Double Trouble: Analyzing the Impact of Statelessness on the Status of Kurdish Women

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ABSTRACT - The struggle of Kurdish women at large has been, as many media outlets suggested, an extraordinary and unique example of women's status in the Middle East. In contrast to the widespread, surface-level narrative of Kurdish women's empowerment, a complex political, socio-historical background of Kurdish statelessness has intensified women's empowerment or oppression. This essay will demonstrate how nationalist ideology, autonomous spaces, and violent conflict may provide the conditions for a "double revolution" and/or "double oppression" of stateless Kurdish women through the lens of statelessness. These three features of statelessness intersect with unique features of the stateless Kurdish populations across the Middle East to determine a woman's status. More specifically, the case of Syrian Kurdistan exemplifies a "double revolution" while Iraqi Kurdistan exemplifies a case of "double oppression" for Kurdish women.

The struggle of Kurdish women at large has been, as many media outlets suggest, an extraordinary and unique example of women's status in the Middle East (Şimşek & Jongerden, 2018, 1). However, the so-called "empowerment" of Kurdish women has not been universal as many Kurdish women still experience violence, discrimination, and subordination due to one or more identities that they hold. Behind the surface-level narrative of Kurdish women's empowerment lies the complex political, social, and historical backdrop of Kurdish statelessness, contributing to Kurdish women's varying statuses today.

Stateless people may be defined as those who lack "effective nationality" and are prohibited from enjoying the rights associated with citizenship (UNHCR 2000). The Kurdish people, an ethnic minority of about 25 million, are one of the largest stateless populations in the world (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019, 1). In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne established present-day Turkey across what would have been the borders of an autonomous Kurdistan (Who Are the Kurds? - BBC News, 2019, 2). The Treaty left the Kurdish people with minority status in the four main countries in which they reside: Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria (Zadeh, 2018, 1). Within these four main countries, the experience of Kurdish people, and Kurdish women, more specifically, vary widely due to different experiences in statelessness. The ways in which statelessness has impacted the status of Kurdish women may be loosely categorized into two primary paths: "double revolution" and "double oppression." A double revolution describes the advancement of Kurdish women, wherein the stateless population's agenda and the feminist agenda are complimentary and can develop in ways that would have been impossible on their own. For Kurdish women, a double revolution leads to greater feminist freedoms and rights in conjunction with greater national autonomy as a stateless Kurd. Double oppression describes the intersectional way in which Kurdish women may experience gender-based discrimination in conjunction with discrimination against their Kurdish identity. For Kurdish women, double oppression entails increased

gender-based oppression and violence, exacerbated by unique characteristics of Kurds' stateless status.

Kurdish populations across the Middle East face a spectrum of challenges that mainly depend on their location and relationship with the state or group controlling the area where they reside. As a result of these circumstances, this essay will focus on the Kurdish populations in Syria and Iraq as distinct populations. In Syria, approximately 300,000 Kurds have been granted Syrian citizenship since the 1960s (Avenue et al., 2009, 10). Under the guise of land reform and redistribution, land traditionally controlled by Kurdish populations within Syrian borders has been systematically redistributed to their Arab-majority neighbours (Avenue et al., 2009, 10). In conjunction with revoking Kurds' Syrian citizenship, this act is a part of a larger trend to culturally oppress, politically alienate, and systematically deny Kurds fundamental human rights within Syria's borders (Avenue et al., 2009, 11). Most Kurds in Syria are geographically situated between territory controlled by the brutal al-Assad regime and the neighbouring Turkish border, escaping the violence of the Syrian Civil War and associated violent conflict nearly impossible. Syrian Kurds' proximity to Turkey has also led to an exchange of leftist ideology and values from Turkey-based Kurdish forces to Syria-based forces (Federici, 2015, 83). Even so, Syrian Kurds have established relative autonomy in the northeastern region of Syria (Federici, 2015, 82). This province, called Rojava, is within Syria but is mainly under Kurdish control. Some displaced Kurds have attempted to cross Semalka, the closest international border crossing in the area, and enter Kurdish-controlled Iraqi territory. Across Semalka, Kurds of Iraq face a very different reality than their Syrian counterparts. Without the influence of Turkey-based Kurdish forces, Iraqi Kurdish movements are more defined by tribal loyalties and patrimonialism (Owtram, 2018, 305). For example, between 1994-1998, Iraqi Kurdistan was the site of a civil war between two regionally based major parties, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) (Joly & Bakawan, 2016, 957). However, like Syrian Kurdistan, Iraqi Kurds

