twentieth century 'the urbanite has no ethnic identity' and writes that 'Those urban notables who were related to the tribes of the region understandably tended to identify themselves with the Kurds, but most of the townspeople long remained ambivalent.'[347] Today tribal social divisions are much weaker as a result of government centralisation and land reforms, urbanisation and immigration. Still, many Kurds dwelling in rural areas do not consider other Kurds living in the cities as 'Kurds'. For Kurdish nationalists today both non-tribal peasantry and townspeople are Kurds (especially since the 1960s with the intensification of the mass mobilisation), but the division between 'dominant tribal group' and 'subject peasant group' has prevailed throughout most parts of the region in the twentieth century.[348]

Tribal structure has had two main influences on Kurdish identity and nationalism and their relation to territory. Firstly, tribal association reinforced territorial attachment at local and regional levels. Despite wide linguistic and cultural variations throughout history (and at present) it is remarkable that Kurds are said to have a sense of common identity among the tribes long before the age of nationalism.[349] This

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[345] Jwaideh, 27 quote from Claudius James Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, 2 vols., London: James Duncan, 1836, 1: 88-89. It is important to note here that, although regional historians did not describe these divisions in ethnic terms, 'ethnicity' as a component of the identity of the groups is generally attributed by outsiders.

[346] O'Shea, 42.

[347] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 31-32.

[348] The author witnessed a typical conversation that is common among the inhabitants of the area. On this occasion two Kurdish men, Nejat who lives in Erciş, a reasonably large town in the province of Van, and Burhan who cultivates and lives in the rural area near Erciş, argued and joked about who was a real Kurd. Burhan adamantly claimed that due to his rural and tribal associations he was not Turkified, whereas Nejat was, 25.08.2009, Erciş/Van, Turkey).

[349] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 25.

common identity has been preserved through several processes. The geographical inaccessibility of the region is believed to have enabled Kurds to maintain their culture and language in spite of the fact that they have been ruled by several different dynasties, empires and states. Traditionally Kurds have been defined as the '… tribesmen of eastern Asia Minor and the Zagros, settled as well as nomadic, who were not Turkish, Arabic or Persian-speaking'[350] but, as Van Bruinessen reminds, it is impossible to define Kurdish ethnicity with a number of common cultural features. Indeed Kurdish society is very heterogeneous, and its culture changes drastically from region to region. Even within one single region there are more than a few religions, languages and cultures. This could also be partly explained by geographical inaccessibility which limited interaction between the peoples of the region, and hence led to the extensive variation in Kurdish culture, language and identity. In addition, some of the tribes were able to preserve their way of life thanks to their peripheral location where Ottoman and Safavid territories met. Most of these tribes were not fully integrated in the social and political cultures of the two empires and often changed alliances between the two empires.

The second implication of tribal structure on the way Kurdish identity and culture is understood is that, on the one hand, tribal structure is believed to have allowed preservation of Kurdish tribal identity, and on the other hand, tribal structure has resulted in the perpetuation of an extensive number of different Kurdish cultures even in one single area, and therefore inhibited the formation of a uniform Kurdish identity and a united Kurdish nationalism. Indeed, territorial rivalry amongst tribes has been a prevalent feature of social and political life in the region.

Tribal structure of Kurdish society, together with other factors, also led Ottoman rulers to create a slightly different administrative arrangement in this region compared to other areas of the Ottoman Empire. During the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry over the control of the region in the sixteenth century, most of the Kurdish tribes sided with the Ottomans not the Safavids because the latter offered them chief fiefdoms and principalities. A crucial factor in the Ottomans ability to win the allegiance of Kurdish tribal leaders was that the latter saw Ottoman control over the region as preferable to Safavid control as the Ottomans offered them greater power and autonomy. The Safavid Shah's intention was to govern the area inhabited by Kurdish tribes through Turkoman and Persian administrators, whereas the Ottomans relied on local chiefs,

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[350] *Ibid.*, 23.

which appealed more to the Kurdish chieftains.[351] Moreover, Kurds were impressed by the demonstration of Ottoman military strength. The mutual religious suspicion between the mainly Sunni Kurdish tribes and new rulers of Iran (Safavids who made Shi'i Islam the official religion of the empire at the beginning of the sixteenth century) was another reason for the Kurdish tribes to side with the Ottomans.

After the establishment of Ottoman rule in these areas, the Ottoman Porte engaged in a restructuring of the newly annexed territories. The Imperial Law Code prepared during the reign of Süleyman (1520-66) and a 1533 imperial decree (*ferman*) indicates that as part of the Diyarbakır province, autonomous nine Kurdish principalities were created.[352] They were administered and ruled by their holders, Kurdish *bey*s or *emir*s, who would remain obedient to the orders of the Sultan but would be exempt from paying revenue tax to the Porte.[353] Three centuries later, in 1847, a province with the name 'Kürdistan Eyaleti' was created by the Ottoman state but it was dissolved in 1867. Although there was no continuous administrative province or district with the name 'Kurdistan', the Ottoman policy of sustaining principalities headed by local leaders in certain parts of this region remained more or less unchanged in this period. Main principalities in the Ottoman ruled areas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were Botan, Hakkari, Badinan, Soran, and Baban.[354]

The creation of Kurdish principalities was result of the Ottoman administrative system which was managed in a way that was flexible enough to accommodate local circumstances and previous or existing practices in general. It could also be argued that the remoteness of this area and its harsh topography and deeply embedded tribal structure required intermediary figures in its governance. Therefore, even though the general administrative principle was direct rule by Ottoman officials who held non-hereditary positions, the Kurdish *emir*s who controlled principalities and confederations, and the *agha*s and *bey*s who controlled the more remote areas (*sancak*s), had some degree of autonomy within the territory under their authority such as exemption from tax-

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[351] McDowall, *Kurds*, 14; McDowall, *Modern History*, 26-27.

[352] Houston, 40. Özoğlu indicates that by 1530 Kurdistan as an administrative entity seems to have disappeared.

[353] According to the Ottoman administration system, the territories outside the capital were divided into administrative provinces. Provinces were divided into *sancak*s and the latter were divided into fiefs, Houston, 38. *Sancak* means region or district. The head of a province was called *beylerbeyi*, and the head of a *sancak* was called *sancakbeyi*, who were both appointed by the Sultan and their positions were not hereditary. Their main duty was to raise and command troops in their provinces and *sancak*s and maintain order, Houston, 38. In 1527 the empire was constituted by eight provinces: Rumelia (capital Edirne), Anadolu (Kütahya), Rum (Amasya) and Karaman (Konya), Egypt, Syria and Diyarbakır, and Kurdistan within the last province.

[354] Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*, 3.

paying duties and hereditary succession.[355] Historical accounts also indicate that the Ottomans united tribes in order to create confederations that did not exist before and appointed tribal leaders to these new establishments.[356] Even though they were directly bound by the Ottoman authority in terms of military responsibilities, this period led to the reinforcement of the authority of Kurdish tribes and their leaders.[357]

Kurdish Tribal Revolts

The timing of the emergence of Kurdish nationalism is one of the most contested topics in the literature on Kurds. Different perceptions in the literature on the emergence of Kurdish nationalism derive from various definitions of nationalism. If nationalism is seen as ethnic self-identification or consciousness, the emergence of Kurdish nationalism can be traced back to the earlier centuries.[358] However, as mentioned earlier, this thesis adopts a narrow definition of 'nationalism'. It takes nationalism as a recent and modern phenomenon directly associated with the notion of popular sovereignty and nation-state, and disagrees with the arguments that Kurdish nationalism emerged before the nineteenth century. It is instructive to examine the Kurdish tribal revolts in the nineteenth century in order to justify this choice.

Many scholars consider the revolts of Kör Muhammed Pasha (1833-1837), Bedirhan Pasha (1843-1847) and Sheikh Ubeydullah (1880-1882) in the nineteenth century as the first Kurdish nationalist rebellions that took shape in reaction to the destruction of emirates and principalities by the Ottomans and see these revolts as indicators of Kurdish ethnic consciousness.[359] Needless to say, this argument is strongly supported by Kurdish nationalists. This chapter adopts the view that tribal groups and their leaders with their strong desire to maintain their territorial control and self-interested ambitions used nationalism as a 'cover' in competing with each other in the eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire. Kurdish revolts in the nineteenth century are

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[355] Tahiri, 35. Tahiri states that the Safavids also allowed its Kurds to have an autonomous status.

[356] Houston, 45.

[357] McDowall, *Kurds*, 14. McDowall argues that the areas ruled by Kurdish principalities could be considered as a buffer zone between the Ottoman and Safavid jurisdictions. According to the Kurdish nationalist historiography this era was a period of Kurdish semi-independence and autonomy. The creation of provinces headed by local Kurdish tribal leaders is seen as an indicator of the distinct Kurdish identity of the territory in question. For instance, the Kurdish scholar Entessar considers the principalities as semi-independent principalities.

[358] Hassanpour, 'Making of Kurdish identity', 148. Charaountaki, 35; Edmonds, 88.

[359] Scholars who trace the emergence of Kurdish nationalism earlier than the twentieth century generally perceive the Kurdish consciousness of a kind that existed among educated Kurds as a form of nationalism, Özoğlu, 21-22. Said Bashar Eskander, *Britain's Policy Towards the Kurdish Question*, *1915-1923*, PhD Diss., The London School of Economics and Political Science, 1999. Most prominent studies undertaken on Kurdish nationalism, such as McDowall and Jwaideh, also adopt the same argument.

useful in showing the tribal and territorial character of the political motivations of Kurdish leaders in this period. They also help to illustrate why territorial associations (understood in tribal terms) have been very significant in the emergence of Kurdish nationalism in the twentieth century. Therefore, providing a historical background and context is important for understanding the character of these revolts. However, the aim here is not to offer a historical analysis but to contextualise the revolts within the wider framework of Ottoman politics.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the rise of awareness of the decline of the Ottoman Empire, both in terms of foreign influence and domestic control. By the late eighteenth century, Ottomans had initiated centralisation policies throughout the empire. Most important of these were a series of administrative and military reforms initiated by Sultan Mahmud II (reigned 1808-1839) in the 1830s with the aim to revive the power and strength of the Empire. Later Abdulmecid (reigned 1839-1861) continued these reforms. Key aspects of these reforms were centralisation (which aimed to eliminate the authority of the *ayan*s (local lords) who had become very powerful in their local areas), military conscription, tax reforms and others. The imposition of centralisation policies led to many rebellious movements in many parts of the Empire as well as among the Kurdish emirates. Kurdish *emirs* did not welcome increased state control and loss of authority. The Kurdish nationalist discourse claims that leaders of the Kör Muhammed, Bedirhan and Ubeydullah revolts were conscious of their people's Kurdish national identity and their overarching aim was to protect this identity and establish a state for the Kurdish nation. Here it will be argued that these rebellions could also be the result of the attempt of tribal leaders to protect their power or to force the Sultan to maintain their status within new administrative arrangements.[360]

These revolts can be understood within the context of the centralisation process in the Ottoman Empire in two ways. Firstly, ethnicist point of view would emphasise common territorial, linguistic, cultural bonds to show the existence of an *ethnie*.[361] This would indicate that Kurdish tribal groups before the beginning of centralisation policies in the Ottoman Empire had a relatively autonomous status. The idea of Kurdish autonomy derives from the fact that after the establishment of the Ottoman rule in the region, within the context of continuing rivalry between Ottoman and Persian empires and institutionalising the administrative system in that territory, Ottoman rulers granted

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[360] In this context it would be interesting to compare these rebellions with other local uprisings occurred in other parts of the empire but this is beyond the purpose of this chapter.
[361] Houston, 32.

certain privileges to some of the Kurdish tribal *agha*s (tribal chief) to attain their loyalty to the centre.[362] Kurdish nationalist historiography adopts an ethnicist perspective and sees this process as semi-autonomous Kurdish rule in the region and associates this autonomy with nationalist ideology. Centralisation policies that terminated or limited their autonomous status led to Kurdish nationalist reactions led by tribal leaders.[363] As a result, a nationalist reaction emerged from Kurdish nationalist sentiments and Kurdish tribal leaders' vision of a different future for their people.

A second way of understanding Kurdish revolts is to look at the reasons behind changes in the alliances between the centre and the tribal leadership in the region. Within the context of the weakening of the Ottoman rule in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, leaders of the emirates and tribes attempted to increase their territorial control and appropriated the revenues instead of handing to the central authority.[364] Centralisation policies were partly in response to these attempts and Ottoman loss of control in the region. The revolts led by Kör Muhammed Pasha of Rewanduz, Bedirhan Pasha of Botan, and Shaikh Ubeydullah can be understood as reactions to the centralisation policies of the Ottomans as a result of which the authority of tribal leaders was reduced, privileges granted by the Ottoman Porte changed hands and the leaders of the emirates (*emirs*) were replaced by centrally appointed governors (*valis*).[365] They can be understood as examples of resistance to a loss of authority, rather than nationalist revolts for statehood. Şerif Mardin's theory of 'tacit contract' is useful in explaining the motivation for these revolts. According to Mardin, the traditional centre-periphery relation between the local rulers and the Ottoman state relied on the assumption that the Ottoman state tradition and the rebels perceived resistance as a means of bargaining and negotiation between the centre and periphery.[366] Therefore, it can be argued that Kurdish leaders aimed to force the state for a new and more beneficial deal in order to regain their loss of status and authority. Bozarslan, using Mardin's notion of 'tacit contract', argues that revolts were means to renew the type of relations between the state and the tribal leaders.[367]

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[362] Charaountaki, 37-38.
[363] Similar arguments, that Kurdish nationalism began to take shape in reaction to the destruction of the autonomous emirates by the Ottomans and Persians in the nineteenth century, are also widely adopted in the research projects on Kurds. Eskander, 17.
[364] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, tribes and states'.
[365] Jwaideh provides a detailed account of these revolts. Jwaideh, 54-67.
[366] Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi Hakkında Makaleler 4* (Articles on Turkish Modernisation 4), Ankara: İletişim Yayınları, 2008, 108.
[367] Bozarslan, 186.

Another important factor that led to reactions by Kurdish tribal leaders was the increasing recognition of the non-Muslim communities as a result of Mahmut II's *Tanzimat* reforms initiated in 1839. *Tanzimat* reforms aimed to re-organise the administrative, military, fiscal and legal system of the state, to centralise the state rule and to promote the ideas of Ottomanism and equality among the 'millets' of Ottoman population.[368] Ottomanism aimed to respond to nationalist movements in the Ottoman territories in the Balkans and dissident revolts in other parts of the empire.[369] The strengthened and improved status of the non-Muslim population of the Empire disturbed Kurdish leaders, especially after they became aware of the terms agreed in the 1878 Berlin Treaty. For instance, Sheikh Ubeydullah was concerned about possible Armenian control in Kurdistan, especially because of Article 71 of the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, which promised Armenians certain 'improvements and reforms' and guaranteed their 'security against Circassians and Kurds.'[370] All these developments, together with increased Christian missionary activity, led Kurdish tribal leaders to feel threatened and led to fears of the increased power of Christians (Nestorians) and of the establishment of an Armenian or a Christian state in the region.[371]

The revolt of Kör Muhammad Pasha was amongst the most significant regional revolts in the early nineteenth century. The ruler of Rawanduz, Muhammad Pasha succeeded his father in 1814 and quickly expanded his domain of control in the region. He revolted with the aim to acquire all Kurdish provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[372] Ottoman forces appeared in large numbers, but the revolt was suppressed through diplomacy. Interestingly, after his defeat Muhammad Pasha was brought to İstanbul and upon his arrival he was 'acknowledged to be … one of the pillars that sustained the throne of the Sultan' and was appointed as the governor-general of a wide area in east Anatolia.[373] The way Muhammad Pasha revolt emerged and finalised seems to fit in Mardin's theory of 'tacit contract'.

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[368] Ottomanism is a formula created by the Ottoman Porte, elite and intellectual circles in İstanbul in order to stop the Ottoman dissolution.

[369] İlber Ortaylı, *Tanzimat Devrinde Osmanlı Mahalli Idareleri (1840-1880)* [Ottoman Local Administrations during the Tanzimat Period (1840-18800], Ankara, Cedit Yayınları, 2007, 15-17.

[370] Jwaideh, 80-83.

[371] Martin Strohmeier, *Crucial Images in the Presentation of a Kurdish National identity: Heroes and Patriots, Traitors and Foes*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 11. The engagement of both Bedirhan and Ubeydullah in violent actions towards Christian population of the region illustrates such concerns. Houston, 56.

[372] Jwaideh, 55, 291-92. According to Jwaideh, underlying Muhammad Pasha's rebellion was the idea of Kurdish nationality.

[373] Jwaideh, 61. Jwaideh quotes from Frederick Millingen, *Wild Life among the Koords*. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870, 186.

Bedirhan Pasha's revolt, another significant Kurdish tribal revolt, followed a similar route to Muhammed Pasha's. Bedirhan Pasha, the *emir* of the Botan emirate (appointed by the Ottoman Porte) and controlled this strong emirate in the first half of the century. Although he was a loyal *emir*, he opposed the centralisation policies of the Ottoman state and rebelled in 1847.[374] After the revolt was suppressed, Bedirhan Pasha was appointed to another post by the state and sent to Crete to suppress the Greek uprising in 1856 and was allowed to return to İstanbul.[375] It is widely accepted that Bedirhan Pasha revolted against the Ottoman's new administrative arrangements in the region within the context of centralisation policies, as the new arrangements divided the land under Bedirhan's authority and reduced his power.[376] Tahiri argues that although tribal leaders, who rebelled against the state in the nineteenth century, including Bedirhan Pasha, claimed that their aim was to 'liberate Kurdistan', these revolts were aimed at regaining the status they lost as a result of centralisation policies.[377] This assumption again is in line with Mardin's theory of 'tacit contract'.

After the suppression of the last powerful Kurdish leader, Bedirhan Pasha, no Kurdish leader gained that much power in the region until Sheikh Ubeydullah. Destroyed Kurdish principalities were not replaced with effective political and administrative structures. Appointed governors did not have the traditional legitimacy *emirs* and tribal leaders had. This change, according to Van Bruinessen, led to division of emirates into separate confederacies and smaller tribal units and increased rivalry among tribal leaders.[378] Another source of the increased authority of this new type of leaders was the threat of possible Armenian control in the region. Within this context, the gap created by the disappearance of the autonomous emirates was filled by leaders with religious authority, the *sheikh*s who, from then on, were to be found at the head of all the important rebellions.[379] *Sheikhs* were able to exert such authority because their followers saw them as saviours (*Mehdi*), who would end the chaos and bring justice,

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[374] Özoğlu, 71.

[375] Jwaideh, 74

[376] Özoğlu, 71.

[377] Tahiri, 35-36

[378] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, tribes and states'.

[379] Chaliand, 24; Jwaideh, 145, 212; Robert Olson, 'Five stages of Kurdish nationalism, 1880-1980,' *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 1991, 12 (2): 391-409, 393-94. The five stages of Kurdish nationalism Olson identifies are as follows: (1) Shaikh Ubaydallah to the Hamidiye; (2) The Hamidiye; (3) Kurdish Nationalism From 1908 to 1924; (4) From Sevres to Said; (5) The Mahabad Republic. Sheikhs were closely associated with the Sufi orders, the tribal lineage and landed property. Van Bruinessen explains the emergence of sheikhs as new leaders and their role in the history of Kurdish politics in Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, Chapter 4, 203-267.

particularly during the periods of war, economic hardship, social chaos and famine.[380] Sheikh Ubeydullah's increased authority coincided with the huge social, political and economic chaos in the region caused by the 1877-78 War between the Russians and Ottomans.

Although some of the features of the Sheikh Ubeydullah revolt indicate that his resistance was a nationalist movement, his revolt was still mainly a resistance to the loss of territorial control and to the centralisation policies of the Ottoman rule.[381] There are some reasons to consider Ubeydullah's revolt as nationalist. Olson points to the continuities between Ubeydullah's revolt and preceding Kurdish revolts, such as Bedirhan, but argues that Bedirhan aimed at greater autonomy under Ottoman administration, whereas Ubeydullah expressed his desire to create an independent Kurdish state.[382] For example, in one of the pieces of mail correspondence between the British consuls and Shaikh Ubeydullah, vice-consul Clayton wrote'. . . [The Sheikh] has a comprehensive plan for uniting all the Kurds in an independent state under himself.' Jwaideh also quotes from a letter written by Sheikh Ubeyduallah to Dr. Cochran, an American missionary in the Hakkari region: 'The Kurdish nation, consisting of more than 500,000 families, is a people apart. Their religion is different, and their laws and customs are distinct.'[383] However, the nationalist nature of Ubeydullah's plans and the intended meaning of the phrase 'Kurdish nation' in Ubeydullah's letter are questionable especially if we assume that the Sheikh used the concept of *umma* (a term that means literally 'community' and was used to denote all Muslims, or Arabs, but also specific identifiable parts, such as Egypt, or Hijaz).[384] In addition, although Ubeydullah aimed for an independent principality, he was also ready to accept a deal that recognised his authority in the region under Ottoman rule.[385] This shows the priority given by tribal leaders to their own personal and tribal interests and is again in line with the theory of

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[380] Olson, 'Five stages', 393.

[381] Many scholars in the literature on Kurdish nationalism argue that Ubeydullah's uprising was nationalist (Jwaideh) or had 'nationalist undertones', Edmonds, 96. Ubeydullah was a Naqshbandi sheikh from Şemdinan family had an extended control due to his religious authority over a very large area: 'parts of the areas formerly under control of the princes of Bohtan, Bahdinan, and Hakari in Ottoman Turkey and Ardalan in Qajar Persia.' Jwaideh, 80-83. Jwaideh considered sheikhs as zealous nationalists. *Ibid.*, 302-303.

[382] Olson, 'Five stages', 392.

[383] Jwaideh, 80-81.

[384] 'Unfortunately, we do not know what word the shaykh used that was rendered as "nation" by the translators or possibly by Mr. Cochran himself. It is not only possible but probable that Ubeydullah, a Naqshbandi shaykh, did not know the explosive meaning of the word "nation," or at least the word did not mean the same thing to him that it did to Mr. Cochran. Therefore, caution should be exercised in drawing any conclusions about the nationalist intention of Ubeydullah based on this text.' Özoğlu, 75-76. Alternatively, maybe the shaykh had some understanding of how using the word "nation" might evoke a positive response from a British diplomat.

[385] Özoğlu, 76; Natali, *Kurdish Quasi-State*, 11.

'tacit contract'. What followed Sheikh's capture seems to support this theory because the fate of Sheikh Ubeydullah was not different from Muhammed Pasha's or Bedirhan Pasha's. After the suppression of the rebellion, the Sheikh was brought to Istanbul and was granted honours by the Sultan and awarded a new position within the Ottoman state.

In this period the Kurdish elite followed varied political ideas and tied themselves with different political and military loyalties and attachments. Some of the provincial tribes joined the Hamidiye Cavalry, which was established by Sultan Abdulhamid II (reigned 1876-1909) in 1891 in order to organise the Sunni population (some of the Kurdish tribes, Turks and Turkmens) against the Armenians and their supporters, particularly the British and to secure the loyalty of the Sunni Kurdish tribes[386] Joining the Hamidiye armed forces nourished and reinforced Kurdish hostility toward non-Muslim populations in the region. It is said that these cavalries were involved in the Armenian massacres in the 1890s and were involved in the worst kind of abuses.[387] Olson argues that the Hamidiye cavalry served as a pivotal stage in the development of Kurdish nationalism because some of the Kurdish tribes gained immense power and authority by joining to these forces.[388] However, it is important to be aware of the fact that the key influence of joining the Hamidiye Cavalry on the Kurdish tribal elite was increased reactions against non-Muslim communities in eastern Anatolia and a possible Armenian state in the region, and further divisions among the Kurdish tribes.

