

**The Kurdistan National Liberation Movement: Paradigm Change
and Transformation from National Liberation to Democratic
Liberation.**

Submitted by **Sait Keskin** to the **University of Exeter**
as a thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Kurdish Studies

January 2018

This thesis is available for Library use on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature:

Contents

Contents.....	2
Abbreviations.....	5
Abstract.....	6
Acknowledgements.....	7
Chapter 1.....	8
Introductory Remarks.....	8
Why This Study?.....	23
Research Questions.....	29
Ontology.....	31
Epistemology.....	32
The scope of the Thesis.....	33
Outline of the Thesis.....	37
Conclusion.....	42
Chapter 2.....	44
Theory and Methodology.....	44
Introduction.....	44
The Nation.....	46
National Identity.....	53
Nationalism.....	59
National Liberation.....	67
Methodology.....	70
Literature Review.....	74
Conclusion.....	80
Chapter 3.....	82
Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism and Radical Emergence of the PKK.....	82
Introduction.....	82
Historical Background.....	85
Emergence of Political Parties in Kurdistan.....	92
Domination of the KDP in all parts of Kurdistan.....	102
Failure of the KDP-Iraq in 1975 and its Fragmentation.....	105
The Impacts of the Failure of Bashur on the other three parts of Kurdistan.....	107
The Emergence of the PKK.....	108
Conclusion.....	111
Chapter 4.....	
The PKK as a Radical National and Political Movement - Formation.....	113

Introduction	113
Emergence of the ‘Kurdistan Revolutionaries’ in 1973-1978 and the Multiple Challenges.....	115
The Kurdistan Revolutionaries Group Evolves to a Political Party	125
The PKK revealed in July 1979 in Siverek.....	128
Moving to the Middle East and other Parts of Kurdistan	133
Reorganization Ideologically, Politically, Militarily and Return to Kurdistan.....	136
Conclusion	138
Chapter 5.....	141
The PKK’s Dominance and Hegemony in Kurdistan-Reformation	141
Introduction.....	141
A political Party.....	142
Establishing a Guerrilla Army (ARGK).....	149
Founding a Popular Front (ERNK).....	158
Opening the Gate of Legal Politics.....	162
An interlocutor starting the Process of Dialogue and Ceasefires	168
The Kurdistan Parliament in Exile.....	170
Conclusion	172
Chapter 6.....	174
Why the PKK Needed Paradigm Change- Transformation.....	174
Introduction.....	174
Ideological and Political Transformation.....	175
Changing the National Liberation Strategy	180
Replacing the Democratic Liberation Strategy.....	187
Searching A Peaceful Political Solution.....	192
Debates About Ending the Armed Struggle.....	197
The KCK (Kurdistan communities Union or the Union of Communities in Kurdistan)	200
Conclusion	203
Chapter 7.....	206
The PKK's Radical Democracy Paradigm: the KCK	206
Introduction.....	206
Democratic Republic	209
Democratic Nation.....	213
Democratic Autonomy.....	216
Democratic Civil Society, Decentralization and Devolution.....	226
Democraticising the state by ‘non-violent means’.....	228

Democratic Confederalism as an Alternative Solution.....	229
Conclusion	233
Chapter 8.....	237
From National Liberation to Democratic Liberation: What is Next?	237
How far has the PKK distanced itself from the National Liberation Discourse?	244
According to the evidences on the ground, to what extend has PKK been successful in implementing a Radical Democracy in order to achieve Democratic Liberation Discourse?.....	246
The Process of PKK’s historical evolution from Formation to Reformation, Transformation and Re-Transformation	251
Is it possible for the effects and impacts of Nationalism in Kurdistan to be wiped away in a short time, while being surrounded by nationalist nation-states from four sides?.....	258
General Conclusion.....	263
Bibliography	275

ABBREVIATIONS

- ARGK: Artesa Rizgarîya Gelê Kurdistan (Kurdistan People's Liberation Army)
AKP: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development party)
BDP: Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)
CHP: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (People Republic Party)
CUP: Etihad ve Terraki Cemiyeti, (Committee of Union and Progress)
DBP: Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi, (Democratic Regions Party)
DTK: Demokratik Toplum Kongresi (Democratic Society Congress)
DTP: Demokratik Toplum Partisi (Democratic Society Party)
DEP: Demokratik Partisi (Democratic Party)
DEHAP: Demokratik Halk Partisi (Democratic people Party)
ENKS: Encumena Niştimanî Kurdên Syria (Syrian Kurdish National Council)
ERNK: Enîya Rizgarîya Gelê Kurdistan (Kurdistan People's Liberation Front)
HADEP: Halkın Demokrasi Partisi (People's Democracy Party)
HDK: Halkların Demokratik Kongresi (Democratic People congress)
HDP: Halkların Demokratik Partisi (Democratic People Party)
HEP: Halkın Emek Partisi (People Labour Party)
HRK: Heza Rizgarîya Kurdistan (Kurdistan Liberation Forces)
IHD: İnsan Hakları Derneği (Human Rights Association)
KADEK: Kongreya Azadi u Demokrasiya Kurdistan (Kurdistan's Freedom and Democracy Congress)
KCK: Koma Civakên Kurdistan (Unions of Communities in Kurdistan)
KDP - Iraq: Party Demokrata Kurdistan (Kurdistan Democrat Party - Iraq)
KDP - Iran: Party Demokrata Kurdistanî Iran (Kurdistan Democrat party-Iran)
KDP - Syria: Party Demokrata Kurdistanî Syria (Kurdistan Democratic Party –Syria)
KDP – Turkey: Party Demokrata Kurdistanî Turkiye (Kurdistan Democratic Party –Turkey)
Kongra Gel: Kongra Gelê Kurdistan (Kurdistan People's Congress)
KKK: Koma Komalên Kurdistan (Union of Kurdistan Organisations)
MGRK: Meclisa Gelê Rojavaye Kurdistan (Western Kurdistan People's assembly)
MIT: Milli İstihbarat Teskilati (National Intelligence Service of Turkey)
KNLM: Kurdistan National Liberation Movement
MHP: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (National Movement Party)
OZEP: Özgürlük ve Emek Partisi (Freedom and Labour Party)
OZDEP: Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi (Freedom and Democracy Party)
PCDK: Partiya Çareseriya Demokratik (Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party)
PJAK: Partiya Jiyana Azad-i Kurdistan (Kurdistan Free Life Party) PKDW: Parlamentoya Kurdistanî Dervayî Welat (Kurdistan Parliament in Exile)
PKK: Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers Party)
PUK: Yekîti Niştimanî Kurdistan (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan)
PYD: Partiya Yekitiya Demokratik (Union Democratic Party)
TAF: Turkish Armed Forces
TBMM: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Turkish Grand National Assembly)
YPG: Yekineyen Parastina Gel (People Defence Units)
YPJ: Yekineyen Parastina Jinan (Women Defence Units)

Abstract

This thesis examines the paradigm change and transformation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party – the PKK and how it became the hegemonic dominant actor in the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement. The thesis argues that the Kurdish Question is an international question that can only be solved through the doctrine of National liberation aiming for National Right to Self-Determination discourse. Such a paradigm change and transformation of the PKK consists of four stages: Formation, Reformation, Transformation and Re-transformation. Throughout the nineteenth century and three quarters of the twentieth century, Kurdish national and political organisations had failed to secure the national and political rights of communities in Kurdistan. Those failures caused a radical revolutionary emergence, such as the PKK in Bakur Kurdistan. The PKK formed when the KDP-led revolt in Bashur failed. National right to self-determination for an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan was the manifest of the PKK from 1973 to 1993. A Political party, a guerrilla army and national liberation front was formed. The Re-formation stage started when the PKK evaluated the national, regional and international changes, and began negotiations with the Turkish state. The thesis argues that the PKK was successful in the formation stage and had a stalemate at the reformation stage, which cost president Özal his life, and resulted in the life imprisonment of its leader, Abdullah Ocalan. It argues that at the third stage, Transformation, the PKK tried to save its leader's life as well as safeguards the movement from total failure. Therefore, it started to totally transform the party, the front and the guerrilla army. A comprehensive paradigm change occurred and the National Liberation Strategy transformed into the Democratic Liberation Strategy. The Democratic Liberation Strategy began in March 1999 up until July 2015, when the latest so-called 'solution process' totally failed. The fourth and final stage of Re-transformation is necessary to examine because the Democratic Liberation Strategy, which was based on 'Democratic Autonomy', has failed and has not guaranteed any legal political rights to Kurdish communities. Therefore, this study concludes that a Re-transformation of the PKK paradigm is a necessity especially at this historically, politically and diplomatically critical time in Kurdistan's national and political history. This examination is based on a wide range of qualitative contemporary resources, the PKK literature and its journals with interviews, alongside a variety of comprehensive observations that were conducted during my fieldwork in Bashur as well as in Bakur Kurdistan.

Acknowledgements

It is difficult to acknowledge those who helped me in the journey to achieve to the level of writing a PhD thesis. This journey started when I began to learn the English language at the age of forty, after arriving in Oxford as an asylum seeker in January 2000. It was the most difficult time of my life because I felt like I was deaf, blind and dumb: could not understand what I was hearing, could not read and write what I was seeing and could not answer what I was asked for. I immediately asked how to learn English. I was directed by Oxford City Council's Social Services to a charity called Asylum Welcome, who were offering some free English lessons. My first English lessons started from there, and then to Oxford College of Further Education. There, I took the language courses of Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced English with International Study Programme together in order to have an equivalent Secondary Education Certificate to enter University. I was accepted into Oxford Brookes University, and finally made my way up to University of Exeter to be able to study in the Centre for Kurdish Studies, the only centre of its kind in the United Kingdom.

My first and foremost gratitude and sincere thanks go to Professor Gareth Stansfield, my thesis supervisor, who has spent a long time among the communities in Bashur (Southern) Kurdistan while he was doing his fieldwork, and has become one of the most knowledgeable experts on the Kurds and Kurdistan. Without his deep understanding of my personal story and ambition, and his guidance and feedback, this project would have not been completed. My thanks go to Professor Jonathan Githens-Mazer, my second supervisor, for his guidance during my upgrade process. And also to Professor Christine Allison and Ms Zoe Humble since 2010 when I started my MA in Kurdish Studies, and then continuing to do my PhD because of all the efforts they have taken during these seven years.

I would like to thank Professor Garry Browning, my tutor during the three years at Oxford Brookes University while I was studying my BA in International Relations and Politics. But more so, without the help of Sally Mercer-Smith and her husband Bruce Rose-Smith at Oxford College of Further Education, this thesis would have not existed today.

Fatima, my dear wife, has always been like Ararat Mountain keeping my back safe and secure, encouraging and pushing me to endure this journey. When it had been just 10 days that I had started my PhD in 2011, we faced a very difficult problem, which has continued over the years. It was because of her that we have been able to resist and rise. So, my greatest gratitude and acknowledgement goes to my dear Fatima, who always becomes a light to shine in the darkness; together we have continued to overcome the odds and have been successful. Great thanks also to my four children and three grandchildren and all the family.

Chapter 1

Introductory Remarks

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate, analyse and explain why the PKK – *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Workers’ Party changed its paradigm of national liberation to democratic liberation. In order to understand the paradigm change and transformation of the PKK, one needs to look at its ideological and political formation, reformation, and transformation, as well as the possible retransformation of the PKK from its birth in 1973 until 2016. In order to investigate, analyse and explain why and how the PKK has become a predominant and hegemonic non-state player in the struggle to dominate the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement (KNLM)¹, contrary to all expectations voiced by the ‘Turkish social-chauvinists’ and the Kurdish ‘nationalist-reformist’ political parties, it is necessary to look at its formation and historical development. The PKK emerged at a critical juncture, when the Kurdish nationalist struggle was defeated in Bashur² Kurdistan and, as a consequence, the majority of people in all four parts of Kurdistan lost their hopes in any successful outcome of the struggle. The reason for this mistrust in the cause has to be seen both in the external occupation suffered by all Kurdistan, and in the long internal tribal conflicts which tore apart the Kurdistan political parties and organisations in the Bakur (North Kurdistan, known as Southeast Turkey), Bashur (South Kurdistan, known as North Iraq), and Rojhilat (East Kurdistan, known as West Iran) parts of Kurdistan. In this context, it is important to understand why significant changes and transformation had taken place in the

¹ The Kurdistan National Liberation Movement (KNLM) in this research means that combination of all Kurdistan political, nationalist, and cultural organizations in all parts of Kurdistan including the Kurdistan Diaspora around the world. Since 1999 after the imprisonment of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, the political discourse of the PKK has changed from Kurdistan National Liberation to a Kurdistan Freedom Movement. The term Freedom Movement can also explain that the PKK has removed the idea of an independent Kurdistan as the realization of self-determination to substitute it with the idea of a ‘democratic nation’, As explained later in the thesis, this change will have a huge impact on the future popular support to the PKK.

² In this dissertation Bakur denotes North parts of Kurdistan under Turkish occupation; Bashur denotes Southern Kurdistan (Iraqi part); Rojhilat denotes Eastern (Iranian occupied) and Rojava denotes South-Western (Syrian occupied).

national and political strategy of the PKK from its foundation in the seventies until 2013 when the ‘Peace Process/Solution Process’ started.

The case of the PKK as a radical movement is important because it has challenged all the other Kurdish political actors in its claim to secure freedom and independence since its formation. For this reason, this thesis will focus on the political and ideological transformations of Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). In particular, focusing on the passage from a national revolutionary strategy and the idea of an ‘Independent, United and Democratic Kurdistan, to the formation of a ‘Democratic autonomy’ in Bakur Kurdistan, which towards an Association of Kurdistan Communities’ Confederations, the KCK – *Koma Civakên Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Communities Union involving all the four parts of Kurdistan.

As will be explained further in the literature review, the process of change undertaken by the PKK and its leader Öcalan, has been explained in the book *Turkey’s Kurds: Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan* by Ali Kemal Özcan, and published in 2006 is a general overview. But, however important his contribution, it does not fill all the gaps for a complete assessment on the role of the PKK in the Kurdish question. This is why this study aims to investigate, analyse and explain the rise of the PKK and its paradigm change in the context of the Kurdish question. This approach will help the researcher to see the action of the PKK in a wider regional perspective and to compare different ways of addressing the Kurdish question.

In addition, this study will offer the opportunity to place the role of the PKK in the ever changing political scenario of the Middle East in the last forty years, with a particular emphasis on the changes due to the different balance of power in the world after the fall of the Soviet Union and the consequent supremacy of the West, in particular of the United States it will analyse the new developments of the Kurdish question that have arisen from the

establishment of a *de facto* then a *de jure* state in Bashur Kurdistan with the founding of the Kurdish Regional Government, and with the Rojava Kurdistan Revolution, following the most recent conflict in Syria (Rojava is West Kurdistan, known as North Syria).

In this context, in order to explain the theoretical framework of the PKK, it is necessary to analyse its leaders' political socialist ideas, and in particular how they relate to the different Kurdish communities and their historical, ethnical, cultural, territorial, and sectarian realities. This will help to explain why Kurdish people have been living for such a long time in an under-status³ - worse than the status of a colony. To investigate, analyse and explain their struggle for their national and political independence, it is important to explain concepts such as nationalism, federalism, and democratic autonomy.

Applying the theories of nationalism will enable a better understanding of how a national liberation movement in Kurdistan can be transformed to a social movement, if there is a democratic environment to oppose the monist Turkish state's assimilationist policies in order to liberate society democratically. In order to contextualise, classify and test the hypothesis, and predict the scientific outcomes, the theory of nationalism will explain the evolution of the ideas of nation and nationalism, and how in a colonised area such as Kurdistan it translates into a social movement. There are interlinked vigilant civil society organisations evolving in Kurdistan at the national and political level. However, when these work as a pressure force for democratic change, the state uses its coercion policies against them. This, contrary to Europe, happened in the absence of the industrial economic developments in Bakur Kurdistan, where the Turkish state intentionally left the region in an economic crisis. But because of Kurdish national and democratic demands, when there is even the smallest democratic environment, Kurdish civil society organisations flourish, and

³ The term has been used by Professor Ismail Beşikçi, which means that the inhabitants of Kurdistan even do not have a name or a status. For instance he mentions that the slaves have had their names and their status, the inhabitants of Kurdistan not only do not have name and status even they are in lower position than the slaves.

immediately the Turkish state shuts down legal civil society organisations and closes the door of any democratic political environment.

In order to analyse the origins of the PKK and its role in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkish politics, it is necessary to offer a brief historical account of the Kurdish question in the country. After the establishment of the Turkish republic in 1923 any reference to Kurds in politics, culture, and literature was banned. The new republic was based on a strong monist Turkish nationalist ideology with the purpose of creating a unified and homogenous country and nation with one language, one state, one nation, one country and one flag oppressing all non-Turkish ethnicities. The Armenians were exterminated in 1915; the Greeks exiled and also exterminated, the Kurds faced assimilation of Turkification, and the Alevite were forced to convert to the Sunni branch of Islam (Pope & Pope 2011: pp. 43). These policies triggered more than twenty-eight Kurdish rebellions against the Turkish State, most of them suppressed with the killing of their leaders, the destruction of their villages, and their forced deportation to Anatolia under the ‘compulsory settlement’ which was aimed at assimilating (Gürbey 1996: pp. 10).

In the historiography of Kurdistan National Liberation Movement in general and the PKK in particular, the abduction of Öcalan in Nairobi, Kenya on 16th of February 1999 constituted a significant turning point for the speeding up of the reformation and a total transformation of the movement. The PKK’s first significant manifest: *The Path of Kurdistan Revolution* was written in the summer of 1978 in Amed, introducing the aims and reasons for its foundation. The second important manifest entitled the *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question* was released 31 years later under Öcalan’s leadership, focused mainly on the need for reform and transformation. The former, *The Path of Kurdistan Revolution*, was written, when free Öcalan was preparing for establishing an

underground party in Amed the unofficial capital city of Bakur Kurdistan, while the *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question* was written under strict control of Turkish state in the high security prison of Imrali. The previous was focused on an Independent, United and Democratic Kurdistan; the latter discussed the Bakur Kurdistan as part of the Turkish state, the logic of the puzzle is obviously clearly can be read.

A number of rebellions against the central government took place until 1973, when the twenty-ninth rebellion started and was led by the PKK. It was in that year that a group of undergraduate university students founded a movement totally different from the previous Kurdish organisations operating in Bakur and the other three parts of Kurdistan. This movement became the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan-PKK*) in 1978, and that underground party officially declared its activities one year later in July 1979.

The PKK was founded during the Cold War era under the influence of international leftist socialist and National liberation Movements fighting against the colonial regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It manifested its ideological and political goals by defining Kurdistan as a 'classic colony'. In order to gain the universal national right to self-determination, an Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan could be created only after the liberation from the yoke of colonialism of the four states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria after a long-term popular war. In order to achieve this goal, the PKK despite the criticism of the Soviet Union and its satellite Communist Parties, considered itself as a part of the Socialist block of the National Liberation Movements, and of the Labour Movements operating in the developed Western world.

It is important, in order to follow the activity of the party and its ideological stance, to say that at the beginning the PKK was not dissimilar to left parties all over the world inspired by the Marxist-Leninist ideology in opposing their colonial past. In this sense, the objectives

of the PKK were in tune with the international leftist movements, ‘since [Kurdistan] is an international colony; since it is a place in which humanity is ignored to the utmost and regarded as 100 per cent its property, then the revolution of Kurdistan shall be international and the property of humanity in proportion to it’ (Öcalan 2011: pp. 51-52).

In this context, it is obvious that the new born party aimed to present itself as a clandestine underground organisation and that its main means of resistance to the Turkish power was the armed struggle, which started officially in 1984 and lasted until 1999. As stated in the first Manifesto of the party released in 1978, Öcalan made very clear the aims of the organization, and the language used remind clearly the language of leftist revolutionaries’ movements around the world. Öcalan himself defines it as ‘a manifesto for proletarian revolutionaries of Kurdistan’, establishing in this way that the revolution had to involve a complete change in the life style of those who adhered to it. This stance is particularly important because, as we will see later in this thesis, even during the years of the armed struggle, and in particular after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the language of the revolution together with its emphasis changed considerably.

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union and Socialist system took place, during the trade union workers’ strikes in Poland started, the PKK had already started its paradigm changes towards reformation. In 1988, at Öcalan’s first ever interview with the Turkish journalist Mehmet Ali Birand (whose maternal heritage was Kurdish), the PKK leader indicated that a compromise was needed in order to establish a democratic relationship between Kurds and Turks. Of course, Öcalan and the PKK were answering the demands of the people of Kurdistan despite the Turkish state’s harsh and violent measures. Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned that if there were not a statesman such as President Turgut Özal (whose maternal heritage was also Kurdish) any recognition of Kurdish language would have

been impossible. In the beginning, his aims were focused on totally destroying the PKK, but when he found that was not possible by military means he changed the direction towards a peaceful solution. In this phase, the president of Turkish state and the PKK came closer to a dialogue, but the Turkish state and the army were against that dialogue.

The Soviet Union collapsed, the bipolar world ended, the European Community evolved to the European Union, in the Middle East the Palestinian Liberation Movement entered negotiations with the state of Israel, and the Bashur part of Kurdistan went under international humanitarian protection. The PKK at the beginning of those changes did not react quickly enough to adapt itself to the changes that occurred in the national, regional and international arena. The slow moving process of the organisation's reformation did not take place until Öcalan was abducted and handed over to Turkey. Although this event constituted a big blow for the movement and a tragedy for its international reputation, in a very short time the PKK leadership declared a leadership council to act on behalf of the leadership and the process of reformation upgraded to its transformation. In the reformation and in particular in transformation, the PKK saved the organisation from a total failure and saved Öcalan's life too.

Despite Öcalan's arrest, the PKK gained more and more support from all parts of Kurdistan and significantly, from the Kurds in the Diaspora. The PKK membership is unique. For example, the members of the organisation never marry, they stay as brothers and sisters, and they are completely devoted to the revolution of Kurdistan at the expense of their private lives. In addition, since the PKK based its activities on a strong revolutionary will and self-sacrifice - they do not own any private property.

It is not the purpose of this study to offer an analysis of the impact of the armed struggle conducted by the PKK. However, it is important to remember briefly that in March

1993 with the mediation of Jalal Talabani the famous Kurdish guerrilla leader in Bashur and then the president of Iraq negotiated the first ceasefire with Öcalan and Özal. A second ceasefire followed in 1995 and third one in 1998 starting a series of negotiations with the Turkish state (Gunter: 2014 pp.62). This was due to two main factors: the first one was the local, regional and international pressure on the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan because he had organised a strong guerrilla movement against a NATO member. The second factor was that Turkey was in a deep political, social and diplomatic crisis and could not destroy the PKK led guerrilla movement. In order to come out of the crisis, president Özal went as far as to propose a federal solution for the Kurdish question in Turkey (Ibid: 2014, pp.62).

After three ceasefires and three attempts for peaceful solution, NATO and Turkey forced the Syrian authorities to extradite Öcalan, who was forced to leave Syria where he had been in exile. Abdullah Öcalan chose to move to Europe to look for support for a democratic and peaceful solution instead of moving to the mountains of Kurdistan. Eventually he was handed over to the Turkish authorities and he is still in a solitary confinement prison on the Turkish island of Imrali, due to the influence he had on the Kurdish struggle for recognition of the national and political rights of Kurdish people not only in Bakur Kurdistan, but also in the other three parts and among the Kurdish diasporas in the world.

Despite of his long imprisonment, in 2013 Öcalan was among the one hundred most influential political leaders of the world according to Time Magazine. In an article by Gerry Adams, the president of the Sinn Fein and deputy Prime minister of Northern Ireland, the role of Abdullah Öcalan was compared with Nelson Mandela for its contribution toward a peaceful democratic solution of the Kurdish question in the Middle East (Time:18/4/2013).

The PKK's continued political, military and diplomatic activities, together with the struggle carried out by PKK members and activists imprisoned in Turkish prisons where hunger strikes that lasted more than sixty days in the last quarter of 2012, pushed the AKP government to gain local, presidential and general elections, and resulted in the start of a new dialogue process between the leader of the PKK and the Turkish State. The AKP government attempted as if Abdullah Öcalan has been recognized as the only interlocutor in order to start a new 'peace process/solution process'. The AKP by this attempt tried to gain more votes among communities in Bakur Kurdistan (Gunter: 2014, pp.68).

This new 'peace process/solution' happened after the TAF – Turkish Armed Forces – with the support of the NATO, failed to overcome to the PKK's guerrilla war, which had continued for more than thirty consecutive years. The PKK led guerrilla war was under the control of the armed wing of the HRK – *Hêzên Rizgarîya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Liberation Forces from 1982 to 1986, the ARGK – *Arteşa Rizgarîya Gelê Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Peoples' Liberation Army from 1986 to 2000 and the HPG – *Hêzên Parastina Gel* – the Kurdistan Peoples' Defence Forces from 2000 until now. The chaotic situation was that the TAF could not defeat the PKK in spite of having the full support of the NATO and extremely advanced technology. However, at the same time the PKK was unable to liberate the free zone from the TAF; a stalemate situation still was and is in place.

The latest attempt toward a 'peace process/solution process' was a declaration on 21st of March 2013 on the occasion of *Newroz* – the Kurdish New Year – in Amed (in Turkish Diyarbakir), the unofficial capital city of Bakur Kurdistan. Two MPs from the BDP – *Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi* – Peace and Democracy Party Pervin Buldan and Sirri Sureyya Onder acted as mediators between Turkish State, and the PKK to read the message of Öcalan for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish Question. They read the message directed to the PKK and

the Turkish State in front of more than two million people first in Kurdish and then in Turkish asking to silent the guns and come to a compromise for a peaceful solution. This event was broadcasted live by most of Kurdish, Turkish and international media. In his message the leader of the PKK declared that honourable peace could be achieved “if we read the political reality and the spirit of our time, otherwise we would be in the dustbin of the history”. He went on: “Today a new era has begun, the period of armed struggle is ending, and the door is opening to democratic politics. We are at the beginning of a new process focused on political, social and economic aspects; an understanding based on democratic rights, freedoms, and equality is growing” (Öcalan’s 2013 Newroz Declaration in Amed on 21st March 2013).

It is very interesting to notice that the PKK, still under the leadership of Öcalan, has changed its position considerably from 1999, the same year in which the PKK’s leader was abducted from Nairobi and incarcerated in Turkey. Following a very controversial step, Öcalan brought into practice his ideological stance of the 1990s, and his party followed him. He moved from the original Marxist-Leninist position to a democratic socialism, in an attempt to explain, or for some, justify, his exit from the Soviet Union’s Real Socialist ideology. To the ones who accuse him and his party of still living in the past, in 1998 he replies:

‘This is just propaganda. It is not possible for us to be communists. Why the Soviet Union collapsed and the United States has not? It is because the communism made the government everything, but human being nothing. The United States represents development (Gunter: 1998: 82).

However, it is important to remember that the position of the party started to change even further before Öcalan’s abduction in 1999 and even before 1998 when he released this statement. This is so true that in the 1995 congress the party decides for the removal of the

hammer and sickle from the PKK's flag, a trend in tune with other European communist parties that had to deal with the harsh reality of the collapse of the Soviet Union and of the communist dream. It is in this context that the various cease-fires mentioned earlier have to be interpreted as the PKK aiming to reform and to have a compromised peaceful settlement with the Turkish state to have a democratic solution to the Kurdish question. The new PKK does not aim to change the society according to a Marxist-Leninist ideology as it was practicing during the Cold war era. As a consequence, Öcalan and the party abandoned the founding idea of an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan through the prolonged popular war strategy. Now in 1999, it is very important to recognise that beside the armed struggle it is possible to act in a democratic way if the channels are open. Öcalan himself admits this with the following words:

We are not demanding an immediate separation from Turkey. We are realistic on this subject. Do not interpret this [cease-fire] as a simple tactic [serving a hidden agenda]. Those who understand the historic, political and economic situation of [the Kurds and Turks] know well that separation could not take place. They are intertwined like flesh and bone (Öcalan 1999: pp. 7).

It is common knowledge what happened in the world from 1989 onwards, which was the failure of the Soviet Union and its proposed socialist system. However, it is important to establish some correspondence with the Kurdish question not only in Turkey but also in the other parts of Kurdistan. In particular, as stated earlier, this study will focus on the PKK's reformation during the collapse of Soviet Union and its transformation after its leader's abduction and its influence on the other parts of Kurdistan.

Kurdish political parties played a very influential role in Kurdish political, cultural and social development during the last century. The KDP-Iran – *Hizb i Demokrata Kurdistan a Iran* – Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran that is the mother party for the KDP-Iraq – *Partiya Demokrata Kurdistan'a Iraq* – Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iraq until 1958 when Mustafa

Barzani returned from the Soviet Union. From 1958 onwards the KDP-Iraq became dominant and led all KDPs in four parts of Kurdistan. The KDP-Syria – *Partiya Demokrata Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Democratic Party-Syria was established in 1957, and in the following years the KDP-Turkey – *Partiya Demokrata Kurdistan'a Turkey* – Kurdistan Democratic Party-Turkey was established in 1965. All the KDP's in their party programme were aiming for autonomy for Kurdistan and they were the dominant hegemonic nationalist parties in four parts of Kurdistan up to 1975, when the KDP-Iraq led Kurdistan liberation movement collapsed.

The First and Second Gulf Wars created an opportunity for Rojhilat and Bashur Kurdistan, because of the long destructive war between Iran and Iraq, if the KDP-Iran and KDP-Iraq had used the opportunities for the benefit of their people. However, neither of them took those opportunities and both failed. Both KDPs instead of acting together, fought each other and lost those opportunities and both became immigrant parties. The KDP-Iran was in Baghdad and the KDP-Iraq was with Tehran. The First Gulf War, which was started by Iraq against Iran, produced nothing more than the genocide campaign of Anfal in Bashur. The Second Gulf War was again started by Iraq against Kuwait and this time was responded by the international coalition, and caused the international coalition's Humanitarian Intervention in Bashur Kurdistan. By Humanitarian Intervention a new political situation came into existence after the First and Second World Wars in the Middle East. WWI produced the Turkish republic, WWII produced Israel. The Second Gulf war coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and produced a Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria saw the KRG as future base of a greater Kurdistan, and as playing a similar role to Israel. Humanitarian Intervention brought international protection for Bashur Kurdistan and it became a Safe Haven as No-Fly Zone.

The national strategic goal of most of the Kurdish political parties in Bashur was autonomy. Humanitarian Intervention created a free political environment and they replaced demands for autonomy with federalism. Following the establishment of a federal structure (KRG) in Bashur in 1992, PDK-Iraq removed the suffix of Iraq from its name, calling itself KDP or PDK. In this thesis it will be referred to as KDP-Iraq, in order to avoid confusions, and also due to recent preparations of a national referendum for independence in Bashur Kurdistan.

Since its emergence, the PKK has become the main rival party to the KDP-Iraq. Both parties are having massive impact, influence, and interactions with all parts of Kurdistan as main rival parties. The Kurdistan Democratic Party KDP-Iran in Rojhilat Kurdistan founded during the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad in 1946 and the PUK – *Yekîti Nîştîmanî Kurdistan* – Patriotic Union of Kurdistan founded in 1975, have both played a very significant role in the evolution of national consciousness in Kurdistan. In addition, the Gorran movement recently separated from the PUK has gained a significant voice in becoming a major civil and political force in Bashur Kurdistan. In all the four parts of Kurdistan there are also Islamic Kurdish nationalist parties as well as Communist, Socialist and Liberal ones participating in the struggle. All national and patriotic organisations small or large are important elements of the KNLM.

By focusing on the radical emergence, reformation and transformation of the PKK, this thesis does not intend to ignore the contribution of the KDPs, the PUK and other parties that have struggled from 20th century, and which have lead to the formation of the national liberation movements and its development in Bashur and in other parts. Since September 1961, the armed struggle against Baghdad had gained support from all the other parts of Kurdistan from all stratum of Kurdish society and had played a significant role in the

evolution of national consciousness (while the people from all strata of the society were supporting this policy, however, the leadership of the movement failed to take advantage of this support). Although the KDP-Iraq was founded as a branch of the KDP-Iran, after the failure of the Republic of Kurdistan in Mahabad, the KDP-Iraq took the initiative to lead the political and national movement in the Bashur mainly in Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Hewler and Baghdad. In all the four parts of Kurdistan the KDPs were active under the leadership of Molla Mustafa Barzani until the 1975's failed uprising. The agreement between Iraq and Iran in 1975 in Algiers meant the failure of the revolution and the fragmentation of Kurdistan autonomy dreams. The KDP-Iraq leaders chose to live in Iran and some party leaders moved to Europe and America, the party leadership stayed in Tehran and Karaj cities of Iran. Later the KDP reorganised itself in the Zagros Mountains of Bakur Kurdistan mainly on the border areas. Most of the nationalist political organisations in the four parts of Kurdistan, with the exception of the PKK, derive from this fracture of the KDP's tradition that started in Mahabad in Rojhilat Kurdistan.

The image of Öcalan as the most radical Kurdish leader handcuffed and blindfolded between two Turkish flags, and his imprisonment, caused a national humiliation and dehumanization of the Kurds. Large groups of literate and illiterate Kurdish youths from all parts of Kurdistan joined the PKK to become guerrillas. The humiliation of Öcalan was seen as humiliation of Kurds and Kurdistan from both home and the Diaspora. That massive participation encouraged the organisation to decentralise the PKK by creating multiple organisations for the other three parts of Kurdistan too. At that point, the establishment of the PJAK – *Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistan* – The Kurdistan Free Life Party in 2000s by Rojhilat Kurdistan youths and intellectuals; the PYD – *Partiya Yekitiya Demokratik* – The Democratic Union Party in 2003 by Rojava Kurdistan youths and intellectuals; and the PÇDK – *Partiya Çareseriya Demokratika Kurdistan* – the Kurdistan Democratic Solution

Party in 2002 by Bashur Kurdistan's youths and intellectuals were born. (In 2015 the PÇDK dissolved and joined Tevgera Azadi – *Tevgera Azadi û Demokrasiya Komelgayî Kurdistan*). They were all founded based on Öcalan philosophy and leadership. The PKK, PJAK, PYD and PÇDK became autonomous four parties in four parts of Kurdistan under the umbrella organisation of the KCK – *Koma Civakên Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Communities Union.

The PKK's national liberation strategy for an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan in the long run was an open invitation for magnifying young educated and energetic revolutionary Kurdistan people's support from everywhere in Kurdistan regardless of international borders. Those Kurdish political parties who did support autonomy goal were blamed by the PKK as not patriotic enough, because the autonomy would not be satisfying national demands of a nation. This ideological stand of the PKK continued from 1973 to 2000. National liberation aiming towards an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan was the main focus of the PKK and it was the main bold line between the PKK and the other Kurdish parties. An overwhelming majority of people participated in the PKK struggle and lost their lives fought for National Self-Determination and an Independent, United Democratic Kurdistan, nothing less.

All Kurdish political parties have played significant roles in spreading the national consciousness and awareness of the Kurdish cause among Kurdish people all over the world. However, none of them had the activity and discipline to organise and mobilise strong political, cultural and social activities as the PKK did locally, regionally, and internationally. For example the KDP-Iraq since 1946 has been active in Bashur Kurdistan and led by its honorary leaders late Mustafa Barzani, Ibrahim Ahmed, Jalal Talabani, Mahmoud Osman, Sami Abdurrahman and Massoud Barzani. The KDP-Iraq was fractioned into different groups and none of them have been successfully mobilized; they failed to organize the Kurds

in the Diaspora and bring them towards national unity, and politically and culturally engage with national associations. However, the PKK did work hard and amongst the Kurdish Diaspora in Europe since 1978 onwards, has opened associations in almost all European countries for Kurds to help each other and create their national unity and national knowledge.

Why This Study?

The PKK emerged as the most radical-revolutionary national liberation movement in Kurdistan aimed at fighting for National Self-Determination and an Independent, United and Democratic State of Kurdistan. This idea became the principle of its foundation. The ideological framework gained support based on those principles in a short time, and the PKK was able to mobilize hundreds of thousands of Kurds. Later, the PKK transformed its National liberation strategy into Democratic Liberation, leaving behind its aims of creating a Kurdish nation-state and liberation of Kurdistan. This transformation is at the core of this study. While the PKK was leaving its founding strategy on National Liberation, in the Balkans and former Soviet Union neighbouring countries, tens of new independent states came into existence. If Kurdistan was not divided into four parts and in each part an extermination, annihilation and assimilation policy was not in force and Kurdish nation was not denied an existence, neither a political party such as the PKK would have come to existence nor the Kurdish mass mobilisation would have had supported it. The Kurdish question remained unsolved; the fundamental reasons that had caused the emergence of the PKK were still there, so why did that paradigm change happen? How much of those paradigm changes were related to the evolution of Öcalan's thoughts, and how much of those changes were accelerated by period of his imprisonment? At the end, after examining the formation, reformation and transformation of the PKK, the transformation and paradigm change of the PKK will be analysed. Although research into the PKK's transformation is in increase around the world, this study differs in that it argues the PKK should not and did not

have to drop its fundamental national right to self-determination of a nation and propose its strategic goal to Turkey's democratisation. Such a movement with those fundamental strategic goals that mobilised millions of Kurds both at home and Diasporas politically and nationally was wrong to drop the nation liberation goal, and the status quo will necessarily force it into retransformation process.

Roger Brubaker states that Europe was the birthplace of the nation-state and nationalism at the end of eighteenth century, and it was supposed to be their graveyard at the end of twentieth (Brubaker 1996: 1). Nationalism as an ideology of nations caused fragmentation and division of Europe into small territorial entities, particularly after eighty years of destructive wars. The Westphalia peace treaty of 1648 brought European powers into a stable peaceful coexistence recognizing national sovereignty of nations. It ended the conflicts and wars; it caused economic, social, cultural and political prosperous development. These developments had resulted in the birth of nation-states at the end of eighteenth century. Although the two World Wars were the results of the struggle for hegemony between the European sovereign nation-states, the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 presented to the European nations an era of supranational organisation and removal of the nation-states boundaries. It was also assumed that the era of nationalism and nation-states was coming to an end (Ibid: pp. 2).

From 1917 to 1991 in a substantial part of the world a new system of government came into existence. It was implementing a socialist political economy and claimed that moving towards a communist system led by the Soviet Union and will ultimately aim to a free and democratic society, which would not need a state any more. It looked unquestionable that even the era of the state and nation-state has ended and there was no need for the state apparatus, that people could run all the affairs by themselves by their rural and urban

councillors. However, not long after the Maastricht treaty the Soviet Union collapsed, the so-called communist system ended, and fifteen new nation-states declared their independence. East and West Germany were unified; Czechoslovakia was separated into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, while Yugoslavia was divided into ten new nation-states. Those events were simply proving that after almost seventy years of ruling socialist system not only could not weaken the nationalist sentiments, but even they became stronger and powerful forces in all the so-called Soviet Union and Socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

The concept of nation and nationalism proved to be a powerful paradigm not only in the socialist countries but also even in the most developed capitalist countries too. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in the UK, the Bask in Spain and France, and Catalonia in Spain constitute still unresolved national questions in Europe and similar situations continue to exist in Asia, Africa and more importantly in the Middle East.

Another surprising example is Switzerland with four different official languages and nations living side-by-side in a democratic country under the banner of a supra-national extraordinary confederalist democratic system. The PKK leader in its second manifestation of the paradigm change takes Switzerland as a unique example for democratic civilization and democratic confederalism. Abdullah Öcalan also gives examples of the UK and Spain as the triumph of democracy. The PKK leader at the Imrali prison from February 1999 onwards, tried to convince his party and the Turkish state to take the examples of the EU countries especially the UK, Spain and Switzerland as the examples of Democratic Civilisation, to compromise on democratic principles rather than nationalist nation-state's ideological ambitions. His party followed his transformative guidelines and was keen to compromise on democratic principles for the sake of peace, which resulted in the longest ceasefire from 1st September 1999 to 1st June 2004.

The Kurds as the largest nation without a state of its own had to fight against four different nation-states who are trying to assimilate them by force. Kurdish nationalism as a reaction in its search for recognition can be traced back to Sheikh Ubaydullah at the end of nineteenth century. Sheikh Ubaydullah in his famous letter to the British King through William Abbott, the British Consul-General, in Tabriz in 1880 says:

The Kurdish nation ... is a people apart. Their religion is different [from that of others], and their laws and customs are distinct ... the Chief and Rulers of Kurdistan, whether Turkish or Persian subjects, and the inhabitants of Kurdistan, one and all are united and agreed that matters cannot be carried on in this way with the two Governments [Ottoman and Qajar], and necessarily something must be done, so that European Governments having understood the matter, shall inquire into our state. We also are a nation apart. We want our affairs to be in our own hands (McDowall 2000: 53).

The reactionary nature of Kurdish self-rule against Ottoman and Qajar-Persian nationalism has continued consistently from 1806 up to the declaration of the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad in 1946. After the failure of the republic, the evolution of Kurdish nationalist politics shifted from Rojhilat Kurdistan to Bashur Kurdistan and continued under the leadership of KDP-Iraq in almost two decades from 1958 to 1975, dominating all parts of Kurdistan. The Kurds from other three parts of Kurdistan helped in any way they could. The KDP-Iraq had better situation than the previous rebellions, because almost five hundred Peshmerga with Mustafa Barzani spent their life in Soviet Union for eleven years. They were also supported by the Iraqi government of the time, as well as by the Soviet Union, when Mustafa Barzani returned to Baghdad with his Peshmergas officially in 1958.

The idea that Kurdistan had to be a separate nation was not promoted for the first time by *Azadi*, *Xoybun*, KDP-Iran, KDP-Iraq PUK or the PKK, but by Sheikh Ubaydullah whose aim was the unification of the two parts of Kurdistan at that time divided between the Ottoman Empire and Safavids. Although during the leadership of Sheikh Ubaydullah there was not a significant educated intellectual stratum available to help him in the modern sense,

Sheikh himself had the vision to ask the Western world through the British Empire the recognition and protection of the emergent Kurdish national demands. Despite the failure of Sheikh Ubaydullah's rebellion, this idea was evolved and maintained alive since the beginning of nineteenth, and the whole of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The nascent roots of Kurdish nationalism can be also traced from Sheikh Ubaydullah to the Baban rebellion in 1806; this rebellion was a reaction to the centralization of the Ottoman Empire, (Mir Mohammed Rawanduz in 1815-35, Badirkhan Beg Botan and Yazdan Şêr in 1835-55, Sheikh Ubaydullah in 1879-81). Throughout the twentieth century, twenty-eight rebellions took place in support of an independent identity and an independent Kurdistan only in Bakur Kurdistan. The KDP-Iran was in 1946 and after the KDP-Iraq, the PUK from 1975, and PKK since 1973 have all continuously fought for Kurdistan's autonomy, federalism and independence, applying a modern form of nationalism. All Kurdish political parties in all parts of Kurdistan were in their battlefield representing a national reactionary resistance against the regional and international colonial powers, the results were dramatic failures of all resistances and uprisings. This study will also fill the gap and the knowledge of the impact that Kurdish political parties, in particular the PKK had in the formation of a resistant and freedom oriented towards Kurdish national identity to be able to reform and transform itself if the conditions were changed in a specific situation.

The struggle for dominance continued at a micro level between the PKK and its sister parties such as the PJAK, PÇDK and PYD in Rojhilat, Rojava, Bashur and Bakur Kurdistan, with the KDP and the PUK oriented parties and organisation moving from a violent to a non-violent stance. At the macro level the struggle of all Kurdistanian parties is moving towards unity against the states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. At the micro level the KDP-Iran and KDP-Iraq, the KDP-Iraq and PUK, the PKK and KDP-Iraq and the PKK with the PUK have

had internal strives and challenges. While the gap between all Kurdish political parties in 1970s, 80s, 90s and even 2000 was wide to internal strives, in 2013 when the so-called peace process started in Bakur between the Turkish state and the PKK, it seemed they were coming together in the reading of the spirit of the time at a macro level unity. Any macro level alliance of Kurdish political parties of four parts of Kurdistan would be the alliance of two paradigms: on the right side of the spectrum all the KDPs and Kurdish Sunni oriented parties and on the left side of the spectrum the PKK, PUK, Gorran with Shiite and Yezidi oriented Kurdish political parties. These two paradigms are in the struggle for hegemony and dominance of the KNLM.

The struggle of the two paradigms is on the base of their class composition in ideological level in the paradigm of primordialist, ethno-symbolist and modernist. This has become a struggle for dominance between Kurdish political parties because of the liberation of a nation without a state. They all desired to have their own Kurdish nation-state. However, the two strong states of Iran and Turkey are strictly against such an idea and have prevented and would prevent in the future whatever the cost would be. Despite their ideological, political and territorial differences, would these two paradigms of the KNLM ultimately be joining together at one junction at a near future, or would their struggle be widened and deepened in all spheres of socio-politics in Kurdistan?

If the transformation of the PKK is considered from the ideological point of view of its founding principles, it could be considered as a sign of weakness and surrender to the Turkish State. However, from a broader concept, creating strong links between the peoples of the region on the base of aiming egalitarian, equal, just and democratic confederations, which would make the traditional nation-states' in Kurdistan as well as in the wider Middle East dysfunctional, it could be a positive change. This concept of transformation of the PKK is in

implementation in Rojava Kurdistan. If it is successful in terms of self-governance and constitutionally recognition in Syria, then this success might have an enormous impact in the Middle East in terms of Democratic Confederalism. If after all of the possible options it fails to guarantee constitutional status, then the failure could possibly open up the gate of endless ethnic and sectarian conflicts.

The PKK from its formation to its reformation has progressed significantly and has organised, mobilized and revolutionized the people not only in Bakur but also in Rojava, Bashur and Rojhilat to some degree, because of its national strategy and standing for an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan state. It has become a major factor in all four parts of Kurdistan in Bakur and Rojava where it is the hegemonic and dominant actor, in Rojhilat to a convincing degree, while in Bashur is in alliance with the PUK, Gorran and Tevgera Azadi. While the PKK is trying to bring most of the political actors in all parts of Kurdistan, the KDP-Iraq still insists on its nation-state paradigm and challenging the PKK, PUK and Gorran to join in a wider Kurdistan National Congress for all Kurdistan people in the world. The concept of Kurdistan National Congress itself is a fundamental strategic goal of the national liberation paradigm.

Research Questions

The main research question of this thesis is, what reasons caused the PKK to change its paradigm from National Liberation (Via Armed Struggle, Guerrilla War to liberate Kurdistan and establish a Kurdish nation state) to Democratic Liberation (Via Non-Violent, Civil Disobediences and democratic political parliamentary struggle to transform Turkish state to a Democratic Republic that Kurds will have their freedom of choice whether to live in a unitary state or ask for self-determination). National Liberation strategy was based on liberating

Kurdistan from yoke of Turkish state colonialism through a prolonged popular armed resistance, whereas Democratic Liberation is totally based on non-violent democratic political parliamentary elections under the unitary of Turkish constitutional law, which denies any other ethnic entities other than Turks. The thesis will investigate internal and external factors; Abdullah Öcalan's thought process during his imprisonment, and the readings and reasons for the transformation and paradigm change of the PKK. In order to get an in depth answer to the main research question, this thesis requires many subsequent and dependent questions. For example, how did the PKK move away from the armed struggle to adopt a non-violent democratic political one? Will it be possible to implement it, while the Turkish state's Turkification and denial policies continue? Why did the PKK shift its strategy from an independent, united, and democratic Kurdistan to federalism, then to democratic autonomy, and recently envisage democratization and decentralization in Turkey, Iran and Syria? Is it the struggle of the PKK the result of different branches of nationalism through Primordialist, Ethno-symbolist and Modernist paradigm, or beyond nationalism? Are the PKK and the other political parties despite their ideological, political, sociological, and territorial differences aiming the same objectives, or does the gap between the two trajectories expand? To what extent has the PKK's strategic transformation caused other Kurdish political parties to turn their national strategy from autonomy to federalism, in particular after the fall of Saddam Hussein? And why did federalism fail to work in the Kurdish region to such an extent that it is now heading towards independence?

Ontology

Unlike the dominant rationale and logic in the discipline of Politics and International Relations, which has mostly considered Kurdistan as a part of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria⁴,

⁴ In addition to the four main parts of Kurdistan as the mainland, there are in Armenia hundreds of villages of non-Muslim Yezidi Kurds and Muslim Kurds. In between Armenia and Azerbaijan from 1917 to 1930 there was a Kurdistan region named Red

this research considers Kurdistan as an independent reality. It is the result of the division, partition, and sharing that occurred after the WWI, which divided the world on the basis of the geo-political and geo-strategic interests of the imperial powers. Particularly, the region of the Middle East is the home of the most complex conflicts of the world was divided and partitioned by those imperial powers with the creation of nation-states. This caused endless wars between the ethnic and religious realities in the region, Kurdistan as a part of this region and as the result of those policies of division, is the real picture of the reality of the Middle East.

As such, this inquiry is focused on understanding the depth of this reality, and it concerns its independent existence as the nature and the structure of this object. In other words, the object of the inquiry is the PKK's paradigm change and transformation for Kurdistan as a country and the people who are living in it. Its national and political partition and denial policies of four nation-states have caused the emergence of the entity called the PKK. The actors struggling for its liberation and freedom are the component of this national liberation struggle. Ontology is the study of those actors, countries, their policies, and of what constitutes their political will and structure. In other words, the inquiry of comparative politics and ontological concern is the regional nation-states, non-state actors, events, institutions, and processes which can be observed and need an explanation. In this particular case it is important to discover what the past, present and future contributions of the PKK to the Kurdish struggle are, and what impact its ideological stances have on other similar parties

Kurdistan. After the failure of Soviet experience the Kurds from the Red Kurdistan set up their institutions, however, after the seizure of Nagorno-Karabakh region by Armenia in 1991, that corridor of Red Kurdistan now has been added to ethnic Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh region. The population of Red Kurdistan has been displaced to Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asian Republics, and European countries. In Tbilisi, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine according to unofficial sources live hundreds of thousands Kurds. In Iran since 17th century Kurds have been dispersed to the provinces of Mashhad, Qazvin, Gylan, Mazandaran Shiraz, Esfahan, and Zanjan. According to Dr. Abdurrahman Qassimlu in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India exists a substantial Kurdish community. More importantly the dispersion of Kurds to the neighboring provinces of Kayseri, Çorum, Konya, and Ankara under the policies of the Ottoman state has been dislocated from Kurdistan. In addition, after the launch of guerrilla war by the PKK against the Turkish state millions of Kurds have moved to Istanbul, Izmir, Aydin, Bursa, Gebze, Antalya, Mersin and Adana and they have lost all their properties when their villages were destroyed by the state. The Turkish army forces applied the policy 'dry the sea to destroy the fish'. Literally it meant to cut the support for the PKK guerrillas from Kurdistan's rural population. Sometimes in the academic discourse this is an issue when it is said that Kurds have been dispersed all over Turkey, hence singling out that Kurdistan is not any more a country is possible because almost half of the total Kurdish population lives in western parts of Turkey. One has to say that these people have been forced to move because their home and private properties have been destroyed by the state. All those forced to leave now are demanding to move back again to their villages and this is a much politicized population.

in the region. As ontology establishes what is knowable in context of transformation of the paradigm of the PKK.

Epistemology

Epistemology refers to how we can know the nature of knowledge or how we come to know through both a priori and posterior means of observation, sense impression, and experiences. In contrast to ontology, it concerns what political knowledge of the political world is possible and what rules of inquiry scholars follow in analysing it (Landman 2001: 16). The epistemological aim is to build up and interpret the link between the past and the present on the basis of evidence and inference about the theme and its political actors fighting for Kurdistan's independence and freedom. The available sources of knowledge and examples to acquire knowledge of this particular subject are complex. Despite the complexity of the theme of inquiry, an epistemological account is about interpretation and understanding of these events in terms of why they happened and how they happened, and the likelihood of them happening again in the future (Ibid: 16). One of the main epistemological questions of this research is how can we know what is really happened in Bakur Kurdistan and why the PKK changed its national liberation strategy and how it did it? The reason for going through this route is that the official states' ideologies have created a discourse among the Kurds themselves and their neighbours, one that is far from the reality of the situation. Indeed, those falsely created discourses need to be researched and interpreted.

However, in the long run the political parties that struggled for the liberation and freedom of Kurdistan, whether at home or in the Diaspora have to some extent produced written literature. Among the literature, the most extensive are those produced by PKK oriented organisations. They have set up publishing houses in European countries as well as in Istanbul and Diyarbakir. The knowledge produced by these organisations had a direct impact on the young generations and on their aspirations to re-own and re-gain their cultural,

national and political identity. That identity has been reflected in literature from novels to academic work. In short, epistemology as the theory of knowledge tries to find out what is knowable about the paradigm change and transformation of the PKK from national liberation to democratic liberation.