have also suffered enormous losses at the hands of the states, imposing on their semi-autonomous territory (Joly & Bakawan, 2016, 960). In the last 20th century, Saddam Hussein's regime exerted brutal, even genocidal, violent control over Kurdish populations in Iraq (Joly & Bakawan, 2016, 965). However, even after Saddam Hussein's regime was overthrown, Iraqi Kurds have also been impacted by international forces, such as the United States, Soviet Union, and ISIS, competing for oil revenues and territorial control (Owtram, 2018, 307).

In each of these regions of historical Kurdistan, several features of statelessness make it so that Kurdish women may experience diminished agency or increased agency due to their stateless status. Statelessness is not a direct catalyst for feminist revolution or oppressive marginalization. Instead, unique conditions of women's statelessness have the potential to intensify women's empowerment or marginalization. This essay will demonstrate how nationalist ideology, autonomous spaces, and violent conflict may provide the conditions for a "double revolution" or 'double oppression' of stateless women through the lens of statelessness. These three features of statelessness intersect with the unique features of the stateless Kurdish population at hand to determine a woman's status. More specifically, the case of Syrian Kurdistan exemplifies a 'double revolution' while Iraqi Kurdistan exemplifies a 'double oppression' for Kurdish women. This essay will examine how features of statelessness may pave the way for Kurdish women to undergo both a 'double revolution' or 'double oppression' depending on the circumstances.

Nationalist Ideology

Nationalist ideology has long been a feature of many stateless populations. Kurdish nationalist ideology varies drastically across the four primary states of Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey, in which Kurdish populations live. These points of divergence help to explain differences in the status of women across these Kurdish populations. Aspirations for an autonomous nation-state are typically the foundation of nationalist ideology; both stateless

and non-stateless populations may be invested in nationalist ideology. Nationalist ideology can develop a genuine mutualism with feminist goals as status quos become more malleable through nationalist uprising; simultaneously, nationalist ideology may superficially subscribe to a feminist agenda to benefit ulterior goals. Additionally, there is a plethora of literature that describes and analyzes how nationalist movements reproduce patriarchal societal patterns and harm women (O'Keefe 2013, 1). For Kurds in Syria, nationalist ideology embodies leftist ideas, namely those of Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan, that have been exchanged across the Syrian-Turkish border. Conversely, in Iraqi-Kurdistan, Kurdish nationalist ideology has been divided and, consequently, weakened by divisions across political and social cleavages.

Research on statelessness is more focused on how nationalism harms women than how it may benefit women (O'Keefe 2013, 2). There is merit to this perspective as nationalist movements tend to rely on traditional gender norms and hierarchies to construct and develop a new, formal nation (O'Keefe 2013, 2). For example, the notion of the woman as a mother is often intensely amplified through and for nationalist ideology. Women are put on pedestals for advancing the nationalist cause as the biological reproducers of the nation (Brennan, 2019, 171). Unfortunately, this framing only serves nationalist ideology while diminishing women's roles in society to solely being reproductive agents, limiting their ability to live outside this role (O'Keefe 2013, 4).

Additionally, it is essential to note that Kurdish nationalists have also been accused of perversely promoting an image of Kurdish women as freer than their Persian, Turkish, and Arab counterparts to emphasize Kurdish exceptionalism and their nationalist agenda (Bengio 2016, 1). In her book on Iraq's genocidal Anfal Campaign (1986–1989) against the Kurds, Choman Hardi claims that nationalist leaders sought to advance their cause cause by leveraging Kurdish women's emotional injuries—from wartime rape and abductions orchestrated by Arab men—to gain political momentum (Bengio 2016, 1). In this

way, harmfully ingenuine feminist priorities may also come from within the stateless population, demonstrating how feminist and nationalist agendas may clash. Thus, women of Iraqi-Kurdistan are more likely to experience double oppression because of nationalist ideology, particularly in the context of statelessness. Western-based feminist literature has heavily covered the mechanisms through which statelessness may negatively affect women's status. These findings suggest that nationalist projects reproduce and rely on patriarchal norms and practices, using women's bodies as a battlefield for maintaining their political, social, and economic oppression (O'Keefe 2013, 1). This essay will devote more analysis to how nationalist ideology may positively affect women's status (O'Keefe 2013, 14).