Based on the above analysis, the notion of Kurdistan or the territorial goals in the nineteenth century can best be understood as a pre-national politico-territorial notion or aim that emerged gradually within the processes of bargaining between local tribal elites and the central state during the implementation of centralisation policies by the Ottoman Porte. This finding supports the argument that Kurdistan, as a politico-territorial concept, existed before Kurdish nationalism emerged and the emphasis on territoriality and ownership of land exacerbated the divisions between Kurdish groups (due to continuing tribal structure among Kurdish society). This links back to the earlier point – although territory is generally seen as a given feature of national identities,

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[386] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 268; Olson, 'Five stages, 395.
[387] Houston, 56-58. The Kurdish chiefs, who took part in the Hamidiye cavalry with their men, were exempted from taxes and some of them were entitle to collect taxes from Armenian villages. Klein, 141. In this article, Klein offers a detailed analysis on the motivation and organisational structure of these Kurdish societies emerged in İstanbul and in some of the main eastern cities of the Empire.
[388] Olson, 'Five stages', 397.

actually it is as constructed as the national identity itself. This also supports one of the key arguments of this chapter that territorial identity and the idea of a homeland are the most crucial aspects of Kurdish nationalism both in terms of self-identification and of projection of this identity to the outside world.

The pages below turn to the Kurdish activities in the early twentieth century and explain these activities as attempts of urban and provincial tribal elites to increase their power and dominion during the weakening and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire until WWI ended. Kurdish tribal revolts in the nineteenth century and the formation of Kurdish associations (as will be explained in the pages below) can be interpreted, within a 'top-down' framework, as reactions to the Ottoman rulers' attempt to increase their control in the region and to reorganise the administrative, military and economic (tax system) structure, as well as response to the regional wars and later the weakening of the Empire. The period of revolts therefore set a precedent to the later development of the Kurdish nationalism. From a 'bottom-up' perspective, the changes that happened in the society after the introduction of new civil laws, administrative and military changes, increased rights of non-Muslim populations of the Empire, emergence of Kurdish organisations made it necessary for the Kurdish elite to think of themselves and their dependants within a changing society. Other significant factors that led to the re-organisation of the Kurdish elite, and later to the emergence of Kurdish natioanlism as a political movement were the plans for the creation of Armenia and Wilson's principle of self-determination.

Kurdish Activities until the World War I

It is interesting that the nationalist wave that swept through the Ottoman Balkan territories in the nineteenth century was less influential than Wilson's self-determination principle in instigating nationalist motivations among the Kurdish urban and provincial tribal elite. This was due to the tribal mentality of the dominant Kurdish elites and their strategic as well as Islamic affiliation with the Ottoman Porte. The principle of self-determination had a significant influence on the strategic calculations of the Kurdish tribal elite and the way Kurdish nationalism evolved after WWI. The Kurdish elite's aim to regain, maintain or increase their tribal dominions in the nineteenth century and in the period before WWI reinforced the existing divisions among tribal leaders and led to further divisions. This limited the possibilities for the emergence of a united or a stronger Kurdish nationalism in the early twentieth century. Moreover, the tribal

territorial mentality prevalent among the Kurdish leadership led territorial identity to become the most important common feature of Kurdish nationalism.

After the revolts in the nineteenth century many Kurdish tribal leaders and their families were exiled to other parts of the Ottoman Empire, especially to Istanbul. In Istanbul, these tribal elites found the opportunity to interact more easily, became more aware of the intellectual and political views of their time, published journals and established societies. Most of them were the descendants of large tribal families and were educated in Europe or in Istanbul. A number of these individuals were part of the Ottoman administration as members of parliament, governors and military officials. In this historical period the wave of nationalism was sweeping through the Balkan territories of the Empire and the state was in internal turmoil and under external pressure. Ottoman *millet*s were attaining their independence one after another.

There were different fractions among the urban Kurdish elite in Istanbul (but of course they were still connected to their territorial dominions back in Anatolia). One of these fractions was critical of Abdulhamid's reign but still considered Kurds as part of the Ottoman society. The key figure in this group was Abdurrahman Bedirhan from the Bedinan clan. He and his brothers published *Kürdistan* between 1898-1902 in Switzerland, then in Cairo and some of the other European capitals. The journal included writings on Kurdish sufferings in the Ottoman hands.[389] This critical attitude was probably because of Bedirhan family's strong opposition to Abdulhamid's reign as well as because of their loss of territory and authority back in 1847.[390] Although *Kürdistan* is claimed to be a nationalist journal due to its emphasis on the distinctiveness of Kurdish identity and its effort to create Kurdish consciousness, it saw this identity as part of the Ottoman society. Its main goal was to educate and enlighten the uneducated and mostly illiterate Kurds and to explore and promote Kurdish language, literature, history, and culture.[391]

Some of the Kurdish elite in Istanbul joined the *Young Turk* movement. Young Turks had been working against Abdulhamid's suppressive rule in exile and established

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[389] *Kürdistan* was not published in Kurdish and Kurmanji, but in Turkish. It was not a political journal and it sought the advancement of Kurdish society in educational and cultural terms. Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 7-8; Edmonds, 89.

[390] Strohmeier, 22.

[391] Bozarslan, 167. On its first issue, Midhat Bedirhan wrote: Today whatever happens in the world is reported in newspapers from which we learn a great deal. Unfortunately, the Kurds, brave and intelligent though they are, live without knowing what is going on our planet. I am publishing this paper to inform you of the development of events in the world and to encourage you to read and write in Kurdish. Joyce Blau, 'Refinement and oppression of Kurdish language', in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (eds.) *The Kurds: Nationalism and Politics*. London: Saqi, 2006, pp. 103-112, 106. The *Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti* society was shut down by the Young Turk Government in 1909.

İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (the Committee for Unity and Progress). Two of the founders of the Committee were Kurdish and many others joined later.[392] Committee's activities resulted in the 1908 Young Turk Revolution and establishment of constitutional monarchy. An era of cultural, intellectual and political freedom followed the revolution. In this environment Kurdish elite formed a number of associations and societies in Istanbul. The most significant organisation established by the Kurdish elite in 1908 in Istanbul was *Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (The Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of the Kurds). Its founders, Muhammad Sharif Pasha, Emin Ali Bedirhan and Sheikh Said Abdulkadir (son of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri) were members of key Kurdish tribal families. According to its constitution, the Society was established with the purpose:

> to consolidate Kurdish ties with [the Ottoman state] while protecting the Constitution as the only way for progress and explaining to those Kurds who are not aware of the virtues of the Constitution that is responsible for the happiness of the people and also compatible with the great rules of Islam. [It shall] protect the high esteem of being an Ottoman and strengthen the relations with the Armenian, Nasturi and other citizens of the Ottoman Empire. . . .[393]

Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti, together with the other Kurdish groups, could be considered as a Kurdish political organisation within an Ottoman framework that aimed at education, modernisation and protection of Kurdish people 'for the good of the empire overall' rather than a nationalist organisation.[394] Klein argues that this society and other Kurdish clubs formed in this period by the Kurdish elites living in Istanbul cannot be considered as nationalist in the contemporary sense. Kurdish activities in this period were fragmented and divided, and each Kurdish group had differing political visions based on their interests and goals, and their motivation was to regain their power and territorial authority which they lost as a result of the centralisation policies in the nineteenth century.[395] Similar to the nineteenth-century Kurdish tribal revolts discussed in the pages above, fractions and divisions within and between the Kurdish urban elite in Istanbul and tribal elite in eastern Anatolia can be explained by Kurdish groups' desire to prioritise their interests, authority and power representing the family or tribe they belong to. Klein describes this as a project 'to reclaim traditional political

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[392] Tahiri, 43.
[393] Özoğlu, 78.
[394] Klein, 138-39. The society published *Kürd Teavün ve Terakki Gazatesi* (*Kurdish Journal of Mutual Aid and Progress*) and set up *Kürd Nesr-i Maarif Cemiyeti* (Kurdish Society for the Diffusion of Learning), which established a school for Kurdish children in İstanbul. *Ibid.*, 138-140. Also see Olson, 'Five stages', 397-98.
[395] Klein, 135.

arrangements for one family through nationalism.'[396] Instability caused by weakening and collapsing of state power in the region before and during WWI led the elite of Kurdish tribes, clans and families to attempt to increase their political power. In this process, although the desire to control tribal dominions began to be increasingly legitimated in nationalist terms, none of the tribal leaders would be willing to give up their own control for a wider project.

Another indicator of the Kurdish elites' desire to maintain their territorial control was strategies some of the Kurdish leaders used in attaining support of outside powers. Similar to previous centuries, they lobbied their case in the international arena and sought the support of powers like Britain and Russia.[397] They offered allegiance to the power supporting them, even though that alliance required not having their independent rule. For example, Muhammad Şerif Pasha offered to work for the British Expeditionary forces in Mesopotamia but his offer was declined. Some of the members of the Bedirhan family allied themselves with the Russians while another member of the same family was an Ottoman governor for the province of Malatya.[398] It is also often observed that these Kurdish elite did not perceive the common Kurdish people as members of a nation. Their approach to the common people was defined by paternalistic and tribal characteristics. In the same way, what defined the source of the attachment of the inhabitants of their tribal dominions towards their chief was loyalty to the family/tribal leader, rather than loyalty to a nationalist leader. Even after the 1920s, as Van Bruinessen writes, 'nationalism has become a very significant motivating force, but nevertheless, loyalty to one of the … leaders often overrides the ulterior interests of the nation.'[399]

The concept of Kurdistan began to attain its meaning as a national concept in this period through the activities of the Kurdish elite. Since the concept of Kurdistan, in the early twentieth century reflects a level territorial attachment but not by all Kurds, not

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[396] *Ibid.*, 148.

[397] Past attempts of several tribal chieftains' to increase their authority in times of turmoil, like the processes after the demise of Akkoyunlu and Karakoyunlu states or fifteenth century Ottoman Empire is often mentioned in the scholarly literature. The policies of tribal leaders of the past centuries was based on trying to benefit from the rivalries between internal and external powers and offering allegiance to the state that offers the best deal – a deal that allows them greater authority. See Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, tribes and states'.

[398] Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 276-77. Even when Kurdish movement had a nationalist character in the second half of the twentieth century: 'Kurdish leadership seemed to wish for *more* imperialist interference in the region rather than less. Mulla Mustafa Barzani repeatedly expressed his warm feelings for the United States, which he wanted Kurdistan to join as the fifty-first state, and to which he was willing to grant control of the oil in Kurdistan in exchange for support.' from *Ibid.*, 2.

[399] *Ibid.*, 268, 275.

in all parts of the region and not in the nationalist sense. Although nationalism had become the dominant ideology in the region and national aspirations of Kurdish leaders were being nurtured and supported by the Russian, German and British army agents, construction of a coherent Kurdish national movement proved to be too difficult, even impossible. This was because of the fact that tribal territorial aspirations could not be substituted entirely by national aspirations.[400] There was more than one leading family in the region and none of them wanted to be dependent on the other. Therefore, they could not mobilise as part of one united movement. Moreover, the educated Kurdish urban elite aimed at strengthening the Ottoman Empire through modernisation and education of the illiterate populations, including the Kurds. Kurdish provincial elite in eastern Anatolia and their family members residing in Istanbul aimed to redeem the privileges they enjoyed in the nineteenth century and partly under Abdulhamid's reign, rather than representing a minority group requesting autonomy or independence.[401] Most of these Kurdish chiefs did not have nationalist feelings toward common Kurdish people. Thus, it could be argued that before the 1920s, Kurdish leaders were not necessarily seeking an independent nation-state of Kurdistan, and the idea of Kurdistan was not yet fully envisaged as a national territory.

For the Kurdish tribal elite, Islam was a more decisive component of their visions of the future than Kurdish identity. Indeed, for the vast majority of the Kurds, being a Kurd represented being Muslim both in the Ottoman and Qajar empires.[402] For instance, the *millet* system in the Ottoman system did not denote 'nations'; it reflected a form of compartmentalisation based on religious and sectarian divisions, though in the era of nationalism *millet* system helped to define the identity of emerging nations.[403] Neither the Ottoman state nor the peasants had an ethnic appellation. Turks, Kurds, Albanians identified themselves as 'Muslim and Ottoman'.[404] Therefore the aim of the Kurdish elite active in Istanbul was to regain authority in the areas where once their families had power or to continue to be members of Ottoman administration in Istanbul or elsewhere. In Özoğlu's words, 'The possibility exists that had the empire survived and recovered, Kurdish nationalism might never have emerged.'[405]

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[400] O'Shea, 105; Natali, *Kurds and the State*, 11.
[401] The latter is the widely accepted argument in the literature. Klein, 137. Klein bases her argument on a detailed archival research on the publications done in İstanbul and in the provincial towns by Kurdish groups in that historical period.
[402] Natali, *Kurds and the State*, 1.
[403] İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Barışı* [*Pax Ottomana*], Istanbul: Ufuk Kitapları, 2003, 29-31.
[404] *Ibid.*, 20.
[405] Özoğlu, 70.

After the War ended in 1918 the south-eastern territories of the Empire were divided, and Iraq and Syria were created under the British and French mandate and when the Treaty of Sevrès showed that the Great Powers had no intention to create a unified Kurdistan and preferred not to directly influence the areas above Iraq and Syria, some of the Kurdish elite and most of the tribal leaders and sheikhs in the rural areas joined in Mustafa Kemal's *Kuvayi Milliye Hareketi* (National Forces Movement). This movement denied the legitimacy of the government in Istanbul, and declared the establishment of the government in Ankara and aimed to fight against the Allied occupation in Anatolia. The Kurdish tribal elite's support mostly derived from the movement's aim, at least at the beginning, to defend Islam as part of the 'Turkish-Kurdish Muslim fraternity'.[406] Another reason for these tribal groups to join in *Kuvayi Milliye* was the European support for an Armenian state, in an area which they saw as their own, for which the newly declared Wilsonian principle of self-determination for ethnic minorities provided a suitable framework. As a result, the presentation of the 'War of Independence' as a Muslim war against non-Muslims, the implicit recognition of Kurdishness by Mustafa Kemal's movement, and the open European support to the Armenians led some Kurdish elite in Istanbul and most of the provincial tribal chieftains to support the *Kuvayi Milliye*. When it was understood that the break-up of the empire was inevitable it became clear that Ottomanism was no longer feasible. This is when Kurdish nationalism began to emerge as a distinct movement from other movements such as Ottomanism, pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism.[407]

It is interesting that Kurdish leaders in this period used the definition and map of Kurdistan created by the European agents, travellers and army officers in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.[408] The map Şerif Pasha presented to the British representatives at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference was also similar to the maps created by the Europeans in the earlies decades of the twentieth century. Another map similar to the maps created by Europeans was Muhammad Amin Zaki's map in 1936. Muhammad Amin Zaki was also one of the ex-Ottomanists who became Kurdish nationalist after the realisation of the fact that Ottoman Empire would dissolve.[409]

In this context, some members of the Kurdish elite opted for open Kurdish nationalism. These leaders, most importantly Emin Ali Bedirhan and Sayyid Abdul

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[406] Bozarslan, 169, 172.
[407] Klein, 146.
[408] O'Shea provides a detailed account of the travellers and their maps. O'Shea, 107-115.
[409] Houston, 22.

Kadir (from Ubeydullah family), founded the *Kürt Teali Cemiyeti* (Society for the Advancement of the Kurds) on 17 December 1918.[410] There were strong disagreements between Emin Ali Bedirhan and Abdul Kadir. Abdul Kadir, the president of the Society, supported Şerif Pasha's efforts in Versailles and favoured autonomy of a unified Kurdistan within the Ottoman Empire. Whereas Emin Ali Bedirhan advocated the implementation of Wilson's self-determination principle for Kurds and supported independence of a smaller (excluding the parts in Iran and Iraq) Kurdistan and was severely opposed to General Şerif Pasha's pre-arrangement in Paris Peace Conference with the Armenian delegation for the formation of both Armenia and Kurdistan.[411] The disagreement between Bedirhan and Abdul Kadir indicates to the emergence of two different political and territorial projects of Kurdistan: a larger autonomous Kurdistan under the Ottoman rule and a smaller Kurdistan separated from the Ottomans (and the future Turkish state) under colonial rule. Each leader promoted his plans for the future, based on the rivalry between the two families going back to the nineteenth century. Indeed, it is believed that the division between Bedirhan and Abdul Kadir was rather the result of the rivalry between the two tribal elite leaders for authority in a possible future Kurdish formation of any kind.[412] Therefore, in conclusion, it could be said that by this stage a unified movement with the aim to form a Kurdish state had not yet developed. Kurdish elites had begun to embrace the notion of Kurdistan as a 'national homeland' but still saw it in terms of their territorial dominion.

Overall, in conclusion, the revolts of Kurdish leaders and their formation of Kurdish societies in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century were not motivated by nationalist goals but by the desire to maintain or increase territorial control and power. The territorial political notion of Kurdistan developed before Kurdish nationalism emerged and began to be considered as the name of a 'national homeland', gradually, only after the end of WWI. Therefore, the tribal leaders' desire to maintain

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[410] Özoğlu, 81.

[411] Bozarslan, 169; Olson, 'Five stages', 399; Jwaideh, 134. Şerif Pasha's efforts in Versailles and his map of Kurdistan are discussed in detail in the next chapter. Bedirhan's telegraph to the Conference indicating that Serif Pasha does not represent all Kurds is a proof of this. Other Kurdish chieftains also sent telegraphs to the conference to condemn Şerif Pasha's initiative for a Kurdish state and emphasised their fraternity with the Turks. See Bozarslan, 172.

[412] Özoğlu, 77: '[t]he fact that Emin Ali Bedirhan wanted himself or perhaps his son, Celadet to be the ruler of Kurdistan, it is very probable that Emin Ali Bedirhan was bitter about Abdulkadir's leadership in Istanbul and about Semdinan power in Kurdistan.' *Ibid.*, 118-119. This rivalry between the two families goes back to the nineteenth century. Bedirhan family lost its authority in the Baban territories after the defeat of the Bedirhan Revolt; by the second half of that century, sheikhly Şemdinan family emerged as the strongest power in the region and included some of the old Baban areas under its dominion. This caused bitterness between the two families.

and increase territorial control and their loyalty to the Sultan (with the condition that they continue control their territorial domain) impeded early formation of Kurdish nationalism. This also led Kurdish nationalism to have a strong focus on territorial features. During and after WWI, the international political circumstances changed, Wilson's vision of a new international order began to spread across the world, the Ottoman Empire's dissolution became inevitable and the plans for an Armenia were being seriously discussed. It is in this period that the activities of the Kurdish leadership transformed into a Kurdish political movement.

Conclusion

There is a significant relation between territory and nationalism in the Kurdish case and Kurdish nationalism is shaped by the problematic character of the concept of Kurdistan. This chapter provided the historical background in order to show the prominence of territorial features (linked to tribal structure) in the history of the Kurdish society before the emergence of Kurdish nationalism as a political movement. Scholarship on Kurdish nationalism often mentions the concept of Kurdistan but does not consider it as something to be theorised and explained. However, the study of the territorial concept of Kurdistan provides useful insights to Kurdish nationalism. This chapter took the notion of Kurdistan as constructed through a combination of contingent material, historical and ideational factors, not as a primordial and given feature of Kurdish nationalism as is traditionally understood in the literature. The chapter argued that the notion of Kurdistan gradually developed out of the processes of bargaining between local tribal elite and the Ottoman state, the attempts of urban and provincial tribal elites to increase their power and dominion during the weakening and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and the division of the Ottoman territories during WWI based on the interests of the victorious states.

This chapter showed that the development of Kurdish nationalism has been delayed most importantly because of the excessive 'territorial obsession' of the tribal elite. This territorial obsession has been directed to 'an idea of Kurdistan' which has had multiple forms and meanings. The projected Kurdistans have been numerous and varied in accordance with the interests of tribal confederations. The competition between the Kurdish tribal elites was also one of the reasons to why Kurdish nationalism emerged later than other nationalist movements in the Ottoman Empire and why it did not

develop into a unified nationalism.[413] The territorial obsession with the aim to keep or gain power and authority led to rivalry among Kurdish groups. Thus rival Kurdistan plans emerged, foretelling the divided nature of Kurdish nationalism.

Overall, theoretically, the thesis challenges two general assumptions in relation to existing understandings of Kurdish nationalism. Firstly, in the literature, territory is generally seen as a given feature of Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish identity. This chapter showed that the territory, Kurdistan, was not perceived as a national homeland until the end of the WWI. It gradually emerged as a politico-tribal project and bargaining tool of Kurdish leadership in the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. It transformed into the idea of Kurdistan as a national homeland after WWI. Modernist nationalist theories would argue that territorial projects are created with the aim of autonomy, separation or local administrative rights, and are constructed and created by the nationalist leadership. However, in the Kurdish case, the territorial notion of Kurdistan as a political unit emerged before Kurdish nationalism emerged, and the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism have been directly connected to the concept of Kurdistan.

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[413] Disunity among Kurdish elite, establishment of new states in the first half of the twentieth century which created multiple numbers of Kurdish societies existing in different political and cultural contexts, low levels of literacy and education, highly mountainous geography, underdevelopment due to frontier/peripheral location are among some of the reasons suggested in the literature.

Chapter 5: Kurdistan and Kurdish Nationalism Since World War I

Introduction

This chapter will argue that the formation of Kurdish nationalism as a political movement and the definition of Kurdistan as a national territory can be understood within the context of the re-organisation of the Ottoman territories based on territorial nation-states and through the direct involvement of Western powers and the wide acceptance and application of the Wilsonian self-determination principle. After the 1950s, the spread of territorial nation-states to other parts of the world through decolonisation and the dissolution of the communist regimes reinforced the territorial nation-state ideal and provided further political and ideological impetus for the promotion of Kurdistan as the Kurdish national homeland. As mentioned in the Introduction, this thesis adopts Breuilly's definition of nationalism as a form of politics, which assumes that nationalist movements relate nationalism to the aims of attaining or using state power.[414] In the Kurdish case, elites linked their nationalism to the aim of attaining state power, initially within the context of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and later in the form of separatist nationalism in the new states formed in the ex-Ottoman territories.[415]

This chapter aims to explain the development and proliferation of Kurdish nationalism, and the reasons for the way Kurdish nationalists, scholars and sections in international society perceive the notion of Kurdistan and its maps. It proposes two reasons for such perceptions. Firstly, as explained in the previous chapter, Kurdish nationalist discourse and some of the non-Kurdish academic historiography on the Kurds deploy contemporary conceptions of national territory on historical uses of Kurdistan. One of the key characteristics of Kurdish nationalism is its assumption that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation. This facilitates the perception that Kurdistan is an ethnic territory. The ethnicist understanding of nations in some of the academic and non-academic literature implies that territory is more or less a given feature of groups and this strengthens and gives credibility to such perceptions of a Kurdish homeland. The ethnicist assumption is at its most prominent

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[414] Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, 1.
[415] Breuilly looks at separatist nationalisms in three different contexts: Separatist nationalism in the nineteenth century Europe Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, separatist nationalism in the new nation-states (particularly the cases from Africa and Pakistan) and separatist nationalism in the developed nation-states, particularly the Scottish case.

in the use of the idea of Kurdistan and the use of the map of Kurdistan by Kurdish nationalists in relation to their self-determination claims.