The Scope of the Thesis

The scope of this thesis is the analysis of the PKK's four stages, which define the change that took place in its national, ideological and political struggle for the right to National Self-Determination. Those changes are formation, reformation, transformation and possibly a retransformation if its Democratic Confederalism project does not succeed. As mentioned earlier, it emerged as a small radical national-democratic revolutionary group of higher education students aiming to liberate, unite and democratise colonised Kurdistan and at redrawing its borders with Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. This was with the goal that a state of Kurdistan would be established at the end. It started its struggle from Bakur, and then moved to Rojava, Bashur and Rojhilat as well. Today wherever Kurds are, the PKK is there and organised. The scope of thesis is from emergence of the PKK in 1973 until the end of 2016.

In the four parts of Kurdistan there are many large and small, weak and strong, conservative and liberal, communist, socialist and Islamic political parties, and they have struggled hard and interacted continuously to be the dominant actors since the 1980s. The KDP from its formation since 1946 to 1975 was the only strongest political entity in the four parts of Kurdistan, but after the 1975's failure it lost its significance. In July 1975, the fraction separated from the KDP in Damascus and formed a new competitive political organisation called *Yekîti Nîştîmanî Kurdistan* (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan-PUK). The PUK was an insider to the KDP, and some of the central committee members of the KDP joined

the new organisation. The PUK challenged the KDP ideologically, politically and territorially (Vanly 1993: pp. 140-180). The KDP from 1958 to 1975 was not only the predominant actor of Kurdish nationalism inside of Bashur Kurdistan, but it was also the only actor in the regional and international level as well. Although the KDP had always being ruled by the Barzani family at the highest level, the participation of Kurdistani urban intelligentsia was at a significant level too (Stansfield 2010: pp. 132-33). The hard struggle for dominance was initially inside of Bashur Kurdistan between the KDP and PUK, and then reached over all of the other three parts of Kurdistan too.

The struggle for hegemony and dominance of Kurdistan National Liberation Movement became more complicated when the PKK emerged and slowly this rivalry shifted between the PKK and KDP as the struggle between two trajectories/paradigms. Particularly, up until the PKK changed its paradigm in 1999, the rivalry was in the form of a war and since then it is in the form of ideological war but not in the highest-level. How are their social, cultural, political formation and roots related to the presentation of nationalism in Kurdistan? What are their goals for the Kurdish nation, Kurdistan, in the short and long run? Does this political and national movement project independence in the long run? If so, how and why do they aim for independence? If not, why? What has caused it to change or shift from one assumed solution to an opposite one? Has there been any good will for the solution of any of the states of Turkey, Iraq, Iran or Syria? Why has the PKK suddenly put the discourse on the table to discuss the issues that we have been living together with Turks for a thousand years? Will it be possible to think that Turkey will accept the Kurds as partners? Did the PKK take the right decision to drop off independence from its manifest? How was it interpreted when it removed independence from its party constitution?

The PKK emerged in a real difficult period of history, with a prime objective to discuss and strategically highlight the need for an independent united and democratic Kurdistan, while most of the other Kurdish political parties were against it based on reasons that such a goal would be unachievable,.. The reason was that the struggle in Bashur Kurdistan was aiming towards the formation of a democratic Iraq and an autonomous Kurdistan region. Therefore, the political dominant idea was following the same pattern offered by the formation of an autonomous region in Iraq as an example for Bashur Kurdistan in all other parts of Kurdistan. According to many different sources, participation in all levels from all parts of Kurdistan to the revolution led by KDP under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani was very high. Not only people who participated voluntarily and sacrificed their life, but also from an economic perspective, they offered whatever they had in support of the uprising in Bashur. People were also participating all along the borders in Bakur Kurdistan. Similar examples came from Rojhilat and Rojava Kurdistan as well. Everybody did something according to their ability and their economic position. People from all walk of life and many Kurdish intellectuals have shared and felt the pain and sufferings of Bashur brothers; hence their physical participation with resources. However, the outcome of that huge participation was a dramatic failure.

Those patriots and intellectuals from Bakur and Rojhilat have participated in Bashur's struggle and deeply interacted and formed groups to start the guerrilla war in Bakur and Rojhilat Kurdistan. However, the tragedy of the KDP-Turkey leaders' trails and the KDP-Iran leaders' handover to the Shah regime of Iran by the KDP-Iraq leadership was a strategic failure of the KDP-Iraq in relation to Bakur and Rojhilat. If they had been allowed to spread-out the guerrilla war in Bakur and Rojhilat by the KDP-Iraq and Mustafa Barzani, would the Bashur liberation movement have had failed in 1975? A similar situation happened to the KDP-Iran in Rojhilat Kurdistan between 1979 and 1983, too.

Today, the second decade of 21st century, the components of Kurdistan National Liberation Movement has become significant actors at the internal, regional and international level. At the beginning of the twentieth century there was a very weak and loose national feeling with no well-organised political leadership. However, today significant changes are taking place; the Middle East is in the process of transformation, the process of democratic reforms has started, and brutal autocratic dictatorship are one by one leaving the stage. Bashur Kurdistan despite all difficulties is paving the road towards independence, Rojava Kurdistan's political and military actors are in the evolution process, the Kurdistani forces are in a close relationship to them, and they are controlling most of Rojava Kurdistan's geography. Rojhilat Kurdistan and Islamic Republic of Iran are in a critical situation, the US and Israel are making plans for a strike; Bakur Kurdistan in its consistent continued 5th decade of the political, ethno-national civil strife and high-intensive guerrilla war, and today has proved its strength that the Turkish State is searching for ways to negotiate and resolve the Kurdish question.

From 2010, the so-called Arab Spring started in Tunisia and spread out to North Africa and the Middle East. The dominant autocratic and totalitarian regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen collapsed, and when the change wind arrived in Syria the worst civil war emerged. Turkey supported Al-Qaida related Islamists and Muslim Brotherhood organisations to prevent Rojava Kurdistan from gaining its legal legitimate status. However, Rojava Kurdistan's political parties chose to support a peaceful transformation and avoided their cities and towns from being destroyed in the battlefields. All the political parties in Rojava Kurdistan joined one of the two councils; the ENKS Syrian Kurdish National Council – *Encumena Niştimanîya Kurdên Syria* – and the MGRK Peoples Council of Western Kurdistan – *Encumena Gelê Rojavayê Kurdistan*. The ENKS was supported by the KDP and PUK, while the MGRK was supported by the PKK. Despite the political differences, the

PKK, KDP and PUK at least had a compromise and brought both fronts into one mechanism that is called the DBK – *Desteya Dilinda Kurdî* – Supreme Kurdish Committee, which was not allowed to function because of the Turkish state's intervention.

At least in the contemporary Kurdish history the repeated internal civil strife between the predominant parties has been prevented by the Kurds of Rojava Kurdistan. The political parties in Rojava are in the process of proving that they have learned lessons from their brothers' failures in the past, and also in the contemporary political events in Bashur Kurdistan between the KDP and PUK, and between the PKK and KDP. The Kurds lost the opportunities in 19th and 20th centuries, because of their internal challenges and internal fights. The 21st century has been entitled a 'Kurdish century' by many, if Kurdish political parties are united in a democratic national congress. The transformation and paradigm change of the PKK will be studied in the mentioned period of 1973 to 2016.

Outline of the Thesis

The first chapter has been an explanation of why this research has been conducted; it has compared previous ontological –the study of being, in other words Kurdistan and the PKK - and epistemological - the theory of knowledge, and how the PKK's transformation became knowable - explanations, according to which the territory called Kurdistan is an internationally unrecognized country. The previous theories and concepts can be used to explain the role of the different actors. However, it is the concept of stateless nation and nationalism in Kurdistan, which has evolved and moved towards becoming a social movement. One of the differences of this research is identifying that ethnic-state nationalism of Turkey and religious-state nationalism of Iran and their established institutionalization over the long run in history became the elements, which have strongly prevented the emergence of an independent Kurdish nation-state and. The ethnic and religious nationalism

of these two countries not only have been sponsored at the state level, but it has been deeply embedded in the society by direct state policies, based both on Turkish and Persian nationalisms. Hence, ethnic and religious nationalism in Iraq and Syria, in comparison to Turkish and Iran, does not have that historical established institutionalized character and has a weak social support base, because the states of Iraq and Syria are just recent mandates of Britain and France.

Chapter two focuses on the definition of the nation from Anthony Smith and national identity and nationalism. These three concepts have caused the birth of national liberation movements. Inequality and oppression by a state on other ethnic and national components has produced primordialist, ethno-symbolist modernist nationalist sentiments. Particularly, the contemporary literature after the 1975 failure in Bashur Kurdistan has caused the formation of the pluralistic political environment, and many new political entities in all parts of Kurdistan emerged. A comparative analysis of this pluralist political environment through the reading of internal and external knowledge/literature will support the analysis of how nationalism reflected and shaped the political ideological and philosophical foundation of the contemporary political revolutionary discourse in Bakur Kurdistan, and from the other three parts of Kurdistan, too.

Chapter three explores the evolution of Kurdish nationalism and the radical emergence of the PKK. It considers the short historical background and the emergence of political parties in Kurdistan, and how they reacted in the geo-strategic and geo-political nature of Kurdistan. As a trans-state or inter-state and inter-national question, issue or problem, it has inevitably caused the actors acting for its self-determination to have the same characteristics. This dialectical phenomenon resulted in the actions, reactions and interactions not only among the hegemonic states but also between Kurdistani political actors too. It elaborates the British, French, Russia, Iran and Turkish post-WWI policies towards the independence of

Kurdistan and their impacts and influences on political actors of Kurdistan. One of the most significant causes of the PKK's paradigm change was the multiple regional and global players' dealing with the Kurdish question. In general, the chapter deals with the definition of the Kurdistan question, taking into account political actors, the KDP's domination Kurdistan National Liberation Movement and the way these actors dealt with the two Super Powers of the Cold War in the last twenty years. The charismatic leadership of the KDP and its influence on all Kurdistani people as an unrivalled actor had an impact on the social, cultural and political life from 1914 to 1975. The focus is specifically on the six political journeys of the Barzani family and their significant role in the ranks of the KDP. Mustafa Barzani as the leader of the most oppressed nation, devoted his life for the liberation and freedom of Kurdistan, started his journey from Barzan to Bitlis in the early ages as a messenger, then again from Barzan to Erzincan, where he was exiled to southern Iraq, then to Suliamania, before he escaped to Barzan during the WWII. The chapter will talk about his participation in the formation of the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad, his exile in the Soviet Union in 1958 and his return to Iraq in 1961 where he restarted a war, which had failed in 1975, until his tragic death in March 1979 in the US. The KDP, under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani negotiated with almost all the relevant actors of the Kurdish question. The KDP's national strategy from reformation to revolution and the tragic failure of 1975 caused a pluralist political environment, particularly in Bakur Kurdistan; the emergence of the PKK and reformulation of a national liberation strategy, the divorce of the Kurdish left from the Turkish, ideological confrontation with the KDP oriented nationalism, and finally the PKK's next wave of change to a broader platform from Ankara to Bakur Kurdistan.

Chapter four focuses on the radical national and political strategy of the PKK. The PKK unlike the all other Kurdistani political parties does not have an organic primordial root from traditional Kurdish nationalism. On the contrary, as a political-national actor, it was

formed in the network of undergraduate university students in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. How a group of young energetic students highly influenced by the Leftist Revolutionists formed their ideological and political network in Ankara and started to disseminate their political views in the Bakur Kurdistan provinces constitutes a great historical event in Kurdish history. How did they challenge the political environment of the Bakur Kurdistan provinces, which were already occupied by other Kurdish political groups? How did they open a way for their arguments? Even if they started their activity in 1973, it was from 1978 to September 1980 that this ideological group became a party and it was in the process of promoting a guerrilla war, which prevented by the 12 September 1980 coup d'état. The raids of the army weakened the PKK, thousands of its supporters were imprisoned, hundreds of the active members were killed and few hundred managed to leave the country. The chapter will analyse how the PKK managed to return and start a guerrilla war, and continued to challenge the KDP-Iraq, which was an established party with a great political and diplomatic experience, but was also a hegemonic dominant actor in all parts especially in the Botan, Colemerg, and Mardin provinces of Bakur Kurdistan among tribal leaders. In mid 1980s the PKK insisted on leading the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement and challenged all Kurdish and Turkish political organisations in Bakur Kurdistan. The PKK had a multifaceted struggle against the state, the Kurdish informers and collaborationists, Kurdish nationalists and reformists, Turkish leftists and Turkish ultra nationalist fascist organisations. The PKK relocated its cadres in Lebanon and Syria after guerrilla trainings in order to launch a guerrilla war when the 12th coup d'état took place. Finally, it analyses how the PKK returned from Syria and Lebanon back to Kurdistan

Chapter five is concerned with how and why the PKK became the dominant hegemonic actor in Bakur and in Rojava. It explains and analyses how the PKK became a clandestine underground political party and established a guerrilla army and a popular front opening its

associations in most of the European countries and organised and mobilized Kurdish people around the world. The resistance of the PKK opened the door to legal political activities and became an interlocutor of the Turkish state announcing various ceasefires in order to solve the Kurdish question peacefully and democratically. When the state of Turkey changed its mind and showed it wanted to solve the Kurdish question peacefully and democratically the Kurdistan parliament in exile was established. When the dialogue and ceasefires started, it was the start of the PKK's reformation.

Chapter six focuses on the transformation of the PKK and investigates why the PKK needed a paradigm change. An ideological and political change and transformation was the hardest time the PKK ever faced in its history. It changed its national strategic goal of National liberation to democratic liberation. Although the PKK started some slight changes much earlier, however, the arrest of its leader was a huge blow and transformation speedup after Öcalan's imprisonment. Despite all the good will the PKK showed the Turkish state, the state did not give any concessions. The search for a political and democratic peaceful solution started to disintegrate. The chapter finally assesses the formation of the KCK and its performance in Kurdistan.

Chapter seven studies the implementation of the PKK's Democratic Confederalism project. The paradigm change of the PKK brought with itself a new terminology and new definitions, which never have been used before such as democratic republic, democratic nation, and democratic autonomy. The chapter will explore and outline this terminology within the PKK's framework. How the PKK has tried to implement its radical democracy, also known as democratic Confederalism, in civil society organisations and with decentralization and the devolution process. The chapter ends with an assessment of whether a democratic confederalism solution is possible.

Chapter eight shows the findings based on the practical implementation of the paradigm change and transformation of the PKK, and its shift towards radical democratic politics and democratic Confederalism starting from Bakur and Rojava, which has been accepted neither by Turkey nor Syria. The failed state of Syria still does not accept that the cantonal system of Rojava Kurdistan can possibly bring peace and stability. More importantly, moving towards a non-violent struggle will bring more people together and, in a more democratic environment, the political parties from the four parts of Kurdistan could work in a peaceful regional environment. This can totally change the traditional political landscape in Kurdistan and open the gate of democracy among the Kurds and their neighbours in the Middle East.

Conclusion

During the last quarter of the twentieth century - from 1970 onwards - the PKK emerged as radical movement among patriotic nationalist revolutionary leftist university students, in its ideological and theoretical discourse that defended a very unusual political tradition, which later became dominant in Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan. On the one hand the group built up its theoretical and ideological programme and its main discourse, but on the other hand, it struggled against Turkish leftist social-chauvinists and Kurdish nationalists. The Turkish state was proposing its ethno-nationalist ideology and strategy to the educated stratum of the society in Ankara the capital city of Turkey. By 1978 the PKK became one of the most influential political organizations defending Kurdistan as a classic colony. It was under the attack of Kurdish nationalist reformists, the Turkish left, the state and the Kurdish feudal tribe leaders. The PKK managed to survive from that huge attack from all sides and went a step further as an illegal political revolutionary party with the organisation of a

guerrilla army relying on the support of a wide popular front, while acting through diplomatic channels in order to communicate to the international community.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of socialist system, the PKK decided to reform its ideological, theoretical and political structure. As a revolutionary national liberation movement the PKK based its long-term strategy on three stages of the people's war concept: defence, balance and offence. However, the collapse of the Berlin Wall inaugurated a new world's political order. This had a huge impact on the PKK and called for a reform in its ideology that could not be based on the Cold War concepts any longer.

The international conspiracy, which ended with handing over the PKK leader to the Turkish State, was a devastating blow to both the PKK itself and to all Kurds around the world. It was again the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, his lifetime loyal comrades, and the PKK organization that transformed the conspiracy to an advantage to negotiate with the Turkish state saving the hopes of the Kurdish masses. This was achieved due to the organization's inheritance and its transformation into a new paradigm, but also avoiding an ethnic war between Kurds and Turks. The new paradigm transformed the goal of an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan to a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan in the format of Democratic Confederalism of Kurdistani communities. In short the PKK attempted and focused on leaving the idea of the armed struggle in order to embrace the concept and paradigm of a democratic peaceful form of struggle, if Turkey was to comply with the rules and regulations of the European Union.

Chapter 2

Theory and Methodology

Introduction

As the result of denial policies of Turkification and extermination of the Kurdish nation by the Turkish State, the national liberation discourse developed and caused Kurdish energetic university students to organise a party to defend national right to self-determination for Kurdish nation and its country Kurdistan. The paradigm change from national liberation (Armed Struggle-Guerrilla War) to democratic liberation (Non-Violent-Democratic-Political Struggle) of the PKK needs to be analysed through theoretical approaches of nation, national identity, national liberation and nationalism. The Kurdish question was seen by all Kurdish political parties including the PKK as a matter of the right to National Self-Determination. This has become an international question since the Kurds are divided into four different states. This chapter will approach this unresolved question by applying three different theories of nationalism: primordialist, ethno-symbolism, and modernist-constructivism. The formation of a nation and national identity as cultural, sociological and historical evolutionary process in the formation of nationalism as an ideology constitutes the first step towards the formation of a social movement (Smith 2001: pp. VI). This idea constituting further stage is the rationale of this research. Nationalism (in the case of an oppressed nation) does not emerge from nowhere, but from social, cultural, historical and ethnic roots. Even if such roots are fictive as Smith argues, nationalism is an ideology and a movement that must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism (Smith: 1991, p. vii). The national liberation movement is the political movement of a nation, national identity and nationalist phenomenon. Although it has been suggested that the nation is created by nationalism as a social construct, nevertheless it has strong historical, social, cultural, territorial, and ethnic

roots. Of course, the paradigm of modernity should not be ignored. In the case of oppressed nations it is more visible how nation, national identity and national liberation discourses are interlinked. These concepts were the fundamental discourses during the bipolar world from the WWI until 1989 when the Soviet Union and its satellite states of the socialist system totally disappeared from the world stage.

The first part of this chapter deals with the definition of nation, national identity, nationalism and national liberation in relation to the evolution of nationalism in Kurdistan. In particular, it will focus on whether the evolution of nationalism in Kurdistan is purely primordial, ethno-symbolist, and modern, or a synthesis of all of these.

This approach aids the search for the answers regarding the questions that are concerned with the origin, development, reformation and transformation of the PKK in relation to its role in the evolution of national liberation and national identity. What is the role that the PKK has played in the KNLM (the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement) and why the reformation transformation processes occurred? Is it the transformation closely related to internal dynamics of its origin and its development, or to the external dynamics such as the collapse of the bipolar world? The concepts of nation, national identity, nationalism and national liberation will answer these questions of formation, transformation and re-transformation of the PKK's political and national discourse in the coming chapters.

At the end of this chapter, a methodology and literature review explores recently produced academic knowledge on the subject of the PKK in connection to nation, nationalism, national identity and national liberation movement in Kurdistan, which are at the heart of this thesis. Although external factors become significant in the paradigm change and transformation of the PKK after the Cold War, internal demands of Kurdish people in Bakur and Rojava Kurdistan in particular, have been either an independent state or at least a federalist state solution.

The Nation

Definition of the nation is a problematic topic, since none of the most famous academics of the field of nation, nationalism and ethnicity –Anderson, Smith, Hobsbawm, and Renan agree on a well-defined meaning. Nevertheless, at the middle ground it could be argued that a shared language, culture, long history, geography, and a shared goal of their future are the parameters of a people that make them as a nation. In order to analyse the strategic goal of the national liberation movement initially led by the PKK Bakur Kurdistan that then spread out to all four parts, the concepts of nation, national identity, national liberation and nationalism extraordinary role they played must be analysed, too. The above-mentioned concepts as the theoretical perspectives of the movement attracted people to be organised, mobilised and politicised for revolution. The concepts of nation, national identity, national liberation and nationalism were the paramount factors in of the PKK. Hence the theoretical base of this research has been developed through this lens.

During the Cold War era, most of the conflicts were in the so-called the Third World between colonised groups of people. They were mainly fighting for their right to national self-determination and independence against colonialist states and imperial capitalist powers. The bipolarity of the world was an opportunity to those oppressed people if their geo-strategic and geo-political situation were in interest of any of those powers, would have economic, political and diplomatic significant support. This happened in China, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, Mozambique and many more. Most of them had a significant economic, political and diplomatic support from the Soviet Union against so called US led imperialist system. Most of those conflicts were resolved after long series of armed resistance, called national liberation war, majority of them successfully adopted a Marxism-Leninism ideology in the struggle of an oppressed nation striving for self-determination. Their definition of a nation was based on what Marx, Engels, Lenin or Stalin had theorised. Although most

Marxists were not in favour of Stalin, his analysis of a nation was widely accepted among Chinese, Vietnamese, and Mozambique national liberation movements. In that case, from a Marxist perspective, what is the definition of a nation? As cited in the book of Nationalism by Smith and Hutchinson from Joseph Stalin: the concept of nation undoubtedly is the most problematic and contentious term (Smith: 2001, p 10). Charles Tilly described it as one of the most puzzling and tendentious items in the political lexicon (Tilly: 1975, p 6).

A nation has primarily been defined as a community of people, but not one that is racial or a tribal; for example the modern Italian nation, which, consists of Romans, Teutons, Etruscans, Greeks, Arabs and so forth. The French nation was formed from Gauls, Romans, Britons, Teutons, and so on. The same is applicable to the British, the Germans and others, who were formed into nations from people of diverse races and tribes; therefore firstly a nation is not a racial or tribal, but a historical community of people (Stalin: 1973, p.57-61).

Secondly, unquestionably the great empires of Cyrus and Alexander could not be called nations, although they were historically consisted of people from different races and tribes. They were not nations, but loosely connected conglomeration of groups, which fell apart or joined together according to the victories or defeats of this or that conqueror. This was also the case in the conquests of the Ottoman, Russian and Mongolian empires. Thus, a nation is not a temporary or loosely, ephemeral conglomeration, but a stable community of people (Ibid, p. 57-61).

But not every historically stable definite community constitutes a nation. The Ottomans, who ruled the Middle East, North Africa, and the Balkans for a stable period of history from 16th to 19th century, never became a nation. What distinguishes a national community from a state community? A national community is inconceivable without a common language, which is not a necessity for a state community. The Czech nation in Austria and the Polish in Russia would be impossible if each did not have a common

language, whereas the integrity of Russia and Austria is not affected by the fact that there are a number of different languages within their borders. We are referring, of course, to the spoken languages of the people and not the official government languages (Ibid. p. 57-61).

A nation starts with a definite, historical and a stable community with one of the characteristic features of having a *common language*. A common language is possibly used by more than one nation as in the example of the US, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and so on. A common language is for every nation, but not necessarily several languages for one nation. There is no nation, which at one and the same time speaks several languages, but this does not mean that there cannot be two or more nations speaking the same language as in the above example. But do the English, American and Canadian or Australians not constitute one nation in spite of their common language? Because they do not live together within the same geographical location, but inhabit different territories. A nation is formed only as a result of lengthy and systematic intercourse, as a result of people living together generation after generation. But also people cannot live together for lengthy periods unless they have a common territory. For example the Americans and Englishmen are the same nation living on the same territory as one nation in England. But some of them emigrated from England to America, and over the course of time, permanently and stably living within the same territory, has resulted in the formation of the American nation. So, the different territory led to the formation of a different nation, the American nation. The English and Americans speak the same language, but they are two separate nations.

Another interesting example concerns the Arabs. There are twenty-two Arab countries divided into different geographical territories, but speaking the same language. Although connected geographically, their habitat had been divided between different imperial powers of the time due to colonisation. From Morocco to the United Arab Emirates, almost all of North Africa and half of the Middle East speak the Arabic language. More than twenty-two

countries speak one language, divided into different nation-states. Those Arab states are mostly based on one clan or tribe, and they have close economic and political interests with powerful international actors.

Spain and most of the Latin American countries are speaking the same language but are living in different geographical territories; for example Mexico, Ecuador, Argentina and many more. Therefore, the second characteristic of a stable, historical and definite community is a *common territory* (Ibid. p 19).

A third requirement for a community of people to be called a nation is their connection through economic relations and interactions. The transformation of the social and economic relations from the feudal serfdom to the more advanced capitalist economic developments and the mass production of means open the ways of communications. Economic development introduced new ways of communications and interconnectedness among people. Social, economic and cultural life style was transformed from closed village local life to a broader regional and country level. This transformation took place through *a common economic life and economic cohesion*. Therefore, the isolated middle age closed village local life completely opened up by capitalist economic relations (Ibid. p 20).

The fourth characteristic is a national character, which is the specific spiritual complexion of the people forming a nation. For example Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Turkey they claim that they speak the same language, nevertheless constitute three different distinct nations. Arabs constituted of twenty-two national entities but almost speak one language. But the territorial distance between them, and the unique life conditions have modified their psychological make-up and national character. Thus *a common psychological make-up*, which manifests itself in a common culture, is the fourth characteristics of a nation.

From this theoretical perspective, based on the Marxist definition by Stalin, a nation is: *A historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common*

language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture (Hutchinson & Smith: 1994, p20). This definition is based on objective factors. The subjective definition is in the example of Benedict Anderson, such as basing a nation on attitudes, perceptions, and sentiments as an imagined political community. Max Weber was on the other hand mentioning that the purely objective criteria of a nation such as having a language, religion, and territory always fail to include some nations. Conversely, subjective definitions generally take too large a catch of cases (Smith: 2001, p 11).

According to Smith the nation is a felt and lived community; a category of behaviour as much as imagination, and one that requires certain actions from the members. But it is neither a state nor an ethnic community. It is not a state because, the concept of the state relates to institutional activity, while that of the nation denotes a type of community. It is not an ethnic community because, despite some overlap in that both belong to the same family phenomena (collective cultural identities), though it is a community whose members share a homeland and culture. The ethnic community usually has no political referent, and in many cases lacks a public culture and even a territorial dimension, since it is not necessary for an ethnic community to be in physical possession of its historic territory. But a community, as Smith continues, must occupy a homeland of its own at least for a long period of time in order to constitute itself as a nation. The nation also needs to have an evolved public culture and desire some degree of self-determination. On the other hand, it is not necessary for a nation to possess a sovereign state of its own, but an aspiration for a measure of autonomy coupled with the physical occupation of its homeland (Smith: 2001, p. 12).

David Miller offers definition that is similar to that of Stalin and Smith's, but that differs greatly from Anderson's. Miller defines a nation as (1) constituted by shared belief and mutual commitment, (2) extended in history, (3) active in character, (4) connected to a particular territory, and (5) marked off from other communities by its distinct public culture

(Miller: 1995, p. 27). The issue with Smith and Miller's definitions of a nation is that the importance of the language of a community as constituting a nation is overlooked. Language is one of the fundamental elements and distinguishing factor of a nation. Ernest Renan defines the nation in this way:

A nation is a soul and a spiritual principle. As he says two things, which strictly speaking are just one, constitute this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other in the present. One is the common possession of a rich legacy of memories; the other is actual consent, the desire to live together, and the will to continue to value the heritage that has been received in common. (Renan 1996: 57-8)

Renan's definition is a clear link between past and the present. He links the past and the present through memories and history as a rich legacy with the present will and the consent of living in purely based on subjective elements. Purely basing the concept of the nation on the mentioned subjective factors seems an incomplete definition and explanation of a nation.

It is very complex and difficult to find a common definition of a nation from scholars in the field of nation and nationalism.

Smith bases his argument heavily on ethno-symbolism, Hutchinson on cultural and political elements, Anderson on an imagined political community, and Hobsbawm on an invented tradition. However, at some point most of the mentioned scholars of the field of nation and nationalism seem to overlap in their ideas. For example, nations are the name of progressed and developed cultural, social, historical ethnic communities that had lived over long historical continuity as groups on a permanent geographical territory. On that theory, they have had a continued historical legacy. That territory and history had shaped a common language, culture, costumes, traditions and a psychological make-up. As the results of all these, they have developed a language for common understanding and communication. Therefore, nations are not just a social construct that suddenly appeared by the industrial

revolution and through the emergence of the capitalist economic system (Smith 1999: p. 11), but as named human populations that have evolved over the long period of history.

The debates on nation that occurred during the 1960s and 70s Turkey led to the PKK's founding, with the aim of defending the Kurdish people as a separate nation than the Turks. Their long history embedded in the geography of Kurdistan, their culture, social life, and economic relations tells story than the Turks. The reason of its birth and foundation was thinking differently on nation and national question in the political debates of the time. Kurdistan was defended as a different country than Turkey, and Kurdish people a different nation than Turkish nation. Therefore the national right to self-determination was a natural and universal right of Kurdish people. Moreover if the national right to self-determination was not accepted by Turkish state, Kurdish activists had the right to organise their people for national liberation if not by peaceful means, then through a violent struggle as a necessity. These ideas were developed through debates on whether Kurdish people were a nation or not. Most of Kurdish political organisations and parties emerged on the bases of the sharp debates on Kurdish national question and their national right to self-determination. The major difference between the PKK and all other Kurdish parties and organisations was how soon to start a national liberation war against Turkish state's colonialist rule. Amongst all of them, the PKK was the one that wanted to start as soon as possible, because the PKK believed that the objective and subjective conditions for Kurdistan national liberation had ripened enough. Therefore the question of nation or Kurdish national question was the most important topic of 1960s and 70s of Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan. National self-determination was the fundamental reason for emergence of the PKK and its national liberation struggle.

National Identity

National identity means belonging to a territory/homeland, sharing experience and memory of the past and present, having distinct symbols and language, which means the holder of the identity-individual and collective-, is a separate phenomenon. Identity has been identified and understood firstly as “a ground or basis for of social or political action,” secondly “a collective phenomenon”, thirdly “a product of social or political action”, fourthly “a core aspect of (individual or collective) selfhood,” and fifthly “as an evanescent product of multiple and competing discourses” (Brubaker, 2004, p. 33-34). These five mentioned elements of the concept of identity also combine people’s names, languages and cultures. The way people live and behave towards others is also a part of identity. Social and political conditions cause production of multiple collective actions by individual and collective identities.

National identity means belonging to a distinct territory, culture, shared experience, national symbols, language and public duties; it means belonging to a nation. The nature causes and consequences of national identity are collective phenomena (Castells 1997: p. 6). Therefore, a community of people, whether it has its own state apparatus or not, is a distinctly different nation as long as the people share collective cultural and lingual characteristics on a distinct geographic territory and feel different from other human populations. As Guibernau points out that creation of national identity, is it a phenomenon of both individual and collective emerged with the conditions of modernity? Developments of printing made education more advanced, and led to the expansion of vernacular languages and cultural developments in nineteenth century Europe (Guibernau: 1996, p. 66). More advanced and sophisticated printing caused expansion of written materials, which helped increase the outreach of advanced literacy among the communities, and helped the rise of a sense of national consciousness. Advancement of literacy pushed cultural developments and played a

decisive role in the expansion of vernacular languages and the sense of belonging to a community and collective identity (Ibid. p. 66). This modernist understanding of national identity has been criticised by scholars of the field of nationalism such as Smith, Kedourie, and Hutchinson.

The Soviet Union from the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution to the 1991 Perestroika and Glasnost reforms had accommodated hundreds of different national identities and fifteen republics under the umbrella of a socialism aiming at a classless and stateless society. Even the ruling communist party in 1970s and 1980s were insisting that economic developments together with a social, cultural and political progression of the population would have reached the stage that all ethnic and national identities were going to disappear soon in the wider community created by the Soviet system (Sakwa 1998: pp. 66-70). After Gorbachev's Perestroika and the Glasnost reforms, the Soviet Union collapsed and the fifteen republics declared their independence. In the Soviet Union, territories of the Eastern European republics also had a similar situation. Czechoslovakia was divided between two different nations and Yugoslavia into seven different nations (Brubaker 1996: p. 23-54). The purpose of mentioning these examples is that ethnic and national identities can be silenced for a period of time, but cannot be annihilated and assimilated forever. From 1917 to 1991, the Soviet Union tried to unify different ethnic communities under the umbrella of a classless society. The outcome after seventy-four years of experience was a deeply divided union of different ethnicities and classes, which finally collapsed and led to hundreds of ethnic, class and religious conflicts.

In the case of Aztecs and Incas in the American continent as well as in Anatolia with Armenians, Greeks, Pontus and Kurds, the territory was totally cleaned-up from its indigenous inhabitants by the newcomers. However, in the twenty-first century Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria are still trying to get rid of the Kurdish question through assimilation policies

following the examples used in the past against Assyrians, Armenians, Jews and Kurds again. So the existence of ethnic human groups and their cultural and social evolution into larger human populations and distinct nations inevitably led toward the idea of national self-expression. This national self-expression in the case of oppressed and colonised people has caused national liberation wars. Since the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, the number of the independent states has doubled. There are also hundreds of ethnic and national groups in their struggle for their right to self-determination across the world. The main cause of all national secessionist movements and ethno-racial and ethno-national conflicts in different parts of the world in reality is the belonging to different ethnic-national groups. Anthony Smith has repeatedly discussed in academic circles that the power and roots of ethnicity is not something that happened simultaneously, but something that has accumulated through a millennia of experience, cultural developments and historical legacy.

As Smith clearly points out, national identity and the nation are complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components – ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal – political. These components signify the bonds of solidarity among the members of communities united by shared memories, myths and tradition that may not find expression in states of their own, but are entirely different from the purely legal and bureaucratic ties of the state (Smith: 1991, p. 15). Conceptually, Smith puts the nation at the core of national identity, and highlights it as a multidimensional entity with a civic, territorial and ethnic dimension. Therefore, national identity becomes a persistent and flexible force in modern life and politics and combined effectively with other powerful ideologies without losing its character (Ibid. p.15).

National identity during the post-colonial era was combined with a socialist ideology and became the guiding theory of national liberation movements in Vietnam, Mozambique, Guinea and Cuba, and many more. Nation and national identities became the fundamental

elements of national ideology in multi-ethnic states, were combined with leftist ideologies, and led national liberation struggles against the dominant ethnic national groups. Hence, many conflicts still exist today such as Kurdistan with Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria and to some extent with Armenia and Azerbaijan; Baluchistan with Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan; Kashmir with Pakistan and India; Abkhazia and South Ossetia with Georgia and Russia and so on. Among all these mentioned ethno-national conflicts, whether we identify them as ethno-national minorities or not, the worst case of all is the case of Kurdistan. Baluchistan, Kashmir, Abkhazia and Ossetia all somehow have been recognised either as autonomous regions and now enjoy an official status. However, in Kurdistan's case, with the exception of the Bashur part of Kurdistan which still has massive unsolved problems with Iraq, the community still has not been recognised even as a minority. The struggle of oppressed ethnic and religious groups, and ethno-national entities against the oppressor nation-states are a struggle for survival, for the preservation of their identities. The conflicts between Kurdistan people and Turkish, Iraq, Iran and Syrian states are fundamentally based on identity. Those states mentioned earlier have constitutionally denied the Kurd's identity, thus leading to the Kurds fighting for their identity to be recognised.

We can find similar cases of legally recognised nations without an independent status in the United Kingdom, Spain and Belgium, which can be compared distinctly with what happens in the cases of Kurdistan, Baluchistan, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In the United Kingdom since 1997, the process of devolving the power to the regions, the evolution of national identity has been flourished in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. When different ethnic identities are allowed express themselves democratically they do not cause any violence. For example, the Northern Ireland conflict continued for decades but since 1997 it has had a dramatic decrease and currently Northern Ireland has opted for a peaceful solution of the problem through a power sharing agreement between the Unionists and Sinn Fein.

The Labour government in United Kingdom permitted Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to establish their national assemblies. Interestingly, these assemblies have not become the source of division and separation; conversely they have even made the communities closer as the unity of differences. Even the municipalities have a strong autonomy of governing local governments. The power of the centre has been reduced, whereas the powers of the local councils/municipalities have increased. Therefore the Scots, Irish, Welsh even Cornish identities are not in such a violent conflicts as seen in the Middle East.

When the opportunity for freedoms and democratic right of expression is given, as in the example of United Kingdom, Spain, and Belgium, the level of violence decreases to none, although there are some incidents from time-to-time, overall the results are within a democratic peaceful coexistence and solved through peaceful non-violent means. When the Welsh, Scottish, and Irish express their national identities without any restriction and defend their national rights peacefully, then there would not be any need for violent conflict. When the law and the status of all entities guarantee the democratic preservation of their ethnic and national rights and duties, there is no need to apply to the violent means of struggle. In the United Kingdom, rights and freedoms of expression of all national and ethnic entities have been protected, and even in presence of any claim for separation and secession, non violent acts are committed to this scope.

In Spain, the situation of Catalonia and the Bask national identity in the democratic and decentralized system is similar to some extent with the Welsh and Scottish national identity within the United Kingdom. Their democratic rights and freedoms have been protected, and they are free to express their differences with different regional flags, in the education system, and with regional parliaments. In the Belgium federalism, different nationalities have given democratic protection. In Switzerland's twenty-six Cantons, legal protection has been

provided for different national identities to govern themselves, and it is the most democratic system in terms of protecting different national identities.

When national identities are allowed democratic expression and the environment to flourish in literature, education and in self-governing, they become closer rather than conflicted. The EU is an obvious example. Travelling from Spain to Stockholm and from Lithuania to Italy and Greece, there are no customs imposing travel restriction, or demanding national identity cards, or the payment of customs. If the democratic experience of the European Union supported by economic justice and fair economic investment in the less developed parts of Europe succeeds, then the 21st Century would definitely see the EU's successful story in all other parts of Asia and Africa.

During the Cold War era the dominant discourse in the case of oppressed nations, was fighting against imperialism. This principle was supported by the international socialist system led by the Soviet Union, as it happened in the case of China, Vietnam, and Cuba and so on. However, after the demise of the Soviet Union in the world political system and the end of Cold War, the strategy of national liberation totally went under reconsideration. This was because the popular strategy in the colonised nations' war was setting up a guerrilla war as part of a Soviet led socialist camp. According to the guerrilla war strategy, a long period of an asymmetric war continued and the equilibrium of defence, balance and offence war tactics followed. Especially in the balance stage, foreign help was needed. This help was provided by the socialist camp, which happened in the case of Cuba, China, Vietnam, Mozambique and Laos. The collapse of the socialist camp left the national liberation movements of the colonised peoples without support. Hence, national liberation strategy had to be reconsidered. Instead of campaigning for a long-term popular war, it would be better to concentrate the effort on creating the legal background in support of democratic forms of struggle in order to

solve conflicts through negotiations and dialogue, as between Israel and Palestinians, and between the East Timor and Indonesia.

The concept of nation is embedded deep in people's culture, language, long history, and geography, which they share over centuries through their way of life and psychological behaviour in sharing a common destiny. From this common perspective the treatment of the Kurdish nation led to a rise of new defences with a strategic goal of Kurdistan national liberation as a nation among the society of the nations in the world Kurdish nation must have their national identity. The right for a Kurdish national identity was the second fundamental reason of the PKK's emergence.

Nationalism

Nationalism is, first of all, a doctrine of popular freedom and sovereignty. The people must be liberated and must feel free from any external constraint, they must determine their own destiny and be masters in their own country, they must control their own resources, and they must obey only their 'inner' voice (Smith & Hutchinson 1994: pp. 4). In the case of the oppressed nations as in Vietnam, Laos, Mozambique, Angola and Guiana during the post-Second World War period, nationalism was used as an ideology of national liberation against colonialism and imperialism. As Smiths states:

We could, equally, catalogue the benign effects of nationalism: its defence of minority; its rescue of 'lost' histories and literatures; its inspiration for cultural renaissances; its resolution of 'identity crisis'; its legitimation of community and social solidarity; its inspiration to resist tyranny; its ideal of popular sovereignty and collective mobilization; even the motivation of self-sustaining economic growth (Smith 1991: p. 18).

During the Cold war era, nationalism to some extent had played a positive role in the case of oppressed nations against imperialism and colonialism. Conversely in the case of oppressor nations, it had played a very negative role. For instance, the policy of creating one nation and one language, accumulation of the state power on the hands of one ethnic group to be only the hegemony, and abandoning all the other ethnic groups (Kirisçi & Winrow 1998: pp. 23). That negative role of power and hegemony accumulating in the hand of one national group and a nationalist ideology in the form of one nation state had devastating results of denial, ethnic cleansing and genocides in many regions of the world. Not a very distant past, but a recent past has witnessed devastating examples in Europe, Africa, America and Asian continents. Genocides were committed as the result of extreme nationalism in the examples of Aztecs and Incas in America; Jews and Romans in Europe; Armenians, Assyrians, Yezidis, Greeks, Pontus by the Ottoman Empire, and then by the new Turkish republic against Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds. So, nationalism before the collapse of the Cold War had played these two different functions positively and negatively. In the post-Cold War era, and particularly in the multipolar and globalized world, nationalism has become an impasse (Ozkirimli 2010: pp. 1-7).

Primarily Nationalism is an ideology, but also as a social movement and a symbolic language that explores its meanings, varieties and sources as Smith states in all his scientific works on nationalism. It brings together people who share similar characteristics such as culture, language, history, and territory and in so many cases, systems of beliefs. However, there are different varieties of nationalism. Although these variations define nationalism differently, the source and subject of all variants is only one: the nation. That source starts from a single individual then continues to a family, from a family to a clan and from a clan to a tribe; from a single tribe to a tribal confederation, then to an ethnic group, and finally from a larger community of ethnic groups to a nation. All the developments regarding nationalism

are as an ideology coming from the cultural roots of ethnicity, and then the nation to be organised in a state apparatus. The state is as an apparatus to coordinate social, cultural, economic, and political institutions of a nation.

The nation-state concept previous to the Cold War was the ultimate goal in the case of national liberation movements in colonised peoples/nations in many parts of the world. However, in the globalized world and in the era of democracy, human rights and equal opportunities to be defended by the rule of democratic laws, the ultimate goal of creating a nation-state for each nation has changed. The concept of the European Union and its evolutionary process moving from the union of states to the union of people's local governances, and removing the barriers of artificial borders between peoples is becoming a widely accepted concept. Therefore, Europe was the birthplace of nationalism and since the Westphalia in 1645 the nation-state, but now has become the birthplace of the rule of democracy and democratic local self-governances, if the process continues in this trajectory. So the concept of the EU become a new system after the collapse of the Soviet Union, particularly single market, single currency and removal of borders between members sounding new progressive political global system that small nations can continue their existence under that umbrella.

Primordialism: Primordialist theorists have seen the nation as a natural existence, rather than a social and cultural occurrence, granting communities as primordial or natural in origin, or which are intrinsic to human evolution (Smith 1998: Ch.7). For the primordialist, nations are the foundations of human history, extensions of primitive kinship groups with common ancestry and clear social and territorial boundaries; they can forge out of a variety of elemental aspects such as language, race, religion, and custom, whereby nations and their characteristics can be distinctively identified from one another. These theories are most

sharply criticised for giving biological accounts of nations, which in fact are better seen as cultural and political phenomenon (Puri 2004: p.44). Kinship, culture and common social territorial boundaries are some elements of nations and nationalism.

The primordialist paradigm in the theory of nationalism is not a monolithic category. According to Smith, it is identifiable in four different versions: the ‘nationalist’, ‘sociobiologist’, ‘culturalist’ and ‘perennialist’ approaches. The common denominator of these approaches is their belief in naturalness and/or antiquity of nations (Özkrimli 2010: 50). According to Smith there are at least two kinds of Primordialism: the first is the ‘sociobiological’ version, and the second is the ‘cultural givens’ of social existence, which is the more influential of the two (Smith 2001: 52). However, according to Ethno-Symbolists, the primordialists fail to sufficiently account for the role of history and culture in the emergence of nations and nationalism.

Ethno-Symbolism: The ethno-symbolist paradigm is an alternative kind of socio-historical and cultural analysis to primordial and modernist paradigms of nationalism; it provides a midway approach between primordialists and modernists as historical ethno-symbolism. According to ethno-symbolists, modern nationalism did not appear out of nothing, but has clearly pre-modern antecedents. Smith clearly analyses that the rise of nations is predicted on the basis of ‘ethnic cores’, developed from pre-modern ‘ethnie’ whose members possess a collective name, share a myth of common ancestry, possess one or more differentiating elements of common culture, share historical memories, associate themselves with a specific ‘homeland’ and have a sense of solidarity for a section of the population (Smith 2001: p.13). The power of ethno-symbolism comes from history of myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritage. The ethno-symbolist account gives more weight to subjective elements of memory, value, sentiment, myth and symbol, and that it thereby seeks to enter and understand the inner worlds of ethnicity and nationalism (Ibid: p.57).

As in the case of Gaelic revival in the late nineteenth century Ireland, (Huthchinson 1987: chap. 4-5) the relationship between various elites and the lower strata – the people– was represented through cultural traditions. Cultural traditions, and partly in consequence of their vernacular mobilization, influenced the intelligentsia, political leaders and bourgeoisie, by constraining their innovations within certain cultural parameters and by providing motifs and personnel for their cultural project and political goals (Smith 2001: p.57). The second concern of ethno-symbolic account is the complex relationship between past, present and future and the place of *ethnies* and nations and collective identity in history.

For Smith the nation is neither as natural nor perennial as primordialist claims, nor has it been fabricated without historical and cultural roots and ethnic connections, as some modernists would have it. While modernists like Hobsbawm (1990) dismiss the importance of ethnicity in the rise of nationalism, for Smith, nations have evolved around “ethnic cores.” According to Smith (1998), the creation of national identities without ethnic bases is doomed to oblivion.

Modernism: The modernist paradigm is a process and product of socio-economic developments in Europe, which have come to existence with the foundation of French Republic and economic industrialization. ‘The French Revolution inaugurated not just a new ideology, but a new form of human community, a new kind of collective identity, a new type of polity and, in the end, a new kind of inter-state order. In the conjunction and interlinking of these novel phenomena, is mirrored the new world order of modernity’ (Smith 2001: 47). Smith divides modernism in two forms: chronological and sociological. The first one is about ideology, movement and symbolism as relatively recent; and the latter is qualitatively novel that in the form of innovation and an updated version of something far older. Modernist paradigm has been considered in four varieties: socioeconomic, socio-cultural, political, and ideological and constructionist.

‘Socioeconomic version of nationalism and nations is derived from economic and social factors as industrial capitalism, regional inequality and class conflict. According to Tom Nairn and Michael Hechter, specifically national sentiments and ideals are aroused by relative deprivation between regions within modern states or classes across states, between the underdeveloped peripheral and developed core regions or between core and peripheral elites backed by the newly mobilized ‘masses’ of the periphery (Hechter 1975; Nairn 1977).

Fledging Kurdish nationalism up to the WWI was mainly led by mostly tribal elements, because the economic and social relation was based on a feudal mode of production with the feudal means of the production. Mainly those people living in the plains were cultivating the land by wooden-frame plough (with iron Ploughshare), drawn by oxen or a mule and reaping with sickle and/or scythe. The other portions of people were living at the mountainous villages in a semi-nomadic way, maintaining animals as their source of living and income (Bruinessen 1992:16-16). However this situation to some degree inevitably transformed industrial machineries was introduced in Kurdistan as the means of production; it caused thousands of people to become jobless and move to the bigger cities of Turkey as seasonal workers, such as Istanbul and Izmir. Although the education was entirely based on the assimilation and total extinction of the Kurdish nation and language, the memory, belonging and the socialization process of the young students, particularly of those from Bakur Kurdistan in Turkey, reacted in opposition to the state’s official ideology. Those students and the seasonal workers in the real life were faced with many questions, which contradicted with their real situation. They become the source and elite of the leading Kurdish nationalism with a leftist identity in contradiction to the state and the state’s Kurdish feudal landowners and tribal leaders.

Socio-cultural forms of nationalism and nations are sociologically necessary phenomena of modern, industrial epoch, emerging in the transition of ‘modernization’.

Nations are expressions of literature, school-transmitted 'high culture' supported by specialists and by a mass, standardized, compulsory, public education system. By training a mobile, literate workforce, nations in turn support industrialism, just as the latter encourages nationalism (Gellner 1964, ch.7; 1973; and 1983).

The political version of nationalism and nations are forged in and through the modern professionalized state, either directly or in opposition to specific (imperial/colonial) states. For theorists like John Breuilly, Anthony Giddens and Michael Mann, not only is the modern state the best predictor of nations and nationalism, its relationship with society forms the crucible for re-integrative nationalism, which is the inevitable concomitant of state sovereignty (Giddens 1985; Breuilly 1993; Mann 1995).

Ideological form focuses on the European origins and the modernity of nationalist ideology, its quasi-religious power and its role in breaking up empires and creating nations where none had existed. Elie Kedourie has traced nationalist ideologies to the impact of the Enlightenment and Kantian ideas of self-determination, and ultimately to medieval Christian millennial doctrines; he has demonstrated their destructive effects on non-European peoples when discontented intelligentsia adapted these chiliastic European doctrines to their native ethnic and religious traditions (Kedourie 1960; and 1971: Introduction).

Constructionism is a rather different form of modernism in that, though it assumes that nations and nationalism are wholly modern, it emphasizes their socially constructed character. Nations according to Eric Hobsbawm owe much to 'invented traditions', which are products of social engineering and are created to serve the interests of ruling elites by channelling the energies of the newly enfranchised masses. Benedict Anderson, on the other hand, views the nation as an imagined political community, which fills the void, left by the decline of cosmic religions and monarchies at the point, where new conceptions of time and

‘print capitalism’ made it possible to imagine nations through linear time (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Anderson 1991)’ (Smith 2001: 46-7).

Primordialism, ethno-symbolism and modernist theories briefly explained above underline that none of these theories could be the single satisfactory source of explanation. Although all of them have strong arguments, however, nationalism as a more recent ideology came to the stage with economic progression of capitalism and industrial revolution. Since the French revolution, it has become the source of the nation-state. Modernist theories have collectively added to our understanding of nationalisms and nations as modern and their links with other structures and practices of modernity (Puri 2004: p.43).

The modernist varieties of nationalism are highly relevant to the comparative analysis of political parties in Kurdistan and in a nation without its own state. These four versions constitute the fundamental theoretical base for writing this dissertation. The paramount complexity of the political, social, cultural, lingual, and economic situations and conditions of the communities of people of Kurdistan can be explained through these theories. Inevitably this complex situation had its impact on the nationalist and revolutionary, political organisations and parties who are struggling for the freedom and liberation of Kurdistan.

The discussion of this thesis on nationalism and the goal of the PKK were creating a Kurdish nation state, the module of nationalism the PKK sought was a combination of ethno-symbolist, modernist and some elements of primordialist, collectively called patriotic nationalism. At the beginning it was named Kurdistan Revolutionaries and later became Kurdistan Workers’ Party. In the PKK’s first written manifesto, it repeatedly declared that any group of people in their historical evolution that had not created their own state would face an extermination and extinction. Such as the examples of Aztec and Inca people in America and Assyrian and Armenian people in Anatolia. But those people who created their own states have been moved to an upper stage of historical evolution and became honourable

members of civilised society. The PKK's manifesto also explained Kurdistan not only as the home of Kurdish people, but also the home of Armenian and Assyrian people, too. So the nationalism of the PKK had chosen initially not only a patriotic but also a democratic nationalism too. Chapter seven and eight will analyse whether this patriotic and democratic nationalistic approach had been dropped and transformed, and if so to which kind of nationalism.

National Liberation

The concepts of the nation and national identity have been significant elements of nationalism as an ideology in the case of oppressed nations during the twentieth century. Nationalism was the ideology for fighting for freedom and national liberation during the colonial rules of colonialists in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The October Revolution in Russia created a wide geographical territory for many different ethnic and racial entities to live under the political ideology of socialism. Socialism became widely accepted as the preferred political system among the labour movements in the industrialized countries of Western Europe, as well as in the colonized territories and people across the world.

The First World War created a bipolar world; a Capitalist Western consisted of America, Western European countries, and a Socialist Eastern World consisted of some Eastern European, Central Asian countries and Russia. The Second World War almost separated the Balkans and Eastern European countries from the Capitalist Western World. So, the Socialist system became the victorious and strongest system. In the socialist discourse, the twentieth century is defined as the era of the decline of Capitalism and Imperialism, the victory of Labour movements in the developed capitalist countries, and the struggle of national liberation movements in the colonized territories. Hence national

liberation movements in the colonized countries were accounting their political allies the socialist countries, labour movements and those national liberation movements were successfully becoming victorious, or were on the way to victory.