Nationalist ideology may positively affect women's status in several ways. Nationalist agendas may include gender equality as a key tenet, especially within the ideology of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) and Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) nationalist forces. In this way, both nationalist ideology and feminist ideology call for a disruption of the status quo and may work in tandem to achieve the changes each agenda seeks. For instance, within Syria's Kurdish population, the complementarity of nationalism and feminism contributed to the establishment of a broader political project for advancing women within Kurdish society and the Kurdish national agenda. Much of the literature centred on Kurdish women posits that the prominence of women's rights has always been a part of Kurdish nationalist ideology, albeit it has become more central over time (Al-Ali & Tas, 2018, 455). However, this seemingly omnipresent prioritization of women's rights has its origins in the Kurds' stateless condition. The PKK, the Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey, was a challenge to the Kemalist nationalist ideology in Turkey. It is imperative to note that an integral part of the PKK's ideology and agenda is rooted in Marxist and communist beliefs. As a result, the PKK's "people's war" strategy of leftist social policies and nationalist uprising has integrated women's empowerment since the 1960s and 1970s (Al-Ali & Tas, 2018, 459). The PKK sought to

distinguish itself from and challenge Turkey; a part of this effort was to mobilize the Kurdish public for the Kurdish nationalist effort (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 7). Kemalist secularism had not led to significant changes in the daily lives of rural Kurdish women, in part because of their separateness and unique identity as Kurds. This power vacuum was an ideological opening for the PKK. As the PKK was ideologically predisposed to include women, their stateless movement for self-determination significantly facilitated the inclusion of large numbers of women. This development extended to the Syrian Kurdish nationalist movement. The PKK became a parent organization of the future PYD and looked to Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan for radical leftist ideological guidance (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 7). Ocalan, a Turkey-based Kurdish nationalist and father of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), has advocated for women's liberation throughout his life in the public eye. Thus, even though the PKK was focused on Kurdish liberation from Turkish rule, the organization's geographic and political proximity to Kurds across the border in Syria meant that the PKK strongly influenced its Syrian counterparts (Ferreira et al., 2018, 480). Further, the PKK and PYD are military allies and share similar experiences of cultural repression, including the quelling of the Kurdish language and names, that further facilitated the exchange of ideas and values in historical Kurdistan but across the Turkish-Syrian border (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 40). Thus, nationalist ideology in Syrian Kurdistan has served to advance feminist goals as both movements are rooted in leftist ideology and seek to uproot an unjust status quo. Consequently, the Kurdish women of Syria are more likely to experience a 'double revolution' as women's rights are developed alongside and within the nationalist agenda.

It is natural to ask why Iraqi Kurds have not experienced a similarly striking confluence of women's liberation and nationalist ideology. Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden (2019) explain this difference by pointing to how Iraqi Kurdish national pursuits have been much less ideologically unified and more conservative than neighbouring Syrian Kurdish nationalism. Based in the Northern part of

Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan is home to only two regionally based major parties, the more conservative and personalist Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the center-left Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). The two nationalist organizations have failed to unify across partisan lines after over twenty years of attempting to do so since the bloody Kurdish Civil War (1994-1998) between the two forces (Wilgenburg and Fumerton 2015, 4). Additionally, these divergences have led the PUK and KDP to further their nationalist agenda via tribal elites and tribal dynamics (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 46). Tribal elites control nationalist ideology and maintain control of much of the Kurdish political and military power through their fighting forces, known as the jash (41). This steadfast partisan factionalism has been a critical causal factor in keeping Iraqi Kurdistan from becoming a complete, stable democracy capable of integrating political change to benefit women's status in the region. Thus, nationalist ideology, mainly that which is interested in feminist liberation, has not been as consistent and entrenched in Iraqi Kurdistan as it is for the Kurds of Syria. As a result of this discrepancy in combination, made possible by unique stateless conditions, Kurdish women of Iraq are more likely to experience a "double oppression."