The second reason for the way some actors in international society approach Kurdish nationalists' claims to an ethnically-defined territory is the resonance of the notion of territoriality in the contemporary international system based on territorial nation-states, which provides the legitimate context for the promotion of national homelands. Additionally, understanding territories in ethnic terms can be linked to the popularity of understandings of the nation as an ethnically-defined entity. All this serves as a suitable intellectual justification for Kurdish nationalists and gives strength to their attempt to draw support and sympathy from among would-be nationals and in international society. In this framework, maps can be seen as propaganda tools in promoting the idea of a 'natural' or 'given' border and are particularly effective tools for sub-state nationalist groups.

In order to explain and illustrate the arguments above, this chapter firstly looks at Kurdish politics at end of WWI and the emergence of Kurdish nationalism in line with the idea of a national Kurdish homeland. Next, the chapter explores the ways in which Kurdish nationalist movements, as well as outsiders, have used the notion of Kurdistan and its maps throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Lastly, the chapter offers a discussion of the possible reasons for the perceptions of scholars, Kurdish sympathisers, certain state departments and some of the international media in international society on Kurdistan. As explained in the Introduction, in relation to the historiography of the maps of Kurdistan and their use by Kurdish nationalists as propaganda tools, this thesis has hugely benefited from Maria T. O'Shea's insights. O'Shea discusses how the map of Greater Kurdistan has become widely used and considers this an example of 'propaganda cartography'. As a social geographer she argues that the Greater Map of Kurdistan does not reflect the real demographic circumstances of the region but rather it is the 'most visible form of discourse about Kurdistan.'[416]

Kurdistan and Kurdish Nationalism at the End of WWI

As already established, Kurdish tribal leaders' desire to maintain and increase their territorial control and their loyalty to the Sultan, with the condition that they continue to control their territorial domains, impeded the early formation of Kurdish nationalism.

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[416] O'Shea, 2-3. For a discussion on the implications of the existence of the elusive territory of Kurdistan on the geopolitical realities in the region and the status of the Kurds see Culcasi, 117-119.

Disagreements between Kurdish leaders, especially among the members of the *Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti* (Society for the Rise of Kurdistan), continued even after it became clear that the Ottoman Empire was going to dissolve. Kurdish nationalist historiography considers the WWI period as a key defining moment in Kurdistan's history of missed opportunities. This is because of the fact that the creation of a Kurdish state was one of the issues discussed by the Great Powers before, during and after the War within the wider context of the re-division of the ex-Ottoman territories. It is known that during the War the British sent political officers to Mosul to encourage a Kurdish uprising against the Ottoman Empire with the intention of forming an independent Kurdish state in Mosul and Sulaymaniyah. However, they soon realised that an Iraqi state would not be feasible without those regions.[417]

By the time the war ended and the Paris Peace Conference began on 18 January 1919, there was still no agreement on the location and extent of a possible Kurdish political entity. The proceedings of this conference lasted more than a year, but throughout this time the situation of Kurdistan and the Kurdish people was dealt with only in very general terms and mostly within the framework of its relation to the destiny of the Ottoman controlled areas.[418] The Paris Peace Conference hosted representatives of many peoples and groups, however not all these delegations were given official hearings, including the Kurdish delegation. The Kurdish delegation was led by General Şerif Pasha. The Pasha had prepared a *Memorandum on the Claims of the Kurd People*, which was accompanied by a map of Kurdistan. The Memorandum claimed a free Kurdish state for the Kurdish people and attempted to demonstrate the soundness of the Kurdish demands against the Armenian claims. It argued that the districts claimed by the Armenians were actually the boundaries of Turkish Kurdistan. The request of the Kurdish delegation was as follows: 'In virtue of the Wilsonian principle everything pleads in favour of the Kurds for the creation of a Kurd state, entirely free and independent … Since the Ottoman Government has accepted Mr Wilson's fourteen points without reservation, the Kurds believe that they have every right to demand their independence, and that without any way failing in loyalty towards the Empire under whose sovereignty they have lived for many centuries, keeping intact their customs and tradition…'.[419] Şerif Pasha went on to argue that if the contested districts were to be included in the New Armenia, disorder and guerrilla warfare were inevitable. The

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[417] Tahiri, 53
[418] Ahmad, 196-97.
[419] *Ibid.,* 14.

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Memorandum also indicated the ethnographic frontiers of Turkish Kurdistan as follows: 'in the North at Ziven, on the Caucasian frontier, and continue westwards to Erzéroum, Erzindjan, Kémah, Arabkir, Benismi, and Divick; in the South they follow the line from Haran, the Sindjihar Hills, Tel Asfar, Erbil. Kerkuk, Suléimanié, Akk-el-man, Sinna; in the East, Ravandiz, Bash-Kalé, Vizir-Kalé, that is to say the frontier of Persia as far as Mount Ararat.'[420]

Figure 5.1: Serif Pasha's Map of Kurdistan, 1919[421]
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]

The definition of Kurdistan and its map provided in the Memorandum were constructed on the basis of early definitions of Kurdistan and maps produced by Western travellers, British and German armies and entrepreneurs in the region. From the nineteenth century onwards numerous definitions and cartographic depictions of Kurdistan were created by European travellers and writers who visited the region as state agents, army officers, scientists, researchers or journalists. Their maps derived from their findings during their travels as well as from definitions of Kurdistan by Şerefhan, Evliya Çelebi and Koyi. Among these early Western produced maps, a map produced by the Germans in 1854 is significant because it is the first ethnographic map of part of Kurdistan. The British military officer Major Maunsell produced another important map after his travels in the region in 1892. This map is important as it is the first map of Kurdistan and it provided detailed information on the geography of Kurdistan and Kurdish habitation.[422] The British Government used Maunsell's projections of Kurdistan in the period before WWI when plans about the region were being made. Maunsell's map and other travellers' maps became widely accepted and used by Kurdish nationalists after WWI.

The Kurdish Delegation was not considered representative of the Kurds and, despite the efforts of Şerif Pasha, it was not taken seriously by the British.[423] Eventually

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[420] Kurd Delegation to the Peace Conference, *Memorandum on the Claims of the Kurd People*, Paris, 1919, 3, 12.
[421] O'Shea, 167.
[422] O'Shea, 14-15, 110, 125. It is important to remember that these accounts reflect the values and perceptions of the travellers who were representatives of the states that ultimately decided the political future of the region. Their accounts were shaped by their states' official political policy towards the region and contributed to the restructuring of the region in the first decades of the twentieth century.
[423] McDowall, *Modern History*, 122. For a discussion on how maps are used by the delegations as tools to convince others at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference see Edward Mandell House and Charles Seymour

the Pasha resigned from his role as the President of the Kurdish Delegation before the Conference ended. Before his resignation the Conference received a series of telegrams from Kurdish chieftains in the region stating that they did not recognise Şerif Pasha as a legitimate representative of the Kurdish people and protested against his map of Kurdistan. For instance, Emin Ali Bedirhan, the vice president of Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti, rejected the proposed map and, in a letter to the president of the Conference, he claimed 'Kurdish lands consist of the Ottoman *vilayet*s of Diyarbakır, Harput, Bitlis, Van, Mosul and the *sancak* of Urfa'.[424] There were also telegrams from other Kurdish chieftains claiming that they did not want separation from the Turks.[425] In the Ottoman ruled areas, many Kurdish chieftains supported Mustafa Kemal's movement since they perceived him as the most likely person to protect Kurdish lands from Armenian claims, and believed that they needed him to consolidate and increase their own power.[426] Additionally, Olson states that, some Kurdish groups supported the Turks not only for opportunistic reasons, but also because of their belief that Kurdish nationalists' demands for autonomy or independence were treacherous especially when Turks were stuck in a war with the Greeks.[427]

The general international political and ideological circumstances of the era led Kurdish leaders to raise their hopes since self-determination was the rule of the day, at least in the process immediately after WWI. Not long after the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference ended, the Treaty of Sèvres was signed in August 1920.[428] Despite its limited provisions, modern Kurdish nationalist historiography perceives the Treaty of Sèvres as having legally provided for the establishment of a Kurdish state and therefore as a milestone in Kurdish history. According to this view, if it was not for the 1923

(eds.), *What Really Happened at Paris, the Story of the Peace Conference 1918-19, by American delegates,* London, 1921, 142.

[424] Özoğlu, 39-40.

[425] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 279.

[426] *Ibid.*, 278-279. Olson, 'Five stages', 401.

[427] Olson, 'Five stages', 401-402.

[428] Articles 62-64 of the Treaty dealt with the issue of Kurdistan. The Treaty set the terms for the partition of the Ottoman territories and Articles 62-64 dealt with the status of the Kurds. Article 62 provided that: '…a Commission sitting at Constantinople … shall draft … a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia as it may be hereafter determined, and north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia…'. Article 64 explained when and how Kurds could apply to the League of Nations to show their desire for independence: 'If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish people within areas defined in article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the council then considers that these peoples are capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas.' As quoted in Jwaideh, 131-132.

Lausanne Treaty, the Kurdish state would have been established.[429] For them the WWI period was a missed opportunity for accomplishing their desire to become independent. But later Wilson became aware of the destabilising influence of his ideas. Cautious measures were implemented, such as the removal of the concept of self-determination from the conference covenant. Wilson announced that the Conference would only deal with territories and peoples related to Europe, with the Turkish possessions in Anatolia and the Middle East and the German and Italian colonial possessions, and he suggested the formation of an international mechanism to deal with future claims.[430] Most of the Ottoman territories were divided between the British, French, Italians and the Greeks and, eventually, only two new states were formed: Turkey and Armenia in the immediate period after the end of the WWI.

The future status of the Kurds remained uncertain throughout the post-War process for reasons also other than the Lausanne Treaty. The case of Kurdistan during the WWI period indicates that when the idea to create Kurdistan did not correspond with political, economic and geostrategic circumstances and aims, it was disregarded. One of the reasons for this disregard was that the implementation of the principle after 1918 proved very difficult beyond the European territories. In the Ottoman territories the Great Powers' policy was mainly to draw viable boundaries for the new entities rather than fully implement the principle of self-determination. In theory self-determination seemed reasonable as it implied a people's right to govern. In an existing political jurisdictional entity, the population of that entity constitutes the people or 'the self', but if a new political jurisdictional entity is to be created it is very difficult to define the people (or 'the self') that has the right to self-determination. In many parts of the post-imperial Habsburg and Ottoman territories the 'self' needed to be created. In this context, the victorious powers saw Kurds as a potential 'self' and Kurdistan as the possible territory of that potential 'self'. However, British policies in relation to the Kurds indicate that they did not perceive Kurdistan as an end in itself, but as a potential means to reach the most suitable and favourable political, economic and geostrategic conditions in the region. An example that indicates the greater role played by political considerations is that the victorious powers, in order to avoid antagonising Iran, never brought the Kurdish inhabited areas in Iran to the agenda during the discussions on a

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[429] O'Shea, 11, 144. Even the non-Kurdish academic literature adopts the 'division' argument and sees this at the core of contemporary problems facing Kurdish society such as deprivation of political unity and threats to cultural cohesion. See Charountaki, 42.
[430] Manela, 60-61.

possible Kurdish state.[431] This shows the tension between the idea of self-determination and politico-economic circumstances.

Another reason for the disregard of the idea of a Kurdish state is that the British gradually became less interested in the idea. The key aim of the British in relation to the Kurds was to create a buffer zone (in the north of Mesopotamia and Mosul) between the territory under their domination in Mesopotamia and the future Turkish state. The British soon realised that the control of that zone would be a big undertaking for them and decided to leave this area to its own fate.[432] This disregard was also the result of the fragmented status and inconsistent attitude of the Kurdish leadership, which the British perceived as a drawback in any movement towards a possible Kurdish state. The much more coherent, strong and unified Armenian movement supported by an influential and well-organised Armenian diaspora posed a significant contrast to the fragmented Kurds in the region and their ineffective representation in Europe.[433] Another possible reason for British disinterest was the lack of oil resources in those areas.

The only area where self-determination was implemented, albeit in a quite procedural form, was north Mesopotamia (today Northern Iraq) where a regional administration was headed by Kurdish tribal leaders. This was done with the aim of complying with the League of Nations' expectations but it was made clear that this area was Iraqi territory. Moreover, the British were concerned about the overlapping territorial claims of the Kurds and the Armenians.[434] It soon became clear that the Assyrians also had territorial claims in the same area. They sent delegates to the Paris Peace Conference presenting a large map that projected the location and boundaries of the Assyrian state they envisaged.[435] Turkish political aspirations, on the other hand, opposed the Armenian, Kurdish and Assyrian aspirations.[436] Therefore, the multi-cultural and multi-religious composition of the population in eastern Anatolia made the

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[431] O'Shea, 12.

[432] Kurdish nationalist discourse often criticizes the British state for its inconsistent policy towards the Kurds during the WWI period. This critique is partly fair as before and during the WWI, European agents in the region raised and supported Kurdish nationalist aspirations, but the expectations of many Kurdish tribal leaders were not met. Until the end of 1921 the British encouraged Kurdish nationalism as a weapon against the Turks and kept it in reserve until 1926. *Ibid.*, 138-142.

[433] *Ibid.*, 133-138. As the chapter on the status of Kurdish diaspora showed Kurdish nationalists have learnt from this lesson. Kurdish activists in the diaspora today are more effective in furthering their claims.

[434] McDowall, *Modern History*, 120.

[435] O'Shea, 129.

[436] Turkish claims on the region were officially announced on 12 February 1920 as a set of decisions, *Misak-ı Millî* (National Pact), taken by the Ottoman Parliament just before the occupation of Istanbul by the Allies. Mustafa Kemal's independence movement, the *Kuvayi Milliye*, adopted the *Misak-ı Millî* and requested its fulfilment in the negotiations that led to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 24 July 1923.

implementation of self-determination very problematic due to the difficulty of drawing boundaries for viable and culturally homogenous political entities.

In the end, post-war negotiations did not result in the creation of a Kurdish state but did lead to an abstract Kurdistan with extensive boundaries, which became the foundational aspect of Kurdish nationalism. The internationalisation of self-determination in this era led to the emergence of an understanding that the ethnographic structure of the region was crucial in creating new political entities. Together with the internationalisation of the principle of self-determination, the idea of Kurdistan provided an excellent framework for the Kurdish identity. After this stage, the Kurdish national homeland and its cartographic depiction, the map of Kurdistan, began to imply that the territory lying within those borders was Kurdish.

Kurdish Nationalism and Kurdistan after the WWI

Kurdish nationalists have operated within a context of new international boundaries that emerged after WWI and remained more or less unchanged except for some relatively minor changes. The map of Kurdistan that emerged in the early twentieth century persisted over successive decades until today and constituted the basis for Kurdish nationalist aspirations despite the fragmented status of Kurdish nationalism and different territorial and political aims of each Kurdish political movement. This section will offer a historical and chronological narrative of the significant Kurdish movements and the fragmented status of Kurdish nationalism.

After the British abandoned the idea of creating a Kurdish state, firstly within Anatolia and then in Iraq, Kurdish movements led by the Kurdish elite and intellectuals continued to emerge and proliferate. However, they never attained the status of a unified Kurdish nationalist movement detached from localised tribal desire for territorial control. The territory became the most important and defining feature of Kurdish nationalism despite the continuing fragmentation of Kurdish nationalism and the proliferation of politico-territorial goals. Kurdish nationalists in each state have limited their territorial goals within the boundaries of the states they reside.

The level of popular support has been different in each state and none of the Kurdish movements have gained the full support of their Kurdish societies, and each Kurdish movement in each state is organised in different styles. In Turkey, as a result of Turkey's centralised administration that aimed to eliminate the local tribal and religious authorities of the aghas and sheikhs, and its national education and Westernisation

policies, Turkey's Kurds were gradually detribalised and urbanised. In Iraq, the British maintained the Kurdish tribal structure and local authority figures. In Iran, the Kurds have mostly been clearly divided between 'nomadic, tribal, semi-tribal, urbanised and pastoral' stratas.[437]

Kurdish activities continued after the war in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. In Iraq, Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji, who had been appointed as the governor of Sulaymaniyah, the Kurdish region in Iraq, rebelled against the British in 1920 and again between 1924-32. Sulaymaniyah was created by the British in 1918 as a semi-autonomous Kurdish region, in accordance with the ideals of President Wilson's Point 12.[438] Sheikh Mahmud resented the fact that some of the districts did not accept his leadership and that his freedom was restrained by British advisers. He declared himself the king of Kurdistan and believed that the Kurds of the Sulaymaniyah region were entitled to a state of their own.[439] Nevertheless, Sheikh Mahmud's quest was almost impossible, because the Kurds in the Sulaymaniyah province were divided due to tribal rivalry, and two powerful tribal confederations, the Jaf and the Pizhdar, opposed him.[440] Moreover, the British had different plans for the region. After a short military operation Sheikh Mahmud was defeated, captured, and deported, and these areas were incorporated into the Iraqi administrative organisation. Sheikh Mahmud rebelled again in 1924, and his revolt was suppressed in 1932. After this the British sent a memorandum to the Council of the League of Nations to legitimise their denial of Kurdish right to self-determination.[441]

Another attempt at achieving Kurdish independence in this same era with strong nationalist undertones emerged in Iran in the early 1920s.[442] At the end of WWI, Iran, led by the Pahlavi regime, was in a state of turmoil and Simko Agha emerged as the most powerful Kurdish figure in the Kurdish inhabited areas from 1919 to 1922. Simko was reported to have worked on a plan to include the Persian Kurds in an independent Kurdistan.[443] He tried to ally himself with Turkey, Britain, Russia, the United States and France and declared an open rebellion against Iran in 1922. The tribes that had joined

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[437] Koohi-Kamali, 31-32; Charaountaki, 39.

[438] Edmonds, 92. Wilson's Point 12: 'The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.'
http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson's_Fourteen_Points, last accessed 13 April 2012.

[439] Natali, 28-29.

[440] Jwaideh, 184.

[441] Tahiri, 59.

[442] Edmonds, 96.

[443] Jwaideh, 139.

his forces deserted him and his expectations of a British support for his revolt against the government ended in disappointment. In the end, he was defeated and escaped to Iraq.

In post-war Turkey, the first large scale Kurdish revolt was the 1925 Sheikh Said Revolt. The organisation behind the revolt was the Azadi (meaning 'freedom'), which was founded as a secret organisation in Erzurum (eastern Turkey) in 1923. Its members were Kurdish officers and tribal leaders.[444] Azadi planned to instigate a general revolt and to form an independent Kurdistan. Sheikh Said, who was a well-known Sunni sheikh, was selected as the leader of the revolt. A religious leader was chosen because it was thought that a revolt with a religious character would make mobilisation easier at a time when Kurdish nationalism was weak among the masses.[445] Sheikh Said revolted in 1925. His main support base was the Zaza-speaking Sunni Kurds. Alevi Kurds of Dersim did not support him. Moreover, some Sunni Kurds and tribes in Van and some of the tribes and the townspeople of Diyarbakır and Elazığ joined in the suppression of the revolt.[446] According to Tahiri, the attempt of Sheikh Said was unsuccessful, similar to Sheikh Mahmud and Simko revolts, because all these leaders undertook actions 'for a society in which its people were at odds with each other'.[447] Sheikh Said's revolt was easily defeated and he and other Kurdish leaders who joined the revolt were executed for the crime of attempting to establish an independent Kurdish state.

Sheikh Said's revolt is the most debated Kurdish rebellion in the literature and there are different arguments about its character. According to Jwaideh, there was a strong nationalist sentiment underlying the revolt and religion was simply manipulated for a nationalist cause.[448] Van Bruinessen describes the revolt as a large scale 'traditional tribal rebellion.'[449] It is also argued that the religious component in the revolt was far more significant than many assumed. The abandonment of the Ottoman legacy and the religious authority of the Caliphate led the traditional and conservative Kurdish elite to realise that the dominant doctrine of the Turkish Republic was Turkish nationalism, not Muslim fraternity, and this led to the Kurdish resistance.[450] Another reason proposed for

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[444] Tahiri, 66.

[445] *Ibid.*, 66.

[446] *Ibid.*, 66-69.

[447] *Ibid.*i, 69.

[448] Jwaideh, 210.

[449] Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Kurds in movement: issues, organization, mobilization', Talk given to the Friends of the IISH, Amsterdam, 4 December 2003, online source, http://www.hum.uu.nl/medewerkers/m.vanbruinessen/publications/kurds_IISH_talk.htm, last accessed 5 October 2010.

[450] Bozarslan, 178; Edmonds, 91.

the cause of the revolt is that the Kurdish elite believed that Turkey abandoned the Kurds by accepting the division of the Kurds among Turkey and Iraq in the Lausanne Treaty. Therefore, they saw the British dominance over Mosul as a betrayal by the Turkish state.[451]

Another significant Kurdish revolt is the Ağrı Dağı (Ararat Mountain) revolt (1930-31), also known as the Ararat revolt, which was organized by Khoybun (meaning 'independence' or 'being one-self'). Khoybun was established in Syria in 1927 by Kurdish activists who escaped or migrated to Syria after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Kurds in Syria were less numerous than the Kurds in Turkey, Iraq and Iran and they lacked a focal centre. Therefore the Kurds who migrated from Turkey, especially the Bedirhan brothers, were able to act as significant figures. Also, French patronage in Syria enabled them to engage in nationalist activities. Khoybun's aim was to promote the Kurdish national cause and to form a Kurdish state on the territories of Turkey. Khoybun also opened Kurdish centres outside Syria, in Cairo, Paris, Detroit, and Philadelphia and was particularly active in Paris.[452] It distributed manifestos in Turkey, Iraq and Syria and sent them to the League of Nations, to Beirut and to Paris. However, Khoybun was unable to unify and organise the Kurdish masses, mainly because, according to Tahiri, the Kurdish tribal leaders were only seeking their own interests and the intellectuals engaged in these activities had no real power over the tribal leaders. Moreover, most of the Kurds in Iran and Iraq did not support Khoybun, and the Kurds in Turkey were divided. The level of disunity amongst the Kurds became particularly clear during the course of the Ağrı Dağı revolt. Most Kurds in Turkey did not take sides during the revolt whereas a small number of Kurdish groups supported either the revolt or the government.[453] Meanwhile, most of the Kurds outside Turkey saw the revolt as a Kurdish revolt in Turkey.

Still, the Ağrı Dağı revolt is one of the most significant revolts where Kurds from Iran, Iraq and Turkey, although limited in number, all took part. Most Kurdish nationalist activities after 1925 were confined within the individual states.[454] The revolt took place near the town Ağrı in northeast Turkey and İhsan Nuri and former Ottoman officers led the revolt. Although the leaders of the revolt made appeals to the League of

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[451] Bozarslan, 179. One of the (probably unstated) parts of the 1926 agreement between Turkey and Britain giving the latter final control of Mosul beyond what it said on frontiers and on oil, was that Turkey agreed to cede the territory on the understanding that whatever government was in Baghdad would control the Kurds.
[452] Jwaideh, 145.
[453] Tahiri, 71-72.
[454] Olson, 'Five stages', 402.

Nations and the Great Powers for support, and called for the support of the Kurds in Iran and Iraq, they did not manage to gain support. This was because of the signed treaties and protocols between Iran, Turkey and Great Britain and the Soviet Union, and also because of the security agreements between Turkey, Iran and Iraq to stop cross-border Kurdish activity.[455] The Turkish army suppressed the revolt in 1930 and İhsan Nuri escaped to Iran.