After the WWII the Chinese national liberation struggle gained victory. It became a courageous example to the colonized peoples struggle for freedom in India, South East Asia, Africa and Latin American and Middle Eastern countries. The Soviet Socialist Republics supported the National liberation movement of the people of China. The fundamental definition of a national liberation movement was to be against imperialism and be guided by a socialist ideology. Almost all of the national liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Middle East put socialism in their programme as an economic system, and Marxism and Leninism's ideologies as the only guidance for their liberation and freedom.

The methodology of achieving their national liberation was organizing educated youths from the universities and founding the guerrillas' armies. Guerrilla war strategy was successfully followed in China, Vietnam, and Laos in Asia, Mozambique, Angola and Algeria in Africa, Cuba, Brazil, and Nicaragua in Latin America. In the Middle East the Palestinians also followed the path of guerrilla war and have had considerable support from the twenty-two Arab countries and fifty-five Islamic countries, as well as the Soviet Union and all other countries that had defined themselves as socialist supporting the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). Not only was the socialist system supporting these struggles, but also the labour movements and socialist parties in the Western world were supporting all those anti-imperialist national liberation movements in the colonized world, too. As Hoffman and Graham state:

'The right to national self-determination is a right held by individuals and not by a collective. It is individual Kurds who (should) claim the right to nationhood rather than an entity called Kurdistan. Kurdistan exists because individuals identifying themselves as Kurds imagine it as a community. There is, however, a problem of circularity: Kurds

identify with Kurdistan because they believe Kurdistan exists, such that their believing Kurdistan exists does not bring Kurdistan into existence. In response, it could be argued that Kurds have to believe that Kurdistan exists independently of their beliefs even if, it only exists because lots of people style themselves 'Kurds' and identify with a particular land mass, language, customs and so on. On this argument all 'social entities' are necessary fictions' (Hoffman & Graham: 2009. pp. 277-8).

Since the discussion of this thesis is based on nationalism and creating a Kurdish nation state, the module of nationalism the PKK sought was called patriotic nationalism, which was a combination of Primordial, Ethno-Symbolist and Modernist. In that discourse of patriotic nationalism the ultimate aim of the PKK was to create a nation state for the people of Kurdistan via national liberation war. The founder of the PKK at that time mainly arguing that any group of people who have been able to create their own state, they gained its independence and freedom, who have not been able to establish their own nation state faced slavery, assimilation, extinction and genocides, the examples of Aztecs, Incas, Armenians, Assyrians and to some degree the Kurds.

It was patriotic nationalism that gave support to the PKK to become a mass mobilised movement. As much as the PKK defended the idea of Kurdistan national liberation, Kurdish national identity and creating Kurdish nation state, all stratum of Kurdish society were supporting the PKK. The examples of 1989 to 1999 in all parts of Kurdistan and especially in Bakur and Rojava Kurdistan are self-explanatory. All the associations of the PKK in Diasporas named as Kurdistan National Liberation Front, Kurdistan Parliament in Exile, Kurdistan National Liberation Army aimed towards national liberation and no less than that.

Moreover the first written document of the PKK, which is called the manifesto-*Path of Kurdistan Revolution*-is the fundamental document that expresses the primordial loyalties in the past historical evidences of the Median Empire (the ancestors of the Kurds). It bases its resistance to Legend Kawa the Blacksmith and his struggle against the Assyrian Empire and celebrating Newroz as the New-year, and declaring the PKK as the representatives of the

proletariat of Kurdistan. A combination of primordial loyalties, ethno-symbolic elements and modern constructivist tenancy explains the PKK's patriotic nationalism for Kurdistan national liberation strategy.

Methodology

Gathering essential data for my research and analysing them in appropriate methodological order, this study has applied a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach emphasises two main points, which are crucial for this thesis. Collecting data through various methods and analysing data through interpretive process of qualitative approach. The Methodological framework has been developed through a combination of the available academic literature on Kurdish question, through interviews, and mainly observatory data by the analysis of many political documents and processes. The available academic literature on the concepts of nation, national identity, nationalism and national liberation movement theory is drawn mainly from Smith, Brubaker, Hobsbawm and Anderson regarding its application to Bakur and other parts of Kurdistan. This research specifically focuses on the PKK's transformation from national liberation to democratic liberation through four stages of formation, reformation, and transformation, and will finally analyse whether, according to the theory the retransformation process through strategic changes would be possible. The spread of the PKK's ideological political and national understandings and paradigm from Bakur to Rojava will play an important testimony of this retransformation process.

The *Path of Kurdistan Revolution* (first manifestation of PKK's ideology) was the first concrete and precise ideological, political and national paradigm of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries after a small group university drop out students founded the PKK. Prior to the manifesto, there was a written document called, '*Dogru Yolu Kavrayalim* –

Understanding the Right Path', which was a programme for how to become a party in Kurdistan. This manifesto, which was also called *Serxwebun*, which means independence, was followed by four or five more issues before the chief of general staff of the Turkish army made the coup d'état of 12 September 1980. These documents were fundamental sources for this research, because they were the first official written documents of the Kurdistan revolutionaries who later became the PKK. These display their vision of history, politics, philosophy, society, economics and the ideology including their strategy for the Independent, United and Democratic Kurdistan. In order to achieve an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan, a professional revolutionary party must be organised. For example, from these documents it is clear that the party should organise a guerrilla army, then the party and the guerrilla army should be supported by a national liberation popular front. This ideological and political understanding of the PKK will be investigated, analysed and explained in this study.

A political revolutionary students group from 1970 to 1978 had organised itself and moved to Bakur Kurdistan's provinces and towns, gaining a considerable qualitative and quantitative support mostly from the most disadvantaged strata of Kurdistan's society. On the 26-27th November, Kurdistan Revolutionaries held a clandestine meeting in Amed (in Turkish, Diyarbakir) province. During this first congress, the movement called itself PKK. From 1978 to 1984 the PKK was organizing its guerrilla war. On 15th of August 1984 the PKK declares its guerrilla war against the Turkish state in the towns of Eruh (Eruh is a small town of Siirt province in Bakur Kurdistan/Turkey) and Shemdinli (Shemdinli is a very strategic small town in the triangle of Iran, Iraq, Turkey belongs to Hakkari province in Bakur Kurdistan). The guerrilla units were under the name of *Hêzên Rizgarîya Kurdistan-HRK*- Kurdistan Liberation Units, but in 1986 during the PKK's third congress the name was changed to *Artêşa Rizgarîya Gelê Kurdistan-ARGK*- Kurdistan Peoples Liberation Army. In

1985 the PKK also announced the formation of its national front *Enîya Rizgarîya Netewîya Kurdistan-ERNK*- Kurdistan National Liberation Front. As mentioned earlier, the PKK had also established its official ideological organ *Serxwebun* in 1982. This has been published monthly and so far 424 issues have been released. All this material is available on the Internet and it constitutes the sources of the PKK's official ideological political stand.

The national and political environment from very early education in the primary school, then in middle and secondary school through family members who were teachers we had connections to those who were acting as Kurdistan Revolutionaries in our home town. This connection continued and my fieldwork observations for my research developed when I revisited my home town after 35 years. I visited local municipality, local legal party (HDP and DBP) party branches in Dogubayazit, Van, Bitlis, Amed/Diyarbakir, Mardin, Cizre, Urfa and Adiyaman. My aim was observing how the Democratic Liberation project works and whether that project fulfilled the demands for National Liberation. At the time of my field observations in Bakur Kurdistan, the PKK in Qandil, and the PKK leader Ocalan in Imrali through the HDP were engaged in a dialogue process with the AKP government. There were no fighting and no clashes between those political opponents at the time, to some degree a political openness was in force. However, everybody was aware of that neither the Turkish army and nor the AKP government in favour of a peaceful settlement to Kurdish question and that calm environment was messenger of a heavy storm.

From the field it was obvious neither the AKP government want to declare it will accept some political and cultural rights to Kurdish people and to some degree accept a local self-governance to Kurdish municipalities, nor the PKK was convinced to accept disarm the guerrilla army before any negotiations for a peaceful settlement. The municipalities in Bakur Kurdistan were on very dangerous junction between the AKP government and the PKK. The people of Bakur Kurdistan were overwhelmingly expressing their desire a peaceful

settlement. However, the TAF and the AKP government with ultra-nationalist the MHP were in favour of restarting operations against the PKK guerrillas in all parts of Kurdistan mainly in Bakur, Bashur and Rojava.

What I observed also was that the municipalities and HDP and BDP local branches were not fulfilling the demands of their constituents. For example they could have had cooperatives, volunteers to create employment in their local municipalities. They also could visit villages and create village educational centres. I observed the huge gap between their words and their practices. They did not have to relate themselves to the PKK ideologically and politically, as long as they were branches of the HDP and DBP and their run municipalities they could have been very successful and becoming the role module in any city and towns of Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. However, their short comings in all the fields of social, cultural, political and economical life and not taking the interests of their local constituents left them in a ruined political conclusion.

I witnessed exactly similar short coming problems in the Maxmur refugee camp (Maxmur camp was set up by Saddam Hussein for those Kurds from Sirnak province in Bakur Kurdistan fled from Turkish attacks and their villages were burned and bombarded in 1994 and 95), too. People in the refugee camp have been politicised and follow political developments and Turkish state and AKP government did not make any official statement to accept any kinds of national, political and cultural rights. People were also discussing that the PKK has dropped down all national demands, while Turkish state does not accept any demand and that was a dilemma.

Similar observations were also seen in Qandil Mountains too among guerrillas and guerrilla leaders as well. Although my fieldwork was co-incident to the so-called peace process, it was easily observable that nobody believed that a peaceful settlement would take place. Although ideologically the PKK insists on not demanding a Kurdish nation state, but

in the field in the ranks of new guerrillas to their commanders all were in the opinion eventually something similar to a state must be there in order to govern and manage daily life in the society.

Finally my observations in Bakur Kurdistan, in the Maxmur refugee camp, in Qandil Mountains and in Brussels with the PKK, HDP, DBP and KCK officials and ordinary people trying to understand whether the PKK truthfully approaching to do politics in a more democratic environment according to its transformation to Democratic Liberation or not and how it was developing its democratic autonomous Kurdistan project via municipalities in Bakur Kurdistan. The Turkish state has always seen Kurdish question as the question of terror and separatism. Any kind of talks and acts in regard to Kurdish question has been considered a threat to the integrity of monist Turkish state. All those officials were interviewed were aware of Turkish state's official ideology of Turkification. In spite of knowing that with democratic methods Turkish state will not come to the table of negotiations, trying to implement democratic liberation concept was wasting time and opportunities of Kurdish population. In addition to the qualitative materials, this research utilises a first-hand observation in the Qandil Mountains and direct/indirect interviews with the KCK officials regarding their sincerity on the process of transformation. In Brussels, multiple observations and interviews on the activities of the KCK, their officials and their views on the transformation process of the PKK were conducted. In Bakur Kurdistan, observations were carried out in order to assess the services and activities provided by municipalities.

Literature Review

There are three other important sources, which are fundamental for the study of the development of the PKK; one is called the *Role of Force: Kurdistan National Liberation*

War, and the other *Kurdistan National Liberation Problem and the Path of its Resolution*, and *the Problems of Personality and Organizing*. These three books are important in the PKK's history. The first book is about the organisation and the launch of the guerrilla war, the second one was about how to organise and mobilize the masses to include them in the liberation popular front, and the last one talks about how to reorganize the party and improve the personality of the revolutionaries. These three books along with *Path of Kurdistan Revolution* are important classics of the PKK, and the *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*. In addition to these books, and the Serxwebun monthly journal, Abdullah Öcalan's several books, Cemil Bayik, Murat Karayilan, Duran Kalkan and Mustafa Karasu's writings and books have been used.

Until the last quarter of the twentieth century there were only very few sources available on Kurds and Kurdistan. The available sources in Turkey were destroyed thanks to the constructed state's official ideology that categorised everybody as Turkish. Turkish official state ideology was constructed on creating one nation, one language, one culture, one people, one country and one flag in order to complete a purified Turkish nation-state. Therefore, all different ethnic groups not accounted as Turks suffered strict assimilation policies. Even the words of Kurds and Kurdistan were removed as well as the essay written by Kurdolog Minorsky from the Islamic Encyclopaedia in all Turkey's libraries.

The Kurdish National Movement: its origins and development, written by Wadie Jwaideh is one the most important literature on Kurds in the mid twentieth century. It is one of the unique examples that put the Kurds equally on the same level of Persians, Arabs and Turks in the Middle East as a nation. Jwaideh analyses the strategic importance of Kurdistan and strategic role-played by the Kurds in the long run history of the region. He compares the Kurds' case among three nations (Arabs, Turks, and Persians) and four states (Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria) in the region, with the Scots and English. Although the researcher mainly

based the study on Southern Kurdistan, this book is one the fundamental aspiring texts of the current available sources. Jwaideh is one the unique researcher predicts the geostrategic importance of Kurdistan's geography and its strategic importance in the future. It is interesting that this great scholar (Jwaideh) of Kurdish Studies book was reedited by Martin Van Bruinessen and was published in 2006 after his death; there is a coincident-shared strategic vision between Jwaideh and the contemporary revolutionist movement in Kurdistan.

A Modern history of the Kurds by David McDowall is one of the most comprehensive books so far to have written on the Kurds' modern history. The book has rich historical and contemporary evidences and differs from the earlier sources written by Minorsky, Nikitine, Edmonds, Eagleton, and so on. McDowall deals with modern history of Kurds; it is a source that this research has benefitted from, in its discussion of contemporary political issues in Kurdistan. It is a modern history of parts of Kurdistan, and the political parties and organisations of Kurdistan. It is a historical, political and unique study of our modern times.

Agha, Sheikh and State (1992), written by Martin Van Bruinessen, explores Kurdish society and rebellions in Kurdistan and the leadership of those rebellions. Martin as a young European researcher was interested in doing research in 1960s and 70s in Kurdistan's four parts. Via Iran in 1970 he successes clandestinely to cross the border of Iran and Iraq by his Kurdish agents to do his fieldwork in Bashur Kurdistan and closely observe Mustafa Barzani led national liberation movement. Bruinessen mentions that at last quarter of twentieth century Kurdish nationalism is evolving to a modern nationalism (Bruinessen 1992: pp. 316).

Another academic work is Abbas Vali's Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism (2003) is unique academic critique on the origin and development of Kurdish nationalism. Abbas Vali offers a comprehensive critique of Jamal Nabaz's primordialist approach and Amir Hassanpour's ethno-symbolist approach, and argues that nationalism is a modernist-constructionist ideology in general and mainstream Kurdish nationalism is primordialist.

Vali's argument in academic writings and produced knowledge on Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish national identity is one the strongest and most unique. As a professor of political theory, this study has benefitted from his essays on Kurdish national identity and modernist-constructionist approach.

Michael Gunter, an authority on the question of Kurds and Kurdistan, explores political parties and has interviewed Jalal Talabani, Massoud Barzani and Abdullah Ocalan. Two of his books were crucially important for this study; the first one was 'The Kurds Ascending 2008' and the second one was 'Out of Nowhere – The Kurds of Syria in Peace and War 2014'. The former discussed the PKK's and Öcalan's approach to Turkish state and the solution of Kurdish question. Öcalan's statements via his solicitors and his declaration of democratic solution have been critically approached. The latter is about two different approaches of the PKK and the KDP-Iraq and their modules in Rojava Kurdistan. Both deal with contemporary issues, similar to this study; for instance, the transformation of the PKK and its democratic liberation project and the implementation of the project of Democratic Confederalism.

Robert Olson's 'The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880-1925' published in 1989 studies the emergence of Kurdish nationalism. Olson argues that Kurdish nationalism had had three stages from Sheikh Ubaydullah first stage, then the Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments second and the Kurdish national organisations in Istanbul during 1908 to 1920 and the Sheikh Said Rebellion. But also Olson argues and gives evidence that the Great national assembly in 1922 in Ankara accepted constitutional status and recognition of Kurdish autonomy in Kurdish majority cities and areas. Olson also widely researched Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria and their alliance against Kurdistan National Liberation Movement/s and especially Turkey's active role in the NATO

against the PKK. Furthermore, Olson closely examines PKK's political and ideological effects on Kurdish society in Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan, which are important for this study.

Ali Kemal Özcan's research 'Turkey's Kurds –A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan – 2006' touches upon the Kurds in Turkey and their rebellion under leadership of Abdullah Ocalan and the PKK. It is an analysis of the PKK and its ideology and the members of the PKK and what caused those members to join the struggle of the PKK against Turkish state. According to Özcan, the nationalist ideology the PKK has followed at the beginning has been transformed to nationalismless nationalism.

Cengiz Gunes 'The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey – From Protest to Resistance – 2012'. It discusses contemporary Kurdish protests in 1967-69 and emergence of the PKK. He suggests that the emergence of the PKK and its resistance against the military coup of 1980 in Turkey and its continuation has put impact on not only Kurdish society, but also Turkish society too. Gunes touches on the transformation of the PKK and its legal political struggle in Turkey and parliamentary legal political activities, and analyses how the PKK has become a hegemonic actor in Bakur Kurdistan especially after the imprisonment of Ocalan and the transformation towards democratic political and parliamentary politics.

'The Kurdish Question and Turkey –An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict – 1998' by Kemal Kirisci and Gareth M. Winrow analyses possible solutions by specifically looking at Secession, Consociationalism, Forms of Autonomy, Federal Schemes, Provision of Special Rights, Further Democratisation and Multiculturalism. The authors do not suggest any specific solution that define Kurdish question as the question of a nation and should or ought to be solved through the concept of national right to self-determination. They insist that the PKK is a totalitarian organisation, and that it would not be possible to negotiate any possible peaceful settlement with the Turkish state. As if the Turkish state is a liberal democratic state similar to Switzerland, Belgium, Spain or the UK. Interestingly few years

later, after this was conducted, the Turkish state officially negotiated with the PKK in Oslo for more than two years.

A recent study by Seevan Saeed 'The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey - From the PKK to the KCK– 2015', explores the deadlock of the PKK in its political project that caused the organisation to move from one dimension to a multidimensional wider organisation. At the emergence, as a political and national entity, the PKK was the result of Turkish state's assimilation and Turkification policies in 2005 the struggle of the PKK transformed to multidimensional organisation of the KCK and the PKK become only a small part of the KCK system.

The focus and argument of this study differs from these aforementioned studies. The reason is Kurdish question is the question of nation that has been divided, partitioned and put under a strict policy of annihilation, assimilation and extermination by two powerful states of Iran and Turkey, and the two Arab states of Iraq and Syria. The struggle of Kurdish political organisation is a struggle of self-defence and universally legitimate for national right to self-determination. I argue that if the PKK leader was not imprisoned, the PKK would not drop its strategic goal an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. Although that goal could not be achievable in the circumstances of 1990 and 2000, but today in 2016-19 unexpected changes are inevitable. The PKK will retransform its paradigm as it transformed national liberation. The biggest impasse against a peaceful settlement between the peoples of the region is historical ambitions of Turanism and the Turkification mentality of Turkish state. However, because the Kurdish question is the question of a nation and has lived in Kurdistan in entire history, and its history and culture deep rooted and embedded in the land of Kurdistan, it has moved far beyond the borders of the Middle Eastern region and has become an international question. The solution of this question is not a matter of democratisation of

Turkey, Iran, Iraq or Syria. The solution is the recognition of universal national right to self-determination.

Conclusion

Concepts of nation, national identity, nationalism and national liberation war were the main discourses of the 1970s, 1980s, and to some extent the 1990s in Kurdistan's four parts and in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Kurdish national, political and social movements argued that the Kurds are a nation and should have the right to national self-determination, including the right of having their independent statehood. This approach was widely discussed among national liberation movements in the colonized countries. Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syrian communist parties and leftist socialist movements rejected the arguments of the right to national self-determination being interpreted as independence by Kurdish national and political organisations. Therefore Kurdish national and political movements separated their organizational away from them and organised independently in different parts of Kurdistan. Those arguments were the main cause of emergence of the PKK. In Turkey including most of leftist organisations led by Communist Party of Turkey, refused to accept Kurdish people as a nation and also refused to accept Kurdistan as country. Turkish state's official ideology of Turkification not only indoctrinated ordinary people and state's bureaucrats but also had indoctrinated the leftist and communist Turkish organisations too against universal rights of national right to self-determination.

The era was unquestionably and undoubtedly accepted as the era of fundamental victory of socialist camp and the collapse of imperialism socialist, leftist and Kurdish patriot nationalists. Hence, Kurdish national and political organisations were ideologically and philosophically accounting themselves a part in the socialist camp. However, the 1991

collapse of the socialist camp was the biggest bluff to all national liberation movements and to labour movements and Kurdistan national liberation movements, too.

The terms of nation, national identity, nationalism and national liberation will remain in the political debates for an uncertain amount of time, because they just have not appeared with the October Revolution in 1917. These concepts are related to ethnic, lingual, cultural, social, psychological, historical and geographical developments of human kind through an evolutionary process of thousands of years. The Kurdish question is not a simple matter of democratisation of Turkey in Bakur Kurdistan. Bakur Kurdistan is the largest part of Greater Kurdistan; hence Turkish statesmen are well aware of that sooner or later the people of Bakur Kurdistan will move towards an internationally acceptable solution. Therefore the Turkish state did whatever it could to assimilate the Kurds in Bakur Kurdistan, to make them forget their national identity and national language and culture in order to completely assimilate.

After the collapse of the socialist camp, Kurdistan national liberation movement thought that it had lost one of its future credible supporters. However, the history of the Soviet Union's socialism proved that the Kurdish question would not disappear in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. In fact it was Soviet Union that made good relations with the new Turkish republic and supported it. However, winning the war against the four nation-states in the Middle East could end very difficultly for a nascent movement such as Kurdistan national liberation movement(s), particularly in Bakur Kurdistan because of the NATO's support of the Turkish army.

Chapter 3

Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism and Radical Emergence of the PKK

Introduction

Chapter two discussed the concepts of nation; national identity, nationalism and national liberation as fundamental pillars of the evolution of Kurdish nationalism and the concept of Kurdistan National Liberation in the last quarter of 19th and throughout the 20th century's rebellions and insurgencies. These concepts were the fundamental reasons of the PKK's emergence. In order to understand the paradigm change and transformation of the PKK from National Liberation to Democratic Liberation, the emergence and development of Kurdish nationalism needs to be overviewed. From the beginning of the 19th to the first decade of 20th century, most of the rebellions were led by Kurdish local princes, tribal leaders, Sheikhs and Mollas. Starting from the first decade of the 20th century the social composition of the leadership slightly changed. A tribal leader, Sheikhs and Mollas' effective leadership was handed over to their urban sons educated in the Ottoman Sultan's state schools in Istanbul (Bruinessen 2003: ch.3). The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the new Republic totally denied the Kurdish Question. Prior to the PKK in all parts of Kurdistan's political parties, the leadership from 1920 to 1970 at the hands of Kurdish aristocratic families educated tribe leader's sons. But this time the defenders of the Kurdish cause and the leaders of a new national liberation movement would have to come both from peasantry and urban educated university students mainly belonging to the poorest strata of Kurdish society. This change has totally impacted the nature of the leadership of contemporary political parties in the last quarter of twentieth century Kurdish nation liberation struggle.

After the end of WWI the Ottoman Empire vanished, the Ottoman occupied Kurdistan was divided into three parts by the Sykes-Picot secret agreement between Britain, France and Russia (after the October Revolution in Russia, the Russian army withdrew from Kurdistan). The new rulers were not from the Middle East but from Europe. The Kurdish-Ottoman-Iran interrelationships were over, and to be replaced with new multi-actors; two European Christians, another Euro-Asian and two Middle Eastern Muslim states. Divided, partitioned and under the policies of annihilation and assimilation, Kurdistan became a trans-state and an international colony/question/issue between five different states.

Kurdistan was divided between the Ottomans and Iranians into two parts. The Ottoman part was divided between the British and French and their mandate regimes of Iraq and Syria on one side, and the Middle Eastern states of Turkey and Iran as the inheritance of the Ottoman and Persian Empires on the other side. In this way, the Kurds found themselves with no national and political status, totally a stateless nation. The situation caused a reactionary response from the Kurdish side; as such, Kurdish nationalism inevitably assumed a multifunctional and multidimensional character in reaction against the new powers. The centre of Kurdish nationalist elite's organisations moved from Istanbul to Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, and Beirut then to Berlin, Paris, London and Genève.

The partition of Kurdistan opened the way to Kurdish nationalism with more than one centre and characterized by multiple actors. Prior to the Ottoman failure, Istanbul was the centre for Kurdistan and Kurdish nationalists. In the beginning, the Kemalist republic promised that an autonomous Kurdistan would constitutionally be guaranteed. At the first written constitution in April 1920 Kurdistan was recognized, until the republican leaders secured the republic and turned their back by changing the constitution in 1923, and totally denying any existence of Kurds and Kurdistan (Olson: 1989, pp.40).

Chapter three explores the evolution of Kurdish nationalism in the geo-strategic and geo-political environment of Kurdistan, which has become a trans-state, inter-state and international question after the WWI. Inevitably it has caused the Kurdish nationalist actors acting for its self-determination to have the same characteristics of multiplicity. This dialectical phenomenon resulted in the actions, reactions and interactions not only among the hegemonic states, but also between Kurdistani political actors too. This chapter elaborates the British, French, Iranian and Turkish post-WWI policies towards the Kurds' ambition for independence, and their impacts and influences on the political actors of Kurdistan. In addition, this chapter offers an overview of the emergence of the modern active political parties in all four parts of Kurdistan.

The KDP-Iran dominated Kurdistan National liberation Movement was active in Rojhilat Kurdistan (Mahabad) for a short period of time (1942-47). Soon after, the KDP-Iraq was established under the leadership of educated townspeople of Suliamania, Kirkuk and Hewler. Its members chose Mustafa Barzani as their leader in exile. The KDP under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani negotiated with almost all the relevant factors involved in the Kurdish question (McDowall 1997 pp. 231-60). The KDP's national strategy was to gain regional autonomy for Bashur Kurdistan, but the tragic failure of 1975 insurgency caused the start of a new pluralist political environment in Bashur Kurdistan. The political and historical analysis of this failure and its impact on the evolution of Kurdish nationalism, in particular, the KDP's 1975 failure was the main catalyser for the emergence Kurdistan national liberation new movements in Bashur as well as in Bakur Kurdistan. These new movements adopted a completely different programme, strategy, and ideology, which represented the whole Kurdish nation and not just one tribe as before. The failure of the KDP, which, similarly to all past rebellions, had resulted in the most significant event in Kurdish history, and caused the emergence of modern radical political actors in Bashur; the PUK – the

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan – and the PKK – Kurdistan Workers’ Party. While the PUK was born as a reaction to the KDP-Iraq from inside, the PKK was totally different because it did not have any links to the KDP what so ever.

The PKK emerged as a modern radical revolutionary national liberation movement due to two very close major historical and political reasons; the first being that Kurdish nationalism failed from the beginning of 19th to the last quarter of 20th century in all parts of Kurdistan, and second due to the failure of the Turkish democratic revolutionist leftist movements in Turkey. The PKK was not the source of the Kurdish problem. On the contrary, it was the result of the excessive force of assimilation, annihilation and elimination of the reality of Kurds and Kurdistan carried out by multiple regional and global players. The chapter concludes talking about the emergence of the PKK as the interpreter and the representative of the vast majority of the society against the four states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, and it presents itself as an alternative to the tribal Kurdish political leadership that dominated the four parts of Kurdistan for a long time aiming towards national liberation of Kurdistan.

Historical Background

The mountainous region between the Iranian plateau and Anatolia from east to west and between the Caucuses and Mesopotamian deserts from north to south had accommodated many different ethnic and religious entities. Historically, this geography has been the home of many civilisations. Assyrian, Armenian, Kurds and Kurdistani peoples are the latest inhabitants of Kurdistan. After the end of the mandate regimes in Iraq and Syria, the British and the French left. The geography today is mainly claimed by Kurdish patriotic organisations, starting from the provinces of Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Sivas, Erzincan, Erzurum, Kars, Ardahan, and Iğdır in Bakur Kurdistan (Turkey); towards the cities and towns

of Maku, Khoy, Urmia, Sanandaj, Hamadan, Kirmanshah, Loristan, Iylam and Shush in northern part of Khuzestan in Rojhilat Kurdistan (Iran); through the towns and cities of Badra, Hamrin, Kirkuk, Mosul and Sinjar in Bashur Kurdistan (Iraq); all the way to Hasake to North of Rakka towards the Kurddag in Idlib province – Qamishlo, Kobani and Afrin - in Rojava Kurdistan (Syria). This geographical picture of Kurdistan, which has accommodated many ancient civilizations, empires, and states over thousands of years, is mostly a mountainous region(Jwaideh 2006: pp.3).

The Assyrian, Armenian and Kurdish inhabitants of this geography, called Kurdistan, so far have survived from direct and indirect extinction by the powerful foreign rulers. Assyrians are very scarce now, and occupy the regions around Mardin in Bakur Kurdistan, in Urmia and Salmas in Rojhilat (Eastern), in Hewler (Erbil) and Duhok in Bashur (Southern) with a small portion in Jazeera/Hasake province in Rojava (South-western) Kurdistan. The Armenians, after the genocide of 1915 carried out under Ottoman rule, lost all their southern territory, where they lived with the Kurds for thousands of years in a coexistent social and cultural brotherhood (Izady 2009: pp. 163-4). The Kurds have survived in large numbers in Kurdistan, despite the direct denial policies of the powerful four nation-states mentioned above. Along with Kurds, Assyrians and Armenians, some small portions of Azeri's, Turkmens, Turks, Arabs and Persians have also been living in Kurdistan's divided four parts. Although the inhabitants of Kurdistan have lived and shared the territory over the centuries, the creation of four nation-states in the Middle East has caused ethnic, religious, sectarian and civil wars as well as dramatic demographic changes.

The Kurds and Persians (Farsi) had a close relationship over the centuries, until the appearance of Turkic tribes from central Asia to Iran, and then towards Anatolia. The name of Iran didn't signify only one single ethnic group but a common name identifying groups of

peoples from different ethnic and religious communities, which were historically, culturally, socially, and linguistically close to each other. Iran was an empire ruling from India to central Asia and from Egypt to the Constantinople (Jwaideh 2006: pp. 11). The appearance of Turkish tribes and their occupation and settlement in Iran, Kurdistan and Anatolia with the establishment of two strong empires of the time - the Seljuk and Ottoman in Anatolia and Safavids in Iran, made them the strongest powers of the time. The Safavids claimed to be Kurdish in origin and had later converted to Azeri-Iran identity. The Azeri are of Turkic ethnicity and live in Tabriz, Urmia, Ardabil, and Zanzan under the Persian domination, which caused the demographical change of the Kurdistan region. The Azeri population increased between Persians, Kurds and Armenians; a tendency that can be observed until now due to their exodus and incursion through north of Tehran, Qazvin, Tabriz and Urmia. This route was the cause of the conflict that finally caused the total extinction of the inhabitants (Izady 2009: pp. 46-8). This route starts from central Asia to north Iran and from Horasan to Tabriz towards Erzurum and Sivas to central Anatolia towards Constantinople.

The Kurds and Arabs' relations were not strong, until the emergence of Islam. From the seventh century onwards, when Islam was spread out and expanded as a new religion in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and the Caucasus, the relations deteriorated when all the populations in the region had Islam imposed as the dominant religion. Muslim Arabs became the third rulers of Kurdistan after the emergence of Islam. Persians were the oldest rulers of Kurdistan followed by Arabs and Turkic dynasties. Turkic dynasties before entering Anatolia and Kurdistan in 1071, made a strategic alliance with Kurdish dynasties. The first alliance of Kurds and Turks in 1071 in Malazgirt resulted in the historical failure of Byzantium (McDowall 2000: p.23), and opened the gate of Anatolia to Turkic dynasties. The second alliance of Kurds and Turks was in 1514 during the Chaldiran war between Turkic dynasties, Ottomans and Safavids. And the third alliance was in 1919, at the Sivas and

Erzurum Congresses. Amongst all of the three mentioned alliances, the Kurds turned out to be the losers.

Ethnic Turks were Sunni Muslims, who ruled the Ottoman Empire. Overtime, the Safavids in Iran, also ethnically Turks, became the representative of the Shi'a Muslims. Kurdish dynasties' alliances were a major force in the triumph of the Ottoman Empire against the Safavids Empire, a factor, which opened the gate of today's Middle East and North Africa to the Ottomans. The third Kurdish and Turkish alliance was between 1919 and 1921 during the war of independence, which resulted in the birth of a new Turkish republic after the collapse of Ottoman Empire. If the Kurds had not allied with the Ottomans, they would have never been able to win the Battle of Marj Dabiq against the Mamluk of Egypt in August 1516 (Ibid: pp. 27-31).

In the three mentioned alliances, Kurdish dynasties were deceived by Turkic dynasties. In 1071, they should not have intervened in Kurdish affairs. That alliance to some extent was successful 1514 finds the allied as equals against the Safavids until 1639 when the Ottomans agreed with the Safavids the partition of Kurdistan into two parts. This was an overt breach of the 1514 agreement, mediated by Idris Betlisi between Yavuz Sultan Selim and Kurdish Princes of the time (McDowall 2000: pp. 28- 36).

Between 1514 and 1639, Kurdistan's biggest part was under Ottoman jurisdiction. From 1639 to 1806 the Ottomans were engaged in Europe and in the Balkans, and Kurdistan enjoyed a period of economic and cultural flourishing. From 1800 onwards, the Ottomans' centralisation policy, which for a limitation of Kurdish princes' power and which introduced compulsory conscription, caused major clashes between the Ottoman rule and Kurdish princes and dynasties. From the beginning of 1800 to the end of the WWI, the clashes continued.

In 1919 the new world system was taking its final framework. Turkish leaders, high army commanders of the Ottoman Empire, promised that a Kurdish and Turkish Republic would be built in accordance to the National Pact. The result of that alliance this time meant the total denial of all ethnic entities; mainly Assyrians, Armenians and Kurds in Kurdistan. The inhabitants of Kurdistan during the empires up to the final division of Kurdistan between the new actors did not face any policies of denial, assimilation, annihilation or elimination. This policy of total denial, assimilation, annihilation and elimination of all ethnic and religious differences in the new Republic of Turkey became an official state policy enshrined in the new constitution. The four nation-states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria established their national policies, each imposing one nation, one official language, one country and one flag (Ibid: Chapter. 9).

As mentioned earlier, Kurdistan was divided into two parts between Ottoman and Safavids empires in 1639 by the Kasri-Shirin treaty. The Ottoman part of Kurdistan until the beginning of 19th century was a semi-autonomous region. When the Ottomans failed to capture Vienna, the centralization of power put an end to the semi-autonomous status of Kurdish principalities. The Kurds started a series of rebellion throughout the 19th century. At the beginning of 20th century, Kurdish political organisations came to existence in Istanbul. Kurdish tribal leaders, Sheikhs and educated Kurdish army officers engaged in political activities. At the end of the WWI, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and Kurdish political organisations found themselves in a complicated political situation. The Ottomans ruled Bakur Kurdistan which was divided into three parts between the British, French and new republic of Turkey by the treaty Lausanne while, with the Treaty of Turkmanchai, the northern part of Rojhilat Kurdistan was again divided between Russian Tsar and the Qajar dynasty in 1827s (Ibid: pp. 70).

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain, Germany, France and Russia also intervened in the political and economic affairs of Ottomans and Iranians. Consequently they had relations with the Kurdish dynasties under the jurisdiction of Ottomans and Iranians, too. Germany, Britain, France and Russia were strong powers and all of them competed to control the land occupied by the Ottomans. The central crossing point was Kurdistan. Germany established the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, Russia had aspirations in the Middle East, North Africa and the Constantinople and Dardanelle Strips, France and Britain also wanted to limit the influence of Russia and Germany. Finally, the division of the Ottoman Empire was put into practice with the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916.

The First World War resulted in the failure of Germany and in the consequent disappearance of German influence in the Middle East. Russia was going through a revolution, and this affected its power in other areas of the world. Only Britain and France played their roles in dividing the massive land ruled by the Ottomans, which brought an end to the Ottoman Empire.

To summarize, Kurdistan was first divided into two parts between the Safavids and Ottoman Empires. The Safavids ruled Kurdistan was divided between Russia and Safavids in the 1820s. The Ottoman ruled Kurdistan was divided into three parts: one part under rule of France that later on was transferred to Syria; another part under the rule of Great Britain that later transferred to Iraq, and the third part was annexed by Ottoman land that became the new Turkish republic (Ibid: pp. 210-220).

Although at the end of the WWI the league of the Nations through the Treaty of Sevres promised an Independent Kurdistan, this was not implemented because of the interests of the great powers of the time as well as of the internal divisions of the Kurds and their lack of political leadership. If at that time, Kurdish political organisations that were mainly based in

Istanbul – Istanbul was also under the control of Britain, France and Italy –had a political unity and an organised armed force, the future would have been definitely different.

Between 1920 and 1938, four majors and more than twenty-eight medium scale uprisings were launched against the new republic of Turkey only in Bakur Kurdistan, though none of them was successful. After those uprisings, important demographic changes took place through special state security executive orders and forced settlements. The Kurds were forcibly removed from their homeland and replaced by Turks that had immigrated from the Balkans.

In Rojhilat Kurdistan, the Simko Agha Shikak's rebellion against the Shah of Iran lasted for more than twenty years. Simko looked for foreign help, firstly from Russian Tsars, and then when he was convinced that Russian support was not possible, he turned his direction towards Baghdad and tried to convince the British diplomatic mission to support him. None of those attempts were successful. Finally Simko was assassinated in a strategic plan in Shino town of Rojhilat Kurdistan in 1930. During WWII, the Soviet Union supported KDP-Iran when it declared the Republic of Kurdistan in Mahabad city, an experiment that lasted for about a year and ended with the execution of the president of the republic in 1947.

In Bashur Kurdistan, Sheikh Mahmoud was against Iraq's monarchy and he did not obtain the support of the British. Mustafa Barzani in 1931, 1945-7, and 1958-75 led the Kurdish uprisings against the Iraqi state; unfortunately, none of those uprisings were successful.

Rojava Kurdistan, after Kochgiri in 1921, Sheikh Said in 1925, Agirî in 1927-30 and Dersim in 1937-38, became the centre for those who fled because of their involvement in the Bakur Kurdistan rebellions. Those who fled from the mentioned rebellions in Bakur created political and cultural associations in Damascus, Aleppo and Beirut. Those activities,

particularly the cultural ones, along with the publishing houses, played a very important role in Kurdish communities in Lebanon and Syria, and spread out to other parts of Kurdistan as well.

Because of its geo-strategic and geo-political situation placed between Asia and Europe and at the centre of the Middle East, Kurdistan has always been targeted and often occupied by the powerful actors of the time; the Persians, Alexander the Great of Macedonia, the Roman Empire, the Byzantium Empire, the Islamic and Abbasid Empires, the Ottomans, the Sasanian and Safavids, the Russian Tsars, and finally the British and the French.. The peoples living in those areas suffered enormously. Many civilizations were removed and the people were massacred. It seems that the demography of Anatolia and Mesopotamia changed very often because of those occupations.

Anatolia had been cleansed from the Greeks and the Pontus people; Kurdistan from Kurds, Assyrians and Armenians who suffered the same destiny, in particular with the 1915 the Armenian Genocide. The foreign occupiers against the indigenous peoples of Assyria, Armenia and Kurdistan committed all those massacres and genocides.

From 1975 to the present, too many Kurdish political organisations in four parts of Kurdistan have struggled for national political rights and the freedom of Kurdish people. This short historical overview shows that the inhabitants of Kurdistan did not have an ambition to occupy or attack to their neighbours. In contrast, the newcomers always became the occupiers. The next section analyses the history of the emergence of these nationalist political Kurdish organisations, and their dominance in different parts of Kurdistan.

Emergence of Political Parties in Kurdistan

The Ottoman Centralization policy started in Kurdistan, when it could not occupy Vienna and lost its confidence of succession Europe (Pope and Pope 2011: pp.28). The

spread of a national consciousness among the East European, the Balkan countries and Arab people in the Middle East and North Africa against the Ottoman rule combined with the British, France and Italy's intentions to divide the Ottomans ruled territory, put pressure on the Kurds who were asked to pay more taxes and provide soldiers for the Ottoman Empire army. These measures were undermining the power of Kurdish Princes and dynasties (Klein 2011: pp. 6). A series of uprisings took place throughout the 19th century. The most effective ones were: Abdurrahman Pasha of Baban 1806, Mir Mohammad of Rawanduz 1815-30, Badr Khan Beg 1840-45 and Yazdan Shear 1850-55 of Botan. These were all against Ottoman's rule, and continued throughout three quarters of the 19th century. The most interesting one was Sheikh Ubaydullah Nihri's against the Ottoman and the Qajar rule in Iran. Sheikh Ubaydullah asked for help from British Consulates in Tabriz and in Bashkale-Van, but no positive answers were given (McDowall 2000: pp. 53). The 19th century Kurdish rebellions or uprisings failed and all Kurdish dynasties fell under the control of the central authority of the Ottoman Sultans and Iran Shahs.

The Ottoman Empire put an end to the local governance of Kurdish Princes in Kurdistan after Sheikh Ubaydullah Nihri. In order to fill the vacuum of power left by Kurdish Princes from 1880's onwards, Hamidiye Cavalries were established with the support of the Kurdish tribal leaders. These cavalries acted under the orders of the Ottoman army and were called to defend the land from Russian attacks and from Armenian insurgency. They were also used to prevent Kurdish uprisings against the state. Olson argues (Klein 2011: pp. 175) that the Hamidiye Cavalry needs to be considered from 1990 to 1914 as the fulcrum of the emergence of Kurdish nationalism (Ibid: pp. 175). The role they played in the oppression of the Armenians still prevents these two nations in co-existing as they had in the time before the Armenian genocide. The Ottoman Sultan established Hamidiye Cavalries from tribes, and the commanders of the Cavalries were from the head of Kurdish tribe leaders. Each Cavalry

regiment was separately under strict control of the Ottomans Fourth Army based in Erzincan (Ibid: pp. 3). The institution of these cavalries caused a further division of the Kurds into tribal lines. The main concentrations of the Hamidiye Cavalry regiments were the provinces of Erzurum, Bitlis and Van, where Kurds and Armenians had lived together for thousands of years.

Later it was the CUP – Committee of Union and Progression – and the coup supported by the Sultan that put an end to the Hamidiye Cavalries, which changed their name to the Light Tribal Cavalries. At that point they were still taking their orders from the Fourth Army based in Erzincan. When the Hamidiye Cavalries were established, for their sustainability and continuity, the tribal leader's sons and relatives were taken to Istanbul for education and to attend the army training schools. Few of those educated and trained individual elites were appointed to high positions in the Ottoman civil, bureaucratic and diplomatic services.

Just before this time, the first Kurdish nationalist organisation had been established in 1878 in Nihri, but had unfortunately lived for a very short time, recognised as the Kurdish League. This short-lived Kurdish League only played its role until the failed uprising of Sheikh Ubaydullah in 1881. Sheikh Ubaydullah tried to convince the British to get diplomatic and political help, however, because of his relations with the Ottomans and the interests of Russia and Great Britain in Iran, this diplomatic effort failed.

The Coup of CUP opened up a new opportunity to the educated Kurdish elite in Istanbul from 1908 onwards to establish Kurdish nationalist organisations. The first one was the – *Kurdistan Terraki ve Teavun Cemiyeti* – Kurdistan Society for Progress and Mutual Aid, sometimes called – *Kurdistan Taali ve Terraki Cemiyeti* – Society for the Rise and Progress of Kurdistan. The leadership of the society consisted of prestigious Kurdish dynasties or principalities, some educated Kurdish bureaucrats, tribal leaders and tribal

Hamidiye commanders. The Society for the Rise and Progress of Kurdistan was led by a handful educated Kurdish elite in Istanbul, among them, Amin Ali Badr Khan from Botan, Sheikh Abdul Qadir from Nihri of Shemzinan, and General Sharif Pasha a Baban from Suliamania; all of whom were hostile to the Unionists/CUP. Similar Kurdish groups were established in Diyarbakir, Bitlis, Mosul and Baghdad (McDowall 2000: pp. 93). These attempts by Kurdish educated elites show that they were in activity to bring different Kurdish groups in a united front from the Ottoman occupied Kurdistan. They were against the CUP's centralization policies. However, they were only staying in Istanbul and they did not organize a national unity among Kurdish tribes. In addition, they did attempt to establish any armed force. At that time, the Hamidiye Cavalry remnants were available in Botan, Serhed, Amed and Ruha (Urfa); there were strong and powerful Kurdish tribes able to rise in favour of Kurdish political and cultural rights. This meant that when the Ottoman Empire disappeared after WWI, the Kurdish leadership did not take that opportunity to secure their rights domestically and internationally.

At the end of the WWI, the League of Nations was established. The Ottoman Empire collapsed and the victorious powers were in Istanbul. Kurdish organisations of the time in Istanbul were not able to secure their rights neither domestically nor internationally. Although the Sevres Treaty was provided for the right of establishing an independent Kurdistan, the Kurdish leadership was not united in implementing it. In Kochgiri, in 1921, the rebellions and its attempts aimed at securing the Sevres Treaty were not successful. In Lausanne in 1923 the Lausanne Treaty replaced the Sevres and on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire a new republic emerged. Taking the advantages of the Lausanne Treaty, the new republic of Turkey denied all ethnic, political, cultural and social rights of Kurdish people. A policy of total denial was enshrined in the constitution of Turkey.

As the reaction of those polices, a new organisation called Azadi (Freedom) in Erzurum in Bakur Kurdistan was established by Yusuf Zia Beg scion of the old princely house of Bitlis and one of the Kurdish deputies who lost his seat in the Grand National Assembly in 1923. Khalid Beg Jibrán, probably a founding member of Azadi, who in his time had commanded the two Hamidiya regiments raised from among his tribesman; his kinsman by marriage, Sheikh Said of Palu, whose reputation as a leading Naqshbandi sheikh made his taking a place of pilgrimage for the devout; finally Captain Ihsan Nuri Pasha and Yusuf Zia's brother Riza, fellow officers in the Seventh Army Corps quartered at Diyarbakir where, no doubt, they encouraged by the local branch head, Akram Beg Jamilzada (McDowall 2000: pp. 192-3). The leadership of the Azadi organisation understood the real attention of new Kemalist republic, and were therefore preparing for a general uprising in 1925. However, the early birth of the uprising caused the failure, and the leadership of Azadi was hanged in Bitlis and Diyarbakir. Also the Sheikh Said led uprising failed during the end of the spring of 1925. Some of the local leaders of the Azadi were able to seek refuge in the French mandate of Syria.

Komala-i Serbakho-i Kurdistan – The Association for the Independence of Kurdistan – in Silemani, Bashur Kurdistan, in 1921 (McDowell 2009: pp. 174) was established by a handful of educated townspeople. They were aiming for an independent Kurdistan, and hostility towards Baghdad's rule as well as Sheikh Mahmoud Barzanji's tribal rule. The Sheikh closed down their weekly paper, Bang-i Kurdistan. Although they did not organise an uprising, however, their cultural activities continued in different forms. Sheikh Mahmoud Barzanji's revolt also failed in Bashur Kurdistan.

With the ruthless suppression of Kurdistan between 1924 and 1927 by the new Kemalist republic, the remnants of Azadi from Sheikh's said revolt sought refuge in Syria

and Lebanon. In October 1927, some of those exiles met in Bhamdoun, Lebanon, and established a new party, *Khoybun or Xoybun* (The Independence). Khoybun was active in Rojava Kurdistan and moved from Beirut-Damascus-Aleppo to support and lead Agirî/Ararat in Bakur Kurdistan. They were also active internationally through an alliance with Armenian Liberation Movement.

Khoybun actively tried to support and lead the Agirî Revolt in Bakur, in Rojava, Bashur and Rojhilat Kurdistan. It went even further to launch a guerrilla war from Rojava and Bakur Kurdistan in order to draw attention to the Turkish army attacks in Agirî Mountain. The result was again failure, and the leader of the Agirî Revolt, Ihsan Nuri Pasha, sought refuge in Iran and lived there until 1976 when he died from an accident.

Rojhilat Kurdistan was not immune from these Kurdish revolts. Simko Shikak was one of the most resilient Kurdish tribal leaders in Urmia and the surrounding areas of Rojhilat Kurdistan. He was active from 1905 to 1930 until he was assassinated in Shino town. However, Simko's revolt caused many problems between Kurdish people and Assyrians. Many Kurds joined his revolt from Bakur and Bashur. Simko's revolt also failed as the previous Kurdish revolts in Bakur and Bashur because of the lack of organization of national unity and not organizing a national army with an effective leadership.

During WWII in Mahabad, *Komalay Jiyanaway Kurd* – The Society for Revival of the Kurds – (Komala JK) emerged in September 1942, which then evolved to Kurdistan Democratic Party; PDK-Iran in Rojhilat Kurdistan. In the four parts of Kurdistan, for the first time in Rojhilat Kurdistan a political party was supported by the Soviet Union. The KDP-Iran was also supporting the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union was preventing Germany's expansionist policies towards the north and north-west of Iran in favour of Socialist system. Rojhilat Kurdistan is situated at west and North West of Iran. The KDP declared the

Kurdistan Republic on 22 January 1946, and it collapsed in December of 1946, lasting less than a year. Kurdistan republic with the capital city of Mahabad came to the political arena with the direct support of the Soviet Union and collapsed because of the Soviet Union; the US and Great Britain declared victory and withdrew their military forces from Iran. After the failure of the Kurdistan republic the President of the republic with two of the KDP-Iran leadership were executed, and the KDP-Iran continued to exist until 1979 when the Iranian Popular Revolution occurred. This time an intellectual called Doctor Abdurrahman Qassimlu led the KDP-Iran and Mahabad became the centre of political and national struggle of Rojhilat Kurdistan.

In Bashur Kurdistan after Sheikh Mahmoud Barzanji's revolt in Suliamania and Kirkuk, Kurdish patriots and leftist townspeople founded the four small organisations of Brayati (Brotherhood), Darkar (Woodcutters), Hiwa (Hope), and Azadi (Freedom), which were active from 1930. When the KDP-Iran emerged in Mahabad it had a direct impact on Suliamania and Kirkuk's educated stratum of society. Those educated townspeople of Bashur Kurdistan belonging to the four small organisations previously mentioned, together organised the KDP-Iraq in August 1946 in Bashur Kurdistan. The KDP-Iraq in Baghdad-Suliamania and Kirkuk became the most effective underground political party after the failure of the Republic of Kurdistan in Rojhilat at end of WWII.

The KDP-Iraq emerged at the beginning as a Bashur branch of KDP-Iran. However, the failure of the Kurdistan republic, the execution of Qazi Mohammed the president of the republic and the general secretary of the party the KDP-Iran, lost its influence and dominance. Mustafa Barzani was chosen as the general secretary of the KDP-Iraq, while he was in Mahabad as the Chief of General Staff of the Peshmerga Forces. When the republic

collapsed, Mustafa Barzani moved Bashur and then to the Soviet Union and stayed there until July 1958's coup.

In 1957, Osman Sabri, Abdul Hamid Derwish and Nureddin Zaza founded the KDP-Syria following the example of the KDP-Iraq. The Syrian government used to imprison and then send its leaders into exile. In 1958, a coup d'état took place and an amnesty was issued which allowed Mustafa Barzani to be returned from the Soviet Union to Baghdad. At that stage, the KDP-Iraq was recognised as a legal political party and it started to participate in political activities in Baghdad and Bashur Kurdistan's major cities and towns. The 1961 rebellion was led by the KDP and Bashur Kurdistan becomes the source of revolutions for Kurdistan patriots from four parts of Kurdistan. The KDP-Iraq became a prominent actor not only in Iraq and Bashur Kurdistan, but also in all parts of Kurdistan.

When the KDP-Iran emerged, it was considered as the mother party to the KDP-Iraq; from 1958 onwards especially after the 1961 uprising, the KDP-Iraq took over the leadership and played the role of mother party in four parts of Kurdistan. However, this approach caused clashes between both KDPs. A group of KDP-Iran very well educated university students and intellectuals led by Abdullah Muini, Sulaiman Muini, Ismail Sharifzadeh moved to Bashur Kurdistan. The KDP-Iran leadership was divided into two groups. The secretary of the party Ahmed Toufiq was supporting Mustafa Barzani while the majority of the cadres of the KDP-Iran were supporting leftist ideology and socialism.