These differences exemplify the complexity and context-based nature of the relationship between statelessness and the status of women. In Syrian Kurdistan, specific political conditions in the region left a power vacuum for Kurdish nationalist movements to fill and promote gender equality. As a result, embracing feminism and challenging the dominant narrative of Syrian and Turkish statehood benefited the nationalist cause. Thus, Syrian Kurdistan has experienced a path akin to a 'double revolution,' as nationalist aspirations complemented feminist aspirations. Conversely, in Iraq, maintaining the political status quo, rather than making room for socio-political change, was the most beneficial strategy in the development and stability of Iraqi Kurdish nationalism (Joly and Bakawan 2016, 962). Thus, due to differing ideologies and mechanisms of nationalist mobilization, Kurdish women in Syria and Iraq have experienced a 'double

revolution' and "double oppression," respectively.

(Semi) Autonomous Spaces and Governance

Autonomous spaces controlled by stateless populations can negatively or positively impact women's status based on various factors such as legal infrastructure and ideological roots. In Syrian Kurdistan, the ruling PYD party heads a de facto, autonomous government that is developing a federal system and regional parliament. In Kurdish-controlled spaces of Northern Syria, much of the power that women have gained has been attributed to the influence of the gender egalitarian philosophy of Abdullah Ocalan. Several phrases that Ocalan coined have become well-known sayings among Kurds and exemplify the strength of Kurdish feminism. One of these phrases, "To me, women's freedom is more precious than the freedom of the homeland," demonstrates how Ocalan redefined national liberation as women's freedom (Öcalan 2017, 19). This notion can be seen through advancements such as women gaining the right to divorce and inherit property on an equal basis; women have also gained the ability to keep their children and their homes in a marital breakup (Nordland 2018). Ocalan's philosophy has become the foundation of Kurdish lifestyles, particularly in Kurdish-dominated territories in Northern Syria and Eastern Turkey. The stability of Kurd-controlled spaces in Syria helped spread Ocalan's ideology, ushering feminist ideas to the forefront of public attention, as the population became less preoccupied with land defence, military strength, and general control. The stability of the Kurdish autonomous space in Syria, albeit de facto, has allowed for the proliferation of these more feminist ideals to permeate and change women's political and social status in Kurdish Syria. Consequently, women of Syrian Kurdistan have been more likely to experience a 'double revolution' in which statelessness, and the unique potential for autonomous control that it presents, have complimented the feminist cause.

Unlike its Syrian counterpart, Iraqi Kurdistan has not followed suit concerning women's

status in Kurd-controlled Syria. Iraqi Kurdistan demonstrates how a different set of institutions and infrastructure has influenced women's status in a region. On paper, Iraqi Kurdistan's official ruling body is the autonomous Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). Still, the KRG is subject to overarching Iraqi legislation, and other Kurdish organizations continue to challenge democratic authority (Joly and Bakawan 2016, 961). The KRG is not entirely free to legislate as they please; the government is still subject to several Iraqi laws, many of which linger from Ba'athist era governance that are detrimental to women. For example, honour killings are still considered somewhat legitimate under the 1969 Iraqi Penal Code, which categorizes honour killings to benefit these murderers with lighter sentences than other murder cases (963). The existing norms and power relations that characterized rural Kurdish society in Iraq have been defined by the rivalry between the Kurdish Barzani clan and the Kurdish Talabani rather than progressive politics for Kurds as a larger population (963). In this way, the maintenance of Kurdish self-preservation in Iraqi Kurdistan left no room for feminist ideals. This example demonstrates the significance of the political and social context in determining the path a stateless population will take regarding feminist ideals. The autonomous spaces and free leaders of stateless populations can only serve to advance the status of women if feminist ideals are predisposed and convenient in the political and social context of the given population and state.