The last Kurdish revolt in Turkey in this period was the 1937 Dersim Revolt. This revolt also formed for similar reasons to the Sheikh Said and Ağrı Dağı revolts. Turkish government policy displeased the Kurdish tribal leaders and sheikhs, especially due to the government's continuing confiscations and deportations. A religious leader, Sayyid Reza, led the revolt and the revolt is generally characterised as religious and tribal.[456] There are also arguments in the literature that it was mainly the result of nationalist sentiments and aims.[457] The revolt started in 1937 in the mountains of Dersim and continued until the end of 1938 but the insurgents could not receive outside help. Even the Kurds outside Dersim and some Alevi Kurds did not support the revolt.[458] The revolt was defeated and no Kurdish revolt arose again in Turkey until the 1980s.

During these revolts, Kurdish activists did not produce any maps of Kurdistan. This could be due to the fact that Kurdish tribal leaders were more concerned with the extent of their tribal lands rather than claiming a national territorial Kurdistan and they had no real idea about the extent of Kurdistan.[459] The maps of Kurdistan produced by Kurdish nationalists and Kurdish historical geographers after the 1930s mostly relied on the earlier European maps and atlases produced to study Kurdistan's political geography in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. A good example of such maps is Muhammed Emin Zeki Bey's map of Kurdistan, published in his *History of the Kurds and of Kurdistan* in 1936. Zeki Bey was a Kurdish historian and politician and Transport Minister in the Iraqi government. The sources he used in producing his Kurdistan map were Sykes' 1908 Map of Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman

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[455] Edmonds, 91; Olson, 'Five stages', 402-403.
[456] Edmonds, 91.
[457] Jwaideh, 215.
[458] Tahiri, 75.
[459] O'Shea, 172.

Empire,[460] a map drawn by the Commission of Inquiry of the League of Nations of Iraq and a secret Indian Army map from 1912.[461]

Figure 5.2: Ethnographic Map of Kurdistan, Muhammed Emin Zeki[462]
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]

Until the mid-1940s there were no significant Kurdish military or political activities apart from the 1937 Dersim rebellion in Turkey and some small groups and meetings taking place in other regional countries. In Turkey the WWII period witnessed increased pressure on minority groups and strong one-party rule continued. Following the severe suppression of the Dersim rebellion, the Kurds of Turkey remained relatively inactive. In Iraq, after the suppression of his defeat in 1932, Sheikh Mahmud was exiled to southern Kurdistan and only was allowed to return to his family in 1941. However, other members of his family, particularly Mustafa and Ahmed Barzani continued their activities in northern Iraq. They led several insurrections in between 1930-33. Mustafa Barzani surrendered to the Iraqi forces in 1933 and was kept under control in Sulaymaniyah until 1943. However, when Iraq joined the Axis powers in 1941 and fought with the British forces, albeit briefly, Mustafa Barzani used this opportunity to escape to Iran and organise a rebellion against Iraq with the help of the Hiva Party in Iran. During the 1940s, Kurdish activities were particularly centred in Iran and the Iraqi and Iranian Kurds formed an alliance, as will be explained in relation to the establishment of the Mahabad Republic.

The most significant group established in Iran was the Hiva (meaning 'hope'), which was established in 1935 by both Iraqi and Iranian Kurdish activists. Hiva remained active only for two years, then revitalised a decade later and played an important role in the preparation of Mulla Mustafa Barzani's rebellion in Iraq in 1945. In its first meeting in Barzan (a village in Lurestan Province in Iran) before the rebellion, the party decided to declare the autonomy of Kurdistan and prepared a programme with the goal of unifying the tribes, and publishing and distributing propaganda to form a Kurdish army.[463] Barzani was defeated in 1945 and escaped to Iran. He was part of the

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[460] Sykes' 1908 Map of Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire was published in Mark Sykes, 'The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire,' *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Jul-Dec 1908, 38: 451-486, 452.
[461] O'Shea, 172.
[462] *Ibid.*, 173.
[463] Jwaideh, 239.

political and military movements in Iran and he instigated guerrilla warfare against Iraq in the 1960s. After Barzani's defeat in 1945 the Hiva split into small groups. One of those groups later formed the Rezgari Kurd Party (Kurdish Deliverance Party) that aimed to unify and liberate greater Kurdistan and secure administrative independence for Iraqi Kurdistan, and to explain the Kurdish cause to all nations, particularly the nations of the Middle East.[464] In January 1946 the Rezgari Kurds submitted a formal appeal for Kurdish self-determination and sovereignty to the American Legation in Baghdad. Accompanying this submission was a map of Kurdistan, which they requested be shown to the UN.[465]

Figure 5.3: Rizgari Kurd Map, 1946[466]
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]

In the same period, on 22 March 1945 a young Kurdish officer in the Iraqi Army submitted a *Memorandum on the Kurdish Question* to the American Legation in Baghdad. This memorandum mainly claimed Kurdish independence and requested that the Kurds be given 'their place among free nations'.[467] The Memorandum did not involve a map but provided a description of the ethnographic boundaries of Kurdistan, which more or less replicated the boundaries produced on other Kurdish maps.[468]

The Kurdish League, established in Syria, is another Kurdish group that produced a map with similar boundaries in 1945. The Kurdish League was Khoybun's successor and was mainly led by Kurdish leaders who were originally from Turkey. Their map, called Carte du Kurdistan, was produced a year before the Rezgari Party's map and was presented by the Kurdish League Delegation at the first session of the UN

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[464] *Ibid.*, 240-41; F. David Andrews (ed.), *The Lost Peoples of the Middle East: Documents of the Struggle for Survival and Independence of the Kurds, Assyrians, and other Minority Races in the Middle East*, Salisbury: Documentary Publications, 1982.

[465] McDowall, *Modern History*, 294; Memorandum from the Kurdish Rizgari Party, 1946, addressed to the President of UNO through the US Legation Baghdad to the Secretary of State, Washington, in Andrews, 83.

[466] O'Shea, 178.

[467] *Memorandum on the Kurdish Question*, 22 March 1945, American Legation, Baghdad, in Andrews.

[468] 'To the west: A line starting from the Kurd-Dagh (Syria), running in a northerly direction through the regions of Killis, Marash, Albistan, and Divrik to the Kelkit river. South-West of this line, there are scattered Kurdish settlements as far as the Gulf of Alexandrette. To the North: A line following the Kelkit river, running east through the towns of Baiburt and Olty to Kars. North of this line scattered Kurdish settlements reach the Black Sea near Trebizond. To the East: A line starting from Kars in a southeasterly direction, then running along the western shore of Lake Urmia, Luristan, the Bakhtiar country to Sehneh and Kermanshah. To the South: From Southern Luristan a line running north west through Khanakin and Kifri to the Jebel Hamrin; from there to the west, south of Mount Singar to the Euphrates in Jerablus.' *Memorandum on the Kurdish Question*, 1945.

San Francisco Conference on the 30 March 1945. The Kurdish League also sent a letter with the delegates to this conference and demanded Kurdish autonomy.[469] This demand was limited to Kurdish autonomy in Turkey and excluded the Kurdish enclaves in Syria in order to not to antagonise the authorities in Damascus.[470]

Figure 5.4: Carte du Kurdistan, 1945
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]
Map available at http://www.kurdistanica.com/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=97

An unknown Kurdish group in Cairo produced another similar map in 1947.[471] The territories this map depicted were slightly more expansive than the Carte du Kurdistan and the Rezgari Kurd maps. The memorandum accompanying this map said 'the presence of Kurds in any given area is only indicated where it is expressly stated by a trustworthy authority'.[472]

Figure 5.5: Map of Kurdistan, Cairo 1947[473]
[This content has been removed for reasons of copyright.]

The Cairo Map is important because it has been influential particularly due to its clarity and decisiveness.[474] The territories shown on this map have become widely accepted by Kurdish nationalists and outsiders as 'Kurdistan'. Almost all Kurdish organisations in the diaspora publish this map in their programmes and leaflets and use it is as the symbol of Kurdish identity and future aspirations.[475] Overall, the maps produced in the 1940s have become the most influential propaganda tools of Kurdish nationalist discourse. Despite their production with political aims related to specific claims on the demographic and ethnographic structure of the region, and their

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[469] William Linn Westermann, 'Kurdish independence and Russian expansion,' *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1991, 70 (3): 50-54, 50.
[470] Jordi Tejel, *Syria's Kurds: History, Politics and Society*, New York: Routledge, 2009, 86.
[471] O'Shea, 172.
[472] *Ibid.*, 176-179. For instance, Lurs were presented as 'dilute' Kurds who would probably wish to become a part of a Kurdish state. The map also included the Arabs of Khuzistan near the Persian Gulf and Bakhtiari lands, but these inclusions were not justified.
[473] *Ibid.*, 174.
[474] *Ibid.*, 180.
[475] *Ibid.*, 194.

questionable methodologies, they have become 'Kurdistan in the minds of Kurds' and the boundaries they indicate have been readily accepted.[476]

Two important political developments in the 1940s were the establishment of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) in 1945 and, with Soviet support, the establishment of the Kurdish Mahabad Republic in 1946.[477] After their invasion of Iran in 1941, the British and Soviet forces divided Iranian Kurdistan into three zones: the Soviet zone, the British zone and a buffer Kurdish zone between the two other zones.[478] The KDPI created the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in Iran in the buffer Kurdish zone. The Republic was ruled by the key religious figure in the region, Qazi Muhammad, while Barzani was the foreign minister. The level of Soviet support for the republic was quite limited and it is argued that the establishment of the Mahabad Republic would not have been possible without the support of Mustafa Barzani and his fighters.[479]

The Mahabad Republic collapsed eleven months after its foundation for several interrelated reasons. The most important reason was the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iran in 1946 under the terms of the treaty signed between the Iranians, the British and the Soviets. Following the Soviet withdrawal the Iranian forces occupied the republic. Another reason was the differences and disagreements between the Iraqi Kurds and the Iranian Kurds. The Iranian Kurds were disturbed by the intrusion of Iraqi Kurds in their affairs and disliked the latter's traditional tribal policies.[480] Additionally, Qazi and Barzani had different political views. Moreover, there were linguistic and cultural differences among the tribes of Iran. Their rivalries with each other and with the Azeri landowners increased as a result of the policies of the leadership of Mahabad Republic and the involvement of Iraqi Kurds in the government.[481] After the collapse, Barzani and his fighters escaped and Barzani found refuge in the USSR.

Throughout the 1960s and until the 1980s, Kurdish activities continued in the form of small military insurrections and political organisations in Iraq and Iran.[482] In this

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[476] *Ibid.*, 168.

[477] Charaountaki, 44.

[478] Jwaideh, 243-44. Also see William G. Elphinston, 'The Kurdish questions', *International Affairs*, January 1946, 22 (1): 91-103, 98, 46.

[479] Olson, 'Five stages', 403-404.

[480] *Ibid.*, 404.

[481] *Idem.*

[482] There is a large body of literature on Kurdish nationalist revolts and others in Iraq since the WWI until the formation of the Kurdish Regional Government in Northern Iraq and the policies of each state toward their Kurdish population. James Ciment, *The Kurds: State and Minority in Turkey, Iraq and Iran*, New

period, Kurdish organisations do not appear to have made requests to international organisations or to powerful states in order to gain support for the establishment of a Kurdish state. Until the 1990s, the map of greater Kurdistan was not widely used for the promotion of Kurdish nationalist demands. This was probably because in Iran the Kurds remained fairly quiet after the collapse of the Mahabad Republic; in Iraq the suppression of the Baas regime and later intra-Kurdish rivalry led Kurdish groups in Iran to have limited contact with the international actors. In Turkey the 1960 coup d'état, the 1971 intervention and the military regime between 1980-1982 prevented the formation of significant Kurdish organisations and movements. As will be explained in the next pages, Kurdish movements in 1980s and 1990s began to become more effectively organised and mobilised. Still, in this historical period and later the idea of Kurdistan and its maps continued to provide a significant basis for Kurdish nationalism.

Barzani initiated his guerrilla war against the Iraqi state again in the 1960s.[483] The Hashemite regime in Iraq collapsed in 1958 as a result of the military coup led by General Qasim. After this, Barzani was brought back to Iraq from exile. The Provisional Constitution was created and it referred to the Kurds as equal partners in the Iraqi state with the Arabs but later it became clear that the promises in the Constitution were not to be implemented.[484] The Iraqi branch of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (DPK), which had begun to be openly active in the social and political arena after 1958, was declared illegal in 1960. Mulla Mustafa Barzani left for Barzan again and initiated his rebellion against the Iraqi government in 1961, which lasted until 1970.[485] On the 11 February 1970, the KDP and the Iraqi Government reached an agreement to create an administrative region with a majority Kurdish population who could 'exercise their full national rights and autonomy.'[486] The autonomy in northern Iraq was announced in 1974, but only for some parts of the region. Kurdish revolts began again in 1974 but

York: Barnes and Noble, 1996; Kerim Yıldız, *The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People*, London: Pluto Press, 2005; Edmund Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1981; Erik Cornell, 'The Kurdish question in Turkish politics', *Orbis*, Winter 2001, 45 (1): 16-31; Metin Heper, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; Ömer Taşpınar, *Kurdish Nationalism and Political Islam in Turkey: Kemalist Identity in Transition*, New York: Routledge, 2005; Philip Kreyenbroek and Christine Allison, eds., *Kurdish Culture and Identity*, London: Zed Book, 1996; Philip Kreyenbroek and Stefan Sperl (eds.), *The Kurds. A Contemporary Overview*, Routledge/SOAS, London 1992; Kirisci and Winrow; Charaountaki; Tahiri, Edmonds, Olson, Jwaideh, McDowall, Bozarslan, Elphinston; Barkey and Fuller; Koohi-Kamali, Natali, *The Kurds and the State*; Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism,* Van Bruinessen; Vali; Halliday; Cook.
[483] Foreword by van Bruinessen in Jwaideh, p. ix. According to Van Bruinessen Kurdish nationalism began as a mass movement with Barzani's rebellions in the 1960s.
[484] Edmonds, 100.
[485] *Ibid.*, 100-101.
[486] *Ibid.*, 102.

were suppressed in 1975 because the Iranians stopped their support for the uprising.[487] In 1975 another Kurdish party emerged, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani, the current president of Iraq. The PUK was founded in Damascus and moved its headquarters to the Iraqi-Iranian border in 1976. The PUK has been at odds with Barzani's KDP because it has a different tribal and intellectual basis and has supported progressive and agrarian reforms. The KDP, on the other hand, has a traditional and tribal support basis and opposes the non-tribal reforms. The rivalry between the two parties took the form of armed conflict in the 1990s.

The autonomy of the Kurdish area continued after the defeat of the Barzani revolt and a regional parliament was established. However, border control and a military presence were implemented by the central government. The Iraqi government evacuated a broad zone near the border and destroyed many villages throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. After the Iran-Iraq War began in 1980, Kurdish parties increased their control in Northern Iraq and brought people back to the villages that were destroyed by the Iraqi government.[488] The 1988 Anfal campaign by the Iraqi government was carried out in order to take control of this region again, a campaign during which tens of thousands of people died.[489] After the 1991 Kuwait War, Kurdish groups increased their control again, however, this led to another attack by the Iraqi government. A large number of Kurds were pushed to the borders of neighbouring countries, of which only Turkey allowed the refugees to enter, leading to a humanitarian disaster.[490] Eventually, a 'safe haven' was created by the US, with key centres of the safe haven lying in Sulaymaniyah and Erbil. After fighting with each other from 1994 to 1997, the KDP and PUK made peace and divided their control into two regional administrations with separate parliaments and this division remained unchanged until 2005.[491]

Although the Kurds in Turkey were not very active in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, debates revolving around Kurdish rights began to emerge in the late 1960s with the initiative of the Labour Party of Turkey (TİP). Kurds living in main cities of Turkey began to organise meetings to discuss the regional underdevelopment and the need for political recognition of the existence of Kurds in eastern Turkey. TİP was banned

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[487] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Iraq: Kurdish Challenges', Paper, 14 February 2005, online source, http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/let/2007-0312-083732/bruinessen_05_kurdishchallenges.pdf, last accessed 5 November 2011.
[488] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in Movement'.
[489] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Genocide of Kurds', in Israel W. Charny (ed.), *The Widening Circle of Genocide*, New Brunswick, NY: Transaction Publishers, 1994, 165-191.
[490] Van Bruinessen, 'Iraq: Kurdish Challenges'.
[491] *Idem.*

because of its support for the Kurds and after this came the 12 March 1971 coup d'état.[492] After military rule ended, Kurdish organisations with Marxist and leftist ideologies began to emerge again. The PKK emerged out of one of these groups in 1974. The PKK was founded with the aim of liberating Kurdistan and establishing an independent, united and socialist Kurdish state.[493] Soon after the 12 September 1980 military coup, in 1983 the PKK began its guerrilla warfare, which has lasted until today. The PKK engaged in attacks and bombings against the Turkish police and army and against civilians in the eastern provinces and the main western cities of Turkey. The PKK guerrillas received their training in northern Iraq and western Iran from Palestinian and Syrian instructors.[494] Throughout the conflict, several villages were destroyed by the Turkish army and by the PKK forces, and many people have been forcefully deported or have migrated to other parts of Turkey or abroad.[495] By the 1990s the PKK declared that they are no longer striving for full independence and invited the government to engage in negotiations.[496] But the Turkish state did not respond to these requests and the fighting continued. In 1999, the PKK's leader, Abdullah Öcalan, was captured and, although the armed conflict stopped for a short period, it has largely persisted until today.

As of June 2012, the relationship between the Turkish state and the PKK is in a stalemate. Öcalan indicates that the PKK is ready to negotiate a solution with the Turkish government that involves decentralisation for the Kurds within the existing boundaries of Turkey. Öcalan calls this solution 'democratic confederalism'.[497] He also states that a failure to reach such a solution soon will result in boundary changes for Turkey thanks to the transformations taking place in the Middle East and the increasing globalisation of the Kurdish issue. The co-president of the BDP (Barıs ve Demokrasi Partisi – Peace and Democracy Party), Selahattin Demirtaş, has been calling the government to respond to Öcalan's demands for negotiation. He also suggested a reorganisation of the administrative structure of Turkey based on the principle of decentralisation and warned that Turkey may find a Kurdistan state as a neighbour in

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[492] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in Movement'.
[493] *Idem.*
[494] *Idem.*
[495] Sumantra Bose, 'The Implications of Ethno-national Conflict', in *Freedom in the World - 2003*, New York: Freedom House, 19-28, 24-25.
[496] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Turkey, Europe and the Kurds after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan', online source, http://www.hum.uu.nl/medewerkers/m.vanbruinessen/publications/Kurds_after_capture_Ocalan.pdf, last accessed 8 November 2011.
[497] http://www.pkkonline.com/en/index.php?sys=article&artID=169, last accessed 11 May 2012.

her southern borders soon.[498] However, the Turkish state has consistently considered the PKK movement as separatist terrorist group and as a threat to Turkey's unitary character. Erdoğan and his government have indicated several times that they will not negotiate with a terrorist organisation.[499] Moreover, the government has initiated a legal campaign since the end of 2009, which investigates the urban branches of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK). So far a large number of suspects have been detained, including elected member of parliament of the BDP as well as several mayors, lawyers, and many others. The state prosecutors looking at the KCK cases claim that the KCK is an umbrella organisation encompassing the PKK and other organisations, and accuses the suspects of crimes such as membership of a terrorist organisation, aiding a terrorist organisation and attempting to destroy the country's unity and integrity. The BDP perceives this operation as a governmental attempt to suppress the BDP and its members.[500]

A significant aspect of the events since the 1980s in relation to Kurds in the region is the increased level of military conflict between Kurdish groups and the states in which they operate, and the increased involvement of international actors in the region, particularly in northern Iraq. Although in this process none of the Kurdish groups made a claim to create a Kurdish state as indicated on the greater Kurdistan map, they adhered to the idea that this map reflected the divided homeland of the Kurdish nation. The PKK initially aimed for an independent and united Kurdistan in the region, later began to articulate their demands within the boundaries of Turkey. What is interesting in this period is the increased emphasis on autonomous Kurdish regions, in northern Iraq and eastern Turkey by the main Kurdish parties. The aims for an official autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq was realised in the 2000s. In Turkey the PKK's demand for autonomy within Turkey also has been the most

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[498] Interview with Selahattin Demirtaş by Neşe Düzel, ''Türkiye'nin güney sınırları resmen Kürdistan olacak' [Turkey's southern borders will officially be Kurdistan,' *Taraf*, 10.04.2012, http://www.taraf.com.tr/nese-duzel/makale-selahattin-demirtas-turkiye-nin-siniri-kurdistan.htm, last accessed 26.04.2012. BDP is the political party in Turkey that succeeded the Democratic Society Party [DTP]. DTP was closed due to its links with the PKK.

[499] 'Erdoğan terörle mücadele stratejisini açıkladı' [Erdoğan announced his strategy to fight against terrorism], *Radikal*, 23.03.2012, http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1082749&CategoryID=78, last accessed 11.05.2012.

[500] 'Around 90 medical students detained in anti-KCK operations', *Today's Zaman,* 6 June 2012, http://www.todayszaman.com/news-282755-around-90-medical-students-detained-in-anti-kck-operations.html, last accessed 16 June 2012; 'Van mayor, district mayors detained in KCK operation', 7 June 2012, http://www.todayszaman.com/news-282777-.html, last accessed 16 June 2012.

significant aspect of its political rhetoric in the 2000s in the context of an ongoing military conflict with the Turkish armed forces.

In contrast to the hostile relationship between Kurdish organisations and their home countries, their relationship with other regional states is usually based on mutual strategic support. Each local Kurdish movement has opposed Kurdish movements in other states, principally through allying themselves with those states. Since mid-1960s, Iran has provided logistical and military support for the Iraqi Kurds, particularly the KDP, and Syria has been supporting the PUK. The KDP and PUK have had high-level representatives in Turkey since the 1990s, which shows Turkey's recognition of the two parties. The PKK has received the support of Syria and Iran.[501] It has even been the case that Kurds in one state sided with the rulers of neighbouring states against their own Kurds. For instance Iranian Kurds would ally with Baghdad against Iraqi Kurds and Iraqi Kurds would ally with Tehran against Iranian Kurds.[502] The PKK and the KDP engaged in armed conflict when the KDP removed its support to provide camps for the PKK after a deal made between the Turkish government and the KDP.[503]

Each movement is also subjected to internal rivalries and is dominated by parochial and tribal policies.[504] The Kurdish movement in Iraq is divided, mainly between the KDP and the PUK. As mentioned earlier, the conflict between Mustafa Barzani's KDP and Talabani's PUK in Iraq in the 1990s is a clear example of this. Even though the rivalry between the two parties seems to have been resolved with the emergence of the new Iraqi regime, they still have different spheres of influence in northern Iraq. Sulaymaniyah is mainly under the influence of the PUK, Erbil is the shared capital, and the northern parts of the region are controlled by the KDP. O'Leary states that "The support bases of the KDP and the PUK may look geographical, and to correspond to a clash between Kurmanji and Sorani dialectsof Kurdish, but Peshmerga were recruited into both parties from all over Kurdistan, and there are supporters of each party throughout the Region. The parties are certainly historically differentiated by ideology, with the PUK originally being heavily Marxist, and the PUK was formed in direct hostility to the dominance of the Barzani family in the KDP. Now, ironically, the

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[501] Van Bruinessen, 'Iraq: Kurdish Challenges'.