In Bashur Kurdistan the KDP-Iraq leadership was also not united. There was a deep ideological and political conflict between Mustafa Barzani, Ibrahim Ahmed and Jalal Talabani led factions. Mustafa Barzani's leadership forced the Ahmed and Talabani faction to leave the KDP-Iraq, who fled to Iran in 1964. Later, Ahmed and Talabani factions from Iran moved to Bashur and reunited with Barzani. Then, in 1966 they went to Baghdad, and in

1966 they were reunited with Barzani's leadership again. Finally, in 1970 the Iraqi government and the KDP-Iraq leadership agreed on an autonomy agreement, which was declared on 11th of March 1970. The origin of their disagreement was Kirkuk and this continued until 1974 when the fight started with the government of Iraq.

After the 1938 Dersim Genocide, Bakur Kurdistan's political situation underwent a very long period of silence. However, in 1965 the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Turkey - KDP-Turkey was established. Although the KDP-Turkey chose a passive mode of struggle with a reformist programme, the state and government of Turkey killed the leader of the KDP-Turkey in an orchestrated accident and imprisoned the other leaders. The KDP-Turkey from its birth was prevented from producing a radical programme and radical mode of struggle.

Young educated wealthy Kurdish university students and intellectuals were sympathetic to nationalist ideas and they were supporting Mustafa Barzani; the KDP-Turkey obviously was a branch of the KDP-Iraq. Those educated Kurds in Istanbul and Ankara were politically active within the Workers' Party of Turkey. From 1969 onwards those students left Turkish Workers' Party and organised some legal organisations under the name of *Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Hearths* – Dogu Devrimci Kulturel Ocaklari – DDKO. After the 12 March 1971 coup in Turkey, the majority of active Kurdish and Turkish leftist students were imprisoned. In 1974, with the general amnesty, those prisoners were released and most of them participate in different Kurdish and Turkish political organisations.

The collapse of the KDP led rebellion in 1975 caused a deep division within its leadership and it was fragmented into different factions. From 1958 to 1975, within 17 years, the KDP-Iraq leadership had enormous geo-political and geo-strategic opportunity to secure national and political status for Kurdish people within the state of Iraq. The political and

diplomatic situation of the Middle East was providing this opportunity. That opportunity for a successful resistance was once again lost because of ineffective leadership, this time led by Mustafa Barzani and the leadership of the KDP-Iraq.

On 6th of March 1975, Iran and Iraq agreed in Algeria to terminate their disagreements and hostilities. Iran stopped supporting the KDP-Iraq led revolts, and in return Iraqi government's concessions to Iran about the three small islands in the Gulf and border disagreements of Shat al Arab. The leadership of KDP-Iraq, Mustafa Barzani, failed and left Bashur seeking refuge in Iran and European countries.

During that turmoil, Jalal Talabani organised a new movement separate from the KDP-Iraq. *The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan*, the PUK, emerged with leftist ideas as a united front consisting of three political factions of Bashur Kurdistan. Mainly, they were from Suliamania and Kirkuk and to some degree from Hewler as well. The PUK had its first congress in Damascus and was supported by Syria. From June 1976, the PUK became a major opposition to the KDP-Iraq. Jalal Talabani as the representative of the KDP-Iraq (prior to separation from the KDP-Iraq) in Damascus and Beirut had a wider relationship with both camps of the time.

Political parties and political organisations emerged as the mean to defend national and political rights of Kurdish people in four parts of Kurdistan at different times and in different situations. Pre and post WWI, Kurdish political and cultural organisations mainly failed to achieve any gains to secure national and political rights for their people. The opportunity of WWII, which caused the weakness of Iranian state in governing Rojhilat Kurdistan, resulted in the declaration of Kurdistan Republic, which, as mentioned above, failed due to the lack of support from the KDP-Iran. The KDP-Iraq led revolt of 1961-75 also failed. The failures of Azadi, Xoybun and the KDPs had a consequence, which was the birth of the PKK between

1972 and 1978. First it started with just one man and later from 1973 onwards, it consisted of a clandestine group of students willing to continue the struggle. This struggle evolved to become the PKK and a guerrilla movement spread out to four parts of Kurdistan. However, the PKK also has not made any concrete victories so far unless if it secures Rojava Kurdistan.

Domination of the KDP in all parts of Kurdistan

Kurdistan National Liberation Movement (KNLM) in the post WWII world, allied with other struggles for independence, carried out similar independent struggles to other oppressed nations such as in Vietnam, Cuba, Mozambique and others. Most of those independence struggles were supported by the Soviet Union. The KDP-Iran was supported by the Soviet Union as well, and it was with the direct support of the Soviet Union that the KDP-Iran declared the Kurdistan Republic. At the end of the WWII, the Soviet Union withdrew from Iran and the result was that the Kurdistan Republic collapsed within less than a year. After the collapse of the Kurdistan Republic, the KDP-Iraq and its leader Mustafa Barzani assumed leadership. As Mustafa Barzani had been in the Soviet Union for eleven years, he could obtain Soviet support for the KNLM. Kurdish political parties and their activists of the time were mostly leftist and socialists supporting Soviet Union's policies. Between 1958 and 1975, Bashur Kurdistan became the centre of Kurdish nationalism for all parts of Kurdistan. From 1958 onwards, the new government of Iraq and the KDP-Iraq were supported by the Soviet Union.

The KDP-Iraq led by Mustafa Barzani was the most prominent political actor of all KDPs in four parts of Kurdistan. The KDP-Iraq during its formation up to the return of Barzani from Soviet Union in 1958 was always very fragmented. Those fractions were: conservatives mainly from tribal leaders, Patriot socialists, and Nationalists and Communists.

As soon as Barzani arrived in Baghdad, the sleeping cells awoke causing a faction, which was officially recognized in 1964.

During the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad, the KDP-Iraq was supposed to be a branch of the KDP-Iran. However, that situation changed after the collapse of the Kurdistan Republic. During the revolt in Bashur from 1961 to 1975, the KDP-Iran did not have any role and was acting as the KDP-Iraq's Rojhilat Kurdistan branch. Ahmad Toufiq, the general secretary of KDP-Iran, followed exactly the same political programs of the KDP-Iraq and took orders from it. This situation caused internal divisions of the KDP-Iran. In fact the popularity of Barzani and its leading role of the Peshmerga war against the Iraqi army brought most of political organisations in four parts of Kurdistan under the umbrella of the KDP-Iraq. KDP-Iran lost its leading role and began to take orders from Mustafa Barzani. The majority of the leaders of the KDP-Iran did not accept Mustafa Barzani's close relations with the Shah of Iran.

A young educated group of KDP-Iran cadres led by Ismail Sharifzadeh, Abdullah Muini and Molla Aware took a revolutionary and radical approach. Almost forty young educated university students left their studies and joined the KDP-Iran in Bashur Kurdistan. As soon as they realized KDP-Iran's leadership was in line with Mustafa Barzani's conservative ideas, their internal debates increased and first fragmentation took place in mid 1960s. Most of them returned to Rojhilat Kurdistan in 1967-68 to start a guerrilla war in which most of them were killed.

In Bakur Kurdistan the KDP-Turkey was established by a group of Kurdish patriots and led by Faik Bucak, a prominent lawyer from the well-known tribe of Bucak from Siverek of Urfa province. Faik Bucak was killed in a car incident in Urfa. Dr. Şivan (Said Kirmizitoprak, a medical Doctor from Dersim) and Said Elçi (a lawyer from Bingol) were in

Bashur Kurdistan and both lost their lives in a tragic conspiracy and designed plot. This party was not immune from the KDP-Iraq's conservative political approach. The KDP-Iraq was claiming to be the mother and dominant party of the KNLM. For this reason, it was not letting KDP-Turkey and KDP-Iran act against Turkey and Iran. Therefore, a faction of KDP-Turkey and KDP-Iran took a radical approach against the conservative policies of Mustafa Barzani and the KDP-Iraq, a move that they paid for with their lives.

KDP-Syria was already established in 1957 and was led by Osman Sabri an intellectual and patriot activist from the Sheikh Said's rebellion from Adiyaman (a province in Bakur Kurdistan on the western side of the Euphrates), who moved to Damascus after the failure of the rebellion. KDP-Syria was the third KDP to be established from the remnants of the Xoybun. They had learnt from the failure of the Agirî rebellion.

The KDP-Iraq from 1958 to 1975 became the absolute dominant political party in all four parts of Kurdistan. The Kurdish rebels thought that, due to his experience in the Soviet Union, the Mustafa Barzani leadership would carry out a successful revolt, which would be an example to the other three parts of Kurdistan. Therefore, he gained the support of the majority of Kurdish people from four parts of Kurdistan. Most of the socialist and patriotic educated intellectuals and ordinary people joined the revolution and became Peshmerga. The KDP-Iraq and its leader Mustafa Barzani gained the respect at a national and international level.

However, Mustafa Barzani's leadership was not able to take advantage of that national unity and national support from all parts of Kurdistan. The KDP-Iraq and its leadership did not organise and did not educate their people. They did not make a strategic choice between foes and friends. The collapse of the revolution meant the end of the KDP-Iraq's domination in the Kurdish political arena. The end of the KDP-Iraq domination opened up a new era for

educated, but also the most disadvantaged stratum of Kurdish people to organise themselves and their society in order to regain the lost opportunities.

Failure of the KDP in 1975 and its Fragmentation

As mentioned earlier, if the KDP-Iraq had released itself from its tribal and family-clan relationship, and if it had made a strategic choice of foes and friends, the direction of the revolution of Bashur Kurdistan would have definitely been different. Domestic, regional and international situation provided the opportunity of securing the national-democratic rights of Kurdish people. The agreement between the KDP-Iraq and the Iraqi government on 11th March 1970 was a great achievement. However, the KDP failed to take the initiative to convince the Iraqi government that they would not continue relations with the Shah of Iran and will stay as a part of Democratic Iraq. The 1975 failure was again a dramatic recurrence in Kurdish history. The conservative leadership with its policies caused another national failure in Bashur Kurdistan, which affected the national psychology of four parts of Kurdistan people and to some degree showed the idea that a Kurdish unification would not be possible under the KDP-Iraq leadership.

There was a huge reaction against of the KDP leadership after the 1975 failure. The party further fragmented into more than five different fractions; these fractions were led by Jalal Talabani who founded the PUK, Mahmoud Osman who founded KDP-Fourth Congress, Ali Asker who founded the Socialist Movement, and Noushirwan Mustafa who founded the Komala and Pasok party.

The KDP-Iraq leadership accepted the failure and tried to bring all the fractions into one united front. However, it was too late. The KDP-Iraq lost its effective leadership not only

on Bashur Kurds but also on all Kurds around the world. KDP-Iraq lost its prominence and lost its dominance in all parts of Kurdistan. The entire sister organisations of KDPs in all parts of Kurdistan were fragmented into different organisations.

Most of the villages of Southern Kurdistan were razed by the regime. Vietnam style camps were established. For example, all the geographically strategic villages were destroyed and tens of inhabitants were forced to reside in military camps in the desert.

Hundreds of thousands of people became asylum seekers in Iran and thousands of those people clandestinely found shelter with their relatives in Bakur Kurdistan; and the Turkish authorities were aware of some. The KDP-Iraq also knew that their members were among them. Residents of both sides of the borders between Bakur and Bashur were relatives. After the failure of 1975 the KDP-Iraq started to reorganize in the areas close to Bashur in Bakur Kurdistan. To what degree Turkish National Intelligence Agency (MIT) was aware of the KDP-Iraq's presence in mountains of Bakur is not known.

The KDP-Iraq and the PUK in the spring and summer of 1978 in Hakkari province of Bakur Kurdistan both involved in a civil war. While both parties were from Bashur Kurdistan their battlefield was Bakur Kurdistan. The reason for their fight was that the Hakkari province was the border of Bahdinan region of Bashur Kurdistan where KDP-Iraq and Barzani were dominant. The PUK wanted to cross from that area to reach Syria to bring guns and ammunition to fight the Baghdad regime. As a result of the fight from the PUK side, almost 800 Peshmerga lost their lives due to the internal fragmentation and ideological division of the KDP-Iraq. This event happened only after three years from the formation of the PUK and caused serious damage not only to PUK but also to the entire Kurdistani people.

The collapse of the KDP-Iraq led revolt in Bashur Kurdistan meant the collapse of the domination of Barzani family. A new stage of Kurds and Kurdistan's Pluralist political

environment not only in Bashur, but also in other three parts of Kurdistan was born. In Bashur, except for KDP-Iraq, leftist socialist movements emerged. Similar examples followed in Bakur and Rojhilat and Rojava Kurdistan too. Most of the factions in the four parts of Kurdistan to some degree were related to the KDP-Iran or the KDP-Iraq.

During the popular revolution of Iran in 1979, the KDP-Iran took the initiative and returned from exile and liberated almost 40 % of Rojhilat Kurdistan and was negotiating the autonomy with the Iranian government in Tehran. This time the KDP-Iraq allied with Iranian Revolution Corps, and began operations against the KDP-Iran Peshmergas and Rojhilat Kurdistan from 1983 onwards controlled by Iranian security forces with the help of the KDP-Iraq (my personal observations). Afterwards, the 1975 failure the KDP-Iraq firstly played a negative role in Hakkari, Bakur Kurdistan against the Peshmergas of the PUK, secondly in Rojhilat Kurdistan against the KDP-Iran, thirdly by inviting Saddam Hussein's four hundred tanks and taking control of Hewler from the PUK, and fourthly in its alliance with Turkish state against the PKK guerrillas from 1983 up to now. The KDP-Iraq had an opportunity to play a very negative role in leading the KNLM, however the facts on the ground tell a different story.

The emergence of the PKK, which is unrelated to the KDPs, broke the taboo of traditional Kurdish nationalism led by primordial tribal, sheikhs and princes. Those who organised the PKK were all from the poorest stratum of Kurdish society. This will be explained later in further detail.

The Impacts of the Failure of Bashur on the other three parts of Kurdistan

The most disastrous impact of the failure of 1975 was on Bashur Kurdistan. The people lost their confidence with the leadership and its political project. More than 5000 villages

were razed. The entire cultural and social history destroyed and the people of those razed villages were exiled to southern Iraqi deserts for cultural, linguistic and national assimilation. Those who actively participated in the revolution found refuge in Iran, Europe and the US.

It was history repeating itself in Kurdistan. Why did the political leadership not take the initiative of holding conferences for their militants in order to analyse what went wrong? Why did the Peshmerga force collapsed leading to hundreds of thousands people becoming refugees in Iran? Why did the leadership choose to move to America and Europe, leaving the masses under the boots of the Iran and Iraq's armies? It looked like the leadership had signed an agreement with the Shah of Iran not to start a struggle against Baghdad in change of a comfortable life in Karaj, Tehran, London, Paris, New York and many more.

Mustafa Barzani was sick with cancer and moved to America for treatment. The most crucial impact was on Bashur and Rojhilat and to a small degree on Rojava Kurdistan. Bakur Kurdistan was already undergoing a very harsh attacks treatment by the Turkish army. The most important result was the KDP-Iraq losing its monopoly of Kurdistan Liberation Movement in all four parts of Kurdistan. The pre 1975 era was the era of the dominance of the KDP-Iraq all over Kurdistan. Although the failure had a negative psychological impact on all parts of Kurdistan, at the end of the monopoly of the KDP-Iraq was a positive development in terms of opening space for new, modern, democratic and radical movements.

The Emergence of the PKK

The emergence of the PKK is somehow the story of the childhood of its founder Abdullah Öcalan. He grew up in a typical Kurdish small village and it was during his primary school education that he conceived his future political organisation. As a very talented schoolboy he shows his passion to the village Mosque's Imam, school's teachers as well as

his family and the village population. At the age of 10-12, he rejects old rules and traditions of the village and the family.

Bakur Kurdistan, Turkey and then the Middle East were to observe a new radical emergence, which were unusual in other political entities up to 1973. In Bakur Kurdistan, up to the emergence of the PKK, a Kurdish Prince, a Sheikh or a tribal leader led all the revolts and uprisings. Since the birth of the PKK, the political landscape of Bakur Kurdistan, then Rojava Kurdistan changed quite considerably. This time the leaders of Kurdistan national liberation would be from the most disadvantaged and the poorest stratum of Kurdish society.

Bakur Kurdistan underwent a period of total silence when in 1938 the Turkish Armed Forces – the TAF – committed its atrocious genocide in Dersim. The families of the participants of Sheikh Said, Agirî and Dersim were sent to exile in Anatolia for assimilation. In Turkish official communications, Bakur Kurdistan is just an East and South East region of the seventh regions of Turkey. A special East Reform plan was implemented to totally assimilate and annihilate Kurdish existence. In order to implement that plan, a Martial Law was declared in Bakur and continued until the 1950s. During this decade those Kurds attending universities in Istanbul, Ankara and in Amed united publishing journals in order to preserve the sense of Kurdish identity, which was developing among young educated university students and intellectuals. Turkish leftist organisations were already active in universities. By the 1960s, with the impacts of Cuba and Vietnamese Guerrilla wars, Kurdish and Turkish university students were also slowly moving from a passive mode of struggle to a more radical one. Some Turkish and Kurdish university students went to Syria and Lebanon to undertake guerrilla training and education. They returned to Turkey and started a guerrilla fight against the Turkish state at the beginning of 1970s.

The 12th March coup crashed all political organisations harshly. Turkish left collapsed and failed to lead a revolution and the attempts of launching a guerrilla war failed dramatically. The leaders of the guerrillas were either killed or executed. Kurdish nationalist activists were imprisoned, and after 1974 general amnesty released.

Abdullah Öcalan was a student during that turmoil. In one hand he had witnessed his family and villages traditional life, later, after his education in Ankara; he became a civil servant in Amed – the unofficial capital city of Bakur Kurdistan – and observed closely the social, cultural and political daily life of the people. On the other hand, as an anti-traditionalist in Istanbul and Ankara, he witnessed radical Turkish and Kurdish political activists' struggle and how they sacrificed their life for freedom, justice, equality, democracy and socialism. He expressed the idea that 'Kurdistan is a colony' and there was no possibility to do legal politics freely in order to obtain an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. He participated in students' protests and demonstrations, and he was imprisoned in 1972. While in prison he decided what he wanted to do once release. He decided that in order to survive the Turkish state, he should establish a strong and equipped group supported by scientific, independent knowledge, and independent from both the Primitive Collaborationist Kurdish Nationalists and the Kemalist Turkish Social-chauvinist Left.

As Ismail Beşikçi (Beşikçi 2004) mentions, the PKK does not have a pre-historical legacy, in other words it is unlike the other Kurdish organisations and cannot be explained as the historical primordial continuation of Kurdish nationalism. Nevertheless, carrying some primordial and ethno-symbolic elements, the PKK is a modernist occurrence Kurdish nationalism history. At its emergence, its overwhelming concentration on national elements over the years by changed domestic and international factors has moved from nationalism towards women liberated ecologic democratic socialism.

The future of the PKK will define itself as different in terms of ideology, organisation, political stance, political culture, research and analysis methods, historical analysis of history, politics, and social reality from other parties.

Conclusion

The evolution of Kurdish nationalism in Kurdistan has not taken a straightforward process. It has taken a very complex and complicated time to ensure survival to today's modern era. The complex and complicated nature of Kurdish nationalism is hidden in the diversity of wider contexts. The Kurds are divided socially, culturally, politically and geographically. Above all, Kurdistan's land has been divided since 1639 into two parts and from 1923 into four parts between four nation states. Tribal and clan lines are still strong in many rural and urban areas of Kurdistan. In Bakur Kurdistan, there are divisions among Sunni, Alevi, and Yezidi in terms of religion and in terms of dialect Kurmanj and Zaza; In Rojava Sunni, Alevi and Yezidi; in Rojhilat Sunni and Shiite, Yaresan/Ahl Al Haq Kurmanj and Soran; in Bashur Sunni, Shiite, Yezidi, Yaresan/Ahl Al Haq and Shabak with Soran, Bahdinan and Hawaraman/Goran. Organising a united national liberation movement with these differences can be the most difficult national liberation movement in the whole world. Above mentioned complex and complicated social, cultural, political and geographical divisions in Kurdistan have always prevented Kurdistan national liberation movement to achieve its national and political goals; these domestic and regional complex issues, with no international support in modern times, have made the problem even harder. During the whole 20th century Bakur, Rojhilat and Bashur Kurdistan actively resisted for their rights but all have failed. In Rojava, cultural resistance and a passive mode of struggle had been significant until 2011.

This chapter has provided the historical background of the evolution of Kurdish nationalism and explained its failure in guaranteeing the national and political rights of the Kurdish people. Although there have been social, cultural, political and geographical boundaries in front of Kurdish political parties of the time, there had also been opportunities if the political parties would have had sacrificed their family and tribal interests to their national interest's to make gains. For example, at the same time the Sheikh Said Rebellion was occurring in Bakur, Simko's Rebellion was happening in Rojhilat and Barzanji's Rebellion in Bashur. If they had collaborated, the Sevres Treaty would have been implemented. The failure of not implementation of Sevres Treaty was the huge division among Kurdish leadership; some were supporting the Sultan, some supporting Kemalists and some of them supporting British who were based in Istanbul and Baghdad. A disunity at the top level of Kurdish leadership caused the 20th century was lost as 19th century with no gains for Kurdistan. The last quarter of the 20th century gave birth to the PKK, which since 1970s has continued its struggle in different modes. The PKK's radical emergence and its radical modern programme and radical guerrilla movement was going to be a big surprise. The biggest surprise in Kurdish national liberation will only happen when the PKK/KCK, PUK and KDP with all the other Kurdish political, cultural, and civil society organizations leave their group interests behind talk and walk nationally.

Chapter 4

The PKK as a Radical National and Political Movement-Formation

Introduction

Chapter four focuses in depth on the formation and emergence of the PKK as the most radical ideological, political and national movement of 1970s in Bakur Kurdistan. It will also explain how its influences gradually expanded to the other parts of Kurdistan. The PKK is unlike all other Kurdistani political parties, which do not have an organic primordial social-root (related to Kurdish princes, Sheiks, or tribal leaders). For instance, the Badirkhan family, the Nihri family, the Barzani family, the Talabani, Seyid Riza, Sheikh Said or the Shikak tribe leaders such as Simko Shikak all belonged to the KNLM at a time of Kurdistan history, and all failed. Most of the tribal leader's sons somehow led parties in Bakur, Rojava, Rojhilat and Bashur Kurdistan. Qazi Mohammed, Ihsan Nuri Pasha, and Khalid Beg Jibrán were not related to these families. On the contrary, the PKK as an ideological-political-national actor was formed among the network of undergraduate university students in Ankara the capital city of Turkey, whose members came from the poorest stratum of Kurdish society. Abdullah Öcalan, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Cemil Bayik, Mustafa Karasu, Riza Altun, Mazlum Dogan, Mehmet Hayri Durmus and Ibrahim Aydın (an additional four members were Turkish: Hakki Karer, Baki Karer, Kemal Pir and Duran Kalkan) were students highly influenced by the Leftist Revolutionary Socialist ideology and who formed their ideological and political network in Ankara where they started to discuss their political discourse in Bakur Kurdistan provinces. They challenged the already occupied political space in Bakur Kurdistan provinces with Kurdish political groups mostly supported by the KDP-Iraq. The group approached the other Kurdish and Turkish leftist organisations in that period, from 1973 to

1978 as an ideological group, mainly focused on political research and investigation before evolving into a party as the PKK on 27th November 1978.

From November 1978 to September 1980, the PKK entered its most difficult time in the history of its formation because of the harsh measures taken by the Turkish state, which wanted to destroy it totally. The party's national liberation discourse and the way it had analysed the Kurdistan Liberation struggle with the purpose of the Kurdish question was seen by the Turkish state as a danger posed to its stability. This was because of the radical revolutionary relationship and ideological orientation of the PKK with the Turkish left, combined with Kurdistan patriotism. According to Cemil Bayik, to a great extent the PKK did try to make an impact and influence the Kurdish nationalist organisation of the time in Ankara to act together on the principles the PKK stood for, but none of them accepted their ideological and political principles.

According to the PKK's historiography, it had offered other Kurdish nationalist organisations in Ankara and in Amed (Diyarbakir in Turkish) to get together in a united front to debate the Kurdish Question and create a national front. However, the mentioned Kurdish political organisations rejected the idea (Bayik 1998: pp.85-6). The chapter will also look at reformulation of a national liberation strategy and ideological confrontation with the KDP-Iraq oriented Kurdish nationalism in all four parts of Kurdistan and, finally, it will talk about the PKK's platform aiming at establishing political relations with Kurdish parties and other organization in the Middle East such as the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. The PKK had the opportunity to receive guerrilla training in the Palestinian camps before the 1980 coup in Bakaa valley, Lebanon. Unlike other Kurdish organisations, the PKK did not choose to be a refugee organisation outside Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey, rather it wanted to use the wider platform of the Middle East for education, training and to gain the skills of guerrilla tactics in order to launch a long-term guerrilla war against the military coup in Turkey. After

the 12th September 1980 military coup, most Turkish and Kurdish liberal and leftist organisations left Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey to reach European countries, and over time they were passive from the political developments and lost their strength. Those who resisted in the prisons and continued the struggle actively in all spheres of life gained strength from people, and mobilised the people into politically strong movements.

The formation of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries then became the PKK it was a radical revolution in the history of evolution Kurdish nationalism and it broke the taboo of traditional Kurdish nationalism and revolted to synthesis of primordial, ethno-symbolist and modernist-constructionist contemporary patriotic nationalism.

Emergence of the ‘Kurdistan Revolutionaries’ in 1973-1978 and the Multiple Challenges

The radical emergence of the PKK in Bakur Kurdistan’s political history started with the idea of national right to self-determination for the Kurdish nation, and was discussed in all political debates of the time in Ankara and Istanbul. In one of the DDKO (*Devrimci Dogu Kultur Ocaklari*, Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths) seminars, the topic was whether ‘Kurdistan is a classic colony’ or not. The Seminar was given by Abdullah Öcalan as one of the university students and a member of the DDKO. He argues that ‘Kurdistan is a classic colony in its kind and its existence even had been denied and policies of annihilation and assimilation have been in practice. The only way of its liberation would be through a prolonged popular armed struggle’. This idea was put forward by the future PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in that seminar, according to Sherefettin Kaya and Serhat Bucak (A History from Fire- A documentary recorded by researcher Ahmed Hamdi Akkaya, available on YouTube) whose presence created a fear among the DDKO members. Such a radical

emergence had never publicly been heard because the aim of DDKO was promoting cultural matters and organizing social events. Between the audiences there were three prominent DDKO activists Musa Anter, Sherefettin Kaya and Serhat Yusuf Bucak who met Öcalan after the seminar in order to know who he was. After that speech, the DDKO Istanbul branch terminated Öcalan's membership because of his radical approach to the Kurdish Question (Yucel 2014: pp.110-112).

As mentioned earlier, Abdullah Öcalan was born in very poor village family in Amara (Ömerli in Turkish) village belonging to Halfeti town of Urfa province close to the Euphrates banks, from a Kurdish father and a Turkish descent mother. His native language was Kurdish. The village life style gave him the opportunity to observe closely daily life, culture and social relations among the villagers and to witness their daily struggles for survival. For five year she went to Cibin village very day, five miles away from Amara (Ibid. pp. 65). When he finished primary school he could not go on with his studies because there was no middle school in the area. Due to a dispute between his brother and father, he ran away from his village to live with his elder sister, who was married in the Nizip town of Gaziantep province.

As a hard studying bright student he passed all his exams and finally gained a place in the examination for entering a boarding school in Ankara. He mentions that he was very keen and passionate to go the military academy, but because of his age he was refused to enter the required exam process. Instead, he was given a place at the Land Registrar Cadastral Survey Boarding School in Ankara. By moving to Ankara, he enters a new world; according to his explanations, everything was new to him in that 'big city' (A History from Fire).

In the village of Amara, just like majority of Kurdish children, he grew up in a conservative Sunni Muslim family, practicing fasting and praying five times a day and going to the Mosques where he gained the attention of the village imam. According to Öcalan, once the imam mentions: 'Abdullah if you practice like this and continue consistently, and then

one day you will fly to the sky and become an angel'. When he was in Ankara, he continuously attended the Mosque and kept fasting and praying. He attended the anti-communist seminars and wanted to learn about all the political debates of the time.

Suddenly, Abdullah Öcalan finds the *Alphabet of Socialism* by Leo Huberman on his bed at the boarding schools dormitory, and as a very curious student he opens the book and read in his final year of the study. As a conservative but talented student, he had many questions in his mind. He later explained that he found many answers for these questions in that small book. He says to himself that 'Mohammed lost and Marx has succeeded'. From that moment on, he continued to read books about the philosophy of Marx and Engels, dialectical materialism and the evolution history with the world political history and the history of Turkey and Kurdistan. The difficulty was that there were no books about the history of the Kurds and Kurdistan. Although the aim is not to be biased about Öcalan, the aim is to analyse the emergence of the PKK, the characteristics of the PKK are all hidden in the socialisation process of Öcalan.

Öcalan's political socialization process started from the village where he was born. His primary education was in a neighbouring village Cibin, an Armenian village, which became a Turkish populated village after the Armenian Genocide. Walking with his schoolmates, the first stage of his socialisation was completed when he successfully finished primary school.

The second stage of his socialization happened when Abdullah Öcalan involves in an argument with his family –father and young brother- and fled from his home and his village to his elder sister's home in the neighbouring town of Nizip. Young Öcalan learned how to live far away from home and entered a wider world. He studied very hard and worked harder than everyone, becoming a much respected young student. At the final year of the Middle School exams he went to live in Ankara as previously mentioned, where he had the opportunity to lead an independent life from his family.

His third stage of socialization started in Ankara when he started secondary education at the state boarding school. It was at that time that he started to search for a solution to the problems of the community where he came from, and found the book that changed his life, the *Alphabet of Socialism*. That book changed his philosophy of life; he concentrated on reading books on socialism, nationalism and Kurdish and Turkish history. This third stage is very important because he moves away from idealistic and conservative religious beliefs to convert to dialectical materialism and socialism.

The fourth stage of his socialization happened when he graduated from high school and was appointed as an assistant at the land registry office in Amed, the unofficial city of Bakur Kurdistan. Amed as a very ancient city has been the home for many civilisations and its ancient walls have surrounded one of the most unique cities of the world. The people, the city, the walls and the socio-cultural life had a huge impact on young Öcalan. It was in Amed when he heard people talking about the KDP's struggle and its leader Mustafa Barzani. The ancient walls of Amed, and the socio-cultural daily life of the people made him reflect more deeply about past, present and future of Kurdish people (Öcalan 2012: 218). He wondered about the questions of why the people had no rights, why they were in such a situation, and he began to wonder about what needed to be done in order to solve the situation. In Amed, he prepares for University exams and gets a place at Law Faculty of Istanbul University in 1970-71 academic years. At the same time he transferred his Land Registrar Office assistant job in Amed/Diyarbakir to Besiktas in Istanbul so that he could study and work at the same time. The fourth stage of young Öcalan's socialisation is another highly critical one: either he would engage in a corrupted civil servant bureaucracy, or he would leave his job. One year in Amed gave Öcalan enough experience to choose which way to go. His experiences in Amed become the foundation of his political future.

He had succeeded in his aim: to work in Istanbul as a civil servant and as a student at university, to be involved in political activities and becomes a member of the Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Hearts- DDKO. As it was mentioned earlier it was at that time that he presented his first seminar and met three Kurdish patriotic intellectuals: Musa Anter, Sherefettin Kaya and Yusuf Serhat Bucak. In the seminar he presented his thesis on Kurds and Kurdistan. The theme was 'Kurdish people are a nation' this nation has been colonised and 'Kurdistan is a Classic Colony'. 'Therefore the only way of being free is to struggle through prolonged popular war to gain national right to self-determination and having an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan will be through an armed struggle'. This idea was not accepted by Kurdish nationalist of the time was seen as very dangerous political approach.

Öcalan's interest in the political issues of the time, and more importantly his ideas about the Kurdish question in Turkey, constituted a national security threat to the Turkish state. Kurdish nationalists were also not in favour of Öcalan's ideas. At Istanbul University's Law Faculty Campus Öcalan attended the seminar of Turkish leftist students' leader, Mahir Chayan. His revolutionary leftist manner attracted Öcalan when he talked about the Kurdish National Question.

The 12th March 1971 coup d'état took place and most of the leftist organisations were closed and martial law started to govern Turkey. Leftist students' protests and their demonstrations were against the military coup, which killed the leader of the THKP-C People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey (in Turkish-*Türkiye Halk Kurtulus Partisi ve Cephesi*) in *Kizildere*, Ordu province in Black Sea region of Turkey. Young Öcalan participated in the demonstrations and became one of the leftist revolutionary university students' leaders. Imprisoned in April 1972, he quietly observed the prisoners, among those

leftist political prisoners he became friends with Ibrahim Aydin, a leftist university student from *Dersim* (Tunceli in Turkish). He was released in October 1972 after seven months in captivity. His first duty was to pass the exams in two weeks time. He passed all exams with merit and did not lose his state bursary. Soon after his release, his cellmate Ibrahim Aydin was released too. They met with another friend called Fehmi Yilmaz. Yilmaz told Öcalan that he knew two Turkish friends from the Black Sea region. Öcalan met Hakki Karer and Kemal Pir, both of who became Öcalan's friends for life (Yucel 2015: pp. 143).

This is the PKK's fermentation or Incubation period. Öcalan was in search of quality not quantity, in other words he looked for permanent, talented, fulltime professional revolutionary candidates. It took a little long, but in the end he found what he was looking for. At first he brought together about eight Kurdish university students in Ankara and on 21st March 1973 they went out for a picnic to the Çubuk Dam. He explained to them what his intentions were. He explained that 'the Kurds are a nation and their country called Kurdistan had been colonised and divided into four parts and that its natural and national existence has been denied'. He goes on that 'it needed a very hard struggle and sacrifices to be freed'; 'would you be with me'? Öcalan tested their reactions and opinions. *Abdullah Öcalan, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Mustafa Aksakalli, Halil Aslan, Musa Erdogan, Ismail Bingol, Faruk Vakifahmetoglu and Imad*. Among these eight friends only one, *Ali Haydar Kaytan* stayed with Öcalan and the others left their friendship within one or two months for ever. Some continue their political activities in liberal organisations and some have left their political activities (Ibid: 154-155). Öcalan's first attempt did not produce a positive outcome, because he tried with his Kurdish friends to set an organisation. However, his friends were from feudal wealthy families and that is why they were not in favour of radical political activities. He continued and resisted until he found those he had in his mind, because due to the oppression in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey, there was the possibility to find the social capital

to lead political mobilization. By the end of 1973 he was leading a ground of university students in Ankara, all of them influenced by leftist Marxist-Leninist ideology, focussing specifically on Kurdish national question and the right of separation as an independent state of Kurdistan in context of national right of self-determination.

The small group of higher education students led by Öcalan first manifested their ideological principles according to which Turkey consisted of two nations, the Kurds and Turks. Turks had authority and power over all state institutions. The Kurdish nation has been subjected to Turkish states' assimilation and annihilation policy. The Kurdish nation and their country Kurdistan had been divided, partitioned, and colonised by the four nation-states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. At the centre of the Middle East, this nation needs to have its national right to self-determination to be recognized. In order to gain its right to national self-determination the people need to be organised and mobilized by an ideological and political organisation. All the participants of the debates were ideologically and theoretically convinced that Kurdistan was a colony and the only way out of its colonization was organizing an ideological and political underground party to lead a popular front and armed struggle, without which Kurdistan would not be free and Turkey would not be democratic.

The group around Öcalan had become a very different group in terms of ideology, theory and practice, way of life, social and cultural relations in comparison to other leftist groups and Kurdish nationalist organisations. What Öcalan tried to achieve was security in future leadership for a very difficult struggle ahead. They were all university students, all of them were the brightest students and all were ready to leave their studies and become fulltime revolutionaries to organise Kurdistan National Liberation movement and leave their life in Bakur Kurdistan (Jongerden and Akkaya 2012: pp. 4).

They approached Turkish Leftist organisations and offered them the opportunity to act together as Kurdish and Turkish revolutionaries while trying to organise a legal platform. For

this purpose they founded the ADYOD, Ankara Democratic Association of Higher Education (in Turkish *Ankara Demokratik Yüksek Öğrenim Derneği*) in November 1973. Öcalan and his friend Hakki Karer were its administrators, but Öcalan was also the chairman. In 1974 the CHP party won the election and Bulent Ecevit became Prime Minister. His government issued general amnesty and most of the leftist prisoners were released. Öcalan's attempts failed, so the only way to succeed was to concentrate on the Kurdish Question and organise a national liberation movement similar to the Vietnamese (Ibid: pp. 3).

Before establishing a new group, as a last chance, Öcalan approached Kurdish nationalist and leftist organisations such as the DDKD –Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations – (in Turkish *Devrimci Demokratik Kültür Dernekleri*), TKDP – Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey – (in Turkish *Türkiye Kürdistanı Demokratik Partisi*) and TSKP – Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey – (in Turkish *Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi*) offering them a chance to act together as one front organisation. The offer was rejected, but they offered Öcalan membership into their organisations. After this rejection, the group decided to act independently. Kurdish Nationalist organisations, even harsher than the Turkish left, did not allow the group to enter Bakur Kurdistan's political space especially in the provinces of Amed, Mardin, Hakkari, Siirt, Muş, and Van, because these provinces of Bakur Kurdistan were the most strategic provinces. Those provinces were very important especially because the KDP-Iraq had influence through its sister organisations in Bakur Kurdistan.

The group around Öcalan named it as the Kurdistan Revolutionaries while the other Kurdish and Turkish groups called them Apocular – the supporter of Apo. The purpose of calling the group's members Apocular was to show that the group was not based on any political and ideological principle; rather that it was a group of anarchists. They also labelled the group as the National liberation Army and with many other different names. Some of the

Turkish leftist organisations such as – *Halkin Kurtuluşu* – (People’s Liberators) resisted them and prevented them from entering the high schools in the province centres and towns especially in Dersim, Bakur Kurdistan.

Both Kurdish nationalists and Turkish Leftist groups used violence against the Kurdistan Revolutionaries. The Turkish Leftist group called *Halkin Kurtuluşu* for the first time in Dersim on 7th of March 1977 killed a sympathizer of Kurdistan Revolutionaries, Aydin Gul. It was considered a serious attempt to prevent the group from entering mainly Kurdish Alevite provinces such as Dersim, Sivas, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Adiyaman and Gaziantep of northern and western sides of the Euphrates. Turkish Leftist groups were in action and prevented the Kurdistan Revolutionaries group from establishing its popular base in their dominated Kurdish Alevite provinces.

Kurdish nationalist groups whom before and after the 12th March 1971 coup moved to Bashur Kurdistan and were ideologically influenced by the KDP-Iraq, were very active and took all possible measures to prevent Kurdistan Revolutionaries from entering Sunni dominated Kurdish provinces of Bakur Kurdistan. Kurdish nationalists in a political debate killed one of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries’ founding members, Hakki Karer in Gaziantep on 18th May 1977. It showed that the Turkish left and Kurdish nationalists had both decided to prevent the Kurdistan Revolutionaries from gaining a popular base in Bakur Kurdistan’s in both Alevite and Sunni provinces.

The Turkish state was witnessing these developments in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey; the political struggle and ideological confrontations turned into fighting and political murder between Kurdish and Kurdish, Kurdish and Turkish, and Turkish and Turkish. The Kurdistan Revolutionaries from 1975 onward slowly but sustainably relocated its activists from Ankara to Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, Dersim and Adana. As an active group they decided to participate in most of the political debates of the time in Bakur Kurdistan’s major cities and

towns. Those confrontations were going on in Ankara among the higher education students and in Kurdistan among all the stratum of Kurdish society. The Mobilization of the people and support gained by the Kurdistan Revolutionaries was making the other organisations, both Kurdish and Turkish, uncomfortable.

Kurdistan Revolutionaries faced multiple challenges: The emergence of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries coincided with a politically occupied space in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. In Turkey the TKP – Communist Part of Turkey – and leftist political organisation with ultra-nationalists had already filled the political space. Another actor was the Kemalist CHP party also acting as a so-called social-democratic party. None of them were letting the Kurdistan Revolutionaries hold debates in their territory. In Bakur Kurdistan the political space was strictly occupied in two regions. Kurdish nationalists in favour of Barzani, strictly supporting the KDP-Iraq in Bashur Kurdistan, would occupy the east of Euphrates River. The Turkish leftist and Turkish ultra-nationalists would dominate the west of Euphrates region of Bakur Kurdistan. On top of that, the state was also preventing the action of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries in towns and cities and in the rural areas supporting Kurdish feudal collaborators. Hence, to open a political space was a very difficult process, and defending a discussion about Kurds and Kurdistan, at that time like to hold a rock of fire, because of Turkish state's denial policies against the question of the Kurds and Kurdistan.

The Kurdistan revolutionaries were under heavy attacks from all sides. How did the group succeed in such a short time while under attack? The answer is in their birth and their loyalty, honesty and belief. The group believed that they were in the right direction and their discourse and their practice had to defend the right of oppressed people. That is why people supported this discourse and practice day after day. The memory of the past Kurdish uprisings against the Turkish state and the state's harsh suppression of those uprisings was an important topic during the debates with people.

The Kurdistan Revolutionaries Group Evolves to a Political Party

Kurdistan Revolutionaries made their substantial dynamic base in Dersim, Antep, Maraş, Elâzığ, Amed, Bingöl, Muş, Kars, Agirî, Urfa, Adiyaman, Malatya and Batman but also in Turkey's Ankara, İzmir, Adana and İstanbul provinces. Up to 1977, the group had made a substantial progression not only in the provinces of the western Euphrates but also in the provinces of eastern Euphrates as well. The Kurdistan Revolutionaries had organised a qualitative base among teachers and educated people in Urfa, Mardin, Amed, Muş, Bingol, Van, Agirî and Kars. Öcalan's second but most important trip starts from Ankara to Agirî, Kars, Bingol, Elazig, Dersim, Amed Urfa and Antep from April to mid May, then returning back to Ankara. As soon as he arrives in Ankara, one of the group's prominent members Haki Karer was killed in Antep on 18th May by a group called *Sterka Sor*, a small Kurdish leftist group. The Kurdistan Revolutionaries held an extraordinary meeting in Antep and they realized that the state intelligence was following them. The group decides that the activities had to be either stopped or upgraded to an upper level in terms of organization. In other words, they had to go underground but also avenge Haki Karer.

After the death of his best comrade, Haki Karer, Öcalan prepared the party's programme as loyalty to continue his struggle, and the group agreed that revenge should be taken in this way in order to promote the struggle and defend the values he died for. Taking revenge in the meaning continuation of the aim he struggled for and makes that struggle to be successful. The Kurdistan Revolutionaries group had four very important Turkish members: Haki Karer and his brother Baki Karer, Kemal Pir and Duran Kalkan. Haki Karer was killed, his brother Baki left the PKK in 1993, Kemal Pir lost his life in the famous Amed prison in September 1983, Duran Kalkan is still one of the PKK's executive committee members.

In the anniversary of Haki Karer' death in the small town of Hilwan in Urfa province on 18th of May 1978, the local tribesman that related to MHP ultra-nationalists, killed another prominent member of the group, Halil Çavgun. The group responds in the best possible way. Their struggle became successful and their mayoral candidate won the election. The Municipality of Hilwan became a centre for serving the poor and the group gained prestige not only in the Urfa province but also in almost all neighbouring towns and villages.

On 27th of November 1978, in Fis village in the town of Lice (Amed province), during a clandestine gathering, Ocalan brought together 22-25 prominent members from different provinces of Bakur Kurdistan. For two days and nights they debated the tasks, statute and programme of the party and made plans to establish links between the urban centres and the rural mountainous areas in order to prepare for a guerrilla war. They changed the name of Kurdistan Revolutionaries to PKK – *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Workers' Party and they called the gathering their 1st congress. Abdullah Öcalan, Sahin Dönmez and Mehmet Karasungur were elected as the executive committee. The Central committee was composed by Abdullah Öcalan, Cemil Bayik, Mazlum Dogan, Mehmet Hayri Durmus, Mehmet Karasungur, Baki Karer and Sahin Dönmez. However, at the end of the 1st congress they still did not announce the name for two reasons: firstly, they wanted to announce in a very big event to be heard by everyone, and secondly they did want to avoid attraction and attention of the state in the meantime.

The PKK's 1st Congress delegates were: Abdullah Öcalan, Mehmet Hayri Durmus, Mazlum Dogan, Cemil Bayik, Seyfettin Zogurlu, Abdullah Kumral, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Duran Kalkan (Turkish), Baki Karer (Turkish), Sakine Cansiz, Kesire Yildirim, Ali Gunduz, Huseyin Topgider, Ali Çetiner, Abbas Goktas, Faruk Özdemir, Ferzende Toguç, Mehmet Cahit Sener, Mehmet Turan, Sahin Dönmez, Resul Altinok, and Suphi Karakus (Akkaya 2005: DVD).

In December 1978 in Maraş the state, ultra-nationalists and the police together with the army implemented a plan of killing hundreds of Alevite Kurds in Maraş City, which is located between Turkey and the Bakur Kurdistan border. The Kurds in Maraş are mostly believed to be an Alevite sect. The Turkish state with ultra-nationalists and conservative religious paramilitary groups changed the demography of the city when more than one hundred Alevite Kurds killed and thousands were deported (Tunç 2011: pp. 309). The government of the time declared martial law in most of Bakur Kurdistan provinces.

Following the Maraş massacre, in Elazig, another mixed city of Bakur Kurdistan where the Kurdistan Revolutionaries were very strong, an operation in May 1979 led to the arrest of almost all the members of the Kurdistan Revolutionaries. The group's newly elected executive committee member Şahin Dönmez confessed everything about the organisation to the police during his interrogation. The police and intelligence services became aware of all information about the group and their members and the nature of their activities (Bayik 1998: pp. 285). All secret documents in Şahin Dönmez's possession were now in the hands of the police.

Cemil Bayik knew about this on his way from Ankara to Elazig. After realizing the total collapse of the local branch of the organisation, he tried to escape from the arrest without success. According to Bayik, he was released because the informer(s) did not know him and he had a ticket showing that he was coming from Ankara and he had a forged identity card showing he was a local. Immediately Cemil Bayik moved to Amed and informed the group's founder, leader, and operator Abdullah Öcalan that in a police operation all the branch of Elazig city had been arrested (Ibid: pp. 286).

Öcalan moved from Amed to Mardin and Urfa to meet with the central committee members to inform them that they have reached the edge: life or death. In order to save the organisation and its continuity, the option of moving out of the country had to be considered.

On 1st or 2nd of July 1979, Öcalan with the help of one their local sympathizers in Suruç town of Urfa, left Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey to Kobani in Rojava Kurdistan. In the autumn of 1979, Mehmet Karasungur moved to Rojhilat (Eastern) Kurdistan (Ibid: pp.306).

Öcalan stayed in Kobani for a few days, and in that period he managed to make some contacts and build relations with the people of the town. The aim was to clandestinely move to Damascus in order to prepare the ground for the PKK militants to get guerrilla training from the PLO. During that time, he travelled without a passport from Bakur Kurdistan to Rojava Kurdistan's town of Kobani to Damascus and to Bakaa Valley in Lebanon, where he started educating and training the guerrillas for the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement.

When Şahin Dönmez returned from the Congress to his working place in Elazig he was the executive member of the group. Due to his arrest and collaboration with the police, Duran Kalkan replaced him. The Kurdistan Revolutionaries had not declared the PKK yet, but they were still the topic of interest in all Turkish media, referred to as Apocular instead. The attacks were coming from the Turkish ultra-nationalists of the MHP, Turkish leftist organisation, Kurdish nationalist organisations, and Kurdish tribal leaders collaborating with the state and the state's police and armed forces. They were under a comprehensive siege. The only way was to open a channel outside of the country otherwise all the members would have been arrested.

The PKK Revealed in July 1979 in Siverek

The Kurdistan Revolutionaries kept their congress strictly secret, even from their lower cadres. They had divided responsibilities among the central committee members and had established regional, provincial and district committees of their party, despite having not come out publicly yet (Bayik 1998: pp. 254-55). They were under attack from everywhere. Attacks were from the state, from Kurdish nationalist organisations and Turkey's leftist and

nationalist organisations. However inexperienced, but very loyal to each other and active in the current political debates, by the time they had already written a comprehensive ideological, theoretical and political document as well as their party programme. In each city and town they had secretly set up educational groups which gathered everyday for two or three hours to read and make group discussions in order to prepare future cadres for organizational sustainability.

Hilwan was the first, and Siverek was the second stage of the experiment to find out whether a guerrilla war could be established and survive in the situation and conditions of the time. They were to some extent confident that a guerrilla war would successfully survive if they were trained for it. There were two very critical moments for them: the first was that there was no political space left for political activities under the martial law, and the second was the confession of Sahin Dönmez (Ibid: 286).

As the Turkish state founding principle was based on the denial of Kurds and Kurdistan it would not tolerate such an organisation to threaten its territorial integrity and indivisible unity. Although the PKK was not officially declared, the state had all the necessary information about its political programme and its comprehensive theoretical stand. It was at that difficult moment that Öcalan decided to move to Rojava (South-western) Kurdistan. The nearest city was Kobani, not very far away from Pirsus where he was. He asked Ethem Akçam, one clandestine border trader and sympathizer, to take him to Kobani and asked whether he knew anybody there. On 1st of July 1979 they crossed the border to Kobani. In the movement's history, that was the self-exile that would be remembered as the move that allowed the survival of the movement. Kobani would become the most important centre for the movement not only for Bakur and Rojava Kurdistan, but also for the Middle East and the world as well (Ibid: pp. 306).

The PKK officially appeared on July 29th 1979 in a semi-successful operation against the local Bucak tribe leader Mehmet Celal Bucak who was a Member of Parliament from AP – Adalet Partisi – the Justice Party. The operation was not fully successful because the group only wounded the tribe leader and lost one of its prominent and well-known cadres, Salih Kandal, who was at that time a significant figure of the group in almost in all provinces of Bakur Kurdistan. The aim of the PKK was not killing but making him confess to the people of Siverek and the region about the atrocities he had committed against them. If the operation had been successful, then the outcome of that operation could have been much greater. Despite the operation's lack of success, the PKK was officially declared and the leaflets of the PKK were delivered in most of the towns and cities of Bakur Kurdistan.

The titles of all national Turkish newspapers were about the PKK and its attack on Justice Party's MP Mehmet Celal Bucak. The topic of daily agenda was the PKK and the news about it. Most of the news were speculations about how the PKK had removed the state institutions in Hilwan and Siverek, and how it had become the dominating Kurdish force in the region. The news regarded them as “Kurdish separatist”, “Marxist-Leninist Separatist”, “Separatist Anarchists”, and “Separatist Terrorist”; those words and labels were new in the political vocabulary of the Turkish state.

The first duty of Öcalan was to find a place in Kobani and to make relations with the people in order to create a network with Bakur Kurdistan. Then he planned to move to Damascus and Lebanon to build relations with the Palestinian Liberation Movement for the guerrilla training camps. As a leftist revolutionary during his university studies, he knew how Turkish and Kurdish leftist revolutionaries went to Damascus and Lebanon for their guerrilla training. Although he faced many obstacles with Palestinian organisations, because Turkish leftists and Kurdish nationalist organisations already introduced the PKK as a very dangerous organisation by giving incorrect information that the PKK was founded by the US and the

Turkish secret police, nevertheless in Damascus he resisted to meet the leaders of the Palestinian Democratic Liberation Front (Ibid: 307-8). The attitude about Kurdish people among the Palestinian Liberation Organisations was not positive, because during 1961 until 1975 the Mustafa Barzani led Bashur Kurdistan uprising was supported by Israel. But also since Syria was an ally of the Soviet Union; all regional Communist Parties of the time were in Damascus and they had also given incorrect information about the PKK to the Palestinians, the representatives of Socialist countries as well as the Communist parties of the region of the Middle Eastern countries (Ibid: 389).

After being released from the Turkish secret police and state oppression, Öcalan found the great opportunity to reorganise his party and bring his party cadres for training before returning them to Bakur Kurdistan. He found also another opportunity to spread out his party's ideology and manifest among Kurdish people in Rojava, in Damascus and in Lebanon. As they declared in their programme they were working ultimately for an Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan. Therefore they did not recognise the borders, because those borders were drawn against the will of the peoples of Kurdistan. Syria was at that time the main supporter of the Palestinian cause, and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation was operating in Syria and in Lebanon. Lebanon's countryside was mostly under the control of the Syrian army.