Although the women of Iraqi Kurdistan have made concerted efforts to develop women's rights and agency in the region, instability resulting from international intervention and entrenched patriarchal infighting have undercut their efforts significantly. For example, in 1991, US President Bush, European leaders, and the United Nations agreed to create Kurdish 'safe havens' in Northern Iraq to quell fighting between Kurdish guerrillas and Iraqi government troops stoked by the power vacuum left after the Gulf War. This case provides a fascinating study of autonomous spaces for a stateless population (Tyler 1991). The Bush administration intended to avoid problems

with international law and regional sensitivities regarding the future of that region (Tyler 1991). This unconventional method of de-facto, unstable state-building is uniquely possible with a stateless population. The safe havens provided relative protection from outside military conflict and political interference. They facilitated the formation of new political organizations, the return of previously exiled women, and the establishment of international non-governmental organizations, creating new spaces and opportunities for Kurdish women to promote a women's rights agenda (Joly and Bakawan 2016, 970). However, safe havens did not have a uniformly positive impact on women's status. Initiatives for women's rights were actively opposed and regarded suspiciously by conservative Kurdish political figures and groups.

Additionally, the safe havens were not immune to the phenomena of gendered 'honour' crimes and other forms of violent discrimination (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 45). While the safe havens did give way to some positive effects on women's status in the region, the entrenched instability from within the autonomous space, characterized by tribal-feudal male power, triggered resistance from Kurdish women's rights activists. This resistance marked a point of friction between statelessness and the advancement of the feminist cause. In this way, the unstable and divided nature of Iraqi Kurdistan's autonomous space as a stateless population gave way to 'double oppression' rather than "double revolution."

In Syrian Kurdistan, feminist ideas were both predisposed and convenient for the population at hand because of radical leftist ideological roots. The fact that the region was relatively stable in terms of political, military, and social power. Conversely, in Iraqi Kurdistan, feminist ideas were neither predisposed nor convenient to implement, reflecting deeply rooted social divisions and unstable autonomous spaces subject to outside intervention from Iraqi forces. Even in a stable, autonomous space, stateless populations, in particular, must prioritize self-preservation as a result of their stateless status. As a result, a feminist agenda will only come to fruition if its emergence

is the 'path of least resistance for the benefit of a stable government. In this way, statelessness uniquely positions women to experience 'double oppression' should their space be unstable and predisposed to neglect feminist causes.

Violent Conflict

Since the 2010s, the term 'Kurdish Spring' has been used to describe the wave of upgrading of Kurdish women's status in their societies simultaneously as the Arab Spring (Bengio 2016, 31). While the Arab Spring served to entrench, not improve, the status of women, many ordinary Kurdish women have managed to assume leadership roles and control over their own lives and wellbeing. At the same time, violent conflict has historically plagued stateless populations. Whether stateless or not, women typically bear the brunt of the impact of violent conflict due to deeply entrenched patriarchy, women's traditional role as caretakers, and gendered violence against women (Peterson 2009, 57). Stateless populations are typically unprotected by citizenship rights and are often subject to neglectful or harmful treatment by the state in which they reside. Reactionary coping behaviours in the face of conflict reinforce women's traditional positions in a patriarchal system as populations must prioritize safety above all, relying on the status quo for survival.

Population displacement resulting from violent conflict further reinforces traditional gender roles and entrench discriminatory systems of power because unexpected adjustments to new and often hostile environments reinforce traditional roles and ethnic belonging. Consequently, women are not only more vulnerable to the physical horrors of war, but they also disproportionately bear the economic burdens and financial responsibilities of wartime and war recovery (Peterson 2009, 45). During periods of violent conflict, reinforcement of women's subordination acts as a coping behaviour in the face of uncertainty (Gökalp 2010, 562). This dynamic may manifest itself through direct violence and the secondary trauma received through the violence experienced by their children and husbands (Nilsson 2018, 641). Violence and

reinforcement of oppressive, patriarchal norms diminish women's status in the region significantly. Thus, being both stateless and a woman likely puts them at the bottom of a 'privilege pyramid' (Brennan 2019, 178). For example, the violent struggle against ISIS in Iraq, Syria, and beyond impacted Kurdish women in a gendered manner. This impact was made possible because ISIS specifically targeted the Kurds to be treated with no mercy.

Furthermore, Furthermore, ISIS relies on rigid patriarchal violence to subordinate women as second-class citizens, subjected to violence and repression. Even women who are combatants become the 'flag-bearer of patriarchy.' This reality, combined with ISIS' belief in violently treating women as subordinates and as property, exemplifies a state of 'double oppression' (Joly and Bakawan 2016, 963).