[502] The KDP helped the Iranian regime militarily against the Iranian Kurds during and after the Iranian revolution. Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Kurds between Iran and Iraq', *MERIP Middle East Report*, 1986, 141: 14-27.

[503] Van Bruinessen, 'After the capture of Abdullah Öcalan'. Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Ethnic Identity of the Kurds', in Peter Alford Andrews (ed), *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, Ludwig Reichert: Wiesbaden, 1989, p. 4.

[504] Halliday, 'Can we write?', p. 16.

PUK has experienced a major split, with the formation of Goran, partly in reaction to the domination of the PUK by the Talabani family." In the period ahead, O'Leary expects the PUK to be in much greater danger of break-up than the KDP: "it is more fissiparous; it was originally built from an alliance of multiple parties; and fall-out over corruption in Sulaimania and the ageing of Talabani, who spends much of his time in Baghdad, do not bode well for the party's future."[505] The Kurdish movement within Turkey is fragmented mainly between Kurds supporting the PKK and Kurds supporting the Turkish state. Many leading Kurdish families have members in the government as well as in the PKK.[506] Consequently, although Kurdish nationalism exists as a sentiment among Kurdish nationalists, a politically unified Kurdish nationalism is yet to form within each state.[507]

Today the Kurdish movement, consisting of a number of separate movements, has some differences compared to its predecessors especially in terms of the increase in grassroots support for Kurdish nationalism. This is due to the drastic changes the societies in the region have been going through. The Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, Saddam's campaigns against the Kurds in Northern Iraq, the conflict between the PKK and the Turkish Army Forces, and many other events and conflicts caused a considerable amount of chaos and instability. As a result of various military conflicts as well as for employment and educational purposes, large numbers of Kurds have migrated to other parts of the region or to Western countries. The peasant or urban craftsman remained distant from Kurdish nationalist activities in the first half of the twentieth century. However, in the second half of the century, as a result of migration, increased levels of education and literacy among the Kurds, and the urbanisation and settlement of nomadic tribes, Kurdish nationalist sentiment and ideology has spread to the grassroots.[508] The increasing number of Kurdish activists in the diaspora is also providing another form of grassroots support for Kurdish nationalism.

The KDP declares that Kurds are one nation and they are the largest ethnic group in the world without a state. It invites all Kurds to join a struggle for their democratic and national rights and to pursue self-determination. It also declares its support for the struggle of Kurdish people in Turkey, Iran, Syria and Russia for national

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[505] Interview with Prof. Brendan O'Leary, 31 October 2011, London.
[506] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds, tribes and states'.
[507] Vali finds this paradoxical, he writes, 'we have Kurdish nationalists without Kurdish nationalism – a historical anomaly that is nevertheless true.' Vali, 'Kurds and Their 'Others', p. 54.
[508] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in Movement'

rights.[509] Massoud Barzani, the KDP leader and president of the KRG in Iraq, has said that political and moral support for Kurds in other regional states affects their attitude, but also acknowledged the fact that Kurds in each state has distinct characteristics defined by their country of residence and this has led them having different claims from each other.[510] The Iraqi Kurdistan National Assembly Speaker, Adnan Mufti, has pointed to the importance of support among the Kurds inhabiting different states. But he also said that different Kurdish movements do not interfere in each other's affairs.[511] Overall, leaders of main Kurdish parties seem to have accepted that the Kurdish nation is divided and will remain divided, even if they attain statehood in Turkey, Iran and Iraq separately.[512]

Conclusion

Rather than assuming that Kurdish nationalism developed based on the idea of a given Kurdish homeland, this chapter and the previous chapter showed the importance of considering the construction of the Kurdish homeland through several processes such as the dissemination of Western nationalist ideology among the Ottoman Muslim population, the Kurdish reaction towards the increased strength of Armenian nationalism, the political, economic and military chaos caused by WWI and division of the Ottoman territories, and the internationalisation of the principle of self-determination after 1918. It offered an overview of the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism after 1918 and it analysed the uses of the notion of Kurdistan and its maps by Kurdish nationalists and outsiders. The territory and the ideal homeland of Kurdistan are the most significant aspects in understanding the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism. The importance of territory for the Kurdish cases derives from the domination of tribal leaders and from the wide dissemination of self-determination combined with the attempt of the Great Powers to create viable nation-states for post-imperial territories.

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[509] http://www.kdp.se/?do=general, last accessed 25 March 2012.
[510] Charaountaki's interview with Massoud Barzani, President of the KDP and KRG in Iraq, Salahaddin, 23 June 2007, in Charaountaki, 54, 43.
[511] Charaountaki's interview with Adnan Mufti, President of the KNA Speaker, Erbil, 15 April 2007, in Charaountaki, 29. Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths to nation', p. 28. But it is interesting that even though the Iraqi Kurdish movements have limited their claims to northern Iraq, a map of Greater Kurdistan appears on the outside windows of Kurdistan National Library in Erbil located in the KRG in Northern Iraq. A picture of the Erbil Library Map of Kurdistan in Erbil, Kurdistan Regional Government, Northern Iraq is available in a slide show report prepared by Bruce Behringer, Wayne Myers, and Martin Olsen, *Thoughts from a Site Visit on Healthcare Partnerships in Northern Iraq*, May 2004, www.etsu.edu/kellogg/Iraq_slideshow.pdf, last accessed 30 November 2010.
[512] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 28-29.

This chapter also argued that the Kurdish nationalist movement can best be understood by looking at the historical and political contexts that defined its emergence, development and evolution. It provided an overview of the interactions between Kurdish movements and their host states and other regional states, and Kurdish attempts at seeking international support for their cause. It showed that the proliferation of the nationalist movements and the conceptions of Kurdistan have been in constant tension with the idea of a united Kurdish nation and greater Kurdistan. However, over time, the notion of a greater Kurdistan has come to be adopted as the historical Kurdish homeland by both Kurdish nationalists and outsiders. Such identification takes the concept of Kurdistan as a given feature of Kurdish identity, not as a national aspiration, and sees the history of the region as identical to the history of Kurdish nation.

Since the end of WWI, the main factor that defined the activities of Kurdish nationalist groups in the region have been the new state boundaries that remained mostly unchanged until today. This has provided an enduring inter-state context for Kurdish nationalism. Within this context, the idea of Kurdistan as unfairly divided by new state boundaries has become an important defining factor in shaping Kurdish nationalist groups' aims and activities. These groups continuously used the idea of Kurdistan and its maps in order to illustrate the existence of Kurdish territories and to gain the support of an international audience. This chapter explained the transformation of Kurdistan from a regional/administrative concept to an ideal national homeland and the use of the idea of Kurdistan and its maps used by Kurdish nationalist groups since the early aftermath of WWI.

In addition to these Kurdish nationalist groups that have operated within a regional inter-state context, there is also a reality of a Kurdish movement within and beyond this region. In order to give a complete picture of the reasons for the use of the territorial feature by Kurdish nationalists, attention should also be directed to the Kurdish diaspora. The following chapter looks at activities in the diaspora and Kurdish groups' interactions with international society in order to further illustrate the specifically important role played by the Kurdish activists in the diaspora in successfully promoting the idea of greater Kurdistan to international society.

Chapter 6: Kurdish Nationalism in the Diaspora

Introduction

This chapter looks at the activities of Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora and their interaction with international society. It aims to illustrate the arguments developed throughout the thesis by analysing the role played by Kurdish activists in the diaspora in promoting the idea of a greater Kurdistan to actors in international society. This chapter shows that activists in the Kurdish diaspora have published and publicised the rightfulness of the Kurdish demand for self-determination and the existence of an ethnic Kurdish territory to international society. This is thanks to their location outside the homeland and their ability to communicate their ideas directly to international society. They have been particularly effective in using the contemporary international normative context related to human and democratic rights, particularly the right to self-determination, to promote the legitimacy of their pursuit of autonomy or independence and to convince the outside world that Kurdistan is the ethnic territory of the Kurds. The increasing role of diasporas in international affairs, their growing ability to mobilise (due to developments in technology, communication and transport) and their role in influencing (through lobbying) their host-state's foreign policies and regional and international affairs, gives strength to their propaganda. Kurdish activists in the Kurdish diaspora, much like other diaspora groups such as the Armenian, Palestinian, Kosovar Albanian, Tamil and Irish diasporas, have influenced the perceptions and attitudes of their host-states and international organisations toward their home-countries and their communities back in the homeland.

As argued throughout the thesis, Kurdish nationalists succeeded in drawing support and sympathy from would-be nationals and from international society for their claims that Kurdistan existed as an ethnic territory throughout history and for the claim that the map of Kurdistan represents the ethnic territory of the Kurds. Kurdish nationalists draw this level of support and sympathy because most states and international organisations readily accept the normative assumptions underpinning the principle of self-determination – the rights of ethno-national groups combined with the human, cultural and democratic rights (as explained in Chapters 2 and 3). The Kurdish nationalists claim that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation is another reason that facilitates the perception that Kurdistan represents a given ethnic territorial identity (as explained in Chapters 4 and 5). Many scholars and writers

working on the Kurds, some government agencies and the publications of some international media groups use the notion of Kurdistan and its map to refer to the Kurdish homeland and also accept the related assumptions in Kurdish historiography (as explained in the Introduction). Kurdish nationalist activities in the diaspora play a significant role in delivering this message to other actors in international society and draw sympathy for their cause.

This chapter contributes to the Kurdish studies literature through an analysis of the international interactions of Kurdish activists in the diaspora within an international context. The role of Kurdish nationalist activists in the diaspora in the development and mobilisation of Kurdish nationalism is understudied in the literature. Although the few studies that look at this specific topic provide useful insights, they typically fail to explain what they mean by the notion of 'Kurdish diaspora', instead using it in very general terms.[513] Although diasporas have remained understudied from an IR perspective, in the past decade or so there has been an increase in the number of studies on diasporas and diasporic nationalism, and this chapter draws extensively on this literature.[514]

'Kurdish nationalist activists in the Kurdish diaspora' refers to the groups within the Kurdish immigrant community that actively pursue political aims related to their ideal homeland and their co-ethnics in that land. As a sub-state nationalist group, they are strongly attached to the idea of Kurdistan and challenge the official boundaries of

[513] David McDowall, *Minority Rights Group International: A Minority Rights Group Report*, 6th ed, Sep. 1991, No 915, London, Minority Rights Publications, 1992; Van Bruinessen, *Transnationa*; Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movemen'; Östen Wahlbeck, *Kurdish Diasporas: A Comparative Study of Kurdish Refugee Communities*, London: Macmillan, 1999; Khalid Khayati, *From Victim Diaspora to Transborder Citizenship? Diaspora Formation and Transnational Relations among Kurds in France and Sweden*, PhD Diss., Linköping University, 2008; İbrahim Sirkeci, *The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey and the Emigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany*, Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 2006; Trevor Batrouney, *Kurdish Immigration and Settlement in Australia*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 94 (3314), 1995; Eva K. Østergaard -Nielsen, *Trans-State Loyalties and Politics: Turks and Kurds in Germany*, London: Routledge, 2002; Amir Hassanpour 'Satellite footprints as national borders: MED-TV and the extraterritoriality of state sovereignty', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 1998, 18 (1): 53-72; Diane E. King, 'Asylum seekers / patron seekers: interpreting Iraqi Kurdish migration', *Human Organization*, 2005, 64 (4): 316-326; Diane E. King, 'Back from the "outside": returnees and diasporic imagining in Iraqi Kurdistan', *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 2008, 10 (2): 208-222.
[514] Fiona Adamson and M. Demetriou, 'Remapping the boundaries of "state" and "national identity": incorporating diasporas into IR theorizing' *European Journal of International Relations*, 2007, 13 (4): 489-526; Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory', *International Organization*, Summer 2003, 57 (3): 449-479; Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000; Yossi Shain, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad: Diasporas in the US and their Homelands*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002; Milton J. Esman, 'Diasporas and International Relations', in Gabriel Sheffer (ed.) *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, 333-49; Gabriel Sheffer, 'A new field of study: modern diasporas in international politics' in Gabriel Sheffer (ed.), *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, 1-15.

the regional states where their co-ethnics reside. Members of these groups pursue nationalist activities in their international location and at the same time nurture and support Kurdish nationalism in the region. This chapter considers the Kurdish nationalists operating in the diaspora, as well as other stateless groups in their diasporas, as nationalist actors whose focus is upon promoting the idea of a homeland as an ethnic territory in the international realm. Although such nationalist groups in the diaspora utilise transnational methods in their interactions and most of their activities take place within a transnational space, their goals are nationalist and their activities are directed towards both the national and international realms. Moreover, Kurdish actors operating within the Kurdish diaspora have played a crucial role, more so than the regional nationalist movements, in promoting the Kurds as a unified nation with a specific ethnic territory.

This chapter has three parts. The first part provides some introductory remarks on diaspora politics and discusses the general assumption in the literature that the Kurdish diaspora are best understood as 'transnational actors'. Partly agreeing with this argument, it mainly sees Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora as nationalists who engage in 'long-distance nationalism', as defined by Benedict Anderson, thanks to the 'ethnicisation of life' in Western states and increased forms of fast and cheap communication.[515] The second part gives an account of the history of the patterns of Kurdish migration and of the activities of Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora up to the present. The third part of the chapter looks at the ways in which nationalists in the diaspora influence outsiders' perceptions of their national identity and their right to autonomy or statehood. By looking at Kurdish nationalist actors in the diaspora, the chapter offers three related arguments: 1) long-distance nationalist actors in the diaspora, due to their stronger adherence to the idea of a unified nation, are more assertive in the promotion of their claims than nationalist groups in the region; 2) their location in liberal-democratic host-states and the political freedom provided by these states in organising and engaging in cultural and political activities away from the scrutiny of home country regimes give these groups increased opportunities to mobilise and lobby for their cause; 3) they effectively utilise the discourse of contemporary international politics which puts increasing importance on the discourse of the democratic and political rights of ethnic communities. Actors in the Kurdish diaspora

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[515] Benedict Anderson, 'Western nationalism and eastern nationalism: is there a difference that matters?', *New Left Review*, May-June 2001, 9: 31-42, 42. Also see Benedict Anderson, 'Exodus', *Critical Inquiry*, Winter 1994, 20 (2): 314-327, 326.

have focused on two aspects of this discourse: firstly, the existence of a common national language as the most significant indicator of a homogeneous national identity; and secondly, individual and collective human rights abuses as the justification for ethnic autonomy or separatism.

Diaspora Politics

The notion of diaspora has been increasingly used to analyse peoples, relations, and processes outside the confines of established territorial political realms. The term 'diaspora' originates from the words *dispersion* and *to sow* or *scatter*. Diaspora originally referred to the dispersion of Jews to Babylonia in the sixth century BCE or to their more extensive dispersion during Roman times, but it has since evolved to refer to the dispersion of any people from their original homeland.[516] The diaspora literature offers several criteria for a community to be defined as a diaspora. The two most widely used definitions come from the works of Safran and Cohen. Their definitions have many commonalities when it comes to the attributes of diasporas, such as the dispersion from an original core to at least two different places, the maintenance of a memory or myth of the homeland, a belief within the diaspora that they are not fully accepted by host countries, the idea of returning to their homeland, a commitment to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland, and lastly, the importance of a connection to the homeland in defining the group's consciousness.[517]

Both Cohen and Safran emphasise the necessity for an expanded definition of diaspora due to an increase in the quantity and types of dispersion. Increased international migration, transnational activities, and developments in communication and transport facilities, especially since the 1960s, have enabled dispersed peoples to maintain their national identity outside their national habitat and to engage actively in practices associated with their national identity. These have increased, firstly, as a result of faster and cheaper ways of transportation and communication. Thanks to these developments, groups can easily change their location of residence for political, economic or cultural purposes. They can remain in contact with each other and with their country of origin, and sustain and disseminate crucial ideas such as a common

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[516] Robin Cohen, 'Diasporas, the nation-state, and globalization', in Wang Gungwu (ed.), *Global History and Migrations*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997, 117-144, 118.

[517] William Safran, 'Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return', *Diaspora* 1 (1): 83-99, 83-84.

identity, a homeland and a movement arguing for a return to that homeland.[518] Secondly, throughout the twentieth century new emerging states and nationalisms have generated dissidents, minorities, refugees and diasporas.[519] Thirdly, voluntary migrations for reasons such as economic wealth, personal enrichment or family reunification have increased. As a result, the notion of diaspora has begun also to refer to 'immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, [and] ethnic' groups.[520] Therefore, these political, economic and cultural processes require a more extended definition of diaspora.

Reflecting this expansion in meaning, there are three different approaches to the study of diaspora in the current literature as explained by Adamson and Demetriou.[521] The first approach takes a traditional conception of diaspora and re-defines it in accordance with contemporary changes brought about by globalisation.[522] The second approach looks at the social conditions of diasporas and their transnational self-identification processes in relation to host states and local ethnicities.[523] The third approach examines the political activities of diasporas, mainly studied by Shain and Barth.[524] The focus of this chapter is closest to the third strand because it aims to look at nationalist activities within the Kurdish diaspora rather than providing an overview of Kurdish immigrant society and their activities. Therefore, the focus of this chapter

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[518] Adamson and Demetriou, 497; Fiona Adamson, 'Crossing borders: international migration and national security', *International Security*, 31 (1): 165-199, 191-192.

[519] Cohen, 'Diasporas, the nation-State and globalization', 123-130. For an overview on the meaning and general history of the notion of migration see Zolberg. Zolberg identifies three types of international migration: political persecution, by choice, and as a result of necessity (due to natural disasters, hunger, poverty, and underdevelopment) and focuses on political persecution in his article. Marienstras argues that whilst migration is a prerequisite for the formation of a diaspora, not all immigrant communities transform into diasporas. Whether they are voluntary or forced migrants, 'time has to pass' before we can know whether they really are to become members of a diaspora. Richard Marienstras, 'On the notion of diaspora', in Gérard Chaliand (ed.), *Minority peoples in the Age of Nation-States*, London: Pluto, 1989, as quoted in Robin Cohen, 'Diasporas and the nation-state: from victims to challengers', *International Affairs*, 1996, 72 (3): 507-520, p. 516.

[520] Khachig Tölölian, 'The nation state and its others: in lieu of a preface'. *Diaspora*, 1991, (1): 3-7, 4-5 as quoted in James Clifford, 'Diasporas', *Cultural Anthropology*, 1994, 9 (3): 302-338, 303; Adamson, 'Crossing borders', 171.

[521] For detailed explanation on the three strands see Adamson and Demetriou, 499.

[522] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: UCL Press, 1997; Gabriel Sheffer, 'Ethnic diasporas: a threat to their hosts?' in Myron Weiner (ed.), *International Migration and Security*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003, 263-85.

[523] Stuart Hall, 'Cultural identity and diaspora', in Jonathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990, 222-237; Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso, 1993; Clifford, 'Diasporas'.

[524] Shain, *Marketing*; Shain and Barth; Østergaard –Nielsen; For more information on the meaning and study of diasporas see Cohen, 'Diasporas and the nation-state: from victims'; Adamson, 'Crossing Borders'; Safran; Cohen, 'Diasporas, the nation-state and globalization'; Roger Waldinger and David Fitzgerald, 'Transnationalism in question', *American Journal of Sociology*, 2004, 109 (5): 1177-95. The journals *Diaspora*, *Identities*, and *Global Networks* are good source of information on the study of the diasporas.

excludes the members of Kurdish diaspora who are indifferent to the Kurdish nationalist goals and who do not engage in political activities for the achievement of these goals.[525] Scholars adopting the third approach argue that diasporas are active political actors who engage in promoting rival identities to that of the sovereign state in which they reside or to the state from which they come.[526] In this sense, political mobilisation in relation to a homeland becomes an important feature of diasporas.

This chapter adopts a conception of diaspora that embraces key features of Cohen's and Safran's definitions of the diaspora, notably their emphasis on the idea of a dispersed community that is connected to a homeland (or a claimed homeland) and a political attachment to a national/ethnic/cultural identity. It also incorporates the emphasis given by Clifford and others to the importance of transnational connections. Additionally, it particularly focuses on the political activities of Kurdish groups in the diaspora in relation to a homeland, and thus it uses Shain and Barth's insights. Such a conceptual preference facilitates understanding the influence of activists in the diaspora in the development of Kurdish nationalism and in the promotion of the idea of 'Kurdistan' amongst the Kurds, amongst regional states and in international society.

Most of the literature on diasporas, including the few scholars who study diasporas from an IR perspective, argue that diasporas are distinct from other state and non-state actors due to their ability to maintain a national identity and their capability to influence international affairs through their activities in the transnational realm.[527] Although they see diasporas as attached to a specific identity and territory, they argue that their activities and strategies are transnational and deterritorialised. Nationalist diaspora groups indeed operate in a deterritorialised and transnational manner. This refers to their cross-border interactions with other co-ethnics in their home country and in other host-states, and with other states and international organisations away from

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[525] This does not mean that other approaches to the notion of diaspora should be ignored. On the contrary their insights are crucial in studying diasporas. Non-traditional and expanded definitions of diasporas are essential as they capture contemporary features of diasporas and explains how these are related to transnational and global processes. For example, the second approach, with its focus on the location of the identification processes, provides a useful insight on the social conditions of these communities and the significance of their transnational interactions. However, they underestimate the inherent political underpinnings of diasporas and potentially lead to all-inclusive and ambiguous conceptions of diaspora.

[526] Adamson and Demetriou, 499-501. Shain and Barth define a diaspora as 'a people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland—whether that homeland is symbolic, independent or under foreign control. Diaspora members identify themselves, or are identified by others—as part of the homeland's national community, and as such are often called upon to participate, or are entangled, in homeland-related affairs.' Shain and Barth, 452.

[527] Three academic journals, *Diaspora*, *Identities*, and *Global Networks* defend the transnationalist view. See Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 1181.

their original territorial homeland.[528] Although nationalist activists in the diaspora operate within a territory or territories outside their institutionalised state territory, they undertake activities that are related to a specific – real or ideal – territory. Actually, if anything, they are more attached to the idea of a national territory than their co-nationals in the homeland.[529] Therefore, the political activities they engage in through transnational networks are framed in national homeland terms.

The links nationalist activists in the diaspora create between co-ethnics in different locations look more like Anderson's long-distance nationalism, which he defines as 'a nationalism that no longer depends as it once did on territorial location in a home country'.[530] The examples Anderson gives for such cases are the Sikh nationalists in Australia, Croatian nationalists in Canada, Algerian nationalists in France, and Chinese nationalists in the US. Thanks to increasingly sophisticated and cheap communication facilities these groups can exert significant influence on the politics of their original country.[531] Moreover, Anderson argues that diasporas are exposed to ethno-politics in their host-countries, which he describes as the 'ethnicization of political life in the wealthy, postindustrial states' and this encourages the creation of long-distance nationalism.[532] Western democratic-liberal regimes provide suitable conditions for political and ethnic immigrants to develop and reinforce cultural identities, to establish cultural and political organisations that allow for mobilisation, and to seek support and sympathy in international society and among would-be nationals. Therefore, if there are circumstances in the host-state that lead to the nationalist groups' aims and activities in the diaspora to be perceived as more legitimate, the diaspora groups tend to mobilise more actively and lobby for their cause in the international realm.

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[528] *Ibid.*, 1178. For transnationalism in IR see Stephen Krasner, 'Power politics, institutions, and international relations,' in *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In*, Thomas Risse-Kappen (ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 257-80.
[529] Shain and Barth, 459.
[530] Anderson, 'Western,' 42.
[531] *Ibid.*, 42.
[532] Anderson, 'Exodus', 326.