The PKK had started to relocate its cadres via Kobani and other towns such as Nusaybin and Kaniya Xezalan (in Turkish Ceylanpinar) to Damascus, and to the Bakaa Valley in Lebanon to give them guerrilla training before they returned to mountainous-forested provinces Bakur Kurdistan to launch a guerrilla War. The PKK considered two strategic mountain ranges in Bakur Kurdistan: Dersim and Botan. The first group got trained and returned to Siverek, Dersim, Kars, Agirî and Batman and tried to set up its clandestine guerrilla hideouts in the mountainous forest areas. While the PKK was busy with guerrilla

training, a dramatic accident happened when two of its central committee members – Mazlum Dogan and Mehmet Hayri Durmus – were arrested while in possession of some organizational documents. Another dramatic incident happened when the guerrilla groups' leaders Kemal Pir and Mehmet Can Yuce were arrested in Batman province while on their way back from guerrilla training with all the documentations. It was a significant blow to PKK's guerrilla war strategy, because Öcalan had written orders to the future-to-be guerrilla commanders and all those documents were confiscated in that accident. The Turkish police, the intelligence and the army became alarmed when they witnessed the preparation of the PKK for guerrilla warfare and their regional and international relations for guerrilla trainings with the Palestinians, which consequently led to the 12th September coup d'état.

The emergence of the PKK was seen as an existential threat to the national security of the Turkish state. This is because the Turkish state, after the Amed, Agirî and Dersim Genocide, was convinced that it had broken the backbone of Kurdish national liberation movements and that they would never be able to stand up again. But also when Turkish state defeated the Agirî rebellion in 1930, they made a symbolic grave and wrote on the gravestone: 'The Dreamed Kurdistan Graved Here'. The declaration of Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan's programme aimed at removing Turkish rule in Bakur Kurdistan showed the strength of the movement. Not only was the Turkish state feeling uncomfortable, most of the Kurdish and Turkish political organisations attacked the PKK very harshly with the prominent arrests mentioned above. Although the PKK gained momentum in a short time under very difficult circumstances, if it had not lost its most prominent members the future of the PKK would have been more successful than it was.

Moving to the Middle East and other Parts of Kurdistan

At this stage, the PKK's struggle was similar to its birth in Ankara, when Öcalan did not have anybody to rely on. When Abdullah Öcalan moved to Rojava Kurdistan, Damascus and Lebanon another Central Committee member, Mehmet Karasungur, was the first commander in charge of the Hilwan and Siverek popular resistances. In the autumn of 1979 he moved to Mahabad – the Famous city of Rojhilat Kurdistan that saw the Kurdistan Republic in 1946 – as the representative of the PKK in Rojhilat (Eastern) Kurdistan (Serxwebun 2008: vol. 33, pp. 10). The idea behind this moving to Rojava and Rojhilat Kurdistan was to allow the newly established PKK to act more freely and to safeguard its members from the huge pressure from the Turkish state's security and intelligence forces, and create new facilities for ideological, political and guerrilla trainings.

Mehmet Karasungur in Rojhilat Kurdistan was not successful as Öcalan was in Damascus and Bakaa Valley. In Rojhilat Kurdistan there were more opportunities than in Syria, because after the 1979 popular revolution in Iran, a great part of Rojhilat Kurdistan was free from Iranian state's rule (Ibid: pp. 10). The PKK representative in Mahabad was able to build relations with Rojhilat and Iranian political organisations. Despite Rojhilat Kurdistan being divided between the KDP-Iran and the Komala (*Komalay Shoreshegeri Zahmatkeshani Kurdistanî Iran*) – Organization of Revolutionary Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan) leftist Maoist organisation and Islamic Republic of Iran, there were great opportunities to build guerrilla-training camps close to the mountainous border areas. Mehmet Karasungur was also responsible to build relations with Bashur Kurdistan's political parties too. Most of the Bashur political parties were situated in the mountainous areas of the border between Rojhilat and Bashur (my personal experience).

The PKK from 1979 onwards had built relations in Syria with Palestinian Liberation Organisations, and with some Kurdish political organisations in Rojava. In Bakaa Valley in Lebanon, it had been successful in opening guerrilla-training camps with the Palestinian Democratic Front in an effort to extend the relations to other Palestinian organisations; it had also set up relations with Kurdish Community in Damascus, Aleppo and in Beirut. But also Öcalan had successfully set up relations with the PUK Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's leader Jalal Talabani who was a well-known Kurdish leader because of the uprisings that occurred from 1961 to 1975 in Bashur Kurdistan.

In Easter Kurdistan, Mehmet Karasungur had set up relations with KDP-Iran, the Komala, the Bureau of Sheikh Izzeddin Husseini, Iranian leftist organisations and Iranian Tudeh Party (Iranian Communist Party). Those relations did not go further to produce constructive collaborations. For example, Rojhilat Kurdistan could have been a very important base to safeguard those PKK activists in Bakur. However, Mehmet Karasungur was not active enough to create opportunities as Öcalan did in Syria and Lebanon. Although the PKK was successful in extending a kind of diplomatic relation from outside of Bakur Kurdistan, it failed to prevent imprisonment of almost five thousand of its supporters. In the same way it failed in avoiding the leading cadres from the inhumane tortures in Amed prison as well as the prison massacres.

The PKK's national liberation discourse was different from most of the political parties of all four parts of Kurdistan. For instance, the PKK's ideological discourse was based on Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan. A Proletariat led National Liberation Movement must have been organised and without armed struggle the liberation of Kurdistan it would have been impossible. The PKK challenged two different views: the first being that all four KDP's were struggling for Democracy for Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria and Autonomy for Kurdistan. The second view was that autonomy was not the solution, but

independence gained through non-violent actions. These three different views were in friction and conflict in all four parts of Kurdistan.

One of the reasons that Mehmet Karasungur was not able to get permission from Rojhilat organisation, the KDP-Iran, to launch guerrilla-training camps was because of those different views. The PKK Rojhilat representative from autumn 1979 to September 1980 tried hard to open bases in the KDP-Iran controlled areas, but the KDP-Iran officials did not allow.

Dr. Abdurrahman Qassimlu, the general secretary of KDP-Iran, was in good friendly political relations with the French Socialist Party and had diplomatic channels through Iraqi government. Massoud Barzani, president of KDP-Iraq, was in a good political relation with Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran and Iraq were at war. KDP-Iran was not keen to provide a base to the PKK because it had relations with Turkey. The PKK had relations with the Syrian Baath government and the Palestinian organisations. All these relations were offering opportunities and advantages as well as disadvantages. Inevitably Kurdish political parties were playing the role of proxies rather independent actors as their own.

Moving from Bakur Kurdistan to a wider environment of the Middle East offered the PKK the opportunity to move wider in the Middle East. During the Germany reconstruction after WWII, hundreds of thousands of Kurdish people were allowed to work in Germany. In the centre of Europe there was a Kurdish Diaspora and after the declaration of 1978's Martial Law in Turkey so many political activists left Turkey and the Kurdish Diaspora in Europe became stronger. The PKK used the opportunity of being in Beirut and Damascus effectively and transferred some of its cadres to Europe for organisational purposes. It also started the publication of its monthly ideological journal, *Serxwebun*.

Reorganization Ideologically, Politically, Militarily and Return to Kurdistan

The PKK's foundation, progression and development in Bakur Kurdistan in 1970's shocked all political actors of the time. It was progressing well among Kurdish society, wherever its militants had debates they were quickly supported by a group of people. During the 12 September 1980 coup d'état thousands of its supporters were imprisoned and tortured and many of them lost their lives (Gunes 2012: pp.98). As explained in the previous section, the PKK already relocated some of its cadres for training in Syria and Lebanon. The military coup took place on 12 September 1980. Thousands of Kurdish and Turkish nationalists and left and right wing political supporters were imprisoned. In Bakur Kurdistan the PKK lost many of its supporters, thousands of them imprisoned, some lost their lives in clashes with the security forces.

The PKK relocated a significant number of its members to Syria and Lebanon prior to the coup and already made bases in Bakaa Valley. Through Syria a channel was opened to the Middle East for the PKK to organise a massive Kurdish community in Germany and Europe. It tried to relocate its members and supporters from Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan as many as it could to train and educate for launching guerrilla activities (Ibid: pp. 99). At the beginning the group had given a great importance to ideological and political education and understanding of the group members. Through education, and the reading of historical and scientific revolutionary literature, it would be possible to prepare a knowledgeable generation to lead Kurdish society. It was a principle of the PKK that any member must first be armed with scientific revolutionary knowledge.

The 12th September coup d'état had silenced all political activities in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. The PKK tried to work on two fronts: first of all it wanted to bring all Kurdish nationalist organisations in a united front. The PKK's leader visited all Bakur Kurdistan

political organisations in Damascus and offered them the opportunity to act in a wider front against the military coup (Yucel 2015: pp. 352). Kurdish political organisations declared that they were not in favour of launching a violent struggle against the military coup. The turn came for the Turkish leftist organisations; Öcalan knew all of them because when in Ankara he visited and debated the Kurdistan question with all of them. The offer after long debates and discussions was accepted and the FKBDC Anti-Fascist United Resistance Front (*Fasizme Karsi Birlesik Direnis Cephesi*) emerged in 1981 (Ibid: pp. 353). At that stage the PKK was not successful in bringing Kurdish political organisations from Bakur Kurdistan in a united front. Although the PKK was able to bring seven Turkish leftist revolutionary groups in an anti-fascist front, the union did not last long and disappeared in 1983.

While the PKK has had its comprehensive manifesto in 1978, Öcalan found out that those ideological and theoretical writings were not answering the questions of the day. Therefore, he prepared three important guiding comprehensive writings, which continued up to 1999 as the maxim of the PKK for education: 1- The organizational and Personality Problems, 2- The Role of Force in Kurdistan, and 3- Kurdistan's National Liberation Problem and Its Solution. The relocation of its members increased. Those members were trained ideologically, theoretically and militarily. Those writings became classics of the PKK for education. The PKK held its first conference in July 1981 and its second Congress in August 1982. On both occasions, Öcalan presented the political reports and emphasized the need to expand the strategy and tactics of the revolution for the years to come (Gunes 2012: pp.92).

Öcalan observed some organizational shortcomings and analysed the problems, then offered the solutions on overcoming those organizational problems. In spite of a highly ambitious and spiritual standing for high values of Kurdistan revolution, he found again some personality problems that needed to be solved. He concentrated on those problems every day. Those educated and trained cadres of the party needed to have understood the role of the

force in the history of colonialism. Hence Öcalan prepared the Role of the Force in Kurdistan Revolution as the scientific explanation of Guerrilla war's strategy and tactics. As it was though, the Kurdistan revolution would be the hardest one in the region of the Middle East because of its nature; that it has been divided into four parts and each part has been divided and ruled strictly by military force. The ultimate aim of the dividers was to remove Kurds and Kurdistan from history. The aim of the Force in Kurdistan Revolution was to make sure that those Guerrillas knew the difficult task that they were standing for and the difficult days ahead.

The Second Congress of the PKK was as important as the first one because thousands of the members of the organisation were in detention. Nevertheless, the Second Congress became the platform for the PKK to reassess its past ten years of struggle and experiences and to analyse the causes and reasons of successes and failures. That platform played a significant role for the implementation of the strategy and tactics and an opportunity to the cadres to debate and express their views for the first time. Having almost relocated 300 members the PKK gained the greatest opportunity in its ten years history (Marcus 2009: 57). More importantly the PKK was able to build strong relations with the PLO, which constituted an important step towards diplomatic and political relations to the Socialist system of the time.

Conclusion

Kurdish nationalist leadership failed to be united during the 1920 attempt to implement Sevres Treaty at least to guarantee international recognition of independence of Kurdistan. Almost all rebellions in Bakur, Bashur and Rojhilat Kurdistan faced deadly failure and Bakur Kurds were put under annihilation, assimilation and extermination. This policy caused a radical small group of university students successfully created with the purpose of

establishing a totally independent, talented, dynamic and leftist political reading aimed at investigating and researching the history, politics, international relations and history of the world in relations to the Kurdish Question. The group, which started from one man, named itself Kurdistan Revolutionaries in Bakur Kurdistan. Abdullah Öcalan based the theoretical and political activity on his life's experience. The theory was totally based on Marxist theory and approached the Kurdish Question through class-based politics; despite this, in Bakur Kurdistan there was a very little working class industrial proletariat. The Turkish state built all manufactories in Turkey not in Bakur Kurdistan. It was Amed's cultural, social, political, lingual and ethnic composition that influenced Öcalan. He managed successfully to organise it, created its ideological framework, and set up its strategic and tactical programme writing a comprehensive manifesto. The nascent movement faced an obstacle by the Turkish state, Turkish leftists, Kurdish nationalists and some Kurdish tribes. Despite all those challenges, they were able to overcome and evolved into a party.

The PKK's formation happened in a very chaotic and complex socio-political environment and later moved to Rojava, Rojhilat and then to Bashur Kurdistan in a very critical moment of contemporary Kurdish history. It was formed as an ideological and political leadership that aimed to understand, analyse and find the way of solving the Kurdish Question and act for its solution in theoretical and practical ways. Understanding the official policy of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria with international political system regarding Kurds and Kurdistan was the most important topic of the formation of the PKK. The formation of the PKK was representing a radical change in the KNLM, while challenging Kurdish tribal leadership as was still largely present in the KDP's of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria.

This chapter defined the PKK as a contemporary modernist-constructionist patriotic nationalist movement, which occurred when all forms of Kurdish traditional primordial nationalist movements failed in all parts of Kurdistan. The strength of the PKK came from its

modernist and patriotic and self-sacrifice nature of organisational discipline with its ideological and political philosophy of defending national liberation at the stage of its formation.

Chapter 5

The PKK's Dominance and Hegemony in Kurdistan-Reformation

Introduction

Chapter five focuses on the PKK's radical strategy and its progression in Bakur Kurdistan with the positive impacts in the other three parts. The heroic resistance in Amed prison, the serious revolutionary ideological and political performance in the Middle East, while the PKK was accommodated by the Palestinian Democratic Front, the launch of guerrilla war against Turkish state and more importantly the continuity of the struggle makes the PKK ideologically, politically and virtually the dominant actor in all parts of Kurdistan. The spirit of resistance of the PKK leaders abroad and in the Amed prison was inspired in their ideological belief and political stand to make a successful Kurdistan national liberation movement and create an independent and democratic state of Kurdistan. The chapter will analyse the PKK's impact in the Middle East and Europe among the Kurdish Diaspora. The 12 September 1980 coup d'état carried out by Turkish armed Forces (TAF) obstructed all Turkish leftist democratic movements in Bakur Kurdistan preventing the PKK from launching a guerrilla war. The raids of the army weakened not only the PKK, but also all democratic forces. Thousands of its supporters were imprisoned, hundreds of the active members were killed and few hundred managed to go out of the country. In order to understand the post 12 September coup's PKK, one must look at the heroic resistance of its leaders and members in Amed prison as well as those members in Bakur Kurdistan and those who moved to the Middle East. How was the PKK able, despite that huge damage, to organise in a short time a real political party consisting of full-time revolutionaries completely committed to the revolution? How did it manage to build a popular front? Most importantly, how could the PKK establish a parliament in exile in Brussels? Does a conceptual analysis of all these developments allow an understanding of whether the

movement was trying to adopt a more democratic stand? At this regard, the chapter concludes that the PKK was partially successful in adopting a more democratic option by obtaining the election of Kurdish MPs representing Kurdish interests in the Great National Assembly of Turkey. The PKK transformed itself from a party devoted to the armed struggle to a party able to negotiate possible solutions to the Kurdish question democratically by becoming a national and international actor. At the heart of the PKK's emergence, progression and becoming a hegemonic actor in all parts of Kurdistan, lies the spirit of Kurdish national question, national identity, and national liberation concept. Analysing the process of transformation and paradigm change from national liberation to democratic liberation of the PKK, it is necessary to look at its development at the first instance as a party, a guerrilla army, a popular front (moving towards a national/social movement), and then becoming an interlocutor to negotiate and establish a parliament in exile. All these mentioned organisations were preparations for Kurdistan national liberation and the independent state of Kurdistan.

A Political Party the PKK

As mentioned in chapter four, the PKK was born illegally in a strictly controlled political environment after the military coup d'état of 1971. This meant that whoever adhered to its views and politics ran the risk of being arrested. In this climate, the nucleus of a political reading group devoted to the research on the national-democratic revolution in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey was founded under the name of Kurdistan Revolutionaries. The group read Marxist Leninist classics from a wide range of world revolutionaries of the time. The group focused on the Leninist party structure following the theory and in the practice adopted by the Vietnam Workers' Party.

The nucleus group's leader Abdullah Öcalan, the senior member of the group, had experienced a different kind of political education. Born in Kurdistan, he witnessed and

observed the differences between Turkish and Kurdish people in particular in Turkey's capital Ankara and in the *de facto* capital city of Kurdistan, Amed. He could listen to the speeches and observe the actions of Kurdish nationalists and Turkish political leaders; most importantly, he had the opportunity to participate in the university students' political protest against the state, a political commitment for which he was imprisoned for seven months. Once in prison, he witnessed how the state punished its political enemies to death. After seven months in prison he was released, and he continued his education. His life at university not only provided him with a legal status, but it allowed him to organise a group according to his own political beliefs.

As the natural leader of the group he used all his abilities, talents and energy to create a group of professional revolutionaries in order to fight for an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. These professional revolutionaries devoted their life to work for the revolution. He prepared the theoretical and ideological base for the group. The group acted in clandestinely and for this reason it did not have any legal association, journal or newspaper. The members had willingly devoted their life to the cause and had to strongly believe in socialism, freedom, equality, justice and democracy. He worked among university students and recruited selected students with such credentials and qualities. Öcalan has had two attempts purely based on Kurdish nationalists although both attempts resulted in little success: the first attempt was during his membership of the DDKO. Because of his very radical views he was dismissed from the DDKO membership, and the second one was at the Çubuk Dam's meeting. At the Çubuk Dam meeting all of his fellows were Kurds from different parts of Bakur Kurdistan, but from wealthy families apart from Öcalan himself and his first comrade Ali Haydar Kaytan.

When Öcalan was in Istanbul at the Faculty of Law, he built up relations with the DDKO and became a member of the association. In addition, while at university he had the

opportunity to listen to Turkish leftists, mainly Revolutionists Youth, and in particular the DEV GENÇ, as Ocalan explained to both the DDKO –Kurdish nationalists – and the DEV-GENÇ –, mainly Turkish radical leftists influenced him (Öcalan 2012: pp. 263). Although both the DDKO and DEV GENÇ influenced Öcalan, he was not convinced that they were the organisations he wanted to work for; he had a different organisation in his mind. Öcalan left the Faculty of Law in Istanbul, and moved to Ankara to study Political Science with a bursary granted to the best performing students in Turkey and Kurdistan.

After his release from Mamak prison he realised that what was needed was a new political party different from the Kurdish nationalists and the Turkish leftist ones. He worked hard among the higher education students and brought together the group he wanted. In the Mamak prison, one of Öcalan's cellmates was Ibrahim Aydin who was a Kurd from Dersim. He met Fehmi Yilmaz who was a friend of Haki Karer and Kemal Pir, two Turkish leftists from the Black Sea region of Turkey. Öcalan moved there and in a very short time they became a research, investigative and political reading group. A qualitative group grew, reaching between 20 and 30 members, all of them university students (Jongerden & Akkaya: 2012: pp. 8). In the first year, every evening the group met and did readings followed by discussions about the reason and causes of the failure of Turkish lefts, the coup d'état of 12 March 1971, the Kurdistan National liberation problem, and about a possible solution to the Kurdish question.

From 1973 to 1975 the group gained popularity and respect. Öcalan, as the chairman and Haki Karer were elected as the members of Ankara Revolutionary Higher Education Students' Association called ADYÖD. Öcalan tried to bring Turkish and Kurdish leftist organisations together in one strongly united organisation. That attempt also failed. At the beginning, Öcalan tried without success to involve just Kurdish students in the Çubuk Dam meetings, later he tried also to involve the Turkish left, again without success. In his mind

Kurdistan was a colony with the right of national self-determination. According to Öcalan the revolutionaries from the oppressing nations should support the oppressed nations in their right to self-determination. It was the principle article and universally recognized right of oppressed nations in the United Nations Charter and the topic of their debates agenda.

In Turkish history, even after the establishment of the Republic, many nations and ethnic minorities were massacred such as the Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks. However, in Turkey the most oppressed people were the Kurds, and Öcalan believed that as a colony divided between four states, Kurdistan should be liberated first. In his view Kurdistan's liberation would have helped Turkey's democratic revolution and revival of the other minorities too.

When the group evolved from an ideological and theoretical reading group to a political power, the relations between the members of the group also evolved in a unified effort towards a common revolutionary goal. They have continuously researched, investigated and debated the topics of socialism, democracy, national question, national identity, and national liberation, national right to self-determination and consequently how to solve these problems in Kurdistan and Turkey from 1973 to mid 1975. In order to act towards a political change, a systematic programme, a revolution theory, and clear ideological guidance were needed. All these debates and meetings were held in secrecy since talking about these topics as well as talking about the Kurds and the Kurdish question could result in long imprisonments; this was due to the fact that their existence as a nation and a country was not recognised by the Turkish state.

Cemil Bayik, one of Abdullah Öcalan's first comrades since 1973, started a journey from Ankara to Urfa and Antep, two large Kurdish cities, in 1975. They participated in seminars and debates with Kurdish nationalists and Turkish leftists. The intentions of Öcalan and Bayik were to measure the political pulse in Kurdistan and analyse whether or not they

could open a window of hope for themselves. At that time the political environment was filled with Turkish left and Kurdish nationalists. The state was also in close surveillance, and talking about liberation of Kurdistan was very dangerous; if you hold fire you will burn. On the way back to Ankara both visited Öcalan's home village, Amara. After having their meals, Öcalan's father says: 'you were a communist, now I heard that you are dealing with Kurdish question. Kurdish question is very dangerous, it is better to stay as a communist'. Abdullah Öcalan smiles and says: 'my father knows the Kurdish question is more dangerous than the Turkish left's Communism' (Bayik 1998: pp. 124). This journey was Öcalan's first journey to Bakur Kurdistan after his preparation to build a party different than the traditional Kurdish and Turkish leftist ones.

As soon as he returned to Ankara, Öcalan asked his comrades whether or not they could work professionally and devote their 24 hours to the Kurdistan Revolution. Some of the group cadres such as Haki Karer, Kemal Pir, Cemil Bayik, Mustafa Karasu, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Duran Kalkan, Mazlum Dogan and Mehmet Hayri Durmus moved to the cities of Bakur Kurdistan to carry out the ideological propaganda and organize the youth. They had named their group Kurdistan Revolutionaries, without exposing themselves not to attract the attention of the Turkish intelligence. However, the other groups called them with different names such as: *Apocular* as the supporters of Apo (Abdullah Ocalan), or *UKOcular – Ulusal Kurtulus Ordusu* – Kurdistan Liberation Army. But also Kurdish nationalists and Turkish Leftist organisations wanted to discredit the Kurdistan Revolutionaries as the followers of a person, Abdullah Ocalan/ Apo, rather than a political movement.

On the 1st of January 1976 the Kurdistan Revolutionaries in Ankara held their first meeting. At that meeting Öcalan gave a detailed and systematic speech regarding the group's ideological parameters of their understanding of historical materialism, dialectical materialism, history of Kurdistan, partition of Kurdistan and its colonization offering a

solution. The solution was that Kurdistan becomes a country and the Kurds a nation. A revolution must be organised in accordance with the principles of National right to self-determination; to achieve that, an ideology and a political force must be created and organised. Another topic of the meeting was the evaluation of their first ideological struggle in some Kurdistan cities, particularly in the cities of Antep, Maras, Malatya, Dersim and Adana. At the end of the meeting, the group reached the decision that a committee of three people would manage the activities. Abdullah Öcalan with two of his deputies: Haki Karer and Kamer Özkan. At the end of the first meeting the group members returned to their duties in different cities in Kurdistan (Ibid: 143-46).

Haki Karer's duty was in Antep, where he carried out a very successful ideological and political organisation in 1977. Kamer Özkan's activity in Dersim caused some problems and he had to leave the group. According to Öcalan and Bayik Kamer Özkan he was working for the intelligence service when he left the organisation in Dersim. Apparently he had created a group called Tekosin, which stood against Kurdistan Revolutionists (Ibid: pp. 146). In the history of the Kurdistan Revolutionists in Ankara there were a lot of conspiracy stories. When Öcalan was the head of ADYÖD in Ankara, naturally he met all the members of the students association. The state enrolled its spies wherever it needed, and those enrolled students were members of the ADYÖD as well. Among those students Nejati Kaya (Pilot) and Kesire Yildirim approached Öcalan (Öcalan 1996: pp. 96), according to Öcalan and Bayik.

The underground party that Öcalan dreamed of was finally established. Would they be able to continue their work as a party, while the party was in clandestinely? According to Öcalan at that time, Pilot was representing the Fascist tendency of the 'special war branch', on the other side Kesire Yildirim represented the Kemalist tendency of the 'special war

branch' (Öcalan 1996: pp. 112). Both of them were very close to Öcalan and they acted as members of the party. From 27th of November onwards the Kurdistan Revolutionists became Kurdistan Workers' Party the PKK – *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*. A central committee was elected and between the committee members a three member executive committee elected Abdullah Öcalan as the General Secretary of the PKK. The programme of the PKK was aimed at organising the Kurdistan Liberation Revolution. This revolution should be led by a proletariat party, should organise a wide popular front, and organise a guerrilla army to continue the struggle through a prolonged popular war. The first stage was a party from the poorest stratum of Kurdish society, which had been established as well as the agenda to organise a guerrilla army. All those concepts were easy to express theoretically, the difficulty was implementation under a strict denial policy.

The important question always asked by its foes and friends was why the PKK had achieved so much support and why the others had not. Objective circumstances of Bakur Kurdistan were ripe for revolutionary ideas. There were many Kurdish intellectuals and organisation prior to the PKK, but they did not have that much support from the people, as the PKK had. The answer was that the PKK was answering the objective demands of the time and acting towards the demands of the Kurdish society. The PKK had organisational independence; it did not belong to any branch of Kurdish or Turkish organisations. That organisational independence was observable in the personality of the PKK leadership activists. The ideological and political independence of the PKK and its ideological and political agendas were based on the objective circumstances of Bakur and other parts of Kurdistan. Therefore at the beginning the PKK was supported by the most oppressed as a party.

The goal Öcalan had been dreaming of, the group of professional revolutionaries he had been searching for, and the party itself, were looking to build to lead the people from the

poorest stratum of Kurdish society; such a party was finally organised. Founding the party passed the first difficulty and impasse of Kurdistan revolution, but it was only the start.

Establishing a Guerrilla Army the ARGK

When the PKK was still in the mind of only one person in Istanbul and then in Ankara the political situation in Turkey, Bakur Kurdistan and the Middle East were in turmoil because of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in Lebanon –PLO, while Syria was the centre for the guerrilla organisation of Africa and Asia. In Bashur Kurdistan a prolonged uprising continued against the state of Iraq. Most of the Turkish revolutionists during the 12th March 1971 coup moved to Syria and Lebanon in order to receive guerrilla training offered by the PLO. Then they returned to Turkey to start a guerrilla war against the Turkish state. However, their warfare was short lived and they were killed in the clashes with Turkish Armed Forces. Some of Kurdish patriots from Bakur went to Bashur Kurdistan to receive for guerrilla training too. Those events, together with the training in Turkey, had left massive impacts on revolutionary youths in Turkey. The founding group of the PKK was ideologically supporting the prolonged popular warfare and armed struggle. Just before the formation of the PKK, Öcalan said that when he was in Dersim he visited Kutu Deresi in the Haydaran region and explained to his comrade Kamer Özkan his project for a guerrilla war (Öcalan 1996: pp. 101). However, Kamer Özkan decided not to create a first group of Armed Propaganda Units in Dersim.

Between 1968 and 1971 the Turkish lefts organisations were discussing about how to start the urban guerrilla warfare and make Turkey an independent country. These discussions were opened and inserted in the legally established associations. The state was vigilantly but slowly monitoring what they were doing with the help of agents infiltrated among the students. It is known that some of the university's academic members such as Professor

Mahir Kaynak and Professor Yalçın Kuçuk were among them. One the main reason why the THKP-C, THKO and TIKKO-TKP/ML's guerrilla warfare failed and was defeated at the first instance was because of the state intelligent agents' reports on them. Most of the universities of the time in Turkey were full of leftist, socialist, social-democratic and secular ideas. Kurdish students from Bakur who were studying in those universities in Turkey were naturally influenced with these ideas (Jongerden & Akkaya 2012. pp. 5).

Turkish and Kurdish society at that time was not as literate as it is today; mostly of its members were uneducated and very religious and conservative. Some Kurdish students were conservative, however most of the university students had tendency towards leftist ideas. Similar to the Turkish leftist organisations, the Kurdish organisations of the time also had leftist tendencies and saw all national, political, social and cultural problems through the lens of materialism, socialism and secularism. The majority of Kurdish and Turkish leftist revolutionary groups in the 1970s decided that their base strategy was the guerrilla warfare. Turkish leftist were organizing the urban guerrilla warfare while the Kurdish ones were debating on the rural guerrilla warfare (Romano 2006: pp. 49). Because of the bipolar situation of the world, most of the leftist organisations were against the symbols of Western imperialism and capitalism. Although some of those organisations criticized the Soviet Union as revisionists, they hope that because of their anti-imperialist struggle the Soviet Union they would eventually support their guerrilla warfare, as it had happened in China, Vietnam, Mozambique and Cuba.

The killing of Haki Karer constituted a turning point in the history of the PKK. The group knew who the rivals were and their relations and motivations, as well as their reason for the killing of Haki Karer; therefore, they decided to take revenge. Antep was one the most cosmopolitan Bakur Kurdistan cities and it were where the PKK started its first activities and where the party gained its stronger presence. On the first anniversary of Haki Karer's deathon

18th May 1978, this time in one the most backward rural area of Urfa in Hilwan, a PKK activist got killed this time by a local tribe closely related to the ultra-Turkish nationalists. This time the PKK started to act against Kurdish collaborationist tribes supporting the Turkish state. The PKK successfully defeated the tribe called Suleymani tribe, and a candidate supported by the PKK won the mayoral municipality elections. The area of Hilwan was not suitable to launch guerrilla warfare because of the lack of popular support and its distance from Siverek, Amed, Urfa Adiyaman, Elazig and Dersim. However, the first Armed Propaganda Unit was established against Kurdish collaborationist tribe leaders.

The Hilwan resistance and their success against the state supported tribe became the title of all state sponsored media. The attention of the state and all other organisations focused on the Apocular. In the same year, the PKK made its first congress while their first guerrilla commander Mehmet Karasungur was in Hilwan because their struggle in Hilwan Karasungur could not attend or wait for the 1st congress to be held on 27th November 1978. After the 1st congress the Maras Massacre took place and the martial law was declared. Öcalan immediately called a meeting and said that the martial law was the sign of a coup d'état. In May 1979, one the PKK's three main executive committee members, Sahin Dönmez, got arrested in Elazig, and he confessed everything to the police. The members of the Elazig local branch of the PKK were all arrested. Öcalan left Amed to Mardin and then Urfa after some meetings, which had the purpose of reorganising the central and executive committee. He also prepared the PKK's declaration document and the action against Mehmet Celal Bucak in Siverek, and then he left Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey on 1st July 1979 to reach Kobani in Rojava Kurdistan.

In the Middle East, Öcalan faced a very cold greeting from the Palestinian organisations, because Kurdish and Turkish organisations had already had relations with the Palestinian Liberation Movements and made a negative propaganda against the PKK. In a

very short time, Öcalan reversed this negative opinion and worked on four important points: firstly Öcalan managed in a very short time to establish a warm relationship with the Palestinian Liberation movements as well as Kurdish community in Kobani, Aleppo, Damascus and Beirut. Ethem Akçam, the PKK sympathizer who helped Öcalan reach Kobani became the bridge between the central committee of the PKK in Bakur and Öcalan in Damascus.

His immediate duty was to bring some cadres in order to educate and train them in the guerrilla warfare and then relocate them to Bakur Kurdistan. Secondly, Öcalan created the bases in the Bakaa Valley among the Palestinians for a long-term education and guerrilla training, telling them the truth about the PKK because the Palestinians were recognized and supported by the Soviet Union. Thirdly, he made connections with the Kurdish community in the Diaspora, which since the 1960's existed both in Lebanon and in Europe. Fourthly, he used that opportunity positively in order to make sustainable relations with the socialist system, European communist and socialist parties and National Liberation Movements around the world; despite the socialist system, this was not the system in which the PKK believed in (Bayik 1998: pp. 306-12). After long discussions and debates with the Palestinian Democratic Front, it finally allowed Öcalan to bring a group of PKK members for guerrilla training. Öcalan urgently returned to Kobani and sent a message to the executive committee asking them to urgently relocate 50 good candidates for future guerrillas from all regions of Bakur Kurdistan. In a short time, they were relocated in Kobani then in the Bakaa Valley clandestinely. The unexpected incident led to the arrests of Mazlum Dogan and Mehmet Hayri Durmus, two of the PKK's central committee members, on 1st October 1979 – the biggest threat to the organisation.

The first trained guerrilla group of the PKK returned to Bakur and they made their bases in Kars, Agirî, Bingol, Dersim, and Siverek. The commanders of the guerrillas, Kemal

Pir, Mahsum Korkmaz and Mehmet Can Yuce, carried out an amateur action in Batman province at a Gendarmerie check point that would heavily damaged the PKK. Kemal Pir and Mehmet Can Yuce got injured and then arrested while they jumped from a moving pickup truck between Batman and Sason, while Mahsum Korkmaz managed to escape with some injuries.

Three important events compromised PKK's activities at the time: the first one was the arrest of Sahin Dönmez, a member of the executive committee of the PKK. Once in custody, Sahin Dönmez disclosed every detail about the PKK's future activity and programme. The second one was Mazlum Dogan and Mehmet Hayri Durmus's arrest while with another cadre, who was carrying a very important note from Öcalan to the PKK's central committee, which was confiscated by the police at the time. The third one was the arrest of Kemal Pir and Mehmet Can Yuce between Batman and Sason while in possession of all the documents related to the guerrilla warfare and the training camps in the Bakaa Valley. The Turkish State had enough evidence in hand to show that the PKK had established as a party, that its leader was able to flee out of the country and, more importantly, that the PKK was preparing a very dangerous guerrilla war against the Turkish state. The 12th September coup d'état took place and the army took over the government and arrested almost all the members of Kurdish and Turkish legal and illegal organisations and associations. The PKK immediately relocated its remaining cadres and supporters to the Bakaa Valley.

On 20th September, just eight days after the Turkish army coup the Iraq and Iran war started and soon after, Israel attacked Palestinian positions in south Lebanon and in Bakaa Valley in Lebanon. The PKK held its first conference in 1981 and its 2nd Congress in 1982. In the PKK's ten years struggle the 1st conference and 2nd congress were cornerstones, which paved the way to the future development and progress of the party in the following years and decades that followed. How could a party with a modern scientific knowledge focus on

leading a revolution in Kurdistan? How did the PKK educate its cadres for the continuity and survival of the party? How did it mobilize the masses for a general uprising? How would it sustain its relations and continue with multiple actors in Kurdistan, the region and the world? The challenge was how to achieve all these revolutionary goals without repeating the failures of the previous Kurdish uprisings of the last two hundred years, or the mistakes made by the Turkish radical left until their disappearance in 1972.

The process of the reinvention of the PKK started in the post-coup period in Damascus and the Bakaa Valley in Lebanon. After, and even before, the coup thousands of the supporters of the PKK were arrested and most of them made political defences for the Kurdistan national liberation Movement (KNLM). Mazlum Dogan, Hayri Durmus and Kemal Pir, the three PKK Central Committee members and founders of the party were, arrested before the September 1980's coup. They were in Amed prison in conditions worse than the ones experienced by prisoners in Saigon, Vietnam, in the 1960s and 1970s. The resistance continued under inhumane conditions: tens of prisoners lost their lives in hunger strikes, while executions were also being carried out among the members of Turkish revolutionary leftist organisations.

The expectation of the PKK members in the prison, and particularly from Kemal Pir and Mehmet Can Yuce was that the commanders who were trained in the Bakaa Valley knew how the PKK was organizing the guerrilla warfare. In addition, they expected that Mazlum Dogan and Mehmet Hayri Durmus were aware of the post-coup developments as well. The state's policy was to defeat the PKK in Amed prison before it started a substantial guerrilla insurgency. The tortures and inhumane treatments of the political prisoners of the PKK reached an unbearable degree.

The PKK was aware of its responsibility to launch the guerrilla activity inside Bakur and they thought that it would reduce the harsh treatments on the people as well as in the

prison of Amed. Some internal problems inside the PKK were causing and preventing launching the guerrilla activities. For example, Kesire Yildirim, Cetin Gögür and Baki Karer were not in favour of launching guerrilla activities. However, the majority of the leadership of the time worked hard to reinvent and to organise the cadres on the basis of an ideological and political manifestation of the long-lasting popular war as experienced in China and Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh and Mao Zedong's guerrilla war theories were the mostly used sources.

In order to prepare its members ideologically, the PKK went through a reassessment of Hilwan and Siverek practices in order to decide what kind of guerrilla warfare could be sustained. This included a study of the 19th and 20th century's uprisings in Kurdistan, and of the failures of the Peshmerga practice between 1961 and 1975. In addition, they analysed the experiences from Palestinian the Al-Fattah, the Palestinian Peoples Liberation Front led by George Habbash, and the Palestinian Democratic Popular Front led by Naif Hawatme.

The PKK had almost recruited three hundred cadres from Bakur Kurdistan. Most of them educated and who had left their university studies in order to undertake an ideological and guerrilla training offered by the PKK. The most important experience was that, according to the PKK's military strategy, a guerrilla war would not be possible, if they did not learn from the consequences of the past Kurdish rebellions' failures. For example how they became immigrant or sent to exile by the Ottoman and Persian Empires far away from Kurdistan. The case of the famous Badr Khans family was a very dramatic one. The Badr Khan rebellion was defeated and all the family was sent to exile in the Grit Island in the Mediterranean Sea and never caught the chance to return to Botan. The PKK taught to its cadres the process of returning back to Bakur Kurdistan must return as armed guerrilla in order to have public support and their mobilization a guerrilla insurgency must launched immediately. That was the only way out of the political conundrum of the time to organise a

guerrilla army, otherwise the PKK would have been an immigrant organisation and after a while would be self defeated, similarly to previous Kurdish and Turkish organisations.

Human resources and the mobilisation of the masses in Bakur Kurdistan, logistics and hide out bases together with channels of communications and weapons constituted the technical sides of that struggle. The most important thing was to have the will power, the courage, the bravery and ideological belief of returning to their homeland even if it would entail death and sacrifice. Most of the Kurdish and Turkish political organisations agreed that the only way to confront the military coup and Turkish state was to launch guerrilla warfare, but none of them have had the courage and bravery to launch such an action, with the PKK as the only exception.

Öcalan, in an education seminar, said: what is it for the sword and weapon? In order to live in our land we have to have these to defend ourselves, because there is not any other way of life left. Every avenue of life for ourselves has been blocked; however we have to use these weapons in the right way (Öcalan 1996: pp. 168). At the second congress, the decision of establishing the HRK –*Hêzên Rizgarîya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Liberation Forces was confirmed and well-trained guerrillas groups were established from September 1982 onwards: they crossed the borders of Rojava (Syria) towards Bakur (Turkey) then to Bashur (Iraq). Some of the PKK groups faced difficulties crossing from Bakur to Bashur.

One of the experienced commanders from the Hilwan and Siverek resistances, Sahin Kilavuz, was killed along with eight of his comrades while crossing over to Bashur. According to the agreement between the PKK and the KDP, the PKK guerrillas had to be based both in Bashur Kurdistan and Bakur Kurdistan's border area. The first group was called the Armed Propaganda Units. Botan is the most important area, where the assimilation policies of Turkish state had not been effective; the guerrillas aimed to set a base there. Botan is also the most strategic area between four parts of Kurdistan and one of the most forest and

mountainous terrain of Bakur Kurdistan. The guerrillas by mid 1983 made their bases in all areas they had aimed to. They reached Agirî, Kars, Dersim, Bingol, Amed, Botan, Adiyaman and Mardin.

The first official attack on the Turkish armed forces was launched. On 15th August 1984 the HRK (*Hêzên Rizgarîya Kurdistan*) the Kurdistan Liberation Forces planned to launch a guerrilla war against the three strategic towns of Bakur Kurdistan Eruh, Çatak and Shemdinli. The state announced that bandits who would be caught and killed by the security forces had caused the attack. The guerrilla warfare continued with heavy losses but it managed to win the support of the people and to mobilise the masses causing social, cultural and political changes not only in Bakur Kurdish communities but also in the other three parts of Kurdistan, as well as in Turkish society too.

The HRK gained strength and in 1986 the ARGK- *Artesa Rizgarîya Gelê Kurdistan* – the birth of the Kurdistan Peoples' Liberation Army was announced. The guerrilla war under the banner of the ARGK continued for fifteen years. The organisation structure was different then the HRK. The HRK was small guerrillas group aiming to become a guerrilla army. When the HRK evolved into the ARGK its structure was like a conventional army consisting of a single unit to the biggest component of the army, a division.

After Öcalan's imprisonment in Imrali Island in Turkey the concepts of the "Liberation" discourses in the PKK literature changed to "Freedom". The PKK at its 7th congress in 2000 changed the name of the ARGK to the HPG – *Hêzên Parastina Gel* – the People' Protection Forces. The HPG is still the PKK's armed force. The HRK and the ARGK aimed at ejecting the Turkish army from Bakur Kurdistan and the strategic goal was creating an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. The main goal of the HRK and the ARGK was the Liberation of Kurdistan no matter how long it would take. The HPG was aiming for a

legitimate self-defence, in other words not aiming to Liberate Kurdistan, but to defend the forces for a democratic solution with the Turkish state without secession from Turkey.

Founding a Popular Front the ERNK

The PKK's ideological, political and theoretical paradigm was different from other Kurdish nationalists and from Turkish leftists. The Turkish left was under the influence of Kemalist ideology and Kurdish nationalists were asking for reforms. Although some of them in theory were asking for the same strategic aims as the PKK, in practice they did not choose to act to form a national front or launch a guerrilla struggle. Conversely, the PKK focused on Kurdistan National Liberation strategy as it had established a leading Party to lead the revolution, but also it was trying hard to include in its strategy the formation of a professional Guerrilla Army. To sustain and mobilize the masses it was necessary to establish a National Popular Front. In order to sustain the guerrilla army with their own resources and not to be a dependent movement, an immediate popular organisation was established in Newroz in 1985, almost six months after the announcement of the start of the guerrilla war against the Turkish state.

The ERNK – *Enîya Rizgarîya Netewîya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan National Liberation Front aimed to achieve the best possible organisations in this area. The first step consisted of organising the people inside Bakur Kurdistan from all stratum of the society. Secondly, the ERNK aimed at working with the other parts of Kurdistan's political parties and the people on the border sides of Bashur, Rojava and Rojhilat in a logistical effort to support the demands of the guerrilla units inside Bakur. Thirdly, it aimed to organise the millions of Kurds living in Turkey's big cities especially Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Adana, Mersin and others. Fourthly, its purpose was to involve the struggle of the Kurdish communities in the Diaspora. A great number of dynamic and young Kurdish populations from all parts of

Kurdistan were in Europe. That population in Europe became organised and mobilized very fast and provided an invaluable support to the Kurdistan National liberation Movement.

The people of Bakur Kurdistan, after the September coup, were frightened because of the martial law and from widespread open public tortures in villages and towns. There were enormous difficulties to find supporters among the villages in rural areas. The army and police force strictly controlled the cities and towns in the east and west sides of Euphrates. The Turkish state had an official policy of depopulating Bakur Kurdistan's provinces on the west of the Euphrates (Sivas, Malatya, Maraş, Adiyaman and Antep), mostly the Alevite Kurds. The process of depopulating Alevite Kurds from west Euphrates started when the state witnessed that a radical national and political development was in progress and that it was different from the other organisations. This time that organisation was bravely acting in the name of Kurdistan and was capable of recruiting Sunni and Alevite Kurds, Kurmanj and Zaza Kurds, and even Turks. The PKK had organised into a united popular front from all communities in Bakur Kurdistan, the ERNK becoming the voice of all social classes in relation to Kurdistan national liberation.

I have repeatedly pressed on this point that the PKK at its emergence insisted on acting together with Kurdish nationalists in Bakur and Turkish democrats in Turkey. The PKK from its early stage, between 1974 and 1975, tried to act collectively in collaboration with the radical revolutionary Turkish left and nationalist leftist and conservative Kurdish organisations in Ankara. During the ADYÖD with the supporters of THKP-C, THKO, TIKKO-TKP/ML and many other Turkish organisations did not follow Öcalan, Bayik, Pir, Karasu, Kaytan and Karer when they tried hard to convince them to form a united democratic front. The Kurdish organisations of DDKD, KDP-T and TKSP were active in Ankara. Öcalan and Bayik met them and offered to discuss their ideas in an attempt to unifying their beliefs and actions. However, Kurdish nationalists rejected their offer (Öcalan 1982: pp. 115-16),

(Bayik 1998: pp. 85), (Karayilan 2012: pp. 97). The PKK had tried to bring all democratic forces into one united front before and after the martial law declaration in 1978, and before and after the military coup.

When the 12th September military coup took place, the PKK in Kurdistan and the DEV YOL organisation in Turkey were able to safeguard and relocate some members to Syria and Lebanon. This time the PKK fastened its activities in two spheres. The first one, to bring the Kurdish organisations that were from Bakur Kurdistan into a united anti-colonialist and anti-fascist front and the second one was to bring Kurdish and Turkish organisations into a wider anti-fascist front against the military coup. Even Öcalan went further in order to bring Kurdish organisations into a united front, and in this way aiming to safeguard them in order to avoid those becoming immigrant and refugee organisations. The PKK offered the general secretary of the TKSP, Kemal Burkay, the opportunity to be the leader of this united front, but this offer was rejected (Öcalan 1982; pp. 115). All Kurdish organisations in 1980 and 1981 gave the PKK their final decisions; that they would not attempt to prepare for guerrilla warfare and they would definitely continue their struggle in the non-violent way in Europe until the government in Turkey's political authority returned to the civilians. The PKK also offered all Kurdish organisations from all four parts of Kurdistan to get united in a National Congress and offered them the opportunity to work seriously and to concede them the role of secretary of the National Congress; unfortunately this offer also was rejected (Öcalan 1982: pp. 189).

This time the PKK tried to attract Turkish radical leftist organisations. Finally, the FKBDC – *Fasizme Karsi Birlesik Direnis Cephesi* – Anti-Fascist United Resistance Front was declared on 1st of June 1982; a union between the PKK, DEV YOL and seven other radical leftist Turkish organisations (Serxwebun 1982: Issue: 6 pp.1 & 23). The FKBDC became a hope among the Turkish and Kurdish united front, however, it did not continue and at the end of 1983 DEV YOL chose to move to Europe, left Syria and stopped its

commitment to any kind of guerrilla war. In the end the PKK was left alone, none of the Kurdish or Turkish organisations supported PKK's insistence on launching a guerrilla war against the Turkish state. In the prisons in Kurdistan and Turkey, those who resisted the most were the PKK's members. The PKK speed up its national, political, cultural, social and diplomatic activities and the ERNK – *Enîya Rizgarîya Netewîya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan National Liberation Front was finally declared. The ERNK obtained the support from Kurds in the Diaspora. The Rojava Kurdistan's people gained a special place among the ERNK organisation, because they did not only support materially but also became a physical support participating even in the guerrillas. The ERNK in Europe as a legal organisation played a very crucial role in terms of cultural, social and diplomatic activities, and also became a huge financial supporter of the guerrillas.

The ERNK continued to exist until February 1999, when the PKK's leader was handed over to Turkish state from Nairobi, Kenya. In the winter of 2000, the PKK's extraordinary 7th congress put an end to the activities of the ERNK. This caused a huge confusion among the members of the ERNK in Europe. The PKK made a huge mistake in suspending the activities of the ERNK (Karayilan 2012: pp. 355). It could have created an equivalent organisation to replace it. The ERNK not only compromised the activities in Europe but also in Rojava Kurdistan, too. The ERNK played a significant role in the history of Kurdistan and the PKK's struggle for the mobilisation of Kurdish people in the Diaspora in Europe. The ERNK struggled hard against the forced assimilation of Kurds and revived Kurdish cultural and political development in big cities in Turkey and among the people in all the four parts of Kurdistan. The ERNK opened a new page in Kurdish history, and its influence still continues by different social, cultural and diplomatic Kurdish associations wherever Kurdish people have lived.

Opening the Gate of Legal Politics

Kurdistan was partitioned and colonised between four nation-states: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Under each of them Kurds were subject to strict policies of assimilation, annihilation and ethnic extinction. In order to make Kurdistan a liberated independent country, all possible legal political environments were prohibited. In any case, mentioning the words of Kurds and Kurdistan were enough to be accounted as the most dangerous terrorist against the 'indivisible territorial integrity' of the Turkish state. The existence of a nation called Kurds and a country called Kurdistan was strictly forbidden in the Turkish constitutions of 1971 and 1980. So the page of any legal political activity for Kurds and Kurdistan was completely sealed forever in the Turkish state's system. The constitution of Turkey only recognized one nation in Turkey, the Turkish nation, Turkish language, Turkish flag, Turkish state and Turkish country. There was only one way left to exist, deny your Kurdish identity and live as a Turk and to do politics according to the Turkish state constitution to become an MP, Prime minister or even President. Any expression about Kurds and Kurdistan faced heavy sentences. Under those circumstances to do politics as a Kurd for the liberation of Kurdistan meant a very long imprisonment, if not worse. Those measures implemented by Turkish state's constitution caused the birth of the PKK.

The PKK managed to organise a small group of political activists into a party, and to create a guerrilla army and a wider popular front to mobilise tens, hundreds, thousands and millions. It saved its organisation and reinvented itself ideologically, politically, and by theoretically publishing its philosophical understanding and belief in a continued political monthly magazine. It influenced the creation of communities in the Diaspora, the creation of associations of youths, workers, women and peasants in Bakur and the mobilisation of the Kurds living in Turkish main cities and in European countries (Romano 2006: pp. 50-51).

The PKK was able to launch and sustain a guerrilla war with mobilized masses and fought against the second largest army of the NATO. The PKK independently organised the people in different spheres politically, culturally and diplomatically in order not to depend economically from satellite organisations. Organizing masses was not just for a short time but also for a long-term impact.

The Turkish state used whatever method was needed to stop these developments and advancement of the movement led by the PKK. The counter-actions of Turkish state included the use of Special Forces, the army, the police, the Kurdish village guards, the informers, JITEM – gendarmerie, the intelligence agency and the army intelligences' secret service against Kurdish people' and the creation of Extraordinary Region Governorate in Bakur Kurdistan. Turkish state's internally continuous war had a strong impact on the all stratum of the society in Bakur Kurdistan and in Kurdish society outside of Kurdistan, because of their extraordinary support of the PKK.

The Second Gulf War started when Iraqi Armed forces occupied Kuwait in 1990 and the American led International Coalition dismantled Iraqi army and the regime. It opened a new window and an extraordinary opportunity for the movement of the PKK. Thousands of the Iraqi army left their weapons in their bases after American attacks on Iraq. The PKK gained those weapons and widened their spheres of operation in a huge geographic area of Bakur and Bashur Kurdistan. Kurdish people in the north and Shiite Arabs in the south of Iraq upraised against the state of Iraq. The Iraqi state used unlimited military force against Shiite and Kurdish civilians; it caused millions of people to leave their homes due to the fear of chemical bombings. It caused Humanitarian Intervention by the permission of the United Nations Security Council Resolution of 688 to establish Safe Havens for the civilians and No-Fly Zone for Shi'a Arabs and Kurdish people in Bashur Kurdistan. Humanitarian Intervention in Iraq caused the political parties of Bashur Kurdistan to become united in a

wider front, and then they held elections, set up National Parliament and established the KRG – Kurdistan Regional Government.

Prior to the Second Gulf War the PKK announced that the developments in Bakur and Bashur Kurdistan caused the establishment of the Botan-Bahdinan War Cabinet. However, because of the KRG establishment and the Humanitarian Protection by the UN, the PKK left the idea of Botan-Bahdinan War Cabinet. With the resistance led by the PKK, fought by the ARGK and sustained by the ERNK, over the years it became obvious to Turkey, regional states and the international powerful nations such as the US, UK, France, Germany and Russia that the PKK movement was not like any other previous movement seen before. It was not only a national liberation movement; it was a political, a guerrilla, and social movement attracting all stratum of communities' attention and support in Kurdistan. That movement had deep roots among the society and it guaranteed its continuity and sustainability.