Additionally, as previously discussed, in instances when institutions appear to be changing in favour of women's rights, there has been evidence of insubstantial, surface-level change for the sake of public image. This illusion of change may damage stateless women experiencing violent conflict as it serves to erase the actual reality of violence and subverts sincere efforts to protect women. For example, in an extreme case, Iraqi Kurdish nationalists have been accused of manipulating the emotional horror of Kurdish women being raped and abducted by Arab men to benefit the Kurdish nationalist cause. Hence, Kurdish women's suffering was put on a perverse pedestal to advance an ulterior cause rather than out of genuine solidarity and rage regarding the violence against women. Thus, the vulnerability and characteristic displacement that the vast majority of stateless Kurdish women experience due to their statelessness have exacerbated the oppressive experience of violent conflict, producing a case of "double oppression."

Although stateless women, including Kurdish women, have suffered greatly at the hands of violent conflict made more harmful by their stateless status, there remains evidence that violent conflict in the context of statelessness has the potential to foster feminist developments. In 2011 and the US-backed battle against ISIS into

Kurdish-controlled regions of Syria, the eruption of the Syrian Civil War prompted the establishment of new armed wings in the Kurdish armed forces (Szekely, Henshaw, and Darden 2019, 43). One of these units, a separate Women's Protection Unit (YPJ), was notoriously instrumental in the fight against ISIS and the protection of Kurdish territories during the 2010s. This military involvement is more than breaking a vital glass ceiling; women's involvement in militant groups can lead to more political roles. For example, the ruling PYD in Rojava has a rule that each political position must be held jointly by a man and a woman, significantly increasing the number of women in powerful, influential political positions.

Moreover, in the PKK case, interview evidence has demonstrated that the presence of women in the PKK bolstered the organization's ideological focus on feminist ideals (49). Consequently, war circumstances may act as catalysts for stateless women to advance their rights, socio-political spaces and ultimately improve their status when there is infrastructure and institutions in place that are sensitive to specific gendered injustices (Gökalp 2010, 567). In other words, violent conflict that has historically plagued stateless populations, while horrific in and of itself, may offer an opportunity for feminist causes to advance and produce a "double revolution." However, given the broader Iraqi and Kurdish socio-political histories, the women of Iraqi Kurdistan have gone down a path of mixed 'double oppression' and "double revolution."

Conclusion

By analyzing three primary features of statelessness, nationalism, autonomous spaces, and violent conflict, it is evident that the status of Kurdish women is impacted by statelessness in numerous and complex ways. Statelessness does not automatically or universally harm or benefit women's rights; instead, characteristics of statelessness have the potential to reinforce patterns of oppression or women's empowerment. As demonstrated in this paper, the trajectory of the status of women is dependent mainly on pre-

existing histories and socio-political forces in the region at hand. In Syrian Kurdistan, women have primarily experienced 'double revolution' as a result of ideological predispositions, stable autonomous spaces, and the opportunity to dislodge the patriarchal status quo. Conversely, Iraqi Kurdistan epitomizes a case of 'double oppression' for Kurdish women as the population is constrained by internal political divisions, destabilizing outside interference, and debilitating violent conflict. It is important to note that there are countless other features of statelessness such as legal insecurity and post-traumatic impacts of forced displacement; these features were chosen due to their prominence in the existing literature and their broadly applicable nature in analysis. Those researching this topic in the future should consider other, less examined lenses and challenge the analyses of commonly considered perspectives.

Even though the fight against ISIS has been on the decline for the last few years, Kurdish populations across the Middle East remain uniquely vulnerable to the turbulence of international and regional geopolitical dynamics. For example, US President Trump's decision to withdraw troops from Kurdish territory in October of 2019 left Kurdish populations vulnerable to hostile Turkish forces to the East and the lingering threat of ISIS to the West (Feith and Shulsky 2019). As a stateless population, Syrian Kurdish forces were essentially forced to make a deal with the Syrian government in Damascus. This deal paved the way for Syrian President Assad's forces to enter Rojava for the first time in years, sacrificing Kurdish lives and well-being in the process (Hubbard et al., 2019). Lastly, as discussed, women continue to be on the front lines, disproportionately shouldering the burdens that may come their way as both women and members of a stateless population. The world has yet to see how these changes and more may impact the trajectory of 'double oppressions' and 'double revolutions' in the 2020s.

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