Political Activities within the Kurdish Diaspora[533]

Kurdish Migration Beyond the Region

Kurdish activists in the diaspora formed as a result of the migration of millions of Kurds throughout the twentieth century. Migration is not a new issue for the Kurdish people. During the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, Kurdish migration was mainly voluntary and occurred for economic and educational purposes, particularly to İstanbul and some of the larger European cities. Most of the Kurdish migrants in İstanbul in this period were from peasant backgrounds and worked in low skilled manual labour occupations (especially as porters – *hammal*). But there were also many members of Kurdish tribal families who went to İstanbul for educational purposes or to serve as Ottoman bureaucrats. They were the most active Kurdish community in İstanbul in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. Some members of these families went, usually temporarily, to Europe for educational purposes, or as Ottoman diplomats, or as political dissidents (mostly as part of the *Young Turk Movement*). For example, as mentioned in Chapter 4, members of the Bedirhan family published the first journal on Kurdish society, *Kurdistan,* in 1898 in Europe.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of new states in the formerly Ottoman territories, many Kurds dispersed from their original location. As explained in Chapter 5 in detail, Kurdish tribal leaders and elites who sought Kurdish independence or a mandate system after the end of WWI and did not support the Turkish independence movement of Mustafa Kemal, escaped to Syria and Europe after 1923 and engaged in militant and political activities against Turkey. They formed Kurdish nationalist societies and provided direct economic, military and political support to Kurdish rebellions in Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Soon after the French mandate withdrew from Syria, these intellectual and nationalist Kurds went to Europe and continued their activities there. Additionally, beginning with the establishment of Turkey and right up until the present day many Kurds have changed their location through voluntary and forced migration (*sürgün*). This has resulted in a great number of Kurds

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[533] Most of the Kurdish diaspora today is constituted by Kurds that came from Turkey. The second biggest group is from Iraq. The Kurdish diaspora mostly resides in Germany, Sweden, France, the UK, the Netherlands, the US and Australia. There is no reliable and accurate census on the number of immigrant Kurds in Europe and elsewhere., but general estimates from the year 1995 are as follows: 600.000 in Germany, 100.000 in France, 70.000 in Netherlands, 60.000 in Switzerland, 50.000 in Belgium, 50.000 in Austria, 25.000 in Sweden, 20.000 in the UK, 20.000 in Greece, 8.000 in Denmark, 4.000 in Norway, 3.000 in Italy, 2.000 in Finland, 15.000 in the US and 6.000 in Canada. Institute Kurde de Paris website, http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama, last accessed 11 September 2009.

now living in mainly industrialised and developed cities like İstanbul, İzmir, Adana and Mersin.

From the 1960s to the 1990s Kurds emigrated from their locations to different parts of the world, particularly to Western Europe, North America and Australia. Most of the Kurdish migration in the 1960s took place from Turkey to Europe. Kurdish immigrants constituted part of the guest-workers under inter-governmental agreements between Turkey and European countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France.[534] The biggest flows of Kurdish migration occurred in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s as a result of several political events that took place in the Middle East.[535] After the 1971 military intervention and the 1980 coup d'état in Turkey, the Kurds, together with the leftists and the islamists, were subjected to very strict and violent measures and this led to a large numbers of Kurds seeking refuge in European countries.[536] Some of these politicised refugees fled to neighbouring countries, particularly to Iranian Kurdistan. From there some of them went to Northern Iraq and then to Europe. These refugees lived in the Kurdish villages and guerrilla camps in Iran and mostly adjusted to the cultural life there and took part in internal Iranian political conflicts.

Another influential political development that led to Kurdish migration was the agreement reached between the Iranian Shah and Iraq's leader Saddam Hussein in 1975. Before this agreement, the Iraqi Kurdish leader Mulla Mustafa Barzani was in alliance with the Iranian Shah and with the US in his struggle against the Iraqi regime. However, when an agreement was made between Iran and Iraq, the Shah withdrew Iran's support for Barzani's movement and the Iraqi army defeated the Kurdish resistance movement. As a result, 50,000 Iraqi Kurds fled to Iran and some of them were given political asylum in Western European countries.[537] The 1979 Iranian revolution, which led to the fall of the regime in Iran and caused a prolonged civil war, is also an important political event that led to Kurdish migration. The Kurdish populated areas were greatly affected

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[534] Institute Kurde de Paris website, http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama, last accessed 11 September 2009. Germany was the recipient of the largest amount of workers.

[535] For regional politics in relation to Kurds see Mehmet Ali Aslan, *Mülteci Kürtler* [Refugee Kurds], Ankara: Demokrasi, 1988; Entessar, *Kurdish Politics*; Natali, *The Kurds and the State*.

[536] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'. For Kurds in Turkey see Gunter, *Kurds in Turkey*; Metin Heper, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; Sirkeci, E*nvironment of Insecurity in Turkey*; Mesut Yeğen, 'The Turkish state discourse and the exclusion of Kurdish identity', *Middle East Studies*, April 1996, 32 (2): 216-229.

[537] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

by the civil war in Iran and many Kurds escaped from Iran to Turkey and then sought a way of going to America, Europe or to Australia.[538]

The largest amount of Kurdish emigration from Iraq occurred as a result of the Iran- Iraq War 1980-1988 and Saddam's policies towards the Kurds in the 1990s. The Iran-Iraq War was partially fought in the Kurdish populated areas of Iraq and Iran and greatly affected the lives of Kurds inhabiting those areas.[539] After the Iranian military attacks, Kurdish guerrillas in Iran and other Kurdish migrants from Iraq and Turkey, relocated themselves to areas near the border between Iraq and Iran. The PUK provided them with military support. But the KDP allied itself with the Iranian state against these Kurds. As the war continued, the conditions became increasingly more difficult for these political refugees from Turkey and Iran, and therefore they escaped to Europe.[540]

After the War, Saddam's policies and attacks on the Kurds also caused a significant flow of Kurdish refugees into neighbouring countries and into Western Europe.[541] Following the 1988 Anfal campaigns, 60,000 refugees entered Turkey and only half of these refugees returned to Iraq. Another Kurdish flow from Iraq occurred after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Following Iraq's defeat as a result of US military intervention, the main Kurdish groups in northern Iraq rose against the Iraqi government. However, Iraqi troops pursued a very violent attack on the Kurds resulting in over one million Kurdish villagers fleeing to Turkey and Iran in April 1991.[542]

Kurdish emigration from Turkey, Iraq and Iran, and possibly Syria, continues in smaller numbers up until the present day. As a result of the dispersion of Kurdish migrants to Europe, the US and Australia throughout the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, a considerable Kurdish diaspora community exists in these countries today.

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[538] *Ibid.* http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama, last accessed 11 September 2009. For Kurdish immigration in Australia see Batrouney.

[539] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[540] *Ibid.*

[541] Institute Kurde de Paris website http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama, last accessed 11 September 2009. For Saddam's Kurdish policy see Mohammed M.A. Ahmed and Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurdish Question and the 2003 Iraq War*, California: Mazda, 2005; Kenneth Anderson, *The Anfal Campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan: The Destruction of Koreme*, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993; Joost R. Hiltermann, *A Poisonous Affair: America, Iraq, and the Gassing of Halabja*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[542] Some of these refugees ended up in Western Europe, Northern Iraq and Australia. After the campaigns a Safe Haven above the 36th parallel was created by the US for the protection of the Kurds from the Iraqi regime. The course of Kurdish political developments in Iraq is explained in Chapter 5.

Political Activities of Kurdish Groups in the Diaspora

As already mentioned, the focus of this chapter is limited to those sections of the Kurdish diaspora that have engaged in political activities related to their homeland. The political nature of their activities and their strong attachment to a homeland (real or ideal) distinguishes these groups from other Kurdish immigrants.

In the 1950s and 1960s these Kurdish groups established organisations to address the problems facing Kurds back in the region of their assumed homeland. The oldest such Kurdish organisation is the *Centre d'Etudes Kurdes* of Paris, founded by Kamuran Bedirhan in 1949 after Kurdish intellectuals began to migrate to Paris following French withdrawal from Syria. Other Kurdish organisations, such as the Kurdish Students Society and the National Union of Kurdish Students, were formed in Berlin in the 1950s and 1960s.[543] The Netherlands Kurdistan Society and the International Society of Kurdistan (ISK) established in Amsterdam 1960s were to become among the most prominent of the Kurdish diaspora organisations.[544] The ISK issued a monthly news bulletin called *Kurdish Facts* and published the *Kurdish Bibliography*. The Society for the Advancement of Kurdistan (SAK), which was established in the UK, was another important Kurdish organisation and it published the magazine *Kurdica*, with the aim of spreading information about the cultural, social and political status of the Kurds. Both the SAK and ISK were founded and supported by non-Kurdish students and intellectuals who claimed to be friends of Kurdistan.[545] None of these organisations was large in size. For instance the ISK was a small committee and some organisations in Paris or Berlin were one-person committees.[546] What these Kurdish diaspora organisations had in common was a set of cultural and linguistic aims, such as promoting and developing a Kurdish language and protecting the Kurdish cultural identity, rather than explicit political aims.[547]

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[543] For instance, the Kurdish Students Society in Europe, a left-wing organisation, was founded in 1956 in Berlin and was connected to the International Union of Students. It organised annual general meetings where matters such as the Kurdish struggle and the conditions of Kurds in different host-countries were discussed. The organisation also issued an annual periodical entitled *Kurdistan*. Another Kurdish student organisation, the right-wing National Union of Kurdish Students in Europe, which broke away from the Kurdish Students Society in Europe, was founded in 1965 in Berlin. They published the monthly newssheet *Kurdistan Information* in German and funded book publications in Kurdish and Arabic. Edmonds, p. 105 Other Kurdish journals include the *Kurdish Journal*, a periodical published by Kurdish students in the US, and *Çiya* (Mountains) which was published in Berlin and addressed primarily to the Kurds of Turkey. Edmonds, 105-106.

[544] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[545] Edmonds, 106.

[546] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[547] Edmonds, 105.

More politicised Kurdish organisations only began to emerge after the 1980s and it was during this period that a Kurdish ethnic consciousness became more prominent among Kurdish immigrants in Europe. This was mainly due to the arrival of politically-minded dissidents along with educated Kurdish immigrants and asylum seekers from Turkey and Iraq in the 1970s and 1980s. They were acutely aware of the fragmented status of the Kurdish identity and so these groups encouraged the politicisation of second-generation Kurdish labour migrants who had arrived in Europe in the previous decades.[548] They established many Kurdish organisations, most importantly, the Kurdish Institute of Paris (KIP) in 1983, which was initially a cultural organisation but later evolved into an organisation concerned with political activities.[549] In the 1980s and 1990s other Kurdish institutes and organisations were established in other European cities and in the US, such as Kurdish Institutes in Stockholm, Brussels (1989), Berlin (1994), Moscow (1996), and Washington DC (1996).[550]

Many of these Kurdish political groups that have formed since the 1980s can be best understood as long-distance Kurdish nationalists who carried out their activities in a transnational realm and utilised transnational links and communication methods. These Kurdish groups and activists established strong connections to the idea of a unified Kurdish national identity and the idea of a Kurdish homeland within their immigrant communities. As a result, political mobilisation among the diaspora led Kurdish immigrants to strengthen their awareness of their ethnic identity and connect themselves with a wider notion of a Kurdish identity beyond their local or tribal realities. Moreover, through the lobbying activities of Kurdish political groups in the diaspora they attempted to influence the foreign policies of their host-countries toward their home-country and ethnic communities. They forged transnational links between members of co-ethnic groups in the homeland, the host-state and other host-countries, established contacts with journalists and politicians, and mobilised a large number of Kurdish immigrants. Eventually, they became an important actor of 'the European political landscape'.[551]

Political groups in the Kurdish diaspora adopted the rhetoric of national identity, which heavily relies on a homogeneous national language. They believed that

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[548] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[549] *Ibid.* On Kurdish diaspora activities in France and Sweden see Khayati.
[550] Among these, the Kurdish Institute of Paris and the Washington Kurdish Institute have been the most active, both in political and cultural terms.
[551] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in Movement'. Van Bruinessen writes that this is documented in the IISH (International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, Netherlands) collection of Kurdish books, periodicals and memorabilia.

presenting the Kurdish identity as homogeneous was necessary to obtain international support for the Kurdish cause. Therefore the main focus of their activities was heavily focused on creating a unified Kurdish language and presenting it to the Western community to prove the distinctiveness of the 'Kurdish nation'. They attempted to transform the main Kurdish dialects (Kurmanci – the dominant dialect in Turkey - and Sorani – the dominant dialect in northern Iraq and Syria) into literary languages. As such, one of the main goals of their publications, broadcasting and language congresses was to systematise the Kurdish language and spread its use among both the intellectual Kurdish community and the grassroots. Their books and journals were also smuggled into Turkey until the Turkish government lifted its ban on publications in languages other than Turkish.[552] Kurdish intellectuals who escaped from Turkey mainly to Sweden during and after the military interventions in 1971 and 1980 accounted for most of the publication activity in Kurdish Kurmanci. The Kurdish language courses and mother tongue education in Kurmanci Kurdish at schools in Europe increased the number of Kurmanci speakers greatly over the decades. They played a crucial role in transforming Kurmanci into a Kurdish vernacular and demanding education in their mother tongue for the children of Kurdish immigrants.

The Impact of Activities of Kurdish Groups on Kurdish Society in the Diaspora

An anticipated outcome of the attempt of Kurdish intellectuals and activities in the diaspora was that it would raise ethnic consciousness among the Kurdish community. Their attempt to create a homogeneous national identity through systematising the language and cultural features is similar to the way Anderson describes the imagination of national communities.[553] However, Kurdish nationalist intellectuals in the diaspora did not use the instruments of an existing state apparatus; rather they operated through Kurdish organisations and the print media to undertake a project that resembled an elite-led top down nation building process.[554] They disseminated their publications (which were mostly based on Kurdish poems, epic stories, literary dictionaries, and news from the home and host-countries in which Kurdish immigrants were residing) among the Kurdish community in the diaspora and their co-ethnics back in their home-countries.

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[552] *Ibid.*
[553] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
[554] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

Integration among Kurdish society has increased as a result of these faster and more frequent forms of communication and interaction.[555] Moreover, in this way the cultural aspect of their nationalist project became integrated into a wider political project. Kurdish activists in the diaspora, in their continuing nation-building and mobilising efforts, used the facilities provided by new communication technologies such as radio transmitters, satellite TV and the internet in order to disseminate Kurdish language and culture and nationalist propaganda. In late 1970s they used radio transmitters and transistor receivers for these purposes. In the 1980s, Kurdish folklore, songs, and tales, as well as Kurdish nationalist propaganda, were also distributed among the Kurds via audiocassettes and videocassettes.[556] In the 1990s, visual broadcasting technologies became more widely available. MED-TV, the Kurdish satellite television station was established in 1995 in the UK and broadcasted to the Middle East as well as being widely available in Europe and most of Asia. It was initiated by the PKK, but Kurds from all backgrounds with different political views were able to express their opinion via MED-TV. Its programs included live debates where people participated via telephone, Kurdish language lessons, and movies with Kurdish dialogues.[557] Communication technologies such as faxes, cellular telephones and the internet (news groups, e-mails, homepages of individuals, institutions and political movements) have also been widely used for disseminating news, information and propaganda.

Another important aspect of the Kurdish diaspora's activities lies in their interactions with Kurdish nationalists in the region. The connections between different sections of Kurdish society have increased significantly and this had important implications on the status of Kurdish nationalism in general. Firstly, the Kurdish diaspora continuously disseminated nationalist propaganda among Kurdish nationalists not only in the diaspora but also in the region.[558] This flow of information between the groups in the diaspora and the region created a stronger connection between the tribal and intellectual sections of Kurdish nationalists and enabled the transfer of a nationalist ideology to the grassroots.[559] Secondly, most of the Kurdish immigrants, who were not initially politicised, became gradually politicised following the arrival of political refugees from Turkey in 1970s and 1980s.

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[555] Edmonds, 106-107.
[556] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[557] *Ibid.* For an in depth analysis of MED-TV see Hassanpour, 'Satellite footprints'.
[558] Edmonds, 106-107.
[559] *Idem.*

Moreover, the PKK's attempts to mobilise migrant Kurds in Europe and recruit fighters, especially among the Kurdish diaspora in Germany, contributed to the politicisation of Kurdish immigrants and raised their ethnic consciousness.[560] The PKK has long been aware of the importance of the Kurdish diaspora since its foundation in 1974 and sent organisers to Germany and Sweden. Activities of the PKK among the diaspora offered a sense of identity, meaning and confidence to the second generation of guest workers, especially in Germany.[561] The PKK was less able to mobilise supporters and recruit fighters among Kurdish immigrants in Sweden.[562] This was due to the fact that most of the Kurdish immigrants in Sweden were educated Kurdish writers, journalists, and intellectuals due to its immigration policies and incentives for publication and ethno-cultural self-expression, and thus they were already highly politicised.[563] Like other migrant communities in Sweden, they received very good teaching, publishing and broadcasting opportunities.[564] Still, the PKK efficiently organised among the Kurdish diaspora in Europe and used this outlet to establish diplomatic connections with European governments.[565]

Although the relationship between the Kurdish diaspora and regional Kurdish movements became stronger, this has not necessarily led to the unification of Kurdish movements. The level of ethnic, linguistic and political consciousness within Kurdish society has indeed increased, but there are many discrepancies both within the Kurdish diaspora and between nationalists in the diaspora and in the region.

Moreover, dialectical differences, mainly between Sorani and Kurmanci, have continued to exist among diaspora Kurds. In their attempt to transform the Kurdish vernacular into a literary language, Kurdish writers and journalists in Europe established cultural institutions and published several journals in Kurdish. However, deciding on which dialect of Kurdish should be used resulted in conflict and debate amongst Kurdish intellectuals. The KIP published the first Kurdish literary journal in Europe and this contained sections in Kurmanji and Sorani. This led Van Bruinessen to argue that the 'Kurdish intelligentsia recognized that there is not a single standard Kurdish dialect

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[560] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'; Adamson and Demetriou, 512.

[561] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[562] *Ibid.*

[563] Institute Kurde de Paris website http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama, last accessed 11 September 2009.

[564] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[565] *Ibid*; Martin Van Bruinessen, 'The impact of the dissolution of the Soviet Union on the Kurds', 1995, Paper presented at the international conference on Islam and Ethnicity in Central Asia, St Petersburg, online source,
http://www.hum.uu.nl/medewerkers/m.vanbruinessen/publications/Kurds_and_Soviet_Union.htm, last accessed 7 November 2010.

and that the geopolitical division of the Kurds could be overcome only by using both major dialects'.[566]

Kurdish nationalists' attempts to disseminate the use of Kurmanci Kurdish also led to the emergence of micro-dissident nationalisms. Children of migrants in many European cities are entitled to education in their mother tongue at schools as a result of the multicultural policies adopted by liberal democratic states, which require respect for the rights of different ethnic communities in the host-country's economic, social and political life. The most visible aspect of this policy is bilingual education in schools.[567] Increased Kurdish (Kurmanci) education in schools and Kurdish publishing in Europe alienated other ethnic communities and increased their awareness of their own distinct identity.[568] When the children of immigrant families were given the chance for education in their mother tongue, immigrant communities from Turkey (Zazas and Alevis) ended up having to choose between Turkish and Kurmanci Kurdish. This put Zaza and Alevi immigrants in a difficult position and raised their awareness of the differences between their dialects and Kurmanci Kurdish.

Some of the Kurdish nationalists were against the effort to develop Zaza as a written language and such debates affected Zaza intellectuals greatly.[569] Although some of them still consider themselves Kurds and demand official recognition of their distinct identity within Kurdish society, others parted from Kurdish nationalism. They began to consider Zaza as a different language and Zaza speakers as a distinct people, and they even started to call their homeland 'Zazaistan'.[570] In fact, this process led to the emergence of Zaza nationalism in Europe and then its subsequent transfer to Turkey.

The Alevis are another group who went through a similar process. The ethnic identity of the Alevis has been ambivalent and their distinction has been very much based on their religion, which is different from that of the majority of Sunni Kurds. The increase in Sunni Muslim activities in Europe led by Turkish and Kurdish Sunni Muslims alienated the Alevis from the Kurdish communities. As a result the Alevis distanced themselves from Kurdish nationalist organisations.[571] They began to establish their own organisations and many Alevis who were previously active in leftist Kurdish organisations joined the new Alevi establishment. As in the case of the Zazas, the Alevis

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[566] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish Paths', 41.
[567] T. Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, 8-9.
[568] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 40.
[569] Though, the journal published by the KIP had a third section in Zaza (in addition to Kurmanci and Sorani).
[570] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 41.
[571] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

began to see themselves as a distinct nation with their own homeland 'Alevistan'.[572] Both the Zaza and Alevi cases formed in reaction to the increased dominance of the Kurdish identity and nationalist organisations in the diaspora. Therefore, although they were generally assumed to be Kurdish, Zazas and Alevis have increasingly disassociated themselves from the Kurds and expressed their own distinct ethnic and linguistic identity.

A prominent division among the diaspora is their different country of origins and the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and political differences among the Kurds in the region, which has implications for the Kurdish diaspora. Today, most Kurds in the diaspora still to an extent associate themselves with the Kurdish movements in the states from which they come – Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Politically, each group tends to follow or participate in the nationalist movements of their own country. Their ability to stay in contact with their home country thanks to modern forms of communication and transport has helped them maintain their ties with their fellow Kurds and maintain their distinct identity within the general Kurdish identity.[573] For instance, while the PKK has its own adherents and associations in Europe, the supporters of Barzani's KDP party constitute a separate diaspora group.[574] Kurds coming from different countries tend not to interact with each other but rather integrate with Kurds from their own country. If one enters one group then he or she might be excluded from others.[575]

In spite of this diversity, it is important to note that Kurdish activists in the diaspora more systematically and more strongly adhere to the idea that greater Kurdistan represents the Kurdish national homeland than regional Kurdish nationalist organisations adhere to this idea.[576] Despite certain discrepancies between Kurdish nationalism in the diaspora and in the region, Kurdish activists in the diaspora have had a significant impact on the advancement of Kurdish nationalism and the promotion of Kurds as a homogeneous and state-deserving nation on a homeland which is presented as an historical, ethnically homogenous but divided homeland. Throughout their history the Kurdish diaspora have produced many historical, sociological and political texts and

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[572] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish paths', 39.
[573] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[574] *Ibid.* Also see King, 'Asylum Seekers'; King, 'Back from the "outside": returnees'.
[575] O'Shea, 13.
[576] Van Bruinessen, *Transnational Aspects* 7. Östen Wahlbeck writes, 'The label 'diaspora' is, perhaps, especially appropriate in the case of the Kurdish refugees because of the influence of Kurdish nationalism, which commits many Kurdish refugees to the restoration of their homeland.' Östen Wahlbeck, 'Transnationalism and Diasporas: The Kurdish Example', Conference Paper presented at the International Sociological Association XIV World Congress of Sociology, July 26 - August 1, 1998, Montreal, Canada, 13-14.

maps to legitimise and prove the Kurdish right to statehood. However, this romantic idea of a greater Kurdistan as the homeland for all Kurds has not succeeded in transforming Kurdish nationalism into a unified nationalism.[577] Kurdish nationalist groups in the diaspora generate discussions and attempt to influence policies in relation to their own home-country rather than greater Kurdistan. Therefore, although the idea that Kurdistan represents the national territory of the Kurds is very strong in the diaspora, adherence to a united greater Kurdistan at the political level is not as strong or coherent.