Turkish state's denial policy on Kurdish national identity was not able to assimilate and annihilate Kurdish Question by force. The PKK's guerrilla war was supported by the Kurdish masses. A new entity in Bashur Kurdistan came to existence with the establishment of the KRG, which caused some anxiety among regional states especially the Turkish state. Those developments caused Turkish state to change the direction and to adopt some softer policies toward the acceptance of the existence of a Kurdish nation and opened the gate of legal politics in Turkey. In this way, the Kurds gained some limited representation in the National Assembly of Turkey not representing as the representative of Kurdish people but accommodating in the left leaning Turkish political parties. The PKK up to this stage had always insisted that it was leading Kurdistan national liberation as the only revolutionary movement that has truly fought for the independence of Kurdistan. The PKK also blamed the other Kurdish political parties and associations as opportunist and primitive nationalists who

had not truly fought for independence, but for autonomy. Therefore the PKK up to this stage has refused any parliamentary political activities, and even if such an activity opportunity occurs, it will only be in the interests of the state. Despite defending this idea ideologically, when the opportunity of legal political activities was available the PKK politically supported the idea in order to move towards political reconciliation and opening the gate of political dialogue and negotiations to have peaceful settlement of Kurdish question. The national liberation concept of the PKK, the progression and developments of its ARGK and ERNK put a huge social change inside of Kurdish society in Bakur Kurdistan and its coincidence with emergence of the KRG made millions were mobilised.

A legal political party was established in Turkey by Kurdish leftists, patriot nationalists and some reformist elements, with some Turkish leftists. Later, the Turkish leftist members were not keen to participate and they left. The Kurdish elements established the HEP – *Halkin Emek Partisi* – the Peoples’ Labour Party, legally, in 1990 to participate in general elections with the Social Democratic Popular Party. The state infiltrated it and tried to control the HEP because the Turkish state wanted to prevent Kurdish masses supporting the PKK through a legal party. However, by 1990 the PKK, as a political party that had organised a guerrilla army and created a national front, knew of the Turkish state’s indirect intervention and prevention of the HEP. The PKK, on the contrary, supported any legal activity such as the HEP to become a platform to be an indirect supporter and play role in the peace process, which it did (Watts 2010: pp. 52).

Turkish state security court banned the HEP on 14th July 1993. The MPs of the HEP were transferred to the DEP- *Demokrasi Partisi* – Democracy Party. The DEP party was established on 7th May 1993. There was also another party established, the ÖZEP – *Özgürlük ve Eşitlik Partisi* – Freedom and Equality Party on 25th of June 1992, and the ÖZDEP *Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi* – Freedom and Democracy Party on 19th October 1992. Both

parties of ÖZEP and ÖZDEP were dissolved and joined the DEP, and the DEP was shutdown on 16th June 1994. All those parties followed the same path and were supporting the PKK struggle and in favour to solve Kurdish Question peacefully. Although all those pro-Kurdish legal political parties in Turkey aimed to solve the Kurdish question in a democratic parliamentary way, the state continued to ban them, and did not allow them to participate in politics legally

The HADEP – *Halkin Demokrasi Partisi* – Peoples Democracy Party was established on 11th May 1994 and was closed down on 13th March 2003 to be replaced by the DEHAP – *Demokratik Halk Partisi* – Democratic People’s Party, which was established on 24th October 1997 and dissolved on 9th November 2005 to join the DTP – *Demokratik Toplum Partisi* – Democratic Society Party. From 2nd March 1994 to 22nd July 2007, because of the 10% national election threshold in Turkey, all those Kurdish supported political parties that could not pass the national elections threshold were not represented in the Turkey’s Grand National Assembly (Watts 2010: pp. 65-71). On 22nd July 2007 they participated as a block of independent candidates and they won 22 seats, and when the Parliament opened after election all the 22 elected MPs joined the DTP and they set up their own parliamentary group. The DTP also had the same destiny of all previous sister parties and eventually was blamed because for its support to the PKK and eventually closed down by the verdict of Constitutional Court on 11 December 2009. All these parties knew that they would be closed down and therefore they always established a spare party in the case of closure to replace it immediately. The BDP – *Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi* – Peace and Democracy Party was already there and the MPs were transferred to the BDP, which was established on 2nd May 2008. The BDP became very successful and continued the tradition that was established in the HEP in 1990s. The BDP participated until the 11th June 2011 general elections as a block of independent candidates and won 35 seats in the parliament.

The HDP – *Halkların Demokrasi Partisi* – Peoples Democracy Party was established on 27th October 2013 and the DBP – *Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi*- Democratic Regions Party was emerged on 11th July 2014. These two parties were born from the BDP. The BDP was dissolved and all the MPs were transferred to the HDP except one MP who was transferred to the DBP as co-chair of the party was Emine Ayna.

All the above-mentioned parties were established to create a dialogue and negotiation for a peaceful solution of the Kurdish question with the Turkish state. On 3rd January 2013 Turkish media announced that two MPs of the BDP Ahmet Türk and Ayla Akat Ata paid a visit to Öcalan in Imrali Prison. It was an extraordinary event, most of Kurdish people were happy for that dialogue. The reconciliation process continued and the HDP played a very important mediation role, however this so-called ‘peace process’ was failed when the HDP passed the 10% election threshold and won 80 MPs to the parliament of Turkey as the representatives of Kurds, Turks, Armenians, Assyrians, Laz, Arabs, Sunnis, Alevite, Christians, and Yezidis.

At the birth of the PKK until 1988 it built its discourse on the National Liberation discourse and ejected the Turkish army from Kurdistan through guerrilla war. When the second Gulf War happened in 1991 and the collapse of Soviet Union and Turkish state’s removing ban on Kurdish language, the PKK softened its radical revolutionary policies that a legal political struggle could be considered if Turkey accepted Kurdish national and political rights through peaceful means. Therefore all those parties were established in order to push the Turkish state towards a peaceful solution to the Kurdish Question. This process of those legal political parties still continues without any success.

An interlocutor starting the Process of Dialogue and Ceasefires

The region of the Middle East after WWI was divided into small nation-states. The Ottoman Empire was defeated; the Kurds lost their right of statehood because of internal and external factors of the time. The former Ottoman part of Kurdistan was divided into three between Britain, France and new republic of Turkey. Other than the Palestinian and Israel war there were no major issues between Turkey, Iran, Iraq or Syria. In 1979 the Iranian popular revolution was hijacked by theocratic Mollas, Iraq attacked Iran and occupied a large portion of Iran's territory and the Iraq-Iran war as the First Gulf War continued for eight years. After the Iraq and Iran war, Iraq occupied Kuwait and the Second Gulf War started between of the US led international coalition against Iraq. Iraq was dismantled as a state. Millions of Kurds sought refuge in Turkey and Iran, and the world witnessed the scale of the Kurdish question in the Middle East. Humanitarian Intervention for the first time after the end of the Cold War was brought in defence of the Kurdish people at the United Nations Security Council. Forty per cent of Bashur Kurdistan's territory became a de facto state with its own parliament and government. Interestingly, Turkey, a country that never accepted the existence of Kurdish people did support the UN Security Council Resolution in supporting of the Kurds (McDowall 1997: 375-6).

The president of Turkey at that time was Turgut Özal who was Kurdish from his mother's side and among all the presidents to date he was the first one without a military past. President Özal invited Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani to Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, and met them at the Presidential Palace. President Özal opened the way for the parliament to remove the ban on the Kurdish language for the first time in the history of the Turkish republic, while Mesut Yilmaz declared that Kurdish language could be a second official language in Turkey. All these revolutionary changes were happening just after March

1991. President Özal declared he would support the autonomy for the Kurds in Iraq. Abdullah Öcalan declared that if Turkey wanted peace, a federal solution could be negotiated. Soon after that declaration, president Özal started talking about a federal solution for the Kurdish question in Turkey and even to put Bashur Kurdistan under the federal umbrella (Ibid: 428-29).

The president and the Prime minister of Turkey for the first time declared their support to solve the Kurdish question. The opposition party in the parliament of Turkey was also in favour of solving the Kurdish question. The PKK with its national, political, diplomatic and guerrilla struggle has gained enormous strength and was also in favour of a peaceful settlement. The regional and international situation was not against such a solution. The European Union and the US wanted Turkey to solve the Kurdish question peacefully, even if it needed a federal solution. The liberalization of Turkish politics by president Özal was a sign of positive developments.

The HEP participated in the general elections held in October 1991 in the list of the SHP – *Sosyal Demokratik Halkçi Party* – the Peoples Social Democrat Party, and won almost 22 seats from Bakur Kurdistan. After the elections, the HEP MPs split from the SHP and became a parliamentary opposition group.

President Özal invited Jalal Talabani and discussed the possibilities of a peace settlement between the PKK and the Turkish state. The HEP parliamentary group of Kurdish MPs built up a dialogue with president Özal and supported the initiatives to open the channels of dialogue. Eventually, Jalal Talabani went to Bakaa Valley and met Öcalan. On that occasion they agreed to publicly declare the 17th March 1993 Newroz Ceasefire (White 2000: pp. 169). It was a great moment for the PKK: after twenty years, since 1973, it had gained an enormous reputation and its leader had become an internationally recognised one. Some forces inside the Turkish state were hostile to that process, because the process itself

was self-explanatory showing the defeat of the Turkish state, security, intelligence and army in defeating the PKK by force. They could not defeat the PKK, and finally they were negotiating a peaceful solution with it.

On 17th April, exactly one month after the announcement of the ceasefire, Turgut Özal died. Many believed that president Özal was killed because he was the supporter of Bashur Kurdistan's autonomy and went further beyond autonomy supporting a federal solution for the Kurdish question in Turkey. At a meeting of the Turkish-American businessmen, Stephen Kinzer in 2001 on the New York Times stated that he had suspicious of president Özal's death (Uzun 2014: pp. 14). Almost everybody agreed that the 'special branch' of the state had killed president Özal. After the death of Özal a commander of the PKK killed 33 unarmed soldiers in May and the peace process collapsed. The HEP closed down, and another party was established: the DEP – *Demokrasi Partisi* – The Democracy party. The HEP MPs were transferred to the DEP but the DEP also closed down and eight MPs were imprisoned and the other fled from Turkey.

Four MPs of the HEP, and then DEP, Leyla Zana, Orhan Dogan, Hatip Dicle and Selim Sadak, were sentenced for a fifteen year long imprisonment. Ten years they were kept in prison and in 2004 they were released again; they participated in legal politics. What observers saw was that the Turkish state only plays a political game with the Kurdish political movement and it would never come to terms of peace, in a peaceful manner?

The Kurdistan Parliament in Exile the PKDW

The republic of Turkey, since its establishment in 1923 to 1990 when Turgut Özal became the president of Turkey, the Kurdish language was prohibited. After Özal's presidency, the ban on the Kurdish language was removed. Özal also opened the way that

somehow Kurdish politicians could participate in parliament and he was also the first ever official in Turkish republic's history to mention a solution for Kurdish question; even mentioning that federalism could be discussed in order to make Turkey as a democratic member of European Community. This democratic approach of Özal caused his death and the destruction of 4000 villages and thousands of lives. One of the Kurdish MPs Mehmet Sincar was assassinated in Batman city on 4th of September 1993 and on the 2nd March 1994 the parliamentary immunity of eight Kurdish the DEP MPs was removed, and they were arrested in the Turkish parliament.

The Kurdish MP's were mediators for peace between Özal and Öcalan, eight of them were imprisoned and some of them fled the country before their political immunity was removed. Legal political activities were banned by the Turkish state for the Kurds and those DEP MPs in Europe established the PKDW – *Parlamentoya Kurdistan li Dervayî Welat - Kurdistan Parliament in Exile*. On 12th of April 1995 Kurdistan Parliament in Exile was convened in the Netherlands. Although Öcalan was trying to establish Kurdistan National Parliament in 1990-91, however, it was not successful because of some internal party crisis at the 4th congress.

The Kurdish national organisations in Europe were unique because they included Kurdish intellectuals from all parts and the Diaspora. They organised a symbolic election between the Kurds in the Diaspora and the member for the PKDW were elected. The PKDW was greeted in all European countries and was invited to talk in different European parliaments. It promoted relations between Kurdish political parties and became a national platform for national unity transforming itself in a very short time into a national institutional body. The PKDW wrote a constitution and built diplomatic relations, and brought international attention and support to Kurdish Question in the centre of the Middle East.

After the imprisonment of Öcalan, the PKDW dissolved itself and its majority members were transferred to the KNK – *Kongra Netewîya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan National Congress. The KNK is still continuing its activities under the same logo of the PKDW and at the same building in Brussels, Belgium.

Conclusion

After the 12 March 1971 military coup in Turkey the right to national self-determination of the Kurds reverberated in students' daily discussions together with their cultural rights. After the coup, the idea strictly defended by the Kurdistan revolutionaries was that the Kurds were a nation and their country, Kurdistan, had been colonised by four nation-states. The Kurdish question became an international one with the need for a solution according to international law. Those students established a small radical revolutionary group evolved to a political party of the PKK. It established a guerrilla army and a popular front. When Turkish state found out that the Kurdish national problem and the PKK would not be eroded from the Turkish political agenda, it softened its policies. Alternatively, the PKK was willing to solve Kurdish Question by peaceful means. President Özal's policies of removing the ban on Kurdish language and his determination to solve Kurdish Question, even if it required a federal solution, were revolutionary steps. Those steps caused the PKK to do some reforms in its ideological stands. The obvious example was slowly moving from an independent united and democratic Kurdistan to a federal solution inside the borders of Turkey. Although the PKK was at the beginning strictly defending the only solution that would be secession from Turkey, the developments showed that when an opportunity for peaceful were available, the PKK used it as one of the possible solutions for peaceful settlement of Kurdish national question

Evolution from a small radical group of Kurdistan Revolutionaries to a Political party, established a Guerrilla Army, a Popular Front, and led and mobilised the people to resist in urban, rural and in prisons against the Turkish state's coercive force of assimilation, annihilation and extermination of Kurdish nation; this pushed the state to think about some dialogues with the PKK. That evolution happened because the Kurdish national question was the main question in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. The ideological and political goals of the Kurdistan national liberation were supported by Bakur Kurdistan's people as well as other three parts of Kurdistan. The chapter discussed that the PKK's national liberation strategy was working well in practice, and the reformation process of negotiating a federal solution and moving to legal political parliamentary process became possible.

Chapter 6

Why the PKK Needed Paradigm Change- Transformation

Introduction

Chapter six analyses the factors and dynamics that caused ideological, political and national strategically transformation as well as paradigm change of the PKK movement not only in Bakur, but also in the leadership of Kurdistan National Liberation Movement in the four parts of Kurdistan. As a leftist but national liberationist movement, the PKK showed the signs of reformation when it witnessed Perestroika and Glasnost in Soviet Union, the collapse of East European Soviet satellite states and Polish reformation process with the collapse of the Berlin Wall. The PKK started its ideological and political reformation when the PKK leaders accepted to meet Mehmet Ali Birand, Turkey's famous half-Kurd internationally well-known journalist in the Bakaa Valley in June 1988. Öcalan, in that very long first-ever interview to Birand, gives first the signals to the Kurdish and Turkish public that the PKK is ready to agree on mutual interests at the first instance (Dündar 2012: pp. 281).

Whether the new paradigm for a democratic republic and society are achievable or not in the socio-political situation in Turkey and in all parts of Kurdistan is an unanswered question and everybody is still questioning these new developments. The PKK insisted on building radical democracy through a bottom up process of municipalities able to guarantee a democratic autonomy. The chapter will focus on the reasons why the PKK started to change its ideological and political strategy and why it changed its national liberation strategy, which was getting support from the masses. Why the PKK had dramatically changed its national liberation discourse and withdraw its armed guerrilla forces from Bakur to Bashur Kurdistan in 1999, a move that caused the death of almost 500 hundred lives? While the search for a peaceful solution which cost the lives of 500 guerrillas failed and why it started again in May 2013 withdrawing guerrilla forces from Bakur to Bashur again repeating the same mistake?

Which were the reasons of moving from an armed revolution to a totally non-violent mode of struggle? Why the PKK reformed and transformed itself two times in a decade? How it managed to run the affair of KCK's complicated organization? Would Democratic Confederalism constitute an alternative solution to the nation state system? The conclusion will be drawn from the above-mentioned parameters.

Ideological and Political Transformation

The PKK emerged as a Marxist Leninist proletariat party with the purpose to lead a Kurdistan National Liberation Movement during the Cold War. Its definition in that era was a Leninist definition, in tune with the collapse of imperialism and the victory of national liberation movements and socialism, Soviet Union, China, Eastern Europe and Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, Mozambique and Cuba all adopted socialist political systems. The international workers unions as well as the national liberation movements fighting for independence were part of the world's socialist system (Öcalan 1992: Chapter 3). The road to the liberation of Kurdistan from the yoke of Imperialism did not aimed only at an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan, but also Turkish people would be freed too. The Turkish leftist organisations due to their Kemalist and social-chauvinistic attitude, and Kurdish organizations with their nationalistic-reformist approach considered that Kurdistan has not been liberated by the parameters that the PKK built its ideology. In order to prove whether this ideology would work or not on the basis of the parameters in Kurdistan should go through political challenges. The acceptance of the official ideology of the state, based on the Kemalist ideology as well as the sharing of the same religion confused the Kurdish nation in state institutions such as army, police, courts, education, banks and prisons. Kurdistan ideologically and politically was under siege (Serxwebun 1979: pp. 88-89). The PKK build its ideology and politics on these parameters.

The PKK successfully propagated its ideology among the educated youth; public services workers, peasants and teachers strengthening itself as political actor in Bakur Kurdistan and then in Rojava Kurdistan then in all parts of Kurdistan as well as in Turkey, the Middle East and Europe. The PKK proved to the communities in Kurdistan and Diaspora that as reliable political party leading a guerrilla war has mobilised millions of people and was able to declare ceasefires, negotiate and make political alliances. It had organised a popular front and mobilised hundreds of thousand people; established its representatives in most of European countries; despite of the support of the NATO to some Kurdish parties, the PKK has become the only prominent actor in all parts of Kurdistan, without fear from Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Most importantly the PKK struggle over two decade broke the strict Turkish state's assimilation policy on Kurdish nation and to some degree pushed the state to accept Kurdish reality to deal with it. From 1925 to 1990 within sixty years of Turkish Republics history the word of Kurds and Kurdistan was a taboo and who had talked about them would have had faced heavy imprisonment even capital punishment. That was the struggle led by the PKK broke that taboo and made the prime ministers and presidents of Turkish Republic from 1990 onwards talk about Kurdish Question and its solution.

Why the PKK had to reform its successful ideological and political programme? Why this reformation became a transformation process? There are different internal and external factors have caused the ideological and political reformation and transformation of the PKK, which started from 1988, then became official policy in 1995 at the party's fifth congress. The total transformation starts when the leader of the PKK was abducted and transferred to Turkey from Nairobi the capital city of Kenya the Imrali prison in Turkey.

The international plan of arrest and handover of the founder, leader and the organizer of the PKK to Turkish the state was the greatest tragedy Kurdish nation ever faced in its history, a fact that shocked around the world. The reaction to that plot was unimaginable among all

Kurds everywhere, except in the KDP-Iraq controlled areas. Kurdish people protested that dirty action of the US, Israel and Turkey all over the World. It was an enormous blow to the PKK, to the Kurdish nation and it was inhumane and degrading for the whole Kurdish nation. The arrest of the PKK's leader in the plain among Turkish Special Forces and Öcalan's blindfolded picture in between two Turkish flags broadcast on TV screens for days and weeks and months after his arrest was very humiliating. For a long time it was the main news title of all international newspapers and TVs around the world.

As a consequence that plot and brutal show on TVs created a revolutionary reaction a great number of young educated secondary and university Kurdish students joined the guerrilla army from all parts of Kurdistan. Qandil Mountains become a magnetic centre for educating young guerrillas. When I was doing my fieldwork in September 2013 interviewed the KCK executive council members in Qandil and Maxmur Camp they said that more than a thousand men and women from Rojhilat and another thousand from Rojava Kurdistan joined the ARGK guerrillas (Tekin 2013: interview). More than a thousand were from Bakur, a little less were from Bashur were joined to the PKK's guerrilla army the ARGK.

The PKK was in the middle of its 6th congress when Öcalan was handed over to the Turkish authorities. Immediately they elected a leadership council in order to substitute Öcalan. They knew his arrest was an international plan and that the NATO had a role in it. What Öcalan did was to take an unexpected approach, which surprised everyone. As he later explained to his lawyers, in order to make the plot ineffective, Öcalan acted against what it was planned, instead of inviting the people to continue the demonstrations and continuing the fight, he ordered his comrades to act calmly and peacefully. Öcalan had shown his and his party's intention to their search for a democratic and peaceful solution showing that the PKK has been to compromise on minimum demands for a democratic and peaceful solution of the Kurdish question since 1988.

When Öcalan started giving interviews to Turkish journalists from June 1988 onwards, he already started reforming his party's ideological set and intention for reforms. For example he talked about an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan; the borders of four states were drawn against the will of the peoples of Kurdistan; parliamentarian politics was seen as a reformist way and so on. However, the PKK leader explained to the journalists from Turkish media, 'it is just the beginning of the PKK struggle for universal national and political rights of the oppressed in Kurdistan and there is still a way to compromise and to negotiate. Before thousands and hundred thousand death we can stop this war if the state continues on denial and colonization policies then there would be a bloody war' (Birand 1992; pp. 216-7).

After Öcalan's arrest and imprisonment the process of reformation of the PKK started to change very fast. Although the first signs of the change from formation towards reformation started when the socialist system collapsed and, during its fifth congress, the PKK reformed its party programme distancing itself from the Marxist Leninist doctrine. A new doctrine was not introduced, but Apoism (The philosophy of Abdullah Öcalan mainly based on gender equality) was the most preferable among the party ranks. The ideological reformation was not completed with political reformation. The strategic and structural fundamental organizational structures remained as the ones shaped during the socialist system era. From February 1999 onwards Öcalan proposed a road map mainly based on a democratic solution, a democratic republic of Turkey and renaming the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement as a Kurdistan Freedom Movement.

From that change it was visible that the idea of an Independent, United and Democratic Kurdistan as a solution to the Kurdish question was abandoned. National Freedom of Kurdistan replaced the concept of National Liberation. The meaning of that change was that

the Kurdish question would be a matter of democratization of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria and no more of a national liberation with the purpose of creating a state of Kurdistan.

Most of Öcalan's prison writings consist in the court trial's defences focused on the issue of a democratic solution. From his court defence it was visible that 'the libertarian social ecologist Murray Bookchin, feminist political theorists, leftist Foucauldians and critical Marxists', influenced him (Gunes 2012: pp. 136). At that critical moment changing the ideological and political paradigm of the PKK was very risky a kind of 'Salto Mortale' as Jongerden and Akkaya called it. Öcalan was arguing in his new ideological and political manifestation that a nation is defined not on the basis of ethnicity or language but on the basis of citizenship in a democratic republic (Jongerden & Akkaya: 2012 pp. 5). Although this transformation was again supported by the masses, the reality was and still is in the mind of majority of the masses there was still the idea of national liberation for the establishment of a democratic western style state for communities of Kurdistan. In Brussels at the KNK building when Zubeyr Aydar a member of the KCK executive member and Remzi Kartal were interviewed while conducting the fieldwork they expressed that changes of the concepts of the PKK were seen others as we were "renegade".

Analysing that period of transformation of the PKK from imprisonment of its leader from 15th February 1999 onwards three factors need to be considered: Turkish state, the PKK leadership council and Ocalan himself. Firstly, after the initiative of the federal solution in 1993 and trying to solve Kurdish question through peaceful means, which caused the death of President Turgut Özal, it became evident that the only solution for the Turkish state was annihilation and assimilation of Kurdish nation. Secondly, the PKK was born as the result of national oppression of Kurdish people and denial policies of the Turkish state. As a national liberation movement organised, mobilised people and armed guerrillas fought for establishing and independent state of Kurdistan. After the imprisonment of Ocalan, the PKK leadership

council could have had a different approach to insist on its fundamental national and to some degree freedom and justice related ideological reasons of its existence. The leadership council of the PKK's soft and liberal approach damaged its reputation as well organisational defection. Those shortcomings weakened the organisations political stance. Thirdly, Ocalan was fighting with the Turkish state, not the world. In the prison through his solicitors, expressing that the US, Israel and the NATO were responsible for the plot of his imprisonment was not making any positive impact. The solicitors visiting Ocalan and allowing those statements were not making any positive solution to Kurdish question. The process of transformation was the most difficult moment of the PKK history. Ideological and political transformation went too far not only ideologically but also politically too.

Changing the National Liberation Strategy

The PKK was founded during the cold War era's ideological confrontation between the Left and the Right in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. The era was defined as the era of national liberation movements and socialist revolutions. The liberation movement of Vietnam and its revolutionist literature had a massive impact on the discourse proposed by the PKK. The small group of University students took the example of the guerrilla war and the legendary leaders of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro at Sierra Maestro Mountains in Cuba.

The Soviet Union, East European Countries, China, Vietnam, Cuba, Mozambique, Angola and etc., were seen as Socialist Block. The socialist system was supporting anti-imperialist national liberation movements around the world. The PKK was hopeful that eventually it would get support from the Soviet Union. Bakur Kurdistan was a neighbouring

geography to Soviet Union and the future support and aid would not be difficult to get thanks to this vicinity.

Kurdistan National Liberation Movement was founded as a proletariat led Marxist-Leninist organisation to free an oppressed and colonized nations' struggle for their Right to Self-Determination: the aim was to achieve an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. Strategically the PKK aimed at an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. In order to achieve this strategic goal its external allies were: the Soviet led Socialist Block, Labour movements in the developed countries; National Liberation Movements of oppressed nations in the world and Turkish, Persian and Arab proletariat led democratic and socialist labour movements; Kurdistan National liberation Movements in Bashur, Rojhilat and Rojava Kurdistan. Internal allies were also Bakur Kurdistan's proletariat the peasants, petit bourgeois, and the army of jobless and stateless people.

Soviet socialism collapsed in 1991 and consequently all the Eastern European socialist system collapsed too and the triumph of Liberalism over Socialism were declared. European Community countries evolved to European Union removed the national state borders, allowed free movement of the member states' citizens to choose whichever member states wanted to live in. The power was distributed from the centre to the periphery, in other words to the municipal councils for independent internal decision making the process fairer and faster. The norm of state sovereignty was in a limbo after the Humanitarian Intervention in Iraq and Bashur Kurdistan. Israel and Palestine were in dialogue to solve their problems through peaceful negotiations. All these developments were signs that the world is moving towards a more peaceful environment and democratisation process is supported by international institutions such as the UN and the EU.

The Iraq and Iran war (the First Gulf War) had ended. The KDP and PUK, which led Kurdistan liberation movement in Bashur Kurdistan, were defeated again in 1988, after the

Anfal campaign launched by Saddam Hussein's regime. The Second Gulf War (Saddam's occupation of Kuwait and the Desert Storm Operation) started and the UN and the NATO together created a new entity with a Safe Haven for Bashur Kurdistan's people. In 1992 Bashur Kurdistan political parties after long negotiations with Saddam Hussein did not achieve any progress, they hold an election and a Kurdistan Regional Assembly was elected.

The regional power balance changed in favour of the US led NATO alliance, the Cold War ended and the PKK was deeply affected by the collapse of Socialist camp on one hand, and to change its ideological principles and political alliances on the other. The leadership of the Kurdistan national liberation from the PUK and KDP has set a parliament and a government cabinet in Hewler, which has been supported by the NATO. Those developments in the Middle East and in Bashur Kurdistan were affecting the PKK that socialist system has been eroded from the world stage and Marxist-Leninist ideology has been failed. Therefore the PKK speeded up its reformation process.

The signs of the change appeared when Mehmet Ali Birand met Abdullah Öcalan in Bakaa Valley in Lebanon in June 1988. However, their message was not convincing and did not answer the demands of the time. Birand for second time met Öcalan this time in Damascus on 18th of May 1992. The second time the interview took place, when Öcalan was arrested and detained for two days by the Syrian intelligence. Birand explained that the situation was very different domestically, regionally and internationally. When they first met in 1988 there was a bipolar world, a somehow a stable Middle East, and internationally nobody was talking about the Kurdish question (Dündar 2012: pp. 323-33). The second time Birand met Öcalan the bipolar world had come to an end, a multipolar world was on the way of evolution, the Middle East was in turmoil, Bashur Kurdistan was under international protection, the PKK had relocated to its main guerrilla forces to Bakur Kurdistan's mountains, and more importantly the Kurdish question went beyond the borders of the

Middle East to become an international question. President Özal already declared that he was ready to discuss the possibility of a federation (White 2000: pp. 166).

The PKK held its 5th congress in 1995. On this occasion, the signs of slight ideological and political changes were clear, in particular the shift from the idea of independence to federalism. In addition, after a fierce resistance against the Turkish-KDP-PUK alliance in May and June 1992 huge demonstrations took place in Bakur Kurdistan with the interference of Jalal Talabani. As a consequence, thanks to the strong will of the Turkish President Turgut Özal and of the Gendarmerie forces Commander General Eshref Bitlis negotiations for a ceasefire started in order to offer a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey. Accepting the negotiations with the Turkish state constituted a self-explanatory act of the PKK and it was a real sign of paradigm change. It can be said that it constituted a passage from REVOLUTION to REFORMATION. At the end of the fifth congress of the PKK the hammer and sickle in the flag of the PKK was replaced with a flambeau.

The PKK agreed on three ceasefires: the first one in March 1993; the second one in 1995; and the third one was on 1st September 1998. The first one in March 1993 was the most important one for a future peace because of the leaders involved: Jalal Talabani from the Kurdish side, Kurdish MPs from Bakur, PKK leader Öcalan and more importantly a half-Kurd Turkey's president Turgut Özal, all of them had the real intention to solve the Kurdish question even if the solution can be a federal solution.

As mentioned above the domestic, regional and international changes and developments required that the PKK had to make some political and ideological reformations. However, those changes could have been achieved bit by bit according to the developments. For example, the PKK insisted on the idea that the only way of solution was an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. The universal national right to self-determination can only be implemented with the separation from the colonial states of

Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria (although the PKK was not mentioning Syria's name at that time because Syria was the sanctuary of the PKK). Since the solution proposed by the PKK was independent Kurdistan, when the president of Turkish state was talking about federation, it was thought that a solution could be achievable. The Turkish prime minister talked about the examples of Catalonia and the Bask in Spain. When the party at its fifth congress speaks out its demand from independence towards federalism and accepted the idea of a federation. Turkish state stopped talking about federation or any settlement with the PKK.

One of the PKK guerrilla commanders fled and surrendered to the KDP-Iraq in Bashur Kurdistan and was called by his nickname Parmaksiz Zeki, his real name was Shemdin Sakik. Shemdin was captured or handed over to Turkish Army Forces – TAF in Bashur Kurdistan. Shemdin gave valuable information to the TAF operation generals and there were rumours that he was also participating to TAF operations against ARGK guerrillas (Karayilan 2012: pp. 333).

According to Karayilan: 'Shemdin gave very important information and confess to the TAF if you want politically defeat the PKK in Bakur Kurdistan, you should defeat the PKK in Amed (Diyarbakir) first, if you want militarily defeat the PKK you must defeat it in Botan and stop the PKK getting logistical support from Rojava and Bashur to the other Bakur provinces; then if you want to get wiped off the PKK and defeat it totally then you must push pressure on Syria and take Öcalan from Syria out' (Ibid; pp. 333).

The TAF followed that strategy and successfully put pressure on Syria with the support of the US, UK, Israel, and Egypt. On 9th October 1998 PKK leader left Syria to Athens historical and capital city of Greece. Öcalan in a telephone interview to Medya TV said: "By leaving Ankara to Kurdistan we became a party, by moving to the Middle East we became an army; when we go out into the world, we shall achieve a state" (White 2000: pp. xii). That statement declared clearly the ideological and political stand of the PKK's national liberation

strategy. Greece refused Öcalan's entrance then Moscow, Rome, and Nairobi did the same. Finally he was handed over to the Turkish state on 15th February 1999. In the morning of 16th of February Turkish prime minister with a shaky voice announced that Öcalan was in Turkey and he would pay the price for what he did to the Turkish justice.

Kurdistani people from everywhere went through mourning and sorrow and fierce fighting took place in Turkey, Bakur Kurdistan and European metropolis cities particularly in Germany. The anger of every Kurdish person was at its pick. After two weeks Öcalan sent a message thorough his solicitors to his party and the people to be calm and react peacefully. Öcalan's capture and imprisonment caused a physiological impact and disbelieving to the US, UK, Germany and Russia. Most of its followers expected that Öcalan would insist in his revolutionary stand against the state, instead he ordered the party to implement fundamental changes in the PKK's paradigm. This meant, as we already mentioned, a shift from the idea of independence and united democratic Kurdistan to the democratisation of the Turkish republic through constitutional guarantees following the example of Switzerland as a Cantonal system (Öcalan 1999: pp. 10-1).

This shift was very painful for the PKK activists and especially for the guerrillas on the mountains. The Kurdish nation was also in shock and the guerrillas who left their family, children, home, career and life to fight in the mountains suddenly found them without a purpose. This was a complex and chaotic chaos from the grassroots to the top leadership of the PKK. Thousands of people cut their relations with the PKK in Europe and chose to stay homes. Thousands of the guerrillas left the mountains some to Europe and joined the KDP and the PUK.

The PKK's leadership made a major mistake. Öcalan through his lawyers sent messages to the PKK. If the PKK was controlling its activities and step-by-step would have moved forwards according to its previous programme it would not have suffered the damaged

it suffered as it happened from 16th February 1999 to 1 July 2004. The PKDW was closed down followed shortly by the ERNK. And then the ARGK's name and the strategy of its formation were changed to HPG. The name of the PKK was changed to KADEK - *Kongra Azadi û Demokrasiya Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress, then to KONGRA GEL – *Kurdistan People's Congress* – Kurdistan Peoples' Congress (Gunes 2012: pp. 135). Then in 2004 the PKK re-established again. The Kurdistan National Liberation Movement discourse in the PKK literature came to an end as well as the idea of Universal National right to self-determination included in the in the original discourse of the PKK. All these discourses were ended and repurposed again. Instead of aiming at a nation-state, the PKK changed the paradigm to democratizing Turkish republic and democratizing Kurdish society. The worst of that was that the PKK withdraw its guerrilla forces from Bakur, a move that costed the lives of 500 guerrilla fighters. From those changes it was obvious that either the state had promised Öcalan something still not known, or Öcalan was deceived by the TAF intelligence, the Gendarmerie, the Police and National intelligences of the Turkish state.

Despite the domestic and international changes, the shift made by the PKK after Öcalan's arrest was much too drastic. All the promises made to Öcalan by the state as well as Öcalan's good will to reach a compromise without any human cost seemed to clash with the statement he made after leaving Syria without producing any significant positive result. The state did not concede any rights and did not even issue an amnesty for the ten thousand Kurdish political prisoners in Turkish jails. All those paradigm changes only benefitted the Turkish state, as in every National Liberation movement there were defections, but the defections in 2004 by Osman Öcalan the PKK leader's brother was the most dangerous threat to the PKK's existence (Ibid: pp. 144-5). That defection as it has been touched in the previous chapters cost a heavy price to the PKK as it lost almost half of its leadership council and more than two thousand guerrillas.

Finally, changing the national liberation strategy from independence to federalism could have offered a balance; however, it was not compatible with the launch of a guerrilla war again, either a non-violent totally civil disobedience to work for democratisation or a total guerrilla war for strategic goal of national liberation.

Replacing the Democratic Liberation Strategy

The term of ‘Democratic Solution’ was used widely in the PKK’s media after Abdullah Öcalan’s imprisonment. His first defence statement broadcast via his lawyers was entitled “Declaration of the Democratic Solution for Kurdish Question”. Öcalan precisely explains that Leslie Lipson’s book *The Democratic Civilisation* was ‘accidentally’ reached his hands and that has contributed to his understandings for a democratic solution for the Kurdish question (Öcalan 1999: pp. 11). He continued saying that in the 1970’s the idea of the right of self-determination in 1970s was interpreted as the route for the establishment of an independent state. In the case of Kurdistan, he continued, a separate state is a blind alley, which will obstruct solutions. Therefore, instead of looking for solutions on the basis of a separate state, autonomy, federalism or any other options, a rich democratic solution would be the best option (Ibid: pp. 11).

Just before his handover to Turkey, Öcalan had announced the third unilateral ceasefire to begin on 1st September 1998. According to PKK's sources the TAF through some channels had informed the PKK that if they announced the ceasefire the state might accept some political and cultural rights (Gunes: 2012: pp. 134). After his imprisonment and his trial and sentenced to death, on the 1th of August he made statement through his solicitors stating that the 1st September ceasefire in 1998 was valid. However, due to the sensitive situation and his role and charisma the death sentence turned into life imprisonment after negotiations with the EU members regarding Turkey’s EU membership.

In this context he started the unilateral withdrawal of two groups of PKK's cadres as a sign of good will to move towards a definitive peace. One group was the ARGK guerrillas who stationed across the border of Bashur and Bakur in Shemzinan, the other group was the ERNK, a group of civilian activists from Europe who surrendered to the Turkish state at Istanbul international Airport. He ordered his guerrillas to withdraw from Bakur to Bashur Kurdistan.

Since then Abdullah Öcalan through his lawyers statements developed their main tactic of their struggle to gain their legitimate universal national, cultural, political and social right through democratic means and organizing the society through civil society organisations. Civil society organisations were set up in the most of Bakur Kurdistan's cities as the new dynamic of democratic struggle and democratic liberation. The legal political party was DEHAP and they participate in the general elections and to debate the Kurdish question searching for a solution through democratic and political means rather than through violence. The participation in the local municipality elections with the gain of seats in the local mayoral elections would guarantee the presence of different ethnic and religious communities of Turkey. It would also allow them to get organised in order to express themselves in a democratic context.

The PKK did whatever Öcalan asked those thorough letters and via his lawyers. The international and global changes were enormous. The European Union was accepting the membership application of East European countries and Turkey's candidacy seemed going well at that point in time. However, there was not any single development on the part of Turkish state regarding the Kurdish question. At the end Turkey was accepted as a candidate state for membership of the EU.

There were many questions for the PKK to answer. Why was the PKK established? Which were the reasons for the existence/emergence of the PKK? The purpose of asking

these questions were the reasons caused the existence of the PKK had not gone. Those policies of denial annihilation and assimilations were there, why the PKK was taking all those soft measures unilaterally? The state was continuing a destructive propaganda against the PKK and 24 hours on the TVs of Turkey the agenda was the arrest of the PKK leader and saying that he has been surrender and confessed everything to the state. In that political atmosphere the people of Kurdistan was asking why the PKK was giving too many concessions to the state. The PKK did whatever Öcalan asked for and that situation continued for five years without any progression. Neither of the people nor the PKK guerrillas were in favour of Democratic Liberation strategy. It caused the most destructive losses to the PKK.

Öcalan was kept in Imrali prison, a prison only for the PKK leader with high security guarded with more than a thousand Special Forces and officers. Everything was under high security control. The book of Leslie Lipson *The Democratic Civilisation* nobody knows whether it was ordered with special intention of the state, which allowed it despite Öcalan's solitary confinement or was given following Öcalan's orders. Nothing that was not in the interest of the state would have been allowed. Secondly, the letters written and sent by Öcalan from the prison were strictly read and could have been edited then sent to the PKK's leadership council. While the reasons of the emergence of the PKK were still unsolved the PKK was dramatically transforming its national, ideological, political and diplomatic strategy and tactics. The state of Turkey did not pay any attention to those transformations.

When the PKK defending national liberations strategy and aiming an independent united and democratic Kurdistan it had the opportunity to organise and mobilise the people for an armed revolution while diplomatically was holding meetings in the all-state institutions of the EU member countries. Whereas it changed its national liberation strategy to democratic liberation strategy it was put in the terrorist organisations list. That is an unanswered question, why.

The PKK chose the strategy of a democratic solution to democratize the republic of Turkey. It tried to give theoretical bases for its ideological and political changes, distancing itself from the Marxist Leninist doctrine. Democratic Socialism became the post-imprisonment doctrine of Öcalan and the PKK. They put democratic and democracy as the adjectives to whatever noun they wanted. For example: democratic solution, democratic socialism, democratic republic, democratic autonomy, democratic nation, democratic confederalism and now democratic federalism. Putting democracy or democratic in front of any words it would not make more convincing. Saying democracy in theory and acting in practice autocratically would not make any actions as an act of democracy.

The Kurdish question is the question of a divided nation, the question of a colonised nation put under strict rules of assimilation, annihilation and extermination. It is firstly a national question and secondly a question of democracy. The reason of the emergence of the PKK was the question of Kurdish nation, not the question of democratization of Turkey. During the forty-four years of the PKK struggle more than fifty-thousand men and women have been killed and around four thousand villages been razed by the state security forces. Recently, ten cities and towns have been razed again. During these forty-four years Turkey has developed economically but Bakur Kurdistan has been destroyed socially, culturally, economically. More than three million people have been forced to move to Turkey's main cities. Hence reducing the question of Kurds and Kurdistan to the question of democratization of Turkey was not the right political direction. If the state accepted the democratic liberation process with the mediation of the international institutions such as the UN, EU and US it could have been considered. Negotiation was a positive step but not with an imprisoned leader under strict control of the state. The first condition of the PKK for any dialogue and negotiations with Turkish state should have been the freedom of their leaders. Except then his freedom nothing should have been accepted.

The PKK took examples of the Palestinians and Israel negotiations, Northern Ireland and British government, the Moro Islamic movement and the Philippines government and East Timor with Indonesia government. All those negotiations were mediated and monitored by the UN, EU and the US. The PKK should have had insisted on its founding principles. Palestinians insisting on two state solutions, East Timor gained its independence, Northern Ireland achieved power sharing and legally defending the unification of Northern and Southern Ireland and the Moro Islamic movement has reached regional autonomy. The democratic liberation strategy seemed a failed strategy. The Kurdish question is the question of a nation and needs to be solved according to the founding principles of universal national right to self-determination not a question of democratisation of Turkey.

The new Turkish republic was built on denial of any different ethnic and religious communities. The Armenian genocide and massacre of the Kurds then forced settlement of the Kurds among Turkish communities in Anatolia to assimilate was presented as the result of homogenization policies. The existence of different communities was seen as a threat to the new republic. That policy still continues and it has a constitutional base (Turkish constitution 1982). Leslie Lipson in *The Democratic Civilisation* gives the example of the uniqueness of the Swiss democratic confederations. Nearly three quarters (74%) speak German; one fifth (21%) of Swiss the mother tongue is French; 4% is Italian and 1% per cent speaks Romanche. Romanche language is one of the Swiss Cantonal Confederation's official national languages and it is as equal as German language. Romanche language constitutes 1% and German language 74%. Despite this huge difference they are equal and both of them are official languages (Lipson 1964: pp. 143-4). The application of the Swiss example to Turkey could have been the best possible democratic solution not only for the Kurdish question but also for the question of Armenians, Assyrians, Arabs, Circassian, Laz and other ethnic and religious minorities. The monolithic understanding and attempt to assimilate all ethnic and

religious differences in order to create a unique Turkish nation did not succeed. That imposition is too far from democracy. The PKK's new ideological and political changes could have been successful only in a democratic environment like Europe. In Turkey the state and the government saw those changes as weakness of the PKK.

Searching a Peaceful Political Solution

The evolution of a small group of young university students in Ankara in 1973s now in 1993 has become a massive national, political, guerrilla and social movement. It is not only in the heart of Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Mersin and Adana in Turkey's big cities; and not only Bakur, Bashur, Rojhilat and Rojava; and not only in most of the European countries but also it was in the heart of Syria and Lebanon, in other words in the heart of the Middle East threatening a NATO member state. Up to 1993 when the PKK and Turkish state officially and publicly showed their desire to solve Kurdish question, Turkish state had never accepted the existence the Kurds as a different people than Turks, in its official ideology in Turkey only Turks existed and The PKK had created credible relations with Palestinian resistant organisations. Through Palestinians widened their relations to Socialist Camps countries too as Öcalan mentions while he was in Bulgaria in 1982 and later in 1987 (Öcalan 2012: 336). The PKK's diplomatic relations with Palestinians in Lebanon and Syria were damaged when Soviet Union was collapsed. It was triumph of Capitalist Modernity, liberal capitalist economic-political system over Soviet Socialist system. The collapse of Soviet Union affected the PKK's guerrilla warfare strategy and its national liberation strategy. Because the PKK's struggle gained momentum and in 1990 and 1991-92 was moving towards a 'Strategic Balance' stage of national liberation's guerrilla warfare. The PKK after the collapse of Soviet Union was in search for alternatives how to sustain it continuity through changes would be implemented.

The League of Nations up and in 1945 the United Nations had always played a role of keeping states' interests rather than the peoples' ones. However, after the end of the bipolar world during the Second Gulf War that tradition of keeping states' interest first, was broken by Humanitarian Intervention in Bashur Kurdistan with the protection of civilians from a sovereign states' aggression. The paradox was that Turkey, being as a member of the NATO, was also an occupier of more than half of Kurdistan and the home of more than 25 million Kurds who had helped the Bashur Kurds with its NATO allies. In that case Bashur Kurdistan would have become a United Nation protected entity and in the future would have had a domino effect with Turkey negatively affected as the result. In Bakur Kurdistan the PKK struggle was at its pick. As mentioned above that strategic changes were on the way.

Syrian and Islamic Republic of Iran affected negatively the PKK after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The reason was that both states were the only channels of the PKK between Bakur Kurdistan and the world especially the EU countries. The PKK had relocated its guerrilla training camps from Bakaa Valley in Lebanon to the mountainous area between Bakur and Bashur, Bashur and Rojhilat, such as the Haftanin, Gare, Metina, Zap, Xakurk Zele and Qandil as well as smaller camps inside Bakur Kurdistan's Merdin, Garzan, Amed, Botan, Dersim, Bingol, Serhed. Therefore Iran and Syria were pressing and pushing the PKK to act against the KRG in Bashur. Turkey was also pressing and pushing the KRG to act against the PKK. In October 1992 the KRG under the united authority of the PUK and KDP-Iraq and the TAF attacked the PKK from Bashur and Bakur (Ibid: 340-46).

The Kurdistan National Liberation Movement after the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad suffered ups and downs, however second half of twentieth century gave birth many leaders in four parts of Kurdistan.. Osman Sabri, Abdurrahman Qassimlu, Abdullah Öcalan, Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani played the main roles after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Talabani and Öcalan in spite of different ideological and political approaches were friends

since 1979 when Öcalan moved to Syria. Talabani, as the leader of the PUK, was one of the founder and leaders of KDP-Iraq during Mustafa Barzani's leadership. Talabani as t one of the most experienced Kurdish leader in the 20th century played a very important role and had relations with most of the world leaders and especially with president of Turkey Turgut Özal. Talabani became the mediator between Turgut Özal and Abdullah Öcalan when for the first time a Turkish president intervened to solve the Kurdish question peacefully (Cemal 2003: pp. 43-50).

Jalal Talabani, Kamran Karadagi and Cengiz Çandar negotiated mediating between Öcalan and Özal with success. The PKK leader's consecutive interviews with Turkish journalists and the ERNK's external popular activities in Europe, the Middle East and Turkey's metropolis with the ARGK's ripen situation that the PKK to announce ceasefire for a peaceful Newroz celebrations. It was announced they would give a chance for peace an important press conference will take place on 17th March 1993. Famous journalists from all over the world were gathered in Lebanon at Bakaa Valley in Bar Elias town prior to the mentioned date (Çandar 2012: pp.11). Öcalan made his first ever public press conference and said:

“We are not demanding an immediate separation from Turkey. We are realists on this subject. Do not interpret this [ceasefire] as a simple tactic [serving a hidden agenda]. There are many reasons as to why [we are realists]. Those who understand the historic, political, and economic situation of the two peoples [the Kurds and Turks] know well that separation could not take place because they [the Kurds and Turks] are intertwined like flesh and bones” (Öcalan 1999: pp. 7).

Öcalan in front of a crowd of world's expert journalists triggered the bullets for peace and revealed their intention if Turkish state wanted to make a peace deal the PKK will compromise for the good of the peoples of Turkey mainly Kurds and Turks. President Özal's

advisor Cengiz Çandar was present together with Hassan Cemal, two Turkish famous journalists, Kamran Karadagi the famous Kurdish origin of Al-Hayat newspapers' correspondence, and Jalal Talabani the future Iraqi President. That ceasefire was going to last for a month. Three days before the end Öcalan again in front of even more journalists declared that the ceasefire has been extended for a longer time and two days later president Özal died. It was the end of the peace process too (Çandar 2012: pp. 19-20). President Özal was buried very quickly as well as the ceasefire. On May 1 the PKK's Commander Parmaksiz Zeki ambushed a bus carrying unarmed soldiers killing thirty-three of them. It was the end of the ceasefire and a very important opportunity was lost. It was assumed by almost everybody that Turkish states' Special War Branch or the 'Deep State' killed Özal and it had intervention or links in killings of 33 unarmed soldiers. According Cengiz Çandar that he was one president Özal's advisors explains that the period, which was very close to solving Kurdish question (Ibid: pp.19).

After the death of president Özal the Turkish state destroyed thousands of Kurdish villages, committed extra-judicial killings and an undeclared total war was on-going against Kurdish civilians. Totally more than forty thousand people lost their lives in the dirty war between the Turkish state and the PKK guerrillas.

The PKK continued searching for peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. However, after Özal's death none of the officials of the state dared to talk about the Kurdish question because who ever mentioned the Kurdish question would have had the same outcome as Özal's. The PKK was fighting against the TAF as well as with the KDP-Iraq in the border area between Bakur and Bashur. On 1st December the PKK declared a ceasefire with the KDP and Turkish state. The KDP-Iraq accepted the ceasefire but the Turkish state did not. In 1996 the coalition government of Erbakan-Çiller government with the initiative of Erbakan with mediation a conservative writer Ismael Najar was another attempt to re-launch peace

negotiations; however, the army did not let the initiative to be successful. The second ceasefire did not last longer. With the mediation of some Turkish writers close to the Turkish army the third ceasefire was declared by Öcalan through Medya TV by a press conference on 1st September 1998. The people mediated for the third ceasefire, they were the people working for the army and their offer was based on a plot, which was ended with the abduction of the PKK leader. Öcalan was transferred to Imrali prison and nobody knew what was going on in the prison between the TAF intelligence services, the National Intelligence Service (MIT) and PKK leader. The PKK leader was interrogated by a quadrant of the MIT, the TAF intelligence service, the Police and the Gendarmerie intelligences for consecutive 10 days. Soon after Öcalan's interrogation and imprisonment in Imrali, Öcalan started to give a theoretical base for why he wanted to concentrate on a 'Democratic solution'. The first written text was as his first defence to the Court of Appeal in Ankara was interpreted in English in July 1999 called: *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*.

On 1st September 1999 the PKK announced that their announced ceasefire in 1998 was valid and declared its withdrawal from Bakur to Bashur Kurdistan. The strategic aim consisted in the withdrawal of the guerrilla forces from Bakur Kurdistan with the ending of violence. The participation in the general and local elections was the sign that the PKK was looking for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey. They studied the nonviolent struggles and found out how they have been successful how costly was insisting on continuing the armed guerrilla struggle. However, the state did not take any positive actions and all declarations of the PKK and Öcalan's meeting with lawyers did not produce any result. If the Turkish state were acting through democratic means and opening a new window to discuss the Kurdish question, the guerrilla struggle would not have taken place from 1st June 2004 onwards.

The 1st June 2004 was not a strategy to overthrow the government and the state's monopoly over Kurdistan, rather to encourage and support the masses for mobilization in democratic process and organizing the society to stand up for its rights. The purpose of re-launching guerrilla warfare was to support the Kurdish political-legal civil society associations in Bakur Kurdistan and also to encourage Turkish democratic opposition to play their role in the democratic transformation of Turkish society. However, the PKK forgot that the Turkish state would not accept an illegal organisation to support directly or indirectly a legal organisations or civil society organisations. Keeping guerrillas and fighting the state's armed forces and the police only had criminalised legal political activities of pro-Kurdish legal political parties.

The PKK during its forty-four years struggle has declared ten ceasefires from 1993 to 2013 with the intention to solve Kurdish question peacefully and democratically. The first one was genuine and there was the chance of success, though the PKK and the Kurdish society were not really prepared for it. The president Özal and Talabani played a genuine role but the state and deep state of Turkey was against the president and unfortunately the price of peace and democratization of Turkey was paid by Özal's life. All the other eight ceasefires did produce nothing except than the last one on 23rd of March 2013 lasted for 28 month without the TAF's operation against the PKK guerrillas or legal political parties of the BDP then HDP and DBP. The last one could have been saved if there was an intention from both sides.

Debates about Ending the Armed Struggle

It took exactly twenty years until the PKK established the guerrilla warfare and guerrilla army of the ARGK locating them in the heart of Bakur Kurdistan's mountains and forests. They have created a social and cultural relation with the community and the ARGK

had its own prestige among Kurdish communities. It was the most dramatic moment for both the people and the guerrillas to withdraw from Bakur. The intention was the peace and a democratic solution will take place and the guerrilla will return as political activists. However, they had forgotten that the state of Turkey had a past of seven hundred years of Ottoman rule and that in its seventy years of existence the republic never accepted freedom of any national entity except by force. The withdrawal guerrilla forces from Bakur Kurdistan was seen by the state as a proof of PKK's weakness. Even the Supreme Court (*Yargıtay*) confirmed the verdict of capital sentence to Öcalan.

At its 7th congress the PKK publicly announced that they were fully behind the decision of their imprisoned leader to find a democratic framework for peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. They officially confirmed that they were no longer looking for independence but that the new thesis aimed at a “Democratic Republic, ‘Democratic Country (Turkey) and Free Part (Free Bakur Kurdistan)’”. The changes were not only these, they also stated that the ‘armed struggle, the guerrilla warfare’ had played a role in it. Therefore, it would be necessary to restructure and rename the PKK, the ARGK and the ERNK. Öcalan also recommended that to withdraw the guerrillas and that they should be prepared and educated for democratic political activities (Kapmaz 2011: pp. 128-9). They rearranged and reorganized their ideological, political and organizational structures in order to be compatible to the new era of a democratic peaceful solution. However, the state and the governments of the time did not take those actions as the opportunity to look for a solution to the Kurdish question. The state continued the traditional denial and solving Kurdish question in the framework of security problem. The PKK after its 7th congress published its statement and decisions. Everything was in line with whatever Öcalan said. However, there was a great unrest among the people, intellectuals and guerrillas. There was an assumption that whatever came out from Imrali prison if they were not Öcalan's words, had to be taken with suspicious

(Gunter 2008: pp. 79). The PKK was ready to end the armed struggle, which lasted for five years obeying Öcalan, but the state did not guarantee cultural rights in its constitution.

What the state was trying to do was to completely destroy the organizational structures of the PKK, disarm the guerrillas and assimilate the people then integrate pro-Kurdish legal political parties –such as HEP, DEP, HADEP, DEHAP, DTP and BDP – to the Turkish state’s discourse. If the Turkish state had an intention to accept only cultural rights of the Kurdish people it would have a public statement to declare it. The state’s intention and actions has always been against the existence of the Kurds and Kurdistan. Even Öcalan went further invited his comrades to send two groups of the PKK activists, one from the armed guerrillas of the ARGK from the field and the other from the ERNK in Europe, to surrender as a sign of good will for the sake of peace. However, the Turkish state did not consider those positive steps. The PKK leadership was ready to disarm the guerrilla forces and even if with little concessions of cultural right for Kurdish people. The ‘deep state or gladio’ caused collapse the 1993 ceasefire and cost the life of president Özal; in 1996 the deep state or gladio again dismantled the initiatives of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and in 2000 the initiatives of Bulent Ecevit were all signs of a strong hand in the heart of Turkish state showing that it did not want a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kurdish question.

The regional and international dimensions of the conflicts had changed in the Middle East. The United States of America and United Kingdom directly intervened in Iraq because they accuse Saddam’s regime to hold weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein’s regime was toppled and the process of the Middle East turmoil started. Turkey’s relations with the US gradually worsened because a NATO ally Turkey did not let US troop to cross from its territory. Turkey and Syria upgraded their relations and got closer to each other

rather than the US. In 2003 Iraq and Iran also become allies. A new constitution in Iraq was written and for the first time in Iraq's constitution legal status of Kurdistan was guaranteed.

The regional turmoil and the process of democratization started by Öcalan did not produce any legal guarantees for Kurdish people and Turkey refused any negotiations. There was any reason to continue the ceasefire and the PKK reconsidered to restart the guerrilla warfare struggle again, if Turkey was not in favour of a solution. Even the AKP declared in Stockholm 'even if a Kurdistan get established in Argentina they will be opposed and in Moscow also said 'if you do not think of some think it means it does not exist, in other words if you do not think Kurdistan and Kurdish question it does not exist'. The debates to end the armed struggle did not make any contribution of political positive changes in Turkey. The PKK necessarily returned to the original principle that in the Middle East 'if you are not armed you will be harmed and buried'. In the last chapter and in the general conclusion it will be discussing more in depth this point.

The KCK (Kurdistan communities Union or the Union of Communities in Kurdistan)

As a successful organisation the PKK has recorded two achievements in its 45 years of history. The first one was which is the most significant one, was when Öcalan was set free in Syria following successful national, political and diplomatic activities, which forced the Turkish state to come to the table of dialogue in 1993. The second one was that the PKK was able to avoid defeat despite its many mistakes when its leader was handed over to Turkish state by the NATO. When Öcalan moved to Syria in 1979 he did the proper tactics, established diplomatic relations with Palestinians, thorough Damascus and Beirut sending the PKK cadres to Europe. Then, in 1998 almost twenty years after moving to Europe he had the

enormous opportunity to transform the PKK into a democratic movement and to gain the international support for the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement. However, leaving Italy was an unforgivable mistake for which he will never forgive himself. When he was handed over by the NATO to Turkey, his video in the plane and his video between two Turkish flags was the most humiliating picture of a Kurdish leader and the Kurdish nation suffered greatly. In reaction to those pictures seventy-nine Kurds in different prisons in and outside of Kurdistan set them on fire (Judi 2011: pp.815). Nevertheless, he saved the movement he had organised bit by bit for thirty years. From June 1988 he tried to speak to everyone in Turkey in order to convince the state of the possibility to compromise without more bloodshed. During his imprisonment to 1st June 2004 he tried whatever he could to convince the state to accept the minimum demands, but the state rejected his offer. He asked the PKK to change the programme, the strategy, the tactics, the name transforming all institutions and organisations for the sake of democratization, but none of those changes was fruitful.

The PKK, as explained in the previous chapters, emerged to eject Turkish colonialism and establish an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan and establish a state, but a democratic state. When the KCK was announced on 21st March 2005 it insisted on that it was not an alternative to the state formation for the Kurds, or any other ethnic minority within the borders of Turkey against the Turkish state. However, it has been defined as an umbrella organisation consisting of hundreds of civil society organisations from all strata of the society and many clandestine armed and non-armed organisations and parties from four parts of Kurdistan. In other words well-organised civil society associations around the country had the role to raise awareness in the society and to stand up for their legitimate, universal individual and collective rights. Obtaining individual and collective rights can be possible if democratic options are available, so the more the state implements democratic opening and

opportunity for individual and collective freedoms and rights, the more distance will be made by the Kurdistan National liberation movement with the use of violent means (Öcalan 2012: pp. 93).

Öcalan insisted on self-government, which is a kind of administration that can be called a non-state political administration. Public administration/self-governance in Öcalan's new paradigm is different than traditional state-governance. Democratic Autonomy is the direct democratic rule of the people by the people organised from the grass roots of the society. In other words it is a pyramid of direct and voluntary participation of the people and civil society organisations. States are founded on power; democracies are based on consensus. Office in the state is determined by decree, even though it may be in part legitimized by elections. Democracies use direct elections. The state uses coercion as a legitimate means. Democracies rest on voluntary participation (Öcalan, 2011: p 21).

The PKK totally implemented what was coming out from the Imrali prison. The PKK was not curiously considering the messages were receiving by the lawyers from Imrali prison. There was huge anger not only among communities but also from all different political factions and even in the ranks of the PKK too. The confusion was at the pick, the question of a nation has been reduced to the question of democratization of Turkey, the paid price in Kurdistan was unaccountable and those changes were criticized at everywhere and thousands supporters of the PKK left the organisation from 2000 to 2004.

Öcalan through his lawyers and the EHCR – European Court of Human Rights – defences sent his messages in the form of books to the PKK. The PKK adopted the thesis of 'Democratic Modernity' based on a democratic, ecological and women-emancipatory system and switched from being a party to a congressional system (Uzun 2014: pp. 21). The PKK during its 8th congress in April 2002 dissolved itself and a new Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress – KADEK – took its place. Öcalan continued to reflect and analyse the

situation, and as the part of the on-going quest for change, KADEK dissolved itself at 9th congress and was replaced by Kurdistan People's Congress – Kongra Gel – it is still continuing as a legislative assembly of the KCK system, which is continue to develop ideological, political and organizational tripartite. In 2004, the PKK was reconstructed with a new identity: it became the ideological centre of the new system. The Union of Communities of Kurdistan – Koma Komalên Kurdistan – the KKK – was established as the umbrella organisation of the new system at Newroz in 2005 in Amed. One year later the Kurdish name was sounding a name in Turkish army's name therefore it changed to the KCK –Koma Civakên Kurdistan – reflecting a slight change in emphasis (Ibid: pp. 21).

The KCK, as a system now an umbrella consisted of ten might be hundreds of organisations. The philosophy of Öcalan is the main theory of the KCK. Those member organisations are from four parts of Kurdistan and the Kurds in the Diaspora. The PKK and its guerrilla army the HPG are the main pillars of the KCK; the PKK as the ideological centre setting the parameters and the HPG as the armed forces leading all guerrilla activities. The KCK system as an alternative to its previous goal of an independent Kurdish nation state aims towards the 'democratic nation'. The democratic nation concept is not based on one nation; rather it is defined as an umbrella including all ethnic, lingual, cultural and religious entities of the region. Instead of aiming a greater independent united Kurdistan, it aims towards a confederal Kurdistan, which will be free but not independent. The new paradigm of the PKK has been defined as a complicated paradigm and difficult process to implement (Gunter: 2014 pp.127).

Conclusion

The Democratic Confederalism concept has been borrowed from Cantonal administration of Switzerland. The direct democratic rule of law has guaranteed individual

existence of twenty-six Cantons as equal partners in democratic confederative Swiss state in the centre of the European continent. The idea that this example can be implemented in the centre of the Middle East is highly controversial because of too the many ethnic, religious, lingual differences in conflict with the nation-states. The nation-states in the Middle East are ethnic states; they do not implement the rule of law as the principle to democracy.

The Turkish state was playing a political game with the PKK. As an outsider it was obvious that if the PKK did not choose that opportunistic way and had chosen a resistant way of struggle, their struggle would have had achieved to great successes. From 1977 to 1998 the PKK's national liberation strategy gained support, mobilized people almost every year more than a thousand guerrilla. Despite all the odds the PKK's recruits were coming from all over Kurdistan regardless of they were Sunni, Shi'a, Alevi, Yezidi or Kakayi Kurds. Öcalan as an experienced leader did play the main role of creating the PKK in Ankara and transferring it to Bakur Kurdistan and sustain and develop it in Syria and retransfer it to the heart of Kurdistan and did choose the most suitable way to Europe. Moving to Europe meant moving into the heart of the world. His arrest was a huge blow to the PKK. The greatest mistake the PKK did was too fast and too thirsty to move to a reformist and liberalist way of life. Nobody knows whether the Turkish state was enforcing or Öcalan was with his free will was committing to those dangerous changes and transformations. Even if the state did not – which is impossible from my point of view – and Öcalan was independently expressing his free views, it was totally in control of the PKK to act and keep the unity and do the best possible way. Öcalan was in prison. Prison means you are 100% under control of the state. You are not free and whatever you do is under control.

The Turkish state gradually allowed the legal political party the DEHAP and its activists who were sympathetic to the fact that the PKK organised civil society organisations.

According to the experiences the Turkish state never allowed any Kurdish entity to do politics unless it is totally under control of the state. The activities of the DEHAP party was under control of the state. Any uncontrolled party activist was immediately arrested and in the courts state informants were giving evidence against the activists who were sentenced to long imprisonments. It was argued that the state intelligence was controlling the DEHAP activities. What is confusing is why the PKK any other Kurdish political party has not understood so far that any patriotic attempt from Kurdistan has always accounted as a national security danger to state and has been eliminated at the place. The Turkish state in two hundred years of history since the Ottoman Empire dealt very harshly with any Kurdish attempt to self-determination.

Despite all negative steps were taken by the Turkish state against the will of Kurdish people, the international community to solve the Kurdish question according to universal national right to self-determination, after Öcalan's imprisonment, the struggle continued and popular support doubled. When the negative denial policy of the state revealed to the masses the PKK got even stronger. The movement with the paradigm change evolved towards becoming a mass social movement. The participation to the PKK after Öcalan imprisonment made the PKK too crowded from all parts of Kurdistan. Its mass participation caused the birth of new PKK's for the other parts of Kurdistan. The PÇDK – *Partiya Çareseriya Democratic a Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party was established from the Kurds from Bashur who were in the ranks. The PJAK – *Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistan* – Kurdistan Free Life Party from the Kurds of Rojhilat Kurdistan in the ranks of the PKK and the PYD – *Partiya Yekitiya Demokratika* – Democratic Union Party from Rojava Kurds were established. These three parties and the PKK plus KNK in Europe and many more organisations as autonomous organisations in the four parts of Kurdistan and in the Diaspora continue their activities under the umbrella of the KCK.

Chapter 7

The PKK's Radical Democracy Paradigm: the KCK

Introduction

Chapter seven analyses how the PKK's paradigm changed and how this transformation have been effective in mobilizing, organizing and politically involving the masses towards the establishment of a Radical Democracy in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey, although it had moved from one stage (national liberation), to another stage (democratic liberation), the responses (in positive way) from Turkish state so far had been very little or nothing. The understanding of the concept of Radical Democracy fell within the framework of Marxist thought on three pillars: state, class and party. During the Cold War era National Liberation Movements were within the frame of Marxist thought aiming that a party must lead the liberation movements, the working class/proletariat must lead and the goal is establishing a state. In Imrali Island Öcalan criticised Marxism and talked about democratic socialism and radical democracy in hundreds of his meeting with his lawyers. The goal of change from national liberation towards democratic liberation was to move politics beyond the state, political organisation beyond the party, and political subjectivity beyond class (Badiou 2002: pp. 95-97). In implementing democratic liberation, the PKK changed its name to be a congressional organisation that included all social stratum of the society; to do politics for the people by the people and not aiming towards a state. In theory it was seen possible, but in practice the state denounced it as national security threat and banned it.

The transformation of the PKK and the new paradigm of Radical Democracy consisted of the idea of a Democratic Confederalism based on Democratic Republic, Democratic Nation, Democratic Autonomy and a vivid Democratic Civil Society aiming at decentralization and devolution. Implementing such a political project was a paradox in a country like Turkey based on a unique Turkish-nation-state mentality with the exclusion of any other ethnic entities. In case of implementation the Radical Democracy elements it could be argued whether Democratic Confederalism could constitute an alternative to Turkish-nation-state or at least work within that framework in parallel.

The appropriate way of decentralization and devolution needs to be developed is a democratic environment, as it has been in implementation in Switzerland as Cantonal system and in the UK as the devolving power from London to in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland Assemblies. While a vigilant civil society was strongly gaining the ground in Bakur Kurdistan more than ten thousands of Kurdish civil society activists were imprisoned. Despite the transformation process of the PKK the people were participated into the political process and participating to political activities peacefully moving away from violence. The launch of many ceasefires have shown that despite Turkish state's coercive forces, a peace deal could have been achievable as the international example shown but even if the PKK declared of decommissioning itself Turkish state would give nothing because it has always seen the Kurds and Kurdistan as a national security threat. Transformation and paradigm change, dropping the goal of an independent Kurdish state and national liberation did not put any positive impact on the Turkish state's behaviour towards Kurdish question.

A democratic society paradigm is achievable if a bottom up democratic culture and mentality is not prevented by the state. When the PKK from 1st September 1999 to 1st June 2002 silenced the guns, which happened after the imprisonment of Öcalan there were a growing number of civil society organisations and Kurdish democratic legal organisations transformed to a massive social movement in Bakur Kurdistan and in Turkey. In Bakur Kurdistan thousands of civil society organisations from different stratum of the society were organised and Turkey's big cities where millions of Kurds are living they organised civil society organisations too. They only allowed existing until the ruling party achieved to its targets then all of them were closed down and their activists imprisoned.

The PKK leader leaving Syria in October said, "By moving from Ankara to Kurdistan, we become a party, by moving from Kurdistan to the Middle East we become an army and now while we are going to Europe we will become a state". Could the PKK convince the Turkish state that if the PKK leader was not imprisoned in Turkey, would it had been possible to launch then new paradigm? How could it be possible to say while you are surrounded by nation-states, and multi-national states, that Kurdistan does not need a state?

Or how can one convince communities scientifically that the state is the source all exploitations, yes it is, but it can be a democratic institution too. The Soviet experience has proved that there is still a long way to go to reach a democratic socialism. The state is an apparatus of governing or coordinating different institutions and it needed but its power should be reduced and transformed to the local people's self-governance.

The KCK as a system of coordinating mostly PKK supported organisations in four parts of Kurdistan happened after the imprisonment of Öcalan with the massive participation of educated youths from all four parts of Kurdistan. In order to accept all of them the PKK divided itself into four branches one for each part of Kurdistan: northern, eastern, western and southern. In this way Rojhilat Kurdistan the PJAK (Kurdistan Free Life Party), for Rojava Kurdistan the PYD (Democratic Union Party) and for Bashur Kurdistan was PÇDK (Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party) all gathered under the umbrella organization of the KCK.

With radical democracy or direct democracy the PKK meant that through non-violent mode of struggle and not clashing with the state, but parallel to the state, with the political education of people and their organization to give them the opportunity to decide their destiny. This was needed because the communities in Kurdistan are not homogeneous but heterogeneous: different dialects, sects, religions and ethnicities. The PKK's goal was to give these communities the opportunity to represent themselves autonomously with the idea that a more democratic environment would facilitate their unity. The problem was the unilateral mentality of Turkish state had always considered ethnic, national, lingual and religious differences as an existential threat to their existence. Therefore, any reformation and transformation from the PKK side had only little effect on the state mentality. The reason is that Turkish the state since its foundation had always recurred to violence in order to achieve its aims. That is why the paradigm of Radical Democracy/direct democracy has not been productive so far.

Democratic Republic

In the new paradigm of the PKK particularly since the imprisonment of Öcalan is democratic peaceful and legal political reformation and transformation of the state of Turkey. The PKK leadership council according the new paradigm of democratic liberation stated that if Republic is a system where democracy can function for the people by the people and then it needed to accommodate all the people in Turkey democratically and equally. Therefore the republic could be a democratic one where not only Turks and Kurds, but also all other ethnic and religious communities, such as Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, Roman, Pontus, Laz and Circassia's Arabs ethnicities as well as religious communities etc., share the same equal rights and duties and be treated equally.

The ideal state for a republic is not a nation-state but a democratic state (Öcalan 2012: p.29). The evidences on the ground have shown that in over 90 years of Turkey's political history, there is not space opened to the acceptance of diversity. The only principle of foundation of Turkey is that the state is for the Turks with one Turkish nation, Turkish state, Turkish Flag and with only Turkish language. This meant that only those who belong to this nation can access to a social, political, and cultural position in the society and be promoted to the highest ranks. The state is the state of Turks only; there is not any possibility for other different ethnic or religious differences to achieve any position in the state and in the army. The only rare examples had the purpose of deceiving the people and the European democratic audience to show that Turkey has some democratic norms and it is adopting European democratic standards.

According to the new path of the PKK, the republic could be transformed a republic of only one-nation-state into a democratic-republic representing democratically all the other peoples. How could a state such as the Turkish state be transformed into a democracy? This can be done through civil society organisations, which can organise the society from below and bring the people to a level of decision-making without making any differentiations between ethnic and religious realities. However, states only do things if they are in their interests, whereas people's interests always clashes with states' interests. Therefore, the states

do not allow the progression of the civil society in Middle Eastern societies, because the promotion of democratic civil values clashes with the interests of the hegemonic, totalitarian states such as Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, for example. It would be very difficult to find a way towards their democratization. If the Turkish republic can be reformed and transformed through legal political means, there would not be any need for revolution. The evidence on the ground shows that even if you take into consideration the foundation principles of the republic established between the 23 and 24 of April 1920, there is nothing that can legally secure national and democratic rights for national entities. Those principles, and with them Turkish constitution did not recognise Kurds as a nation. It was written at a very critical moment, in order to convince Kurdish tribal leader and other nationalist leaders to support Mustafa Kemal and to dismantle the Sevres treaty. When the war finished the brotherhood also ended.

The examples of Spain, United Kingdom and Switzerland are the examples of countries where democracy had evolved. Spain is not a federal state but highly a decentralized republic and has seventeen autonomous communities. The United Kingdom has also adopted a decentralized system with England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Switzerland is a unique example of liberal democracy in the heart of Europe and, and even it is not a member of the EU, is one the most prosperous multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious democracies.

The idea of a democratic republic for Turkey intensified during the meetings between Öcalan and his solicitors in the Imrali prison. Every week, sometimes twice a week solicitors were visiting Öcalan in Imrali. Cengiz Kapmaz who was the editor of the pro- Kurdish and indirectly PKK supported newspapers and magazines in Istanbul. For ten years as the author and editor of more than two thousands news articles and analyses about Öcalan's lawyer meetings mentions in his book *Öcalan's Imrali Days*, 'Ocalan was convinced that the state will have reforms regarding to Kurdish question, because Turkey was accepted as a candidate member for negotiations by the EU. Even Prime minister Ecevit's representative visited Ocalan and Ocalan was telling to his solicitors about moving to house arrest' (Kapmaz 2011:

pp. 46-47). Each time his solicitors declared that Öcalan mentioned the idea of a democratic solution and transformation. Those transformations were only taking place from the PKK side not from the state's side. On the one hand, a democratic solution required the undertaking of political activities according to the constitution of Turkey; a constitution written after the 1980 coup d'état and that required the PKK to lay down arms and surrender. The state knew that by giving easy access of the solicitors would have a positive impact on the PKK as well as on Kurdish people and the international community projecting the idea that Turkey is a democratic country moving towards the EU. However, the main target was to disarm the PKK and bring the guerrillas down from the mountains and defeat the PKK without giving any rights and status to the Kurds in Bakur Kurdistan. In this way the Turkish fear was, any re-launching of the guerrilla warfare would take a long time and with Öcalan in prison the PKK would not be defeated. The reason was because Turkish state strictly rejected any deal, any constitutional change and even any international mediation.

In his first defence Öcalan in Imrali high security prison under cross interrogation of Turkish National Intelligence Agency –MIT, Turkish National Police Intelligence, The TAF Intelligence and the Gendarmerie Intelligences established the foundation for his democratic unity thesis. He showed that the denial policies of the republic started from 1924 onwards. He explained Kurdish and Turkish relations since 1071 when Kurds and Turks together defeated the Byzantium Empire. He provided a thousand years brotherhood story. He admired Kemal Ataturk and approved the 1921 constitution. Then he went on talking about the emergence of the Kurdish uprisings and took a different approach as if those uprisings were plots against the republic. Then he blamed the foreign plotters that surrounded Mustafa Kemal, without whom Kemal would have given the Kurds some autonomy (Öcalan 1999: pp. 22-35).

Öcalan states repeatedly via his lawyers that an independent state would not be a solution; however, autonomy could be considered if the Turkish state would come to a compromise. Up to that time the KDP-Iraq and other Rojhilat, Bakur, Rojava and Bashur's political parties aimed at obtaining autonomy they were labelled as reformists and even traitors by the PKK since 1973 to 1999. But this sudden change was too difficult to explain to

the people. How the PKK could explain his followers why Öcalan has made a 360-degree turn? Up to the imprisonment it was a taboo to say Turkish or Iraqi Kurdistan, but after imprisonment you witnessed no Bakur no Bashur but Iraqi Kurdistan in the Öcalan's meeting statements. The idea of a democratic solution proposed by Öcalan had damaged the national awareness of the PKK. Up to his imprisonment Turkish republic had destroyed more than 4000 Kurdish villages and forced more than three million Kurds from their native land who were displaced to Anatolia and Europe.

According to Öcalan's thousands of statements via his solicitors and his defences to the European Court of Human Rights, he believed that he would be able to convince the state to reform itself and open a space in its constitution to guarantee the rights of minorities and bring equality between Kurds and Turks. Hence, he tried hard to transform the PKK and all related civil society organisations to be prepared for a democratic solution. However Turkish state was built on some fundamental pillars of denial Kurdish nation and secured that denial by international guarantees at the Lausanne Treaty. It was not an easy process for the Turkish republic to solve the Kurdish question especially because it was responsible for the Armenian genocide, the Greek Pontus genocide, the Assyrian genocide and Kurdish genocides, all of them committed just at the beginning of the century, most of which have been officially recognised by European countries. Today the geography is called Bakur Kurdistan or the republic of Turkey calls it, as Turkey it was a considerable portion of Southern Armenia. Reformation and democratization of Turkish republic means all those files would be coming down from the dusted shelves of the archives to the tables of negotiations.

There was the assumption from rival parties against the PKK, such as Kemal Burkay the former leader of the TKSP, that Öcalan had surrendered to the Turkish state in order to save his personal life from the execution while he was trying to introduce the idea of democracy at the basis of any change in order to show the public and the PKK that the state will be democratized and there was no need to continue with the through violent means. As a close observer of the PKK's formation and evolution since 1976, most of the PKK members and ordinary people of Kurdistan were shocked by the fact that between 1988 and 1993 when

Öcalan in some interviews to Turkish journalists and to his arch enemy Dogu Perinçek said ‘if Turkey open a window of dialogue there would be a possibility to compromise on basic principles of equality between two peoples – the Kurds and Turks – and the armed struggle will be stopped’. Öcalan wanted to reform the state while the state was exactly acting in the opposite direction to annihilate the PKK, the process of the PKK and the Turkish state’s dialogue are the proof and evidence of this.

The Turkish republic cannot be simply be democratized because according to its foundation principle ‘the state is the father’ of Turks only. According to the evidence of the past one thousand years, the history of Turkish presence in the region has made the rulers to be too self-centred. The power of a giant empire was deployed in Anatolia and it was used against very weak tribal led Kurdish uprisings. Turkish state with the financial support and Fighting Jets from Great Britain after WWI the Turkish republic won a decisive victory against Kurdish uprisings. The republic fundamentally invented the motto ‘who ever in Turkey do not accept Turkish identity either has to leave Turkey or be slave of Turks. Turkey is only for Turks and will remain eternally for Turks’. A republic with that motto as its foundation principle can only be reformed transformed through a revolution or a general uprising to be over thrown. Turkish state since its establishment after WWI has continuously officially implemented the policies of annihilation, assimilation and extermination of Kurdish nation and other religious and ethnic minorities. Ninety years of denial state policies followed as the rule of existence of Turkish state against all non-Turkish entities and they all have been seen as national security threat. This kind of republic cannot be a democratic one or in a short time with its constitution to be transformed to a democratic republic.

Democratic Nation

The PKK in its paradigm change and transformation made a new definition of the concept of the nation as democratic nation. In different definitions of a nation there is a significant common ground that no scholar can reject: a shared language, culture, social and economic life, history and territory as it has been mentioned in chapter two. By this definition

it can be said that without a language a nation cannot be called a nation, so the language is the most important criteria of what mainly makes a people as a nation. The charter of the United Nations offers a clear definition of the right of the different nations on earth at first chapter in the article one, clause two and three. However, over time the interest of the states and the interests of the rivalry between them have prevented the charter to be implemented. In fact the United Nation could have been the organisation of the nations not the organisations of the states. The Kurdish question is the question of a nation, in comparison to hundreds of nations on earth who are members of the UN just because they have their own state. The Kurds, numbering more than forty to fifty million, are not at the list of the UN because they do not have a state. Öcalan in the Imrali prison transformed his thought regarding to the definition of Kurdish national question in Turkey. In order to compromise with the Turkish state instead of Kurdish nation in Turkey, he defines all nations in the concept of democratic nation.

Most of the experts of the field of nation and nationalism are agree that what makes the source of conflicts is the unequal representation and inequality between ethnic, religious, social and cultural communities. The prevention of even more dangerous wars between different communities in Turkey seems to be the reason why Öcalan has given so many concessions to the state of Turkey in order to find a way of coexistence and equal representation in the form of a unitary state using the universal legitimate National Right to Self-Determination in the form of a Democratic Nation. This meant to give up the idea of independence in favour of an Autonomous Democratic Kurdistan within the 'artificial' borders of Turkish state. However, even if this idea was thought in order to bring permanent solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey it had a very temporary effect. The historical experience has shown that the very complex and difficult issues and questions need deep permanent solutions if they want to be successful.

One of the main pillars of the new paradigm of the PKK was the idea of a Democratic Nation. From its emergence to the arrest of Öcalan the main principle and founding reason and cause of the creation of the PKK were the right of national self-determination and the

establishment of the independent state of Kurdistan transformed to federalism in 1995 and then to autonomy following the argument that Kurds are a separate nation. Different language, different culture, different history, different spiritual and psychological upbringing and different norms and values embedded in the geography for thousands of years called Kurdish in Kurdistan. There are thousands of legendary heroes of Kurdish men and women who have sacrificed their lives for that purpose over the years. So the Kurds are a different nation from Turks, Arabs and Persians. They do not share the criteria mentioned above.

The Kurdish question is a national question and the question of a separate state and secession from Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Kurdistan has been divided by force and colonised against the will of its nation. Turkey has deceived the Kurds during its war of independence and colonised Kurdistan. There is not a unity based on the shared will and consent. Turkish state accepts those Kurds who denies their existence and obeys to Turkish nation. As a researcher I observed during my fieldwork in Bakur Kurdistan found the above-mentioned ideas among ordinary people who have paid the price for National Self-Determination of Kurdistan. Although the people publicly do not oppose the ideas of Öcalan, however in private conversations they open up. Most people interpret the Democratic Nation proposed by Öcalan as if there is only one way available for the Kurdish nation than to accept self-assimilation and self-melting in Turkish nationality. Öcalan's idea was also rejected by the state as a secessionist one.

Putting an adjective of Democracy in front of every noun would not make the process a democratic one. Democracy is a political system of governance and it is a culture, it is an understanding of life in the form of coexistence with your human fellow and it needs a long time to develop and give fruits. Those countries in the world, which moved or are moving towards democracy, have already left behind a very dramatic past of crimes, wars of ethnic and religious conflicts. The conflict in the Middle East and with it the conflict between Turkish, Iranian, Iraq and Syria and Kurds will come to an end after a dramatic event would have come to an end. This is because the states have created a nation from different ethnic and religious groups by force melting them into one indoctrinated one. Ordinary original

Turks, Persian, Arab or any other have no problems with Kurds. The problems and ethnic conflicts have been created by the states. The peaceful coexistence of Kurds, Armenians and Assyrians over centuries tells the true story.

The ultimate aim of a nation is to create a state apparatus in order to cooperate between institutions. The state's responsibility is to distribute justice, equality, freedom, rule of law and democracy. In a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religion country, the state is to provide those different entities a democratic and equal representation. As it has been mentioned earlier that one of the best examples of a democracy is the Swiss Cantonal system. A 74% of German speakers are equal with 1% of Romanche speakers in front of the rule of law in all spheres of life. The citizens of Swiss would be proud to say that they were Swiss nationals. Though in Turkey the state has aimed to create a nation, which a Turkish nation. Definition of a democratic nation in Turkey would be similar to the one in Swiss political system. However in the foundation of Kemalist's early republican ideology and theory based on the Sun Language Theory – *Güneş Dil Teorisi* –, which states that, all languages are branches of the Turkish language. The difficulty is to implement a Swiss-like political system of Democratic Nation in Turkey is almost impossible, because the state does not accept any other nations except the Turkish nation. The Swiss political system is based on pluralist and democratic cantonal system. Turkish political system is exactly opposite of all European democracies and in particular exactly opposite to the Swiss democratic system. Having elections in Turkey does not mean that it is a democracy. In Iraq, during Saddam Hussein's rule there were elections and he was winning by 99 % of the votes. Therefore implementation in such system in Turkey needs a total change in Turkish political system to be compatible with civilised and democratic norms of the EU.

Democratic Autonomy

Democratic autonomy is one of the new ideas expressed by Öcalan at Imrali as one of the component of democratic solution and democratization of republic of Turkey. According to the paradigm of Öcalan in a democratic republic a democratic nation would be consisted of

multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religions similar to the Swiss nation. Öcalan by offering this paradigm simplified the Kurdish Question from National liberation to the question of democratic autonomy and political democratic solution. Democratic Autonomy thesis of Öcalan does not contain geographical or ethnic-national components' territorial division but compromise them equally in a wider democratic Turkey. However the traditional concept of autonomy is based on lingual, ethnic and geographical differences in the other parts of the world. For example autonomous regions of Spain Catalonia and Bask regions are best examples for autonomy with the KRG in Bashur Kurdistan. Öcalan tried hard to simplify as much as he could in order to withdraw from the original national liberation strategy and start a democratic liberation path removing the ethnic and territorial dimensions of autonomy in order to make it generally acceptable by the bureaucracy of the state and public opinion in Turkey.

Öcalan through his lawyers was working on his Democratic solution thesis in order to implement the Democratic Autonomy thesis it needed to empower the weakened legal political party the DEHAP. But also in addition to this the four MP's in prison since 1994 – Hatip Dicle, Selim Sadak, Orhan Dogan and Leyla Zana – were released to create a new civil society organisation and progressing the activities to a higher stage. It was the Democratic Society Movement – the DTH – *Demokratik Toplum Hareketi* – that had to purpose to lead the society and the civil society organisations. The DTH in a short period of the time gained a huge support from the people and had actively organised civil society organisations. The DTH, in combination with the DEHAP party and its elected municipalities, created two new organisations: the DTP – *Demokratik Toplum Partisi* – Democratic Society Party and the DTK *Demokratik Toplum Kongresi* – Democratic Society Congress. This process of democratic solution was implemented in parallel with the state's hidden dialogue with the PKK through the KRG from 2005 onwards. The DTP participated to the general election as independent candidates and gained twenty-two seats. The DTP continued actively in general politics; the DTK actively organized civil society organisations in Bakur building diplomatic relations closely with the KRG. The process evolved further and developed into the PKK and

Turkish state hidden negotiations called the ‘Oslo Negotiations’. The Oslo negotiations were the second important negotiations between the PKK and the Turkish state. These negotiations lasted three years and eventually failed. The DTP was closed down and another party called BDP – *Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi* – the Peace and Democracy Party continued its legal activities in the Parliament and all over Turkey. The BDP as a party and the DTK as an unofficial regional parliament leading more than a thousand civil society organisations put in their programme that they would work to implement the Democratic Autonomy goal in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey.

Professor Norman Paech in the Draft Submission for a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan pamphlet prepared by DTK defines “‘Democratic Autonomy’ concept as a proposal to democratize Turkey. Its core element is to be a new constitution that gives the Kurdish people the same rights of life, the political status and the same economic, social and cultural opportunities as available to Turkish people” (DTK Pamphlet 2011: pp. 3). The aim and purpose of Öcalan’s democratic solution thesis was for the first time implemented on the legal platforms organised by DTK and BDP in Bakur operating as civil society actors in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. However, as soon as the pamphlet was published at the DTK’s first workshop in Amed the state and related media started the anti-propaganda and labelled it as secessionist and as an attempt to organise a parallel state within the Turkish state. The Kurdish nationalist organisations also blamed the project as a Turkish intelligence services’ programme. The Democratic Autonomy project was under attacked from both the state and Kurdish opposition parties in Bakur Kurdistan. Despite the all objections and obstacles the DTK and BDP progressed, developed and gained social and political support. It doubled the MPs and also doubled the municipals in the following elections in June 2011. Municipalities won by the BDP were doubled from 57 to 100 and the MPs were from 22 to 37.

Turkish state tried to bring all democratic political organisations under its control. The DTK as well as the BDP in Bakur Kurdistan as well as in the big cities of Turkey were strengthened, when the state witnessed it was impossible to take them under its control then tried to cripple the process and imprisoned more than ten thousand activists and supporters.

That crackdown of political activists of civil society organisation, elected mayors and elected council members should have been the lessons to the PKK and Kurdish legal political party and civil society organisations that Turkish state neither want to give any constitutional rights and recognition nor want to solve Kurdish Question even if it has been reduced as an question of democratisation of Turkey. The PKK and Turkish state, have always tried to have their control on the democratic political process as well as civil society organisations in Bakur Kurdistan and in Turkey. Any party wins the majority in the general elections they would not be able to change the policies on Kurdish Question because Turkish state has based its fundamental existence on exterminate all other ethnic entities particularly the Kurds. It becomes obvious that the PKK or any other legal political party would not be able to have impact on official Turkish state policies.

The DTK has been established since 2005 as a civil society organisation (in fact it supposed to be a regional assembly for Bakur Kurdistan) to lead all civil society organisation including trade unions as a wider democratic confederation. By 14 July 2011 it had more than eight hundred civil society organisations as the members. It had proposed a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan, which has been organised on eight dimensions. Those dimensions are: Political, Legal, Self-Defence, Cultural, Social, Economic, Ecological and Diplomatic dimensions. The Draft mentioned that ‘despite all the adversities and obstacles that exist, the international and regional political situation has become more conducive to a solution of the Kurdish question. A solution to the Kurdish question is an emerging trend in Turkish society and this opens the necessary pre-conditions and opportunities for a solution. The Turkish state has arrived to a point where it cannot continue with old policies and Kurdish people refuse to live under old conditions’ (Ibid: pp.12). The DTK points out that there were the situation was already ripe for a change if Turkish society wanted a change. In theory these words were logical and as if they were demands of Kurdish and Turkish society. If both societies of Kurds and Turks were in clash with the state then the state would have not had the power to continue the old policies. Turkish people support Turkish state’s policies and whatever Kurdish politicians’ demands for Kurds and other ethnic minorities they get

labelled with the terrorist mark and get abandoned. Turkish state's coercive policies have frightened the Kurds and all other ethnic minorities to participate in legal and peaceful protest to ask for their rights.

While the theory of the DTP and the DTK was defending the interests of the people, why in practice that people did not help the defenders of their rights. So there is a paradox between the people and the DTK as a regional assembly and the DTP as a political party were preparing political and social awareness between Kurdish and Turkish people in order to achieve a peaceful settlement. After the first attempt of the negotiations and bringing 34 people from Qandil and Maxmur camps as the beginning of a peaceful settlement the DTP, which later closed down by the court and the members, and the MPs were transferred to the BDP. The BDP politicians should have explained if the theory was right and they were moving in the right direction and the masses were supporting them why they do not achieve a peaceful settlement? Kurdish politicians from the legal political sides the DTK, DTP and then BDP and the PKK were sincere for peaceful settlement but the Turkish state was not. In order to understand the idea of a democratic autonomy and what it contains it is better to have a look at its principles as they were explained in the draft submission.

Political Dimension: 'The Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan's political command will get its power from the organised democratic society and the community will get its power from the use of individual rights by free citizens together with the use of collective-group rights. It continues and explains that it will use the power of democratic politics and opposes the nation-state's strict centralist policies and its bureaucratic organisational understandings. Furthermore it goes on via democratic politics all segments of society will participate to political process and function in an open, transparent political environment. Political Administration in Democratic Autonomy starting from the grassroots, village communes, town, district, neighbourhood councils and city councils will organise themselves in the form of confederal organisation and will have its democratic representation at the Congress of Society. The Democratic Congress of Autonomous Kurdistan Community will send its representatives to the parliament of Democratic Republic of Turkey and take part in

the politics of common homeland. Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan will have its own original flags and symbols that representing them. In addition different communities in the democratic autonomy region will use its own symbols' (DTK 2011: pp. 18-20).

Democratic Autonomy project is not based on geography, ethnic and religious community; instead it is based on democracy and coexistence. It is based on criteria of democracy and it means ethnic, religious, social and cultural rights. This model is not only applicable to for Kurdistan but also to the other regions of Turkey too. The decision-making authority will primarily belong to delegates of village, neighbourhood, district, town and city councils. Democratic Autonomy will work in the formulation of state plus democracy. All other ethnic and religious communities will be able to organise autonomously and authentically such as Assyrian-Chaldean, Armenians, Arabs, Azeris plus Yezidi and Alevite. In the case of acceptance with legal constitutional guarantees by Turkish state it could guarantee political status of Kurdish people and all other minorities' rights in a democratic Turkey, while Turkey strictly opposed to that idea and rejected it. The state at Imrali prison says something to Öcalan but outside something else to Turkish public.

This approach fundamentally builds a democratic environment implementing the rule of democracy and providing equal representation while distributing justice among communities to some degree. However, an entity such as the Turkish state was far away from accepting such reformation draft that has been proposed in the DTK programme.

Legal Dimension: 'Despite the denial of its existence and its rights by the international community and regional states, the freedom struggle of Kurdish people today will be decisive for the status of the Democratic Autonomy. The status of Democratic Autonomy should be anticipated in order to end unlawful, inhuman attitudes, the policy of denial and the war of destruction against the Kurds and to secure a peaceful, free, democratic union within the borders of republic of Turkey by constitutional change and legal means. We see turkey and Kurdistan as a common homeland. The Democratic Autonomy law should be recognized as part of the new constitution of the Republic of Turkey and the EU Law and secured through mutual agreements' (Ibid: pp. 22). Democratic Autonomy proposal invites international

organisation such as the UN and the EU and Turkish state to reconsider legal constitutional guarantees for Kurdish people inside the borders of Turkey. It explicitly explains that they have benefited from Abdullah Öcalan's gender free-libertarian, democratic-ecological paradigm. They gave examples of the similar cases such as Northern Ireland, Scotland in the UK and the Catalonia and Bask regions in Spain and demanded similar solutions with national and international guarantees.

The DTK at the same time remind to Turkish state that the Constitution of 1921 and the Kurdish Autonomy Act ratified on 10th February 1922 by the Grand National Assembly. The legal System of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan also states that it does not believe that the management of society solely by law, communality should be protected by using both ethics and politics together without falling into the dilemma of "either ethics or law". A just social system can be build based on the gender-libertarian-democratic-ecological community paradigm (Ibid: pp. 24).

Self-Defence Dimension: To preserve the existences of different ethnic, religious and cultural differences the self-defence is the sine quo non-condition of protecting the identity, politicization, and democratization of the societies. Although it does explain that self-defence does not mean militarily defending the society, however, the state never convinced that such an idea would not end up with clashing the security apparatus. In the Self-Defence dimension there is not the intention of building a huge military power against foreign invasions, however as in the nature all creatures need to protect themselves. In order to continue the existence of Kurdish reality they need to protect themselves by their own security forces. That means a democratic society should have its self-defences and protect itself in the villages, neighbourhoods, towns and cities against fascist and genocide attacks. Although throughout 19th and 20th centuries uprisings in all parts of Kurdistan were a kind of self-defences against foreign occupations but the states of Turkey, Iran and Iraq did respond their self-defences very harshly with many times massacred them, because of self-defence dimension Turkish state so far have not agreed to let a Kurdish security police to operate in Bakur Kurdistan.

Cultural Dimension: In order to prevent cultural genocide as it happened in the history of Ottoman Empire and the republic of Turkey, according to the charters of the UN and EU cultural rights also must be guaranteed and full education in mother tongue needs to be secured in the constitution. Not only Kurdish but also the ban on all other languages than Turkish should be lifted and constitutional guarantees to be provided. In front of eye of the world Turkish state has committed to ‘cultural genocide’ because of not allowing native languages and cultures of Assyrians, Armenians and especially Kurds to be practiced. Assyrian and Armenian culture and language to some degree have been allowed because of their religious differences of being Christians. However, Turkish state has never allowed Kurds to exercise and practice their mother tongue though it was publicly prohibited. Democratic autonomous Kurdistan will guarantee all cultural differences equal treatment no matter their numbers are large or small. These guarantees in the Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan region have to be guaranteed by law in Ankara and international organisations.

Social Dimension: As the outcome of long war between the state and the PKK thousands of villages have been evacuated and the people of these villages have been forced to migrate Turkey’s large cities and then to European countries. The social texture of society has been deformed and physical and cultural genocide has been implemented. Kurdish and other ethnic minorities’ women were under sexist mentality of the state. The family as the social unit of the communities has been in ruin. A democratic gender free and woman emancipatory system is to guarantee children, youth the family and women need to be implemented. The state intentionally has put the assimilationist and social genocide policies in Kurdistan through education, sport art, drugs and especially among women prostitution. The family unit became an example of the state to run and exploit the family and make woman as slaves. Social dimension of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan is contemporary modern democratic form moral and political society a society that allows differences to live in it. The leading forces of the democratic confederal organisations of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan are women and youth, therefore the role of women would be essential

in communal life in all areas or organisations. The youth would play a leading role and take part in reestablishment defence of the society with its energy and dynamism (Ibid: pp.30).

Economic Dimension: Kurdistan as one of the first places in human history has created farming whereas now has become the land of people who are dispersed all around the world as the results of poverty and hunger. This is because who has established political hegemony has destroyed economic life and has exploited all underground and aboveground recourses. The proposed economic policy of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan is democratic socialism that can provide equal opportunities to everyone priority is given to women. The aim of the Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan will be to empower the strong will of the people to go back to the basics to work on the land to cooperate with production from the land to contribute to economic independence.

Ecological Dimension: The natural resources of Kurdistan have been put under control of state owned and private companies. These companies for more profit has destroyed the eco-system especially extracting the mines, making dams and building new sites have resulted burning forests and putting huge mountains of waste underground. The continuation of the policies will end up destruction of the nature and ecological system in Kurdistan.

Diplomatic Dimension: Diplomacy is and activity between peoples groups and states, nation-state mentality is only securing its power through diplomacy with other nation-states. In a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan, diplomacy will base on mutual interests people, different groups and societies. It will take into consideration that historical and social character issue of Kurdistan and its division into four parts will do diplomatic relations between these parts and the societies of other countries. Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan will play a role to improve peace and brotherhood in the region (Ibid: pp.37).

These mentioned eight dimensions of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan were introduced to the Turkish people, the parliament and the media. The response was very negative and officially was rejected. Despite all hard criticisms the PKK took the burden and supported the legal political movement in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey and declared

countless ceasefires in order to give opportunity for a peaceful democratic solution. What the PKK did miss, showing some degree of arrogance, was not taking the wider burden of including the representatives all political, social, cultural, ethnic and religious entities in any so-called 'peace' talks. The PKK and legal activists and the politicians in Bakur and Turkey did not convince the communities in Bakur as well as in Turkey that the national and political denial of Turkish state has caused the emergence of the PKK and the armed struggle was the reason of colonialist and destructive policies. The peace would only be achieved if these policies came to an end and automatically the PKK insurgency and guerrilla war would be ended. I personally observed the situation and did field work in Bakur Kurdistan in Agirî, Wan, Bitlis, Amed, and Merdin and Adiyaman provinces. The situation was in line with the theoretical and ideological propaganda. There were to some degree the opportunity to do good services in order to convince the masses and mobilize them. The practical implementation was in crisis and the people on duty such as elected mayors and HDP with DBP party representatives were not doing their job properly at all. The opportunities were available on the ground were not given by the state, the state itself was in crisis and the situation was out of their control and also the so-called 'solution process' was on the agenda. The PKK, the HDP and DBP did not implement their policies and became bureaucrats and the gap between them and people especially after the 7th June 2015 became wider and wider as demonstrated in the example of Self-Administration declarations the people did not support them stating from 12th August 2015. The DTK two times declared that they will implement their democratic autonomy project independent of the Turkish state, however the results were null. The PKK and its imprisoned leader and all pro-Kurdish political parties in the legal political sphere must have understood that the Turkish state does not recognise any entity called Kurdish question.

Since 2005 to 2016 Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan project in theory has been demanded by the pro-Kurdish legal political actors, however this project strictly had been rejected by the Turkish state and the AKP government. On 14th July 2011 the DTK declared a Self-Administration in Amed and on 12th August 2015 again Self-Administrations in more

than ten town and cities of Bakur Kurdistan declared by people's assemblies related to the DTK. In both occasions the government of the AKP ordered the army, the police and the gendarmerie's Special Forces attacked harshly and destroyed the towns and cities by tanks and warplanes bombardments. In theory Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan project is more compromised one but in practice the Turkish state and government has rejected by destructive measures. The PKK and Kurdish political legal movement must understand there is no possibility of implementation of that project.

Democratic Civil Society, Decentralization and Devolution

Abdullah Öcalan in his democratic liberation project convinced the PKK and pro-Kurdish political parties and civil society organisations in Bakur Kurdistan that Turkey will be a member of the EU. An EU member Turkey would be implementing the EU project in Turkey. Therefore the EU rules and regulations will be in practice and they will apply to Turkish and Kurdish daily life in Turkey. European democracy has been evolved produced civil society organisations and moved to wider institution of the union of more than twenty-seven countries, the European Union. The EU has the principles and conditions for those countries that want to join. Turkey was one of those countries wanted to join to the EU and accepted as a candidate state. The PKK and Kurdish legal political movement believed that Turkey has the intention to join to the EU and implement European Democratic principles in Turkey where Bakur Kurdistan is a part of it. Most of the Kurds and Kurdish movement were so happy that Turkey will become a member of the EU and Kurdish question will be seen similar to Scotland, Catalonia or Northern Ireland and the process of decentralization and devolution of power will solve the Kurdish question.

Decentralization of the EU countries generally means that the power from the centre has been transferred to the local councils. In the United Kingdom a city like London has thirty-two councils and they are based on population density rather than geographical, national and ethnic criteria. Devolution is different from decentralization. For example,

Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have devolved powers from London since the Labour government came to power in 1997. The labour government under the Prime Minister Tony Blair devolved the power from London to Scotland the election of a local parliament, which took the executive power in education, taxation, judiciary and transport. Scotland went so far to held a referendum for independence in 2015.

Öcalan and the PKK wanted to follow the same example of England and Scotland in the context of Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan. Turkey, at the beginning of Öcalan's imprisonment, should have negotiated an independent and federal Kurdistan's UK style devolution. What happened was that the strategy for an independent or federal Kurdistan was withdrawn and within five years the state tried to convince Turkish people that it has defeated the struggle of Kurdish independence. When the PKK started the self-defence strategy in June 2004 the state again started to negotiate with Öcalan as if they wanted a peaceful solution. This approach of the state also failed in 2010, when the PKK started a revolutionary popular war strategy.

The state showed as if it accepted the Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan strategy and started a dialogue with Öcalan again at the end 2012. From 2013 until 24th July 2015 neither the PKK nor Öcalan ever talked about a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan. This time the PKK or the HDP following Öcalan's directives changed from the idea of a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan to the idea of a local democracy. If we look at the Turkish state's strategy it is clear how it worked to gradually reduce the PKK's demands without conceding anything and bringing the demand of the PKK to something irrelevant such as the National Self-Determination of Kurdistan. Simply the state after death of president Özal has always played a game with the PKK and it also took more initiatives especially after imprisonment of Öcalan.

If the PKK had not downgraded its demands from independence to federalism then from federalism to Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan, those goals could have been at least negotiated. For example when the aim of the PKK was the demands of a nation of at least thirty millions in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey have been reduced to a local democracy the

outcome is null. At this stage the PKK must have learnt that they downgraded their demands too fast, which made them very weak in the negotiations. Negotiating the demands of a nation needs political skill the PKK has to learn from conflict resolutions.

Democratising the state by ‘non-violent means’

When the PKK started its journey at the beginning of 1970s there was only a solution between the radical left and some Kurdish nationalist organisations in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey: destroying the state occupation in Kurdistan through prolonged popular war. It was because the political environment did not allow any entity to act or name itself as a Kurdish organisation and talk about Kurdistan in legal spheres. This barrier of the states denial and assimilationist policy was broken after a long struggle and heavy price of more than 4000 destroyed villages and more than 45 thousands lives lost. To some degree that heavy price affected the state to come to a compromise with the opposition from both the Turkish democratic and Bakur Kurdistan’s national-democratic opposition. However, the old trend of ultra-nationalists and extreme-Islamists has prevented the state to come to a peaceful solution. Especially the Kurdish name ‘Peace Process’ in Turkish side ‘Solution Process’ was started from the beginning of 2013 until 24th July 2015 was close to a final resolution. It was prevented at the last minute, because the democratic and national-democratic opposition were gaining the ground and the overwhelming majority of Bakur Kurdistan population and majority of Turkish people supported it.

The Turkish state was and it still is in a very important historical juncture since 2000s. Either will be evolved to a democratic republic and become a member of the EU and accept the rules and regulations of the EU and European Democratic Civilisation or will turn its face back and repeat the history of the Ottomans if the hegemonic powers of the world allowed it. Currently, the tendency of the state and the government shows that it is playing as if nobody were observing it, however, its trick has been known to everyone and it will not be able to continue in this situation.

Democracy and democratization are the best possible, preferable and less costly options. Öcalan and the PKK know better than anyone that the Turkish state is different from any other state on earth and so far has never accepted any other national or ethnic identity within the borders of the geography of Turkey. But until recently that geography was Anatolia, Lazistan, Armenia and Kurdistan. All those entities are prohibited by Turkish constitution because the Turkish state by force has implemented its rules. In order to support the process of democratization the PKK from March 1993 to October 2015 announced ten ceasefires. The ten times announced ceasefires have not so far solved the Kurdish question; nonetheless have shown to the Kurdish and Turkish society, to the people of the Middle Eastern region and the world that until a solution to the Kurdish question has been reached Turkey will not have a prosperous and peaceful future.

The Turkish state still does not accept the Kurds as nation and still thinks according to its military and security apparatus that it will be able by force to solve it and assimilate it as it happen in the Armenian case in the 1915 Genocide. It could be argued that it has removed some restrictions on Kurdish language and culture, however, it has more than three hundred TV and Radio stations and all educational institutions are Turkish. Today's assimilationist policies of the state are harsher than any time. Therefore the PKK have made a major mistake in reducing the demands of Kurdistan National Self-Determination to a matter of democratisation of Turkey. It can support legal political activities and in getting involved directly in legal politics through supporting legal political parties to speed up the solution of Kurdish question.

Democratic Confederalism as an Alternative Solution

Öcalan in his *The Road Map for a democratic solution to Kurdish question* talks about three alternatives. The first one is 'the National Annihilation Solution of Capitalist Modernity' which has been implemented by Turkish and Iranian states since 1514s (Öcalan 2012: pp. 84-6). This solution is the most extreme and violent way of extermination of Kurds

and Kurdistan and other ethnic entities and issues in the Turkish and Iranian capitalist system. Öcalan gives reasons why capitalist system is the main source, while Ottomans and Safavids divided Kurdistan much earlier and Turkey and Iran are the earlier colonizers of Kurdistan. The second one is 'Kurdish Federalist Nation-State Solution' which is based on Bashur Kurdistan and reflects the federal solution considered by Western hegemonic powers such as France, the UK and US. Öcalan states that the hegemonic powers are not anymore sure whether the regional nation-states would really be suitable for their long-term agreements. Therefore a federalist nation-state solution, which based on Bashur Kurdistan, is suitable for their long-term interests (Ibid: pp. 87). The Kurdish Federalist Nation-State Solution is can be similar to Armenian solution during the WWI when all southern Armenian people and land was separated from today's Armenia, just a small portion of Armenia became Independent Armenia. Kurds and Kurdistan question cannot be framed just in Bashur's and only one third of Bashur's geography and cannot be solved without Bakur, Rojhilat and Rojava. The third one is 'Democratic Nation Solution' which is a solution seeks outside the nation-state system. This alternative solution is opposed to both earlier mentioned solutions; neither seeks to establish an independent nor a federal state. This alternative will not be an extension of the state; it will empower the people to administer its daily life without the need of recurring to the state. It will basically organise the society and society's will by electing its representatives in the forms of councils in villages then in neighbourhoods, town, cities, provinces and regional assemblies then in a joint assembly in four parts of Kurdistan which would constitute the regional assembly for Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan inside the borders of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Öcalan and the PKK proposed Democratic Nation Solution as a compromise and the most suitable way of finding a peaceful settlement to accommodate in their thesis of democratic confederalism. In this solution Turkey would be instead of 81 counties be divided into 25 regions but all would be defined as democratic nation of Turkey. A democratised republic and a democratic nation would accommodate a democratic autonomous Kurdistan. Turkey would become a member of the EU, and in a democratic republic of Turkey, a

democratic autonomous Kurdistan would be a democratic nation solution to other three parts of Kurdistan and without questioning the current nation-state system's borders, a democratic confederal system would be possible. In theory this proposal from PKK's point of view was possible but the Turkish state labelled it as a project of parallel state and secessionist and terrorist project against indivisible unity and integrity of Turkish state.

The nation-state system was created especially in the Middle East, Asia and Africa after the WWI according to the interests of victorious powers. The Kurds lost totally while Arabs gained twenty-two states, the Ottoman Empire squeezed into Anatolia but gained an internationally recognized state and Persians kept Iran eventually until the end of WWII. During the emergence of the United Nations at the end of the WWII the remnants of Xoybun attempted to provide some demands with a map of Greater Kurdistan came to naught. The borders drawn for the new states in the Middle East were divided and partitioned Kurdistan from the heart. The Kurds tried hard and struggled to gain a state or at least a legal status. Kurdish leaders of the time were consisted of some Kurds from the Ottoman army officers, educated intellectuals related to tribal nobles in origin left their uprising stay as local rather than national uprisings and they lost their dreams. The international system also ignored the Kurdish request for independence even a legal guarantee for cultural rights was ignored. From the beginning of the 19th to the mid 20th century the Kurds were under physical and cultural genocide.

From the last quarter of the 20th century onward gradually Kurdish political parties with their struggle have gained ground and nowadays are providing different kinds of solutions to their oppressors to have power sharing and coexist equally, for example by going for referendum of independence in Bashur Kurdistan and democratic federation of Northern Syria. Interestingly, those Kurdish political parties at the beginning of their struggle aimed at the autonomy and reforms such as the KDP-Iraq while nowadays they aim at independence and those asked only independence such as the PKK today even does not ask autonomy.

At its first official party declaration statement the PKK described itself as the proletariat party of Kurdistan who brought Marxism-Leninism to Kurdistan. It stated that

only a proletariat party could solve the national question of Kurdistan in Turkey and other parts of Kurdistan. The time changed and the proletariat revolution did not happen in the most developed countries. In the meantime the socialist system collapsed and the era of national liberation and socialist revolutions came to an end. For this reason the PKK had to reform its ideological path and gradually left behind the Marxist-Leninist discourse. The PKK successfully implemented the changes and prepared for the new era of 'the triumph of liberal democracy'. The PKK successfully focused global attention on the Kurds under colonial rules of Turkey. The PKK also distanced itself from the discourses of Marxism-Leninism and left behind the national liberation strategy and tried to negotiate a democratic solution with the state declaring they were fighting for freedom for all lingual, ethnic and cultural different entities not only in Kurdistan and Turkey but also in the whole of the Middle East.

Paul White mentions in his recent book *The PKK, Coming From the Mountain*, 'since Öcalan's capture it has become a commonplace to read that he turned from violence only under pressure from his Turkish captors. This is not true; the move away from 'armed struggle' began earlier, with the first PKK's unilateral ceasefire in March 1993. Indeed, the PKK contemplated bringing an end to its armed activities before Öcalan's capture curtailed this political evolution' (White 2015: pp. 127). Öcalan was sending obvious messages through Turkish journalists for a peaceful, democratic solution. The PKK leader even went further asking if Turkey guarantees they would prefer to do political activities in the name of the PKK at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. As an experienced Kurdish politician who created the PKK from zero and spent twenty years in Imrali high security prison, he transformed his basic principles and goal of an independent Kurdish nation state and to Democratic Confederalism project. He had led the PKK for more than three decades aimed, an Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan up to 2000s. In the Imrali prison after 2000s, Öcalan as a leader, researcher and theoretician influenced from libertarian American Anarchist Murray Bookchin's Libertarian Socialism, Libertarian Municipalism and Democratic Confederalism.

The difficulty of implementing the project of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan was the fear of Turkish state from any kind of democracy and liberty-aimed organisations in Kurdistan. Because those civil society organisations were seeding the discourses of equality, justice, freedom and more importantly gender emancipation promoting the status of women in the society. An organised society can stand for its rights and freedoms. Therefore the state blocked this process for the reason that in the future in the fear that the final goal of a democratic autonomous Kurdistan would be an independent Kurdistan. All concepts and discourses were proposed by Öcalan such as Democratic Republic, Democratic Nation, Democratic Confederalism, Radical Democracy, and Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan. Since 2013 to 2015 Local Democracy and Radical Democracy/Direct Democracy have been supported by the Kurdish people and legal Kurdish supported political parties, but the state and the ruling AKP have rejected. The PKK in its critical historical juncture will either continue on these goals or turn to retransformation process recent developments will produce the answer.

Conclusion

Chapter seven analysed whether the project of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan via Democratic Republic and Democratic Nation was viable for the implementation of a Radical Democracy or Direct Democracy in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. What the PKK understood from the process of transformation was that downgrading its original strategic aim from an Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan and searching National-Self-Determination to establish state of Kurdistan to a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan in the borders of the existent nation-state of Turkey and be a proper example to Rojhilat and Rojava Kurdistan too. Therefore, the PKK thought it would force the Turkish state to get grant concessions by keeping guerrilla forces on the base of self-defence. Turkish state also approached to the PKK and Öcalan in away as if they want to solve Kurdish question through the EU's reformation and democratisation policies would accept and recognise the legitimate rights of the Kurds through civil society organisation in a non-violent way. However, the final game

proved the vice versa. While Turkish state has rejected all form of non-violent peaceful settlements, how can it be argued whether the Turkish state was ready or would be ready to negotiate in a civil way in the same peaceful way Czechs and Slovaks did? Or the evidences on the ground will tell a different story.

The PKK this time convinced a great majority of Kurds to withdraw their quest for independence and accepting ‘illegitimate borders’ as legitimate and to solve Kurdish question within the borders of Turkey as the question of democracy. But this request for Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan was also labelled as a secessionist was rejected because it could inflame ethnic, religious hatred and divide Turkey into two different states. The confusing paradox in the reaction of the PKK to such explicit actions by Turkish state cannot be understood, why the PKK has been so passive. The state has pushed back the PKK through Öcalan to the position where Kurdish nationalists and reformists stand in 1970s. As Ali Kemal Özcan states the PKK’s nationalism is a ‘nationalismless’ nationalism (Özcan 2006: pp. 227) seems to be true. At the start it began Kurdistan Revolutionaries, Kurdistan Workers Party, Kurdistan Peoples Liberation Army, Kurdistan National Liberation Front, and Kurdistan Parliament in Exile all these entities were come into existence for the liberation of Kurdistan from the yoke of Turkish, Iranian, Iraqi and Syrian colonialism. Who ever asked for cultural rights or autonomy were declared by the PKK as national traitors and for the failure of 1975 was blamed the lack of will toward independence.

The mass mobilization of people and their participation to the PKK’s struggle was gaining respect and support from everywhere. Whenever the PKK started to negotiate with the Turkish state and downgraded its national strategic goal of independence and it turned out its basics from nationalism in Kurdistan, Germany put the PKK in the terrorist organisations list. At the beginning the organizational activities of the PKK, it was justifying and giving reasons for nationalism in an oppressed nation as patriotism as it happened in all colonised nations’ national liberation struggles. The justification for PKK’s activities was that any oppressed nation has the right to National Self-Determination. Nowadays the PKK never talks about nationalism, never about patriotism and never about liberation. That is a huge

paradox in the PKK's historiography. Transformation towards democracy does not mean to ignore or deny the past. The future would be based on today and today have been built on the base of yesterday in other words the past. The PKK should be proud of its past. Its past was not based on some dogmatic words. In fact as I remember we were looking at and reading all available classics available from history to philosophy and from sociology to anthropology. As it was mentioned Kurdistan Revolutionaries had a list of the classics and everyday minimum four hours they were having reading and discussions groups' ideological educations. All those educations were mainly aiming an Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan

How the PKK's past relay on standing for justice, equality and freedom of all oppressed in Kurdistan, its ideology was also the ideology of defending those rights. It could be criticized for too much emphasis on Marxism-Leninism and class struggle in Kurdistan. The national strategy of Independent United and Democratic Kurdistan was the right strategy that is why it had gained that support from the most oppressed people of Kurdistan. The PKK can still defend this national strategy of independent Kurdistan as well as if the state would be ready to come to terms of democracy, justice, equality and freedom for National Self-Determination could negotiate. In Kurdistan, nationalism does not end up with racism. If the state of Kurdistan was recognised as a sovereign state and the people of Kurdistan was having the same national and political right as Turks, nationalism would not be on the agenda. Kurdistan is divided, partitioned into pieces and in the process of extinction. Nationalism in Kurdistan would be a democratic nationalism could save Kurdish culture and language from extinction and from death and revive it into the international community.

The PKK had thought to its cadres and still is relying on those knowledge and the historical process of evolution of human history The first lessons of the PKK's secret group education was from the first book the Principles of Philosophy, the history of social evolution of communities from the Primitive, Slavery, Feudal, Capitalist and Socialist stages of economic and social evolution. That historical evolution would have had produced another PKK if the current PKK we are talking about was not born between 1973 and 1978.

Ideologies can change as the evolution takes steps forward, but basic and foundation principles are not.

Transformation of the PKK and its new paradigm of Radical Democracy and Democratic Confederalism build on the pillars of Democratic Republic, Democratic Nation and Democratic Autonomy in theory seems very logical and acceptable. However, Turkish state so far has rejected it with the harshest method of military methods. Kurdish legal political activists who defended that project have been imprisoned for the charges of terrorism by Turkish justice system. Iraq up to the recent Referendum has also taken similar methods to Turkish state. Iran is not talking about it at all, while in Syria the Rojava experience is expecting very difficult days ahead.

The nation-state system was established in the Middle East at the end of the WWI does not accept any changes. Therefore Kurdish Question seems will be the question of 21st century again similar to 20th century but with a very strong presence, the success would totally would depend on the PKK's retransformation towards justice, equality, freedom liberation, democracy and an egalitarian society.

Chapter 8

From National Liberation to Democratic Liberation: What is next?

How far has the PKK distanced itself from the National Liberation discourse? Would it be possible for the new ideological and political paradigm of the PKK to be implemented in the Middle East? From the beginning of this thesis to this final chapter, this study has attempted to establish what the PKK stands for at its emergence up to its leader's imprisonment in Imrali; that it was based on a concept of National liberation and the solution was projected as the universal right to self-determination as it applied to all stateless peoples struggle for their own independent national statehood. The PKK and all its associations for the sake of a peaceful settlement of Kurdish question were ready to compromise with Turkish state, however the state rejected all the offers. The paradigm change and transformation offered by the PKK and its struggle in favour of radical democratic politics and Democratic Confederalism starting from Bakur Kurdistan could bring peace and stability for a long period of time if the states accept not to intervene. In theoretical terms the concept was to offer the Turkish state to accept minimal rights of self-governance. In return the state was not giving any minimum rights, but totally denied that there was not such a question called Kurdish question. From the point of Turkish state in the past there could have been a problem, but anew republic defined that all people in Turkey are Turkish and first class citizens of Turkish nationality. Turkish state does not even recognise the question, how will it address a solution?

However, there are many challenges, which jeopardize the message of the PKK. When Kurdish political parties at the domestic micro (in one part of Kurdistan) and macro (in wider spectrum in four parts of Kurdistan) level sacrificed their party interests to Kurdistan's

national interests and internationally acted under an umbrella of Kurdistan National Congress, then Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria can accept or at least negotiate for a solution.

At the micro and macro level, the most important problem is the impossibility for Kurdish organization to find a common ground for collective action. For example if most of Kurdish political organisations in Bakur, Bashur, Rojhilat or Rojava act together the approach of Turkey will definitely be different. Until there are not a unified national front between prominent Kurdish political parties in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria would never accept the idea of an independent Kurdistan. In particular, Turkey and Iran, the two powers in the region are the ones who act against any form of self-determination for the Kurds. These two states are openly standing against legal constitutional status for Kurds and Kurdistan and they see Kurdistan as an indivisible part of their countries and nation-building processes. These two states have historically been in control of Kurdistan, Iran since 550 BC and Turkey since the 16th century. Since WWI the two new states of Iraq and Syria have been added to the list of Kurdistan's occupiers. In this situation a withdrawal from National Liberation strategy would not help any Kurdistan National liberation Movements' progression towards peace, justice and democracy. It does not matter how many times the PKK transforms and retransform, the Turkish state only seeks assimilation and annihilation of Kurds and Kurdistan.

How are the problems of more than twenty-five millions of Kurds subjected to policies of annihilation in Bakur Kurdistan can be solved with the establishment of democracy in Turkey? The democratization of Turkey would mean the end of the current state's mentality. The owners and rulers of the Turkish state have been Kemalist's for seventy-five years, but now, since November 2002 they are Islamists and their mentality and economical interests are interlinked. They do not accept any a democratic process that could give an openness and

acceptance of different ethnic and religious differences in Turkey. This chronic mentality can be found in the Turkish state's tradition since 1923 and only a revolution could overcome it. In this context, due to Turkish peoples' conservative, nationalist and religious mentality any proposal coming from the KNLM would not be accepted with the exception of an unconditional surrender of the PKK guerrillas.

Bakur Kurdistan has being directly and indirectly affected by the regional developments in Iraq and Syria as well as by conflicts between the Bashur and Rojava Kurdistan's political party leaderships. The so-called peace process started in January 2013 because of the developments in Rojava and collapsed mainly for threat on Rojava in July 2015. The Turkish state's strategic aim in launching the peace process was to bring the Muslim Brotherhood to the government in Syria, prevent any legal and constitutional democratic status to Rojava and distance the PKK guerrillas from Bakur Kurdistan. The PKK was strategically aiming from the peace process to save Rojava Kurdistan by direct strategic help and declare ceasefire for the sake of democratic developments in Bakur and Turkey. This point also need to be mentioned that, for the sake of a peaceful settlement and positive impact of ceasefire, the PKK was ready to disarm and transform to a legal political party if the Turkish state had accepted a monitoring and truth finding commission from impartial Kurdish and Turkish commission, or an international one.

Another complexity of the strategy of Democratic Liberation of the PKK was to keep the guerrilla forces active in order to press and push the state to come to the table of negotiations. While the Turkish state was not accepting any kinds of Kurdish question, how could it accept negotiations from the pressure of the guerrillas? The concept of democratic liberation was on the one hand saying non-violent way of struggle to democratise republic of Turkey, and on the other hand keeping guerrillas as an illegal pressure to bring the state and

ruling party to table of negotiations. What the Turkish state and the AKP government were doing in the “Arab Spring” or the wake of the peoples of the Middle East and Northern Africa in order to disarm the PKK. Disarming the PKK would have been another failure of the KNLM in the 21st century. What happened was the PKK took the opportunity to declare a ceasefire with Turkish Army in order to give a chance for the political process and democratic politics to be flourished in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey, but also to have a chance to help Rojava to establish its institutions in order to achieve self-administration. The Turkish state’s aim was to prevent any kind of democratic status for the Kurds in Rojava and to prevent a similar situation from repeating in Rojava as well as stopping the fight with the PKK in Bakur in order to cause a proxy war in Rojava.

More importantly, transformation towards democratic liberation would create a more democratic environment where different political parties can flourish and act, if the state has accepted the project. The facts on the ground have shown that neither all-political parties of Bakur Kurdistan nor all political parties in other three parts of Kurdistan are in line with the PKK’s Democratic Liberation concept. The opposition of Bakur Kurdistan political parties believes that the democratic liberation strategy of the PKK had the only effect to put Northern Kurdistan people’s struggle under the influence of the Turkish leftists and Turkish state apparatus. Whereas the PKK insists on that the only solution of the Kurdish question would be through the democratization of Turkey carried out with in alliance with all ethnic and national democratic oppositions in Turkey. The reality on the ground is that the overwhelming majority of the communities in all parts of Kurdistan still have not been mobilised to help and defend the liberation/freedom movements despite of heavy human and material sacrifices.

From Newroz 2013 to the 24th of July 2015 at least almost half of the population of Northern Kurdistan believed that the process called ‘solution process/ peace process between the PKK and AKP government intended to solve the Kurdish Question through democratic means, in other words the democratization of Turkey would totally change the traditional political landscape in Kurdistan and open the gate to a democratic change among the peoples of the Middle East. The ordinary people of Bakur Kurdistan were regarding to democratic process and peaceful settlement and about the above-mentioned paradigm whole heartedly believed that there would be a settlement.

However, the answer was and is that the AKP government and the Turkish were only seeking to disarm the PKK, and bring to power a Muslim Brotherhood government to power in Damascus. In that critical situation of the so called dialogue process between the PKK and the AKP government national, regional and international issues were mixed. This was because the state witnessed that not only that the AKP was losing support in Bakur Kurdistan, but also when there was a little window of democratic environment, that the state’s institutions became empty and thus the people preferred to support their elected municipal co-mayors and councillors from Kurdish supported political parties. In Bakur Kurdistan the BDP won more than one hundred municipalities. Its agenda was to solve social, political, cultural and social issues among the society and to raise politically awareness so citizens could stand rights and understand their duties. The Turkish state and the AKP government witnessed closely that this peaceful, democratic political environment did not benefit them.

Would the PKK be able to move to abstain from violence and give up its original ideological stand? The answer of these questions is hidden in the PKK’s evolution through different stages of its reformation and transformation. From my observations from long time

the PKK members had committed so many horrible violent activities against its members as well as civilians not only in Bakur Kurdistan but also even in Europe. However, I have observed these positive points as well the PKK supporters have always believed in a free, just and democratic environment, but the problem is that the Turkish state's ideological mentality does not allow such an environment to exist.

Probably, if the Soviet Union and its Socialist system based on Marxist-Leninist doctrine had not collapsed, the PKK would not have changed its paradigm to this extent; for example, the PKK from its formal emergence on 27th November 1978 until 1995 had the hammer and sickle in the middle of the red star as the official emblem of the party. The PKK insisted on its proletarian nature and on the belief that this would lead to a liberation war similar to the one in Vietnam won by the Vietnam Workers Party. When the Marxist-Leninist doctrine failed it was obvious that the PKK did not insist on supporting it. Even if it continued on proclaiming its Marxist-Leninist doctrine and National liberation strategy, there was not any socialist system to support them. However, the PKK could have kept its national liberation and to struggle for it with peaceful means, even if the Turkish state did not accept the Kurdish question. When Internationalised the Kurdish question and international pressure would have inevitably brought them to the table of negotiations. Defending national liberation in the post-Cold War era with peaceful means of struggle needed liberal democracies aid and support. While there was not a socialist system to support the PKK led national liberation concept in the post Cold War era, the PKK had to seek for alternative ways of getting aid and support.

The National Liberation discourse for the time being has been abandoned in the PKK's political terminology, particularly since 1999 when Öcalan was imprisoned. Instead of National Liberation, the words Democratic Liberation were preferred. Democratic Liberation

aims at continuing the struggle through democratic political organisations awaking the society and contributing to local and national elections. In this sense, it can be said that to a considerable degree, the PKK has distanced itself from the idea of National Liberation. The difficulty of the Democratic Liberation struggle is the Turkish state's monistic ideology of not accepting any other ethnic, religious or cultural entity on one hand and the PKK led guerrilla movements armed activities on the other hand. The PKK to a considerable degree has also convinced the masses to support democratic political ways of struggle and even to accept the illegitimate borders of the four states as legitimate. Since the overwhelming majority of Kurdistan is under Turkish control, Turkey constitutes the biggest obstacle to any democratic solution.

The sectarian civil war in Iraq, which broke out in Iraq after the US and the UK intervention in 2003 and later in Syria after March 2011 with the general uprisings of the population, had huge impact on both Turkey and Iran. As a result Bashur Kurdistan and Rojava Kurdistan have been hugely relevant, because of these two parts of Kurdistan used to be under the realm of Iraq and Syria. Despite of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Bashur Kurdistan is internationally accepted, with the exception of Israel none of the UN member states has so far made any comment whether they would support or not a referendum for independence. Bashur Kurdistan came to existence as the result of international Humanitarian Intervention in 1991 with Resolution of 688 of the United Nations Security Council which aimed at protecting the Kurds from Genocide acts perpetrated by Saddam Hussein's Baath Regime, after 26 years, when 93% of the population of the KRG voted for independence the UNSC rejected it. The political and diplomatic activities of the KRG show that in 26 years the KRG in Bashur has achieved little. If the KRG had not been able to convince the UN, EU and US how it could convince the Iraqi government? The problem is

not only the weakness of the KRG, but also of the strategic position of the Kurds and Kurdistan in the Middle East and their impact on the future of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

While the Kurds of Bashur Kurdistan aimed at independence, Rojava Kurdistan finds itself in a very critical historical junction since its national-democratic and political-military forces are fighting against ISIS in alliance with the US led 73 countries coalition. The difficult question is if when the fight against ISIS is over Rojava actors who sacrificed the most will be included in the peace process? Among this national, regional and international complex situation of the Middle East, the PKK tried hard to negotiate with Turkish state, and distance itself from national liberation discourse as it projected in its paradigm change and transformation process. Turkish state's denial and assimilationist policies will force the Kurds to put pressure on the PKK to retransform its democratic liberation strategy.

How far has the PKK distanced itself from the National Liberation Discourse?

As it has been repeatedly mentioned in this thesis the PKK was founded as an ideological and political organisation aiming liberating Kurdistan from the yoke of imperialism and its colonialist collaborators namely Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. In order to be liberated from those four states a revolutionary organisation had to be organised against in order to lead and liberate all four part of Kurdistan. The political and national goal was not only an utopia, but bit by bit was progressed and getting popular support and putting pressure on a NATO member state of Turkey to talk about a federal solution to the Kurdish question.

The new party called itself the PKK and organised a guerrilla army, with the support of all strata of Kurdish society. Due to the policies of oppression imposed in Turkey, the PKK managed to recruit especially young people who wanted to eliminate the politics of assimilation and annihilation carried out by the Turkish state. The PKK chose a very different

path from the organisations that preceded it. The members of the PKK chose to devote their entire lives to the revolution. They had to give up any material property to own. They believed that life had to be lived in freedom in Kurdistan; otherwise the life for Kurds would be meaningless. Many people believe that it was this attitude towards the revolution, which gain the PKK so many adepts.

The PKK over the time made the masses politically aware and transformed them into a strong social movement with ideas of equality and democracy. One of the reasons that have made the PKK a consistent movement is that the society had come to the point of believing that the PKK was offering them a viable opportunity in the struggle for national liberation. Therefore in this respect the role of nationalism in an oppressed and colonised nation like the Kurds and its primordial, ethno-symbolic and modernist definition and explanation cannot be undermined that national liberation discourse developed from. The concepts of nation, nationalism, and national liberation will continue in Kurdistan until a fair and just solution will be achieved. Although the PKK has changed its ideological and political discourse quite considerably, its armed guerrilla forces are still effective since the start of the guerrilla warfare in 1984, with its guerrilla warfare techniques and tactic becoming even more developed. So in this quagmire how will it be possible to move away from national liberation discourse while the Turkish state does not accept any national and political rights to Kurdish nation?

From March 1999 to June 2004, the PKK under the directives of its leader Öcalan at that time in prison did not carried out offensive attacks against Turkish state's institutions. For five years it respected the ceasefire. It was then that it started transforming its ideological and political paradigm in order to prepare mobilise the masses into a democratic political struggle. The PKK officially distanced itself from the national liberation discourse and

entered the democratic political discourse. Turkish state did not welcome this change because it meant that the PKK was abandoning the idea of an independent Kurdistan and it will disappear as the previous 28 rebellions in Bakur Kurdistan's history. However the reality on the ground proved differently, neither the PKK disappear such as the Turkish state planned, even the PKK become much stronger than before, nor the PKK's democratic liberation produced any positive outcomes.

According to the new paradigm of democratic liberation of the PKK, a democratic confederal Middle East would begin in Turkey. While Turkey is still a monist state and strictly centralised and run by ultra-nationalist ideology, Iran is governed by a strictly theocratic sectarian political system. Turkey and Iran are both the main powers, which prevent any democratic change in the region. In this conundrum of the Middle East, while any demand for national and political, even cultural, rights for Kurdish people in any parts of Kurdistan have been labelled as secessionist and as an act of terrorism, dropping the national liberation strategy has been perceived as a political and national mistake. Distancing from national liberation of Kurdistan will only happen when Turkey democratically accepts national, political, cultural rights of self-governance of Kurdish people, and allow a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan with its parliament function as Scotland and Wales.

According to the evidences on the ground, to what extent has PKK been successful in implementing a Radical Democracy in order to achieve Democratic Liberation Discourse?

Following the PKK's new paradigm of democratic liberation a wide range of civil society organisations started a process of socially and politically organising the people from the grass root level, in order to organise all stratum of Kurdish society and other ethnic

minorities in Bakur Kurdistan and prepare them for civil disobedience and non-violent political actions. In the wider ideological concept it was defined as an implementation of Radical Democracy concept that was borrowed from Murray Bookchin (1921-2006), an American libertarian socialist author, orator, philosopher and pioneer in ecology movement as well as various feminists, leftist Foucauldians and critical Marxists. The dichotomy is to bring this concept into practise is the very strictly centralized ethnically and racially monist Turkish state's constitution.

Turkish state has always had the fear that the PKK led Kurdistan national liberation discourse will be recognised by regional and international powers and that it will create national, regional and international problems of Turkey's division. Hence Turkey was supposedly trying to make dialogue with the leader of the PKK when he was in Damascus through Turkish leftist intellectuals such as Yalçın Kuçuk and journalists of the Sabah, Milliyet and Hurriyet daily newspapers. But also internationally the failure of Soviet socialism had opened the way that the PKK moving towards supporting parliamentary elections as a possible way of mobilizing the masses through non-violent democratic political actions. In this way the PKK leader and the PKK itself thought democratic liberation would be possible.

The PKK indirectly supporting those Pro-Kurdish political parties, which aiming to democratically solve Kurdish question participation to the general elections in Turkey was the beginning of a new era. Soviet System had collapsed Liberal democracy in the West won and Turkish president Turgut Özal opened the gate of political democratic activities. The PKK with Kurdish political organisations in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey had supported Kurdish patriot and progressive political activists when they organised a legal political party in 1990, the HEP. The national election threshold was too high and the HEP participated to

elections in the list of Peoples Social Democratic Party winning 22 candidates. A continued guerrilla war had strengthened popular support and mobilised a considerable portion of Kurdish society. So it became obvious that if there were any possibility of doing politics legally and democratically the human costs would be much less. Both the Kurdish political parties in Diasporas with the PKK and the legal Kurdish supported political parties with ordinary people were supporting any kinds of democratic political activities.

After his imprisonment and his dialogue with the TAF and the MIT in the Imrali prison Öcalan transformed the paradigm from national liberation to democratic liberation through his defence writings to the European Human Rights Court. The first benefit of the democratic liberation discourse was participation in the local mayoral local elections in April 1999, when the DEHAP won 37 municipalities. The most important one was AMED the unofficial capital with Wan and Bingol. The municipalities were won by the democratic legal political party, which was supported by the PKK were moving forward to do best services to the people and to be ready to double their municipalities in the coming elections.

The process continued as if Öcalan was told by the Turkish state that if the PKK withdrew its guerrilla forces from Bakur Kurdistan and some strategic points in Turkey the Turkish state would grant some educational, cultural and political rights to the ethnic, cultural and religious differences in Turkey. However, nobody was or is aware of any deal between Öcalan and Turkish state representatives, which consisted of the TAF and MIT officials. The new paradigm was criticised within the PKK on the ground that the Kurdistan National Liberation discourse couldn't be reduced Turkey's democratisation. And still among the PKK members, especially those more than twenty years have been commanders of the guerrillas, are in favour of national liberation and an independent Kurdistan. However they support democratic liberation to support Öcalan's stand for peaceful settlement.

Local self-efficiency in governance and local democratic administration will be the fundamental element of the democratic liberation process. For this purpose the PKK continued to hold the ceasefire for five years. During these five years it totally transformed its cultural, political and armed organisations in the all spheres of its activities. The DEHAP continued its activities in building and organising civil society organisations in all towns and cities of Bakur Kurdistan as well as in the metropolis of Turkey such as Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, Mersin, Bursa and so on. The civil society organisations flourished and deepened the roots in the society. In March 2004 local elections the DEHAP won 20 more municipalities and the number increased to 57 towns and cities of Bakur Kurdistan. Those developments were positively affecting the society. The municipalities of the HADEP sped up their activities towards building Village commons, Town councils, and Provincial councils in order to build Regional assemblies then moving towards an umbrella organisation called Peoples Democracy Congress as the future Parliament of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan. The Turkish state was closely controlling the pro-Kurdish democratic political activities and allowing them to exist because of its negotiations with the European Union regarding its membership in one hand and to disarm the PKK without giving any legal status on the other.

After the AKP came to power in 2002, the PKK declared that they would give them the opportunity of negotiating in order to solve the Kurdish question in a non-violent and democratic way. When the AKP got into power it promised that it would democratize Turkey. When the EU started the negotiations with the AKP government for Turkey's membership, the AKP was playing a very pragmatic policy as if it really wanted to be a member of the EU. In fact the AKP was pressing the EU to accept the terms of Turkey not enter to EU and accept the terms of the EU. When the AKP government did not fulfil the demands the PKK asked for in the period of 1999 to 2004 for democratisation and a peaceful settlement of Kurdish question, the PKK restarted its guerrilla activities in Bakur Kurdistan

starting from June 2004. In 2005 the AKP tried through the KRG with the mediation of the MIT intelligence service to convince the PKK to declare a ceasefire. From 2005 to 2015 almost six times the PKK had silenced the guns in order to give a chance for democratisation and to open a way to solve Kurdish question. During these six times of declaring ceasefires, the AKP government had time to modernise its army and police force, renew bases in Bakur Kurdistan, and put a strict control on pro-Kurdish democratic political parties and related associations. Although pro-Kurdish civil society and political democratic associations flourished, the state control dismantled most of them towards the end.

The PKK's radical democratic discourse in Bakur Kurdistan speeded up from 2005 and reached its zenith passing threshold national elections on 7th June 2015 and then failed totally on 24th July 2015 to be destroyed by 4th of November 2016. On 21st of March 2005 at Newroz celebration in Amed the KCK declared its formation and, following Öcalan's message, started to work officially for democratic liberation. Pro-Kurdish legal Democratic political movement reached its success when it passed the 10% national election threshold on 7th June 2015 winning 80 MPs putting an end to the AKP's 13 years one party rule. The AKP lost the majority in the parliament since coalition negotiations with CHP party failed. At this point it was clear that neither the Turkish state nor the AKP wanted peace or a solution to Kurdish question with the democratisation of Turkey. What the AKP and Turkish state wanted was to disarm the PKK and nothing more. On 24th of July 2015 the AKP gave order to the TAF to start attacking the guerrilla positions inside and outside Bakur Kurdistan. Because of the hang parliament another election was hold on 1st of November 2015 where the AKP made an undeclared coalition with the deep state and ultra-nationalist the MHP party winning the elections with an overwhelming majority? On 4th of November 2016 Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag the co-chairs of the HDP with ten HDP MPs were detained. All elected the DBP municipalities co-chairs were replaced by the government appointees.

Although the PKK leader and founder pushed his movement through his lawyers from Imrali prison to implement a Radical Democratic Discourse in Bakur Kurdistan, neither the Turkish state through the TAF and MIT nor the AKP government intended to allow a democratic solution to the Kurdish question. Their only solution was to assimilate all Kurds into Turkish ethnicity and nationality and disarm the guerrilla army. Therefore, whatever the PKK and pro-Kurdish democratic and legal political movement have achieved through civil society organisations, municipalities, teachers' unions and students' organisations have been destroyed and closed down by the Turkish state security forces and thousands of the activists were imprisoned. Without a total reformation or revolutionary democratic changes no solution can be achieved to the Kurdish question under the current Turkish political system and constitution.

The PKK distanced from national liberation discourse quite considerably, and wholeheartedly was in favour of implementing radical democracy discourse via pro-Kurdish municipalities and thousands of pro-Kurdish civil society organisations in Northern Kurdistan, as well as in the Metropolises such as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Mersin, Adana, and etc. where millions of Kurds were forced to move and live. As a result of supporting democratisation and decentralisation, the PKK oriented pro-Kurdish legal civil society organisations and gained an overwhelming majority electoral support in Bakur Kurdistan. This support of grass root level and empowering the people in the possible democratic environment caused fear at the highest decision making level of Turkish state, and therefore this process was stopped by the Turkish state.

The Process of PKK's historical evolution from Formation to Reformation, Transformation and Re-Transformation

The PKK in its four and half decade history went through three important stages: formation, reformation and transformation, and according to the evidence on the ground, (most probably it could be retransformed again) the fourth stage might be on the way. However, retransformation will hugely be depended on the regional transformation of the nation-states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. If somehow the Turkish state negotiates a peaceful settlement to the Kurdish issue and gives legal constitutional guarantee and acceptance of the Democratic Autonomy, and negotiates with the pro-Kurdish legal political parties in Bakur Kurdistan to accept Democratic Confederalism as no threat to Turkish state security, then the retransformation process will be stopped. The rejection of this project will radically affect the PKK in search for an alternative solution and with most probability will be re-transformed towards a national liberation discourse again. This is mostly due to the fact that the grass root support of Kurdish population, intellectuals, political activists and the leading cadres of the pro-Kurdish legal political parties have unwillingly supported the new paradigm of Democratic Nation, Democratic Republic and Democratic Confederalism, for the sake of reaching to a peaceful negotiated settlement between the PKK and the Turkish state. Democratic Confederalism and Democratic Autonomy projects have already been rejected by Turkish state. So regional nation-states especially Turkey and Iran then Syria and Iraq would only insist on assimilating and annihilating the Kurdish nation for forever in their agendas. This already has caused different voices in the grass roots level to the leading ranks of the PKK, for example the PKK executive committee member and the general commander of the HPG have stated many times that the PKK is not without an alternative. The alternative

that the HPG commander mentions is a national liberation discourse, one towards an independent Kurdistan.

It is important to mention that the reformation process of the PKK was not only related and based on internal factors, but the regional and international changes and developments had considerable impacts to these changes. The reformation process of the PKK started due to internal developments of Turkish state's President Özal's removal of the ban on Kurdish language and open dialogue about a federal solution to Kurdish question, as well as regional developments of the Palestinian and Israeli peace process, and the negotiations with the Humanitarian Intervention in Bashur Kurdistan and the establishment of the KRG. The International factors were the collapse of Soviet Union led socialist system and the failure of Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the consequent triumph of liberal democracy in the West and the removal of nation-states borders between the members of the EU states. The EU becomes a model of 21st century's democratic governance.

The transformation of the PKK was based on the international factors mainly connected to the West. Turkey was fully supported by the NATO members and Israel. Turkey put pressure on Syrian Baath regime to deport the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan from Syria with the strategic support of the US and Israel and the EU countries. When Öcalan arrived in Greece he was not allowed to enter and he redirected to Russia and then to Rome, Italy. All EU member states agreed with the US not to accept the PKK leader and founder as a political refugee. At the end by direct intervention of the US the PKK leader was handed over to the Turkish authorities. Öcalan did have opportunity to go to the Mountains of Kurdistan. He chose a way to solve the Kurdish question peacefully and democratically with the help of European Western countries.

For the first time on 16th of February according to Öcalan's prison writings and his conversations at the meeting with the HDP MPs the first official greeted him in Imrali prison was a representative of the CPT (Committee for Protection of Torture) from the EU. Öcalan explained that his handover was an international conspiracy against the will of Kurdistan National liberation led by the PKK and the people of Kurdistan; therefore, he intended to dismantle that conspiracy and transforming the PKK and formulating a new paradigm in order to keep the continuity of the struggle in the best possible way playing against the two main powers acting in the Middle East, the US and Russia. The formulation of the new paradigm of Democratic Liberation cost the movement a very heavy price, almost half of the leadership council of the PKK separated from the movement with around two thousand active guerrilla forces. When the PKK changed its name and its national liberation strategy, while declared no more fighting for an independent Kurdish nation-state but democratising Turkish states, an overwhelming majority of its supporter did not believe it could happen, because they had heard from their elders and also they lived and witnessed the civil and security apparatus of the Turkish state.

The events started in 2010 in North Africa countries in Tunis, Libya, Egypt and Yemen had their influence in Syria too. When the wind of change blew from North Africa to the Middle East and reached Syria, Rojava Kurdistan's political actors acted fast to build political institutions and armed forces and power on the basis of their grass root in Rojava Kurdistan. Regime changes took place in those countries –Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen except than Syria. The government and the state of Syria resisted against the uprisings, which was mostly done by Sunni Arab population supported by the AKP government. The AKP at the early 2011 provided the Muslim Brotherhoods Movement logistic support transforming the Syrian people's uprising into an armed clash. Iran and Russia supported Syrian regime economically and politically, while the US and EU with Turkey supported the opposition and

financed them and allowing them to build their bases in Turkey. When the Syrian Regime was nearly to be toppled it invited Russia to help militarily. Syrian uprising in the Centre of the Middle East became a quagmire, which gave birth to too many jihadists belonging to Al-Qaida and dependent armed groups supported by effectively by the NATO member Turkey. Turkey became the main transport route of all jihadist factions around the world and from there easily moved into Syria joined to Al-Qaida's Syria branch Al-Nusra, or ISIS. All Jihadists declared Kurdish people, Assyrians and Armenians as non-believers who must be wiped off from the earth. Russia published satellite pictures of trucks that belonged to ISIS and Al-Nusra entering Turkey and Turkish officials were buying oil from them. Turkish journalist the daily Cumhuriyet production director Can Dündar for revealing those pictures how Turkish state was giving logistic help to ISIS and Al-Nusra by trucks accused as national traitor and left Turkey. So the Turkish state and the AKP government tried hard to show that it was in dialogue with the PKK, without changing constitution and officially recognising and defining Kurdish question, while on the other hand it was supporting all the jihadists and Muslim Brotherhood groups in Syria to overthrow the regime and stop any legal and constitutional guarantees to the Kurds in Rojava Kurdistan.

In that critical moment the PKK's sister party the PYD and the KRG supported factions under the umbrella of the ENKS acted fast promoting their underground national-democratic activities and established people's assemblies in all Rojava with the purpose to organise its self-defence force to protect the organisations against the attacks and threats of the Syrian regime as well as Al-Qaida related Jihadist groups. Rojava Kurdistan became the laboratory testimony for Öcalan's new paradigm for the implementation of democratic autonomy and the module of the KRG in Bashur. The PKK and the KRG to some degree came closer to each other and they established a committee of ten people, five from the KRG supported and five from the PKK supported politicians from Rojava Kurdistan as the Supreme Kurdish

Committee. As soon as the Kurdish Supreme Committee declared in Hewler, among the KRG President Mesut Barzani, the Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu visited Hewler and met the KRG President and the ENKS group. This visit by the Turkish foreign minister dismantled the Supreme Kurdish Committee, discontinuing its ability to function in Rojava Kurdistan.

When Öcalan entered Kobani city in Rojava Kurdistan between 1979 and 1998, within 20 years all the PKK leadership carried comprehensive work among communities in Rojava Kurdistan as a result almost ten thousand young men and women participated in the PKK's guerrilla war against the Turkish state in Bakur and around five thousands of them lost their life. Although the KDP-Iraq supported traditional Kurdish political parties' history goes back to 1950s, over time those parties divided into tens of different factions and lost their political and national impacts. But the PYD and its other associations were using the same ideology and philosophy of Öcalan in Rojava Kurdistan that the PKK was using in Bakur Kurdistan. In Bakur, the Turkish state was in control while in Rojava Kurdistan the Syrian state was too weak. The PYD, with considerable aid from the PKK counted on a considerable grass root to establish a democratic autonomous Kurdistan. The time changed not only those guerrillas from Rojava returned to Rojava but also this time young men and women from Bakur participated in Rojava Kurdistan's self-defence, and practised an autonomous Rojava Kurdistan in the forms of Cantonal system.

As mentioned above, the PKK supported a democratic political solution in Bakur Kurdistan and tried to push the state and government to grant democratic and constitutional guarantees. The ninth ceasefire was declared on 23rd March 2013 and continued for two and half years in order to reach a peaceful solution in Bakur and Turkey, but also to secure legal and political rights for the Kurds in Bakur and save ethnic and cultural entities in Rojava and

progression of Cantonal system. During two and half years the intention of the AKP government was to win the local, presidential and parliamentary elections and use the opportunity of the ceasefire stop fighting in Bakur and transferring the fight to Rojava Kurdistan and in the north Syria against the will of Rojava people through proxies of jihadist groups.

The Transformation of the PKK in implementing Democratic Liberation/Radical Democracy experiment in Bakur Kurdistan, for the time being, has failed. The AKP has, since 1st November 2015, entered an anti-democratic, ultra-nationalist and anti-Kurdish coalition and has removed almost all pro-Kurdish democratic legal political gains in Bakur Kurdistan. Even if the Turkish state and the AKP government for the time being started a peace process with the PKK at the end this is doomed to fail because the AKP and the Turkish state has lost its legitimate credibility is because the state and government in Turkey is not functioning through the rule of law but only by executive orders. A failed process in Bakur and Turkey cannot be repeated as an example. This process of democratic autonomy and radical democratic process is totally dead in Bakur Kurdistan and the transformation of national liberation to democratic liberation is also dead.

The process of formation of the PKK was successful in organising a party, mobilising a popular front and establishing a guerrilla army. The process of reformation was also successful by becoming an interlocutor to enter the dialogue to find a peaceful settlement for the Kurdish question and declaring that a federal solution could possibly negotiate. The transformation process was problematic, because the leader of the PKK was a prisoner under the control of Turkish state. During the transformation process, the PKK focused on indirectly supporting pro-Kurdish democratic political activities and supporting their participation in local elections, general national elections in Turkey. The transformation

process so far has failed and has not gained any significant changes in political spheres in Bakur Kurdistan. The Rojava experiment is the only possible exception to this, with the implementation of a radical democracy. Even though the process became successful in Rojava Kurdistan; it is not going to be similar to the draft of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan demanded in Bakur Kurdistan by the DTK but it is preparing for a federal solution. The Turkish state and the AKP government with ultra-nationalist coalition not only destroyed legitimate democratic political gains, but also the centre of two cities and ten towns of Bakur Kurdistan, affecting the lives of 1.5 million Kurds. The recent domestic, regional and international developments have and will have effective impacts on the PKK to move from transformation to retransformation.

Is it possible for the effects and impacts of Nationalism in Kurdistan to be wiped away in a short time, while being surrounded by nationalist nation-states from four sides?

The answer is simply not according to the evidences on the ground that the impacts of nationalism are even stronger than before. At its emergence the PKK was blaming all the existent Kurdish political parties and organisations as not being patriot nationalists enough to defend Kurdistan national liberation aiming an independent united and democratic Kurdistan state. Even it went further blaming them as collaborationists and reformists for defending an autonomous Kurdistan inside the borders of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Therefore the PKK built its ideological, political and philosophical approach on the theory of nation, national identity, national liberation and nationalism. These concepts as in the example of all other nations are embedded deeply in the culture, language, history and geography of Kurdistan. PKK emerged on the base of these concepts and ideas to liberate Kurdistan and the people

living in it. Therefore nationalism in the case of Kurdistan played as an ideology for freedom and independence and aiming national right to self-determination. The young energetic Ocalan from 1973 to 1983 in Turkey, then in Bakur Kurdistan and finally in Syria and Lebanon witnessed national and political developments as a result of this Ocalan made an agreement with the KDP-Iraq and they declared their alliance in July 1983. While the PKK blaming the KDP-Iraq as a primitive nationalist and reformist but because of close distance of Bakur and Bashur Kurdistan and the KDP-Iraq's presence all along those borders the PKK made an alliance. That alliance was welcomed by ordinary people of Kurdistan but it did not last longer and failed to an end in 1987.

Even the most developed capitalist liberal economies in the age globalization in the European Union the impact of nationalism is still evident, despite of customs union, single currency and removal of national borders' check. For Example in Scotland, Northern Ireland in the UK, and Catalonia, the Bask region in Spain, Northern Italy and Southern Italy etc. national questions still exist in the centre of Europe. The Brexit case is one of the most important cases related to the question nations and nationalism. If the EU with its all institutions was functioning well, why the United Kingdom asked for a referendum for the purpose of leaving or staying in the EU? Those parties and individuals who were working for leaving were nationalists who were against the supremacy of the EU institutions over the UK institutions ones. Therefore the question of nation, national identity and nationalism will continue until freedom, justice and equality overcome and practised worldwide.

The Soviet Union for seventy years claimed that the question of nations, national identity and nationalism were solved, however when the socialist system collapsed all the national questions surfaced and fifteen new states came into existence. The Soviet Union became a federation of federal ethnic, cultural and religious entities. The Middle East region

is a very complex region of ethnic and religious conflicts. At the heart of the Middle East is the Kurdish question with more than fifty million populations affecting four nation-states of Turks, Persian and Arabs. Kurdish nationalism will be developed and evolved despite the treatment from Turkish, Persian and Arab ethnic-nationalist states.

Kurdistan as geo-strategic and geo-political important place constitutes a bridge located at the centre of the Middle East, divided into four parts between Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The communities in Kurdistan find themselves under cultural, social, economic, political and national oppression. In Iraq to some degree the national, cultural, political, economic and social rights of ethnic, cultural and religious entities have been guaranteed in the new constitution, in Syria and Iran is still to be seen, but in Turkey definitely these rights are not guaranteed.

Despite the PKK has lowered its threshold from National Liberation to Democratic Liberation and has shown its good will in this regard, the region's nation-states did not accept its good will. Whatever is related to the Kurdish question is interpreted in Turkey as a threat to its national integrity and unity. The Turkish state has created a Kurd phobia and through that phobia has indoctrinated most of Turkish society against any national, social, cultural and political rights to the Kurds. Until this phobia exists nationalism will have its deep effects on the Kurdish nation, for this reason and the Kurdish question is the question of a nation and it needs to be solved internationally and according to national right to self-determination.

All the discourse and concepts developed during the transformation of the PKK, such as Democratic Republic, Democratic Nation, Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan and Democratic Confederal Kurdistan, has already been rejected by the nation states of the region mainly by Turkey. Turkey has not only rejected it, but has destroyed all related pro-Kurdish civil and political organisations. The Turkish state not only rejected democratic autonomy

and democratic confederalism in Turkey, but also it is preventing other regional states such as Iran, Iraq and Syria to negotiate such an agreement with the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement. So far this project has not produced any positive outcomes in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey. The PKK needs to re-transform its paradigm in Bakur Kurdistan. For Rojava it can be said that democratic autonomy has been upgraded to Democratic Federation of Northern Syria, which accommodates Rojava Cantons as territorial entities inside the federation. Therefore, the PKK in the process of retransformation needs to clearly define National Self-Determination and make clear-cut definitions of autonomy, federalism, confederalism and independence.

Even if the PKK at this stage does not aim to establish a state of Kurdistan with its current paradigm, eventually the practice of the regional states' actions against the will of peoples of Kurdistan necessarily push the PKK to choose the option of a state of Kurdistan. Considering all the process of formation, reformation and transformation the PKK has gone through, a state apparatus needed to organise and govern and this state can be called 'A Democratic State or a Democratic Confederal State of Kurdistan'.

'The concept of democratic autonomy refers to forms of non-sovereign self-government within the territorial framework of a sovereign state. The autonomous rule may or may not be territorial, but it always eschews modern political sovereignty and its characteristic institutional form for strategic or political-moral considerations. In the context of Kurdistan, too the concept of democratic autonomy, elaborated in writings of Abdullah Öcalan, essentially signifies a quest for self-government within the legal-political framework of sovereign states ruling parts of a divided territory. The institutional structure and socio-economic processes and practices of the autonomous government, it is contended, are

grounded in a democratic culture characterized by communal participation in the process of policy and decision-making, gender equality and care for community and environment’

(Abbas Vali:

https://www.academia.edu/35165330/The_Crisis_of_Sovereignty_and_the_Kurdish_Quest_f_or_Democratic_Autonomy_in_Syria_A_Theoretical_Outline_1)

The sovereign state of the Turkish republic bases its existence on the denial of all other ethnic, cultural and national entities. It has committed genocides against Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds in the past and today it is committing cultural and physical genocide against what is the last impasse against its ethnic nationalist ideology, the Kurdistan National Liberation Movement. Although the PKK has been reformed and transformed on the base of good will and coexistence of different national, ethnic, cultural and religious pluralism with the intent of democratizing Turkish political system, the realities on the ground have shown that Turkish political system continues its ethnic nationalist ideology and does not accept any national and political rights.

If Syria does not constitutionally accept the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria, whose funding pillars are the Rojava Cantons, then the PKK would definitely and inevitably have to search for a new paradigm of Re-transformation for A Democratic Confederal State of Kurdistan.

General Conclusion

This study concludes that the PKK, with all its organisational and political shortcomings during its formation, reformation and transformation processes was able to resist the Turkish states assimilationist denial policies and begin a dialogue and negotiations with the Turkish state. The Turkish state continues to deny and reject the existence of Kurdistan, and the Kurdish issue within the borders of Turkey. It was the PKK led struggle that put pressure on the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayip Erdogan within the Turkish Parliament to acknowledge the existence of the Kurdish question within Turkey, as well as its east and south-eastern regions known as Kurdistan at the establishment of the Turkish republic.

National liberation discourse was one the most important topics of the political debates of 1970s in Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan, which attracted those young, energetic, educated Kurdish students at the universities of Ankara and Istanbul, evaluate and analyse the political and national situation of the Kurds. Previous to the emergence of the radical Kurdistan revolutionist group, most of the Kurdish nationalist organisations were also debating National Liberation discourse with Turkish