Activities of Kurdish Nationalist Groups in Diaspora in an International Context

Today, all regional Kurdish nationalist parties, especially the KDP, the PUK and the PKK, conduct international relations with European states and international organisations. These parties have representatives and offices in Europe and the US where Kurdish diaspora members engage in political activities. They take part in the international activities of these nationalist movements, such as conducting relations with European and US politicians and bureaucrats, and with non-governmental organisations, in their attempt to present their claims to international organisations like the United Nations.

Dissident nationalist groups' activities in the diaspora potentially have significant impacts on regional and international politics in cases where they are assertive and capable of promoting a distinct ethnic identity and a specific homeland. For example, the Kosovar Albanians in the diaspora created the Kosovo Liberation Army, raised money for the conflict and recruited fighters among the diaspora.[578] Jewish and Palestinian diasporas are engaged in the Arab-Israeli conflict and other issues in the region.[579] Similarly, Kurdish diaspora groups have played an important role in presenting the Kurdish nationalist cause to their host states and to international society. They have generated a stronger attachment to the idea of a unified Kurdish identity and been more successful than regional Kurdish nationalists in internationalising and publicising the Kurdish issue. Moreover, Kurdish nationalist groups in the diaspora have efficiently used opportunities (such as freedom to organise, publish, broadcast and mobilise)

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[577] Natali, *The Kurdish Quasi-State*, 160.
[578] Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 45 mentioned in Adamson, 'Crossing Borders', 192-93.
[579] Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics: at home abroad*, 215.

thanks to their residence in liberal-democratic states outside the confines of their home-countries and also thanks to new communication technologies.

This section of the chapter aims to explain the effectiveness of Kurdish nationalist groups in the diaspora in particular, and other stateless diasporas in general, in influencing outsiders' perceptions of their national identity and their right to statehood. It offers three related arguments: 1) due to their stronger adherence to the idea of a unified nation, long-distance nationalists are more assertive in the promotion of their claims; 2) their location in liberal-democratic host-states to organise and engage in cultural and political activities away from the scrutiny of home country regimes gives diasporas opportunities to mobilise and lobby for their cause; 3) they utilise effectively the discourse of contemporary international politics which puts increasing importance on the democratic and political rights of ethnic communities, namely, the existence of a common national language as the most significant indicator of a homogeneous national identity, and individual and collective human rights abuses as justification for ethnic separatism. However, of course, the effectiveness of their influence mostly relies on the extent to which their specific policy recommendations align with the interests of the host-states or the international organisations they are lobbying.

Assertiveness

Dissident nationalist groups in the diaspora have stronger attachments to their ethnic identity and ideal homeland than their co-ethnics in the region. They feel their distinct identity more acutely in a completely alien cultural environment in the host-state. They are physically located outside a home-state but they feel mentally located within a specific people, therefore they strongly hold on to an ethnic or kinship identity.[580] Their activities and goals attempt to challenge the territorial sovereignty of a home-country and may also imply territorial change for other regional states. Indeed, in the Kurdish case, although there is no strong attachment to the idea of a politically united greater Kurdistan, the idea that Kurdistan represents the national territory of the Kurds is very strong in the diaspora.[581] Adherence to Kurdistan at a national level is much stronger among the groups in the diaspora than among nationalists back home.

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[580] Shain and Barth, 473.

[581] During all our conversations, the representatives (Kurdish and non-Kurdish) of activist groups campaigning for the Kurds deliberately avoided, even rejected, to use terms such as 'Eastern Turkey' or 'Northern Iraq' to refer to the areas where Kurds reside. In their minds those regions are called Kurdistan and there is no question about it.

One of the reasons for this is that Kurdish nationalist campaigns in the international realm have been driven by intellectuals and aimed at perceiving (and presenting) the Kurds as a homogenous all-Kurdish nation.[582] In the region however, the goals of Kurdish nationalist movements vary according to their social structure and the political conditions within the state in which they reside. Kurdish nationalist parties in each country put forth different demands depending on different conditions in each country. This is one of the reasons why the literature discussing the Kurds puts a bigger weight on the Kurds in the regional countries rather than the Kurdish diaspora. Nationalist Kurds in Iraq aim to establish further and strengthen their autonomous status. Syria's Kurdish nationalists demand civil and social rights.[583] The Kurds in Iran and Turkey, request increased linguistic, cultural and social rights, increased democratic representation, and some desire autonomy.[584] In short, regional Kurdish nationalist organisations have mainly focused on their status and claims within their country of residence, whereas the ideas of a unified Kurdish identity have been stronger in the minds of Kurdish groups in the diaspora.

Although the activities of nationalist groups in the diaspora may take benign forms such as lobbying, and providing financial and intellectual support for their nationalist movements, many long-distance nationalists in diaspora communities have repeatedly used criminal and violent means.[585] One of the striking facts about the relationship between stateless diaspora groups and their co-ethnics in the home-country is that diasporas contribute to violent conflicts in their home country and make life dangerous for their co-ethnics by providing resources and financial funding for conflicts. Sections of the Kurdish diaspora have supported criminal, militant and terrorist activities such as providing financial and organisational aid for the PKK and recruiting young people to fight in the guerrilla war in Turkey. As a result, the Kurdish

[582] Edmonds, 106-107.

[583] Kurds living in the Hasaka region in Eastern Syria were deprived of their citizenship but they were granted Syrian nationality by a decree by Syrian President in April 2011 in his attempt to secure their support for the regime during the turmoil experienced due to pro-democracy protests. 'Syria's Assad grants nationality to Hasaka Kurds', *BBC News–Middle East*, 7 April 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-1299517, last accessed 3 June 2011. For more information on Syria's Kurds see Tejel; and Kerim Yıldız, *The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People*, London: Pluto Press, 2006.

[584] From 1990s onwards the PKK rhetoric shifted in favour of the federal solution for Kurds. Charaountaki, 30. For Kurds in Iran see Kerim Yıldız and Tanyel B. Taysi, *The Kurds in Iran: The Past, Present and Future*, London: Pluto Press, 2007; Asso Agri, 'The Kurdish movement in Iran: the need for a political solution', *A Democratic Future for the Kurds of Turkey, Proceedings of the International Conference on North-West Kurdistan, Brussels, 12-13 March 1994,* London, Kurdish Human Rights, 1995; James John Coyle, *Nationalism in Iranian Kurdistan*, PhD Diss. The George Washington University, 1993.

[585] Anderson, 'Exodus', 326; Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 1185.

diaspora's activities have contributed to the armed conflict, instability and polarisation in Turkey and the wider region. But at the same time, it is the regional movements that initiated organisation among the diaspora. Therefore the role of regional movements in shaping the relationships in the diaspora should not be overlooked.

When a stateless nationalist group in the diaspora aims to undermine the authority and legitimacy of established states and obstruct regional stability, their assertiveness and tendency to engage in or support violent and criminal activities makes them influential actors in regional and international affairs.[586] Most dissident nationalist groups in the diaspora take mistreatments of their ethnic-community by a home-government as a just reason to disrupt the stability of the political regime in the homeland.[587] Their political attachment to an ideal homeland based on an assumed distinct identity poses a challenge to the political regime of their home country. Of course, not all nationalist groups in the diaspora have challenged their home country's sovereignty and it is impossible for a diaspora alone to overthrow the regime in their country of origin. Still, activist groups among the Kurdish, Sikh, Palestinian, Kosovar Albanian and Tamil diasporas, have posed significant challenges to those regimes by cooperating with other supportive parties and by undertaking lobbying in host-countries and in the international arena in an assertive manner.[588]

International Connections

'International connections' refer to the activities undertaken by nationalist groups in the diaspora to influence the foreign policies of host-countries and other states in relation to their home-country or ethnic communities. These groups aim to shape the way in which international society approaches issues related to their ethnic communities. They typically try to raise political, economic and social support for their cause in host-states and in the international arena. They publicise the perceived sufferings and injustices of their ethnic-community at international conferences, they interact with international human rights organisations and with powerful individuals. They engage in activities such as lobbying in order to put pressure on the host-government to denounce the policies of their home government, supporting the boycotts and measures taken by their host-states or international organisations against their home country regimes, providing

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[586] Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 203-204, 206-207.

[587] *Ibid.*, 215

[588] *Idem.*

information and intelligence about their home country for their host-government, and initiating propaganda campaigns against the home country regime.[589]

Thanks to their location and ability to use several methods, they are able to influence and define the way national identity is understood by members of international society. Moreover, their location outside the boundaries of their home state allows them independence and the ability to engage in mobilisation, networking and lobbying for their nationalist cause and to provide support for separatist nationalist movements in their home countries. But of course, the effectiveness of this pressure very much relies on the foreign political agenda of the host-state governments and the opinion of scholarly and media groups.

The influence of nationalist activists in the diaspora on their host-countries' foreign policies also relies on the political regime of the host-state. If the regime provides suitable conditions for them to engage in activities to raise ethnic and cultural awareness and mobilise among their communities, nationalist activists tend to become more assertive in promoting their goals. Liberal-democratic governments generally provide political and ethnic immigrants with opportunities to develop and reinforce cultural identities, to establish cultural and political organisations that allow for mobilisation, and provide them with opportunities to seek the support and sympathy in international society. The idea of democratic self-determination for ethnic communities and the emphasis on the pluralism of the ethnic communities are particularly prevalent in the political discourse of liberal-democratic states. As mentioned earlier, Anderson argues that diaspora groups are exposed to ethno-politics in their host-states and this plays an important role for these groups to engage in long-distance nationalism.[590] Therefore, if the political system and social structure of the host-state provides a suitable context for the aims and activities of nationalist groups in the diaspora to be seen as legitimate, these groups tend to mobilise more actively and lobby for their cause in the international realm.

Another important factor in defining the level of influence of diaspora nationalist groups over their host-countries is whether the system of the host-state has mechanisms that enable pressure groups to affect the policy-making of the state. If the system of the host-state is based on democratic participation and pluralist democracy, in which social forces and civic actors relatively easily access governmental policy

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[589] *Ibid.*, 216. Sheffer writes that all these measures he listed have been used by the Iraqi and Iranian diasporas. The Kurds have constituted most of the Iraqi diaspora.

[590] Anderson, 'Exodus', 326.

deliberations, the chances of these groups to affect policies increase.[591] They influence host-state government's decision-making processes through lobbying and convincing members of parliaments to represent their goals, and through contributing money to the campaigns of the candidates so that they will represent their interests when they get elected.[592] The Kurdish diaspora constitutes a good example of the effective use of methods available to diasporas. Particularly since the 1970s, Kurdish nationalist groups in Europe and the US have been playing an increasingly important role in internationalising the Kurdish issue and influencing the foreign policies of European countries and the US.[593] They have raised awareness in the international arena regarding the mistreatment of the Kurds at the hands of their home-countries and influenced Western states' policy decisions in relation to Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Saddam's Anfal campaigns in Iraq, the increasing number of Kurdish refugee flows, difficult circumstances in the refugee camps, the creation of a safe haven, and the capture of Abdullah Öcalan all coalesced to increase international interest in the Kurds.

The activities of Kurdish groups have typically focused on two issues: promoting a homogeneous Kurdish identity with a specific homeland, and creating discontent at the home country regimes' perceived or actual abuses of individual and collective rights of their co-ethnics. They have articulated a Kurdish national identity with a common language and a symbolic territory and this articulation was at the core of the discourse they used in their interactions with European states.[594] They have claimed that the territory of Kurdistan is occupied and divided by alien nation-states and that this injustice needed to be rectified. These groups promoted the Kurdish question not only as an issue that concerns regional states of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey, but also as an issue that concerns Europe and the US, strongly advocating the belief that Europe

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[591] T. Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, 1-2. Here Smith discusses the role of ethnic groups in the US in American foreign policy and emphasises the importance of understanding US domestic politics in explaining its foreign affairs. For further discussions on this issue see Shain, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad*.

[592] T. Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, 98, 28-29. For instance, Bob Filner, Democrat Congressman for California's 51st District pleaded for the recognition of Kurdish self-determination at the US Congress, on 1 May 1997. The justification he put forth was that Kurds have been ruling the area they inhabit for since 2,000 BCE and the Kurds (then Gutis) ruled today's Persia and Mesopotamia 4,000 years ago. He declared that despite this historical legacy, Kurds have been denied the right to nationhood and self-determination. Frank Pallone, Congressman for the 6th district of New Jersey, also talked at the Congress on the Kurds after Bob Filner on 1 May 1997 in order to appeal for Kurdish self-determination and request the US government stop giving Turkey military support and making arms deals with Turkey. For Filner and Pallone's speeches see http://capitolwords.org/date/1997/05/01/H2152-2_self-determination-for-the-kurds/, last accessed 12 May 2012.

[593] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[594] Adamson and Demetriou, 509.

and the US should be involved in this political conflict and take part in its solution.[595] The works of Kurdish nationalist scholars that articulated the Kurdish sufferings and mistreatments, and the historical legacy of the Kurdish nation and their territory were disseminated to provide credibility to, and raise support for, the Kurdish cause. Among these works, Mehrdad Izady's (a Kurdish scholar and writer in the US) *The Kurds: A Concise Book* is widely used and has almost become the 'bible' for Kurds and Kurdophiles.[596]

The KIP and the Washington Kurdish Institute have been particularly active in promoting the Kurdish identity and human rights abuses. They have engaged in political activities such as lobbying host-countries and organising meetings and discussions between European and American politicians and Kurdish political activists.[597] Kurdish human rights organisations have also flourished during this process, particularly after the increase in the number of asylum seekers and political refugees in the 1980s and 1990s. Among these, the Western Kurdistan Association, established in 1995 in London, organises educational courses, such as Supplementary School for Kurdish immigrants' children, broadcasts radio programmes, and helps Kurdish refugees with issues such as immigration, welfare, housing and health.

The diaspora organisations representing the PKK in Europe have engaged in diplomatic activities toward European states, especially after the 1990s. Although the PKK was later banned in some of the European countries, in many countries it continued to operate through related groups and committees. For instance, in Germany Kurdish committees connected to the PKK conducted relations with German government officials who even met with the PKK leader, Öcalan, in Syria and Lebanon.[598] These diplomatic missions were a result of the PKK's attempts to move from a military to a diplomatic struggle. The PKK's diplomatic attempts aimed at convincing the European states to put pressure on Turkey to recognise the cultural and political rights of the Kurds in Turkey.[599]

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[595] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[596] O'Shea, 66-67. Izady, *The Kurds: A Concise Book*. Izady has produced extensive number of maps which are available in the Paris Kurdish Institute's website. According to O'Shea, although Izady's argument is flawed, he now appears to be an authority on Kurdish history and his ideas began to be used in other works and increasingly disseminated through internet.
[597] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[598] http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/66289/ocalan-39-s-capture-a-timeline.html, last accessed 07 June 2011. Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[599] Öcalan was based in Syria but was forced to leave the country in 1998 under Turkish pressure. He first escaped to Russia then to Italy (according to Van Bruinessen, this showed that the PKK saw Europe as the place to defend the Kurdish cause against Turkey. Van Bruinessen, 'The Kurds in Movement', 11-12.)

The Kurdish Parliament in Exile, which has connections to the PKK, has had a significant role in drawing the attention of European states and politicians to the Kurds. Established in 1995, it had its first meeting in the Netherlands, then in Denmark, Russia and Italy. Its main headquarters are in Brussels. Although established by the Kurds from Turkey, the Parliament also has members from other parts of the region. Its activities are similar to those any diplomatic mission would pursue. It conducts relations with parties and personalities in Europe as the representative of the Kurds.[600]

Another important Kurdish organisation is the Kurdistan National Congress (KNC). The KNC holds the explicit aim of creating Kurdish unity and an independent Kurdistan. Established in 1985, the KNC organises international meetings in European cities in order to bring together Kurdish party representatives, Kurdish intellectuals, academics both from the region and the diaspora. The Charter of the KNC indicates that they are an unarmed organisation that operates above party lines, working to put 'Kurdish Unity' and an 'Independent Kurdistan' on the agenda of the great powers and international organisations in order to abolish the 'unfair and artificial borders that cut Kurdistan into five pieces.'[601] The Kurdish National Congress of North America (KNCNA) is the US branch of the KNC and mainly involves representatives from Kurdish movements in Turkey. It aims to achieve the formation of a unified Kurdistan or the establishment of four Kurdish nation-states and it has openly called for self-determination for the Kurds.[602] Generally, Kurdish groups in Europe are more effective in shaping their host-states' policies toward their home-countries than the groups in the US. The reason for this is usually attributed to the strategic alliance between the US and Turkey.[603]

Another group, the Peace in Kurdistan Campaign, established in 1994 in London, is more active in political matters and is a good example to illustrate the way in which Kurdish groups interact with international society. They organise events and campaigns that bring together Kurdish activists in the diaspora, Kurdish nationalist groups back in the home-countries, host-country politicians and Kurdish and non-

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Öcalan sought political asylum in Italy but his application was rejected and he was not allowed to stay in Italy. This precipitated his subsequent capture in Kenya in February 1999.
http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/66289/ocalan-39-s-capture-a-timeline.html, last accessed 07 June 2011.

[600] Van Bruinessen considers the Parliament and its activities as transnational. Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

[601] The Charter was accepted at the 4th Congress of the KNC held in London on 10-11 October 1998. See http://www.knc.org.uk/charter.htm.

[602] Charaountaki, 30.

[603] See Michael M. Gunter, 'The five stages of American foreign policy towards the Kurds', *Insight Turkey*, 2011, 13 (2): 93-106.

Kurdish academics. This group acknowledges the existence of a Kurdish national territory but seeks a solution within Turkey for the Kurdish problem rather than advocating for Kurdish separation. A recent event organised by the Peace in Kurdistan Campaign illustrates how Kurdish activists in the diaspora attempt to influence the host-state countries' foreign policies toward their home country. The event was titled "Open Discussion on the 'Road Map to Negotiations' – Towards a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question in Turkey" and took place in London on the 16 May 2012. The event hosted a representative of the BDP in Turkey (the political wing of the PKK in Turkey), members of the Peace in Kurdistan Campaign, a British MP from the Labour Party, an ex-British MP, Kurdish and non-Kurdish academics working on the Kurds, and Kurdish and non-Kurdish activists supporting the Kurdish cause.

The aim of the event was to advertise the third volume of Öcalan's prison writings, entitled 'Road Map to Negotiations', and to explain what Öcalan means by a 'democratic solution to the Kurdish question' and what is required to achieve this solution. The book represents Öcalan's proposal for peace, which was secretly discussed between Öcalan and Turkish state representatives between 2009 and 2011. During this event, members of the Kurdish community were asked to write a letter to their parliamentary representatives requesting that increased pressure be placed upon Turkey for the release of Öcalan and for the re-starting of the dialogue between the Turkish state and Öcalan. This event, as well as other events organised by Kurdish groups in other European capitals and the US, highlights the interaction that is taking place between Kurdish nationalists in the home country, Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora, host-country politicians and scholars.

Overall, the activities of the Kurdish diaspora have played an important role in publicising the plight and the nationalist claims of their 'nation'. They tried to draw the attention of international society, including the state governments and international organisations, to the sufferings of Kurdish people in the regional states and their struggle for justice and democracy. These activities were largely successful enough to change public discourse and the way the world perceives the Kurds. According to Van Bruinessen, until the 1980s Kurdish military activities in the region were perceived as the tribal resistance of Kurdish landlords against the central governments who had political and administrative dominance. However, after the 1980s, the Kurdish military and political activities began to be seen as nationalist liberation movements for

autonomy and independence.[604] Although most of these movements are still led by tribal leaders and there are significant divisions among Kurdish leaders deriving from internal conflicts over leadership and land, these aspects have become easily overlooked. Such developments within the movement for Kurdish independence occurred within the wider context of an active and effective diaspora, which aimed to promote a particular vision of the Kurdish plight.

In short, the Kurdish diaspora in many cases acts like a diplomatic mission that claims to represent the Kurdish community. They aim to promote the existence of the Kurdish nation with a common language, distinct ethnic territory and the Kurdish right to statehood. They have openly challenged the policies and official doctrines of their home countries and at the core of this challenge has been the symbolic territory of Kurdistan that is fully at odds with the territorial sovereignty of the regional states.[605] In fact, in many instances, they were far more effective than states' embassies in lobbying and influencing the foreign policies of their host-states.[606] However, a united Kurdish organisation in the diaspora with the overarching aim of creating a united Kurdistan does not exist. Rather, these groups represent different sections of the Kurdish community and the issues they promote are generally related to the Kurds of the country they come from. They all adhere to the idea of a greater Kurdistan as the homeland of Kurds and the existence of a Kurdish nation with a distinct language. But rather than treat these ideas as goals to be achieved, they express these ideas on every occasion to draw justification and strength for the promotion of their individual agendas.

Kurdish diaspora's use of the international political norms

As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, the widely accepted norms in international politics provide a normative basis for the separatist self-determination claims of sub-state nationalist groups. The normative assumption behind this trend is that ethno-cultural identities can justify claims for the creation of new politico-territorial entities and this appears to enhance democratic freedom. This trend can be observed in the formation of new states after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent increased

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[604] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.
[605] Adamson and Demetriou, 509, 511-12.
[606] At the moment, the most effective Kurdish diaspora community is connected to Iraq, and Kurdish Regional Government in Northern Iraq. According to Robert Lowe their representatives in London are acting as a very effective diplomatic establishment. Conversation with Robert Lowe, 14 December 2010, London. Robert Lowe is the director of the Middle East Centre at the London School of Economics.

secessionist claims of distinctive identities.[607] Democratisation and ethnic freedom, according to Sheffer, have increased the ability and desire of ethnic groups to become more politically assertive. For him, the fact that most contemporary confrontations and conflicts are pursued by militant ethnic groups is an indicator of this.[608]

Nationalist Kurdish intellectuals who migrated to Europe or took refuge there were acutely aware of the fragmented status of the Kurdish identity and of the necessity to present Kurdish identities as a single homogeneous entity. They were also aware of the importance of a unified language in proving the existence of a homogenous identity and, as a logical extension to this, proving a right to statehood. The main goal of their publications, broadcasting and language congresses was to systematise a Kurdish language and spread its use not only within intellectual circles but also by common Kurds. They were aware of the fact that the rhetoric of national identity heavily relies on a homogeneous national language. Therefore they focused on creating a Kurdish language and presenting it to the Western community to prove the distinctiveness of the 'Kurdish nation', which would make their aim to create Kurdistan more credible. They also linked their arguments about the specificity of the ethnicity territory to the map of greater Kurdistan as the cartographic depiction of their homeland. The banner used by KNC is an example of the use of the Kurdistan map by these groups.

Figure 6.1: The KNC banner

Kurdish groups in the diaspora have effectively used the norms in international politics, especially in relation to human rights and democratic rights, to advance their goals. They brought cases of individual human rights abuses in home countries to the agenda of international society. They applied to the European Court of Justice and opened cases against states, especially Turkey, for torture, illegal detention, and executions committed by the regime. They lobbied using complaints about restrictions

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[607] Cohen, 'Diasporas, the nation-state and globalization', 130; Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 215.
[608] Sheffer writes, 'in certain regions, such as eastern and central Europe, central Asia, Africa, Latin America, and to some extent the Middle East and the Balkans, the increasing involvement of ethnic groups in such hostile exchanges constitutes the other, less fortunate side of the democratization and liberalization process.' Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 203.

on their ability to experience cultural, linguistic and political rights in the home-countries. The most important example of such groups is the Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) established in 1992 in London 'in response to the genocide, war crimes and human rights violations occurring across the Kurdish regions of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Caucasus and elsewhere'.[609] This group engages in submitting appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and UN bodies. The KHRP has been very influential in attracting the attention of international society to Turkey's treatment of its Kurdish population.[610]

Overall, Kurdish nationalist activist groups in the diaspora have presented the Kurdish nationalist struggle and the armed conflict in Iraq and Turkey that aimed for the liberation and democratisation of the Kurdish people and presented their activities as a struggle against repression. In this manner, international political norms on human rights and democratisation provided a fruitful arena for advocating the case of the Kurds as a struggle for democracy and presenting the home-governments as repressive. Their claims regarding their linguistic and ethnic homogeneity, specific ethnic territory and deprivation of individual and collective rights due to their ethnic identity were brought to the attention of international society and directly linked to the promotion of a nationalist agenda.

Conclusion

Like other stateless groups in diasporas, Kurdish nationalist groups in the diaspora, due to their international location and their ability to interact with institutions and officials at local, national and international levels, are more able to mobilise and publicise the Kurdish case to international society. Moreover, the general assumption in contemporary international political discourse on the link between ethnic identity and democratic struggle has provided a suitable normative basis for such groups to pursue these goals. This is one of the reasons why dissident nationalist groups in the diaspora strongly hold on to an ethnic or kinship identity that they claim as distinct. Presenting their distinctiveness to international society is their most effective tool and Kurdish activists in the Kurdish diaspora have successfully utilised this tool.

The number of Kurdish immigrants in Europe, the US and elsewhere has steadily increased since the 1960s. They have increasingly become more aware of their ethnic identity, especially after the 1980s. They transformed Kurmanci into a Kurdish

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[609] http://www.khrp.org/about-khrp.html, last accessed 14 April 2012.
[610] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurds in movement'.

literary language, gradually became politicised, established cultural, nationalist and political organisations, and adhered to the idea of a united Kurdish nation and the idea of Kurdistan as their homeland. They mobilised and created connections among the Kurdish community in multiple host-countries through transnational links and carried out long-distance nationalism within the diaspora and in connection to the region. They provided financial, organisational, intellectual and personnel support for regional Kurdish nationalist movements. They lobbied in their host-states to put pressure on their home-country government and presented themselves as a distinct ethnic community. Their growing presence within the domestic structures of their host-states allowed them to attract the attention of European states and international organisations to their perceived or actual suffering at the hands of their home-state governments and their struggle for justice and independence.

In summary, the chapter has made four related claims: Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora are long-distance nationalist actors, who are active in an international arena and use transnational methods; the Kurdish activists in the diaspora have played a crucial role in the development of Kurdish nationalism both inside and outside the region; their direct access to the international political arena due to their location and therefore their lobbying, together with an increased appreciation of ethnic struggles in the name of democracy and justice, has enabled the Kurdish diaspora to promote the idea of Kurdistan as the ethnic territory of the Kurds and has drawn support and sympathy among the would-be nationals and international society. They have used the rhetoric of suffering, the incidents of human rights abuses and their right to statehood to manipulate the way host-states, other states, international organisations, scholars, journalists and the international media perceive their case.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

This thesis has examined how a particular sub-state nationalist group interacts with international society to generate support and sympathy among would-be nationals and within international society for their territorial claims. Contemporary examples abound of how demands for autonomy or independence use a specific understanding of the principle of self-determination based on claims of being a distinct ethnic identity: Eritrea's separation from Ethiopia in 1991; the states formed in post-Yugoslavia and the post-Soviet territories; Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008; cases such as East Timor, Abkhazia, Khalistan, Palestine, Catalonia, and many others. Most of these separatist or autonomist demands are framed in ethnic terms, a tendency which this thesis has sought to explain in terms of the increasing validity this framing bestows upon such claims.

By combining insights from the fields of nationalism and IR studies, and by placing the focus on national identity, non-state groups and international norms, this thesis has presented a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the ethnicist self-determination claims of sub-state national groups and their interaction with international society than has been hitherto offered. More specifically, Kurdish nationalist claims to an autonomous/independent Kurdistan have served as a case to analyse this process in detail. To enable this analysis, I have proposed a three-fold argument:

(1) Political assertions regarding the identity of a specific piece of land and cartographic depictions of that territory are powerful in influencing outsiders' perceptions because of the normative context in which they are framed.

(2) Such claims are further reinforced by the perception that the history of a territory is identical to the history of the people living on it. Typically, an association between a people and a territory in political terms, although in reality a relatively novel link, is often assumed to exist throughout all of history.

(3) The diasporal activities of nationalists who, thanks to their location outside the homeland and their ability to communicate their ideas directly to international society, play an important role in asserting the rightfulness of their demand for self-determination and in promoting the idea of an ethnic territory to international society.

This three-fold argument pointed, in turn, to three key features of the relationship between international society and sub-state nationalist groups.

Firstly, political assertions about an ethnically-defined territory and national self-determination can have a powerful influence on outsiders' perceptions when they are presented within the normative framework which informs international society. These norms, particularly that of the right of self-determination in relation to a sub-state group's ethnically-defined claims to territory, suggest a combination of ethnicist understandings of national identity and human and democratic rights. This thesis has demonstrated that there is a strong association between sub-state nationalist groups' claims for autonomy or independence based on a specific territory and the norms of human and democratic rights. These can be observed in the articles and resolutions of various international organisations and their legal and political covenants as well in the actions and decisions of sections of international society. This international normative context influences and shapes the perceptions of outsiders towards the nationalist groups' territorial assertions.

This international normative context in relation to ethnically-defined territorial claims is rooted in the way self-determination, nationalism and liberal democracy are linked to each other. This thesis has shown that the connection between self-determination, liberal democracy and nationalism can take different forms depending on how nationhood is understood - either as a civic and solidarist understanding that emphasises citizenship or as an ethnic understanding that emphasises the common 'objective' traits of a group of people. Looking at the historical evolution of the legal and political meaning of self-determination, this thesis explained why today self-determination claims of sub-state groups are promoted as claims to form culturally homogenous states. There is a strong relationship between tolerant and civic forms of nationalism and liberal democratic principles, but there is also a strong and more recent connection between liberal international norms and the ethnicist-primordialist form of nationalism that has been largely under-explored.

In developing this particular argument, this thesis has drawn on the ideas of IR scholars which explain the role of norms and ideas on politics, acknowledge the importance of understanding the relationship between nationalism and international society, and recognise the necessity of studying domestic factors and domestic non-state actors as international actors in providing a complete explanation of how international

society works. Mayall argues that the creation of new states throughout the twentieth century can be explained through understanding the ways in which the principles of sovereignty and national self-determination have adapted to each other. Using this starting point the thesis argued that, in relation to sub-state nationalist groups' claims to independence and autonomy, the relationship between sovereignty and self-determination has evolved in such a way that the self-determination claims of sub-state groups became claims to self-sovereignty. The promotion of the idea of self-determination as one of the foundational principles for the post-War international order during and after the 1919 Paris Peace Conference played a significant role by providing favourable circumstances for elites in non-European territories to make their voices heard. The support given by the USSR to the anti-imperial movements in the name of self-determination in the non-European world also had a great impact on the dissemination of the principle around the world. These historical definitions and uses of the concept, combined with uses in the decolonisation and post-Cold War period, contributed to the evolution of self-determination and to the expansion of the meaning of the principle to non-state groups' rights to sovereignty.

This thesis found Philpott's notion of 'international context' useful to conceptualise the expanded meaning of self-determination in relation to sub-state groups and how its meaning became associated with democratic and human rights. 'International context' refers to the head of states and organisations that create and disseminate certain ideas. Extending this definition to also include non-state actors and widely accepted international norms helped to explain how non-state actors interact with the international sphere and how they influence international politics through adopting, using and disseminating norms of legitimacy.

Understanding the interaction between states, non-state actors and the framework of norms required a more integrated understanding of the 'international', and therefore this thesis used Halliday's 'international society as homogeneity' to explain this interaction. According to Halliday, in specific historical and political contexts, certain ideas produced and disseminated by the great powers, states and organisations are presented as the most desirable, just and right ideas. In short, political actions based on these ideas become the most appropriate way of doing politics. 'International society as homogeneity' challenges the idea that there is a clear distinction between the domestic and international spheres and appreciates the role of sub-state actors in the

international sphere. Conceptually this enables the analysis of sub-state groups' interactions with international society beyond state boundaries.

This thesis also utilised Risse and Sikkink's argument that the repetition of existing ideas and predictions in the international context may transform them into social facts, or lead to the socialization of norms, particularly in relation to human rights. Their argument is useful in explaining the role ideas play in politics and the power of ethnically-defined territorial claims framed in terms of human and democratic rights. What is considered legitimate within the international framework influences the perceptions and political actions of actors. For instance, the media and academia potentially shape the perceptions of policymakers and their policy decisions in relation to certain issues because of their ability to transmit and disseminate norms and perceptions.

Using these conceptual and theoretical insights and analysing Kurdish nationalists' claims to an ethnic Kurdish territory, this thesis showed that the international context influences the perceptions and activities of sub-state groups, states and other actors in international society when it comes to defining rights to self-determination and who can exercise these rights. Within contemporary international politics, the range of acceptable and legitimate policies, activities, rules and norms are generally defined by the spheres of democratic rights and human rights. This is particularly evident when examining international society's approach to exploring solutions to ethnic conflict. This thesis did not claim that the right to self-determination of all ethnic groups has become an international norm accepted by all members of international society, but rather highlighted the emergence, acceptance and application of a specific meaning of self-determination in international politics. This meaning has significant parallels to the way sub-state nationalist groups interpret self-determination. Kurdish nationalist claims to self-determination based on a direct reference to the notion of Kurdistan, and the Kurdish diaspora's efforts to promote the Kurdish cause to international society, can be understood within an international normative context that combines the rhetoric of democratic and human rights with ethnic conceptions of nationhood.

Whilst, it is vital to take into account the international normative context, this alone is not enough to explain my arguments comprehensively. This takes us to the second feature of the relationship between sub-state nationalist groups, their ethnic self-

determination claims, and international society. The international historical context, the relationship of a sub-state group with the state in which it is located, internal power structures within a sub-state nationalist group, and the way these groups interact with international society are also important determinants that need to be taken into account.

The development and evolution of Kurdish nationalism and its relationship to its territorial feature, Kurdistan, can best be understood within a historical and political setting. Key determinants of this setting are: processes of bargaining between local tribal elites and the central state during the implementation of the centralisation policies of the Ottoman Porte; attempts by urban and provincial tribal elites to increase their power and dominion during the weakening and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire; later, the division of the Ottoman territories; the promotion of plans for the creation of Armenia; Wilson's principle of self-determination which provided the perfect motivation and legitimacy for the tribal elite to increase and secure their power and security; the development of new nation-states in the region and their relationship with the Kurdish movements in their country and other state countries; and, the available framework of legitimate international principles and political activities in each historical period. In the second half of the twentieth century, the spread of territorial nation-states in other parts of the world through decolonisation and then the collapse of the USSR reinforced the territorial nation-state ideal and provided further political and ideological impetus for the promotion of Kurdistan as the Kurdish national homeland. Using Breuilly's definition of nationalism as a form of politics, which assumes that nationalist movements relate nationalism to the aims of attaining or using state power, this thesis argued that Kurdish elites linked their nationalism to the aim of attaining state power, initially within the context of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and later in the form of separatist nationalism in the new states formed in the ex-Ottoman territories.

Based on this background, the thesis argued that the emergence of the concept of Kurdistan as a national homeland can best be understood by reference to material, political and ideational processes, rather than through an essentialist historical view that sees Kurdistan as a consistent and given feature of Kurdish national identity. The essentialist historical view deploys contemporary conceptions of national territory by building upon an idea of Kurdistan that had previously been used to define administrative or geographic regions. One of the key characteristics of this conception is to assume that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation. The perception that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish

nation and that Kurdistan is a given feature of Kurdish identity, not a national aspiration, strengthens Kurdish nationalists' use of Kurdistan and its maps in order to promote their self-determination claims. Moreover, their contemporary conception of national territory is loaded with ethnicist and primordial interpretations of Kurdish territory and national identity. In order to illustrate this argument, the thesis explained the transformation of Kurdistan from a regional/administrative concept to an ideal national homeland and the use of the idea of Kurdistan and its maps by Kurdish nationalist groups since the early aftermath of WWI.

In relation to the territorial feature of Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish nationalists' claims to an ethnically-defined territory, this thesis has argued that the link nationalists forge between the history of a territory and the history of the people living on it is important in strengthening the claims to an ethnically-defined territory. All nationalisms build their identity using existing or assumed historical links, but this is particularly noticeable in the case of nationalisms that have emerged in the last century. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, political identity has become more closely associated with territorial control than ever before. Therefore self-determination in the form of secession appears to be a logical outcome of the structure of the international system today.[611]

Most sub-state nationalist groups aspire to the realisation of their 'ethnic territory' in the form of autonomy or independence. In the Kurdish case, and as well as in many of the other nationalist territorial claims, the 'aspirant territory' transforms into an 'existing territory' in the eyes of increasingly wider sections of Kurds and in the eyes of international society. This is further reinforced by the popular appeal of ethnicist approaches to national identity. For instance, Smith perceives the core of ethnic communities as ancient social formations that have persisted in modern times and he emphasises the role of territorial memories in the construction of national identities.[612] Although he accepts that territory is socially constructed and it is humans who give meaning to that territory, he also seems to assume that specific territorial associations asserted by nationalists are given and he argues that their assertions should have an influence on the political life of a group of people. Many scholars working on self-determination and nationalism have also proposed similar views supporting the argument that ethnic group identity should be the decisive factor in re-drawing territorial boundaries.

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[611] Bishai, 140.
[612] Smith, 'States and homelands', 188 and see endnote 7 in p. 200.

Overall, in relation to Kurdistan and Kurdish nationalism, this thesis, rather than uncritically accepting a pervasive Kurdish nationalism throughout history with a given understanding of Kurdistan, has adopted a view that emphasises historically and politically contingent factors. This was not done with a view to critiquing the credibility of Kurdish nationalist claims to Kurdistan, but rather to show that the ethnicist interpretations of national identity facilitate the positive reception of Kurdish claims among would-be nationalists and in international society. It argued that, within the historical political and normative framework, both at the international level and in the case of Kurdish nationalism, creating homogenous ethnic boundaries began to appear as the best way to establish stable democratic regimes that are respectful of the human rights of both collectivities and individuals. This enabled Kurdish nationalists to generate support and sympathy for their ethnically-defined claims to territory and national self-determination.

The third feature that this thesis has focused on is the activities of diaspora nationalists and their interaction with international society, particularly their role in promoting their claims among the members of international society. Following Anderson's notion of 'long-distance nationalism', the thesis has defined Kurdish nationalists operating in the diaspora as nationalist actors whose focus is upon promoting the idea of a homeland as an ethnic territory in the international realm. Although such nationalist groups in the diaspora utilise transnational methods in their interactions and most of their activities take place within a transnational space, their goals are nationalist and their activities are directed at both national and international realms.

Building on this background, this thesis has argued that the transnational location outside the homeland and the ability to communicate their ideas directly to international society, render the activities of diaspora groups more effective than regional nationalist actors in publicising the rightfulness of their demands for self-determination and in promoting the idea of an ethnic territory to international society. These actors are particularly competent in using the contemporary international normative context related to human and democratic rights, particularly the right to self-determination, to promote the legitimacy of their pursuit for autonomy or independence. The increasing role of diasporas in international affairs, their growing ability to mobilise (due to developments in technology, communication and transport)

and their role in influencing (through lobbying) their host-state's foreign policies and regional and international affairs, gives strength to their propaganda.

Kurdish activists in the diaspora, much like other groups such as the Armenian, Palestinian, Kosovar Albanian, Tamil and Irish diasporas, have influenced the perceptions and attitudes of their host-states and international organisations toward their home-countries and towards their nationalist movements back in the homeland. Kurdish nationalist groups in the diaspora undertake their activities to promote the assumption that Kurdistan is an ethnic territory. Long-distance Kurdish nationalist actors, due to their stronger adherence to the idea of a unified nation, are more assertive in the promotion of their claims than many of the nationalist groups in the region. Their location in liberal-democratic host-states, and the political freedom provided by these states in organising and engaging in cultural and political activities away from the scrutiny of home country regimes, give these groups increased opportunities to mobilise and lobby for their cause. Additionally, they effectively utilise the discourse of contemporary international politics, which puts increasing importance on the democratic and political rights of ethnic communities.

Considering the large number of such struggles – the Kurds, Tamils, Chechens, Abkhazians, Sikhs, and others – the question of why ethnically-defined claims to territory and national self-determination generate sympathy in international society is an important issue that requires explanation. Therefore, even though Kurdish nationalists have not generated the international norms that provide a normative context for their activities and have limited political power compared to states and many other actors in international society, Kurdish nationalist groups play an important role in the dissemination of certain norms and attempt to affect international politics through engaging with other actors in international society. By doing this, they provide legitimacy to their goals and at the same time, disseminate and reinforce certain norms and political activities.

Considering the question of how sub-state Kurdish nationalist groups generate support and sympathy among would-be nationals and in international society for their claims to an ethnically-defined territory and national self-determination this thesis suggested three key lessons, each of which is elaborated below:

(1) *The need to avoid an uncritical acceptance of the essentialist understandings of ethnicity and territory*: Assuming the existence of a pervasive Kurdish nationalism throughout history

with a given understanding of Kurdistan inhibits understanding and the need to study historically contingent political, economic, social and ideological factors which really are determinant.

(2) *The need to incorporate an international perspective into the analysis more extensively*: Generating a complete understanding of the political implications of Kurdish nationalist activities on Kurdish nationalism, on regional states and on international society requires an analysis of the case from an international perspective that takes into account both the evolution of the international normative context as well as the international historical, political and ideational context.

(3) *The need to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach*: The findings of this thesis suggest that an analysis of the relationship between Kurdish society and international society requires a systematic theoretical and analytical approach that combines different fields of study. This will enhance our understanding of Kurdish nationalism by utilising the conceptual and theoretical tools that studies in IR and nationalism provide, and allow comparisons between the Kurdish case and other cases.

Analysing how sub-state Kurdish nationalist groups generate support and sympathy among would-be nationals and in international society for their claims to an ethnically-defined territory and national self-determination supports the efforts of some IR scholars to incorporate the study of nationalism and sub-state actors into the study of the 'international'. It illustrates the usefulness of addressing sub-state groups' interactions with international society in two complementary ways: through an awareness of the political and international ideational context in which sub-state groups interact with other actors in international society, and through drawing on the insights from IR and studies on nationalism concerning the territorial component of nationalisms and self-determination. This enables researchers to understand better the challenges nationalist separatist movements pose to state sovereignty, territorial stability, and regional and international security.

This thesis has only investigated the Kurdish case. The, histories and internal/external circumstances of other cases of sub-state nationalism will each display specific characteristics. Nevertheless, the general arguments about the importance of taking into account the international aspect in a systematic conceptual and theoretical way together with awareness of the historical and political context can be applied in studying all sub-state nationalist groups.

It should also be noted that rather than claiming to contribute to the fields of IR and studies of nationalism in a theoretical manner, this thesis aimed to expand on existing arguments in the IR literature concerning the necessity of incorporating nationalism, sub-state actors and diasporas into the study of IR, and further supported these arguments by using the Kurdish case to illustrate its claims. This thesis has made a conceptual contribution to both IR and studies on nationalism by providing a nuanced understanding of the notion of self-determination, which would be a useful tool in understanding the activities of sub-state groups within an international framework. This is an understanding of national self-determination that relies on liberal principles such as self-rule and democracy, but at the same time reifies primordial features of national identity.

Liberal democracy and national self-determination are two important principles enshrined within current international affairs, both in legal and political contexts. A new meaning of self-determination has emerged that is particularly related to sub-state national groups. This meaning of self-determination is still focused on liberal democratic and human rights, but claims that the achievability of these rights is more legitimate if the community in question is culturally and ethnically homogenous. In these cases, the way self-determination is understood and interpreted appears to reify both liberal principles and the given cultural characteristics of the communities in question. This could be used as a basis for the creation of new political entities based on distinct cultural characteristics. Kurdish activists are deliberately using this meaning of self-determination to promote their claims. Political, social and military activities that promote such claims have important implications for the societies in question, on other societies in the region, on the regional states and on international security. The nature of these implications and their negative or positive effect is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it would be a valuable area of future research to pursue.

Another interesting area of future research related to the argument of the thesis is the study of the impact of the use of maps on sub-state nationalist politics and their interactions with international society. Kurdish nationalists have repeatedly used the map of Kurdistan to indicate the Kurdish ethnic territorial boundaries. Kurdish nationalists' constant use of maps of Kurdistan facilitates the assumption that Kurdistan is an ethnic territory. It could be argued that the promotion and reception of the Kurdistan map takes place within, and benefits from, the international framework of ideas that increasingly recognises the creation of ethnic territories in order to improve

the human rights and democratic rights of peoples. Another aspect that makes the Kurdistan map influential as a propaganda tool is that this map provides a clear and credible message when promoting the idea that Kurdistan is an existing national territory. Uses of these maps mostly share the same ground in terms of Kurdistan's existence and do not consider the concept's existential challenges and its ambiguity as problematic. In this context, maps are useful political tools to promote such nationalist assumptions. Kurdish nationalists use the map of Kurdistan to spread the message that the territory indicated in the map is the Kurdish homeland and that it is vital for their cultural and ethnic existence as a community.

In the current international system, state boundaries are associated with the national entities as shown on the world political map. They are seen as 'abstractions of reality' and therefore they can change or establish territorial perceptions.[613] This assumption derives from the way users of maps perceive them. As Jeremy Black states, 'Most purchasers and users see the development of map-making as a science based on changes in mathematics, perspective and surveying … Most users rely on the apparent accuracy and objectivity of maps; they do not see the very process of mapping as political.'[614] The map broadcasts the message to outsiders that the territory shown on the map is a real territory, not a political construction. The assumed association between the map of a territory and the population within that territory facilitates the view that the people inhabiting the territories within the borders of map are homogenous. The understanding that territory is a given feature of ethnic groups reinforces this view. Therefore, a cartographic depiction of an aspirant homeland implies that the land indicated on the map is the manifestation of their territorial identity.

Maps are influential tools for delivering a message to outsiders because it is assumed that maps serve as medium to reflect realities. In their use of the map of Kurdistan, scholars, journalists, and the foreign affairs departments of some states claim that their purpose is analytical and descriptive and that they do not seek to deliver a specific message by using these maps. To an extent, this is indeed a fair claim. As Black states, maps cannot be dismissed simply because of their political and subjective aspects.[615] However, the problem arises from the outsiders' quick acceptance of the aspirant Kurdistan as depicting an ethnic Kurdish territory. As a result of the ethnicist conceptions of nations and their territorial features, and the effective use of maps, it is

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[613] Arthur H. Robinson, *Elements of Cartography*, New York: Wiley, 1995, 7.
[614] Jeremy Black, *Maps and Politics*, London: Reaktion Books, 1997, 9-10.
[615] *Ibid.*, 168.

possible to observe the transformation of the 'aspirant Kurdistan' to an 'existing Kurdistan' in the eyes of both would-be nationals and outsiders.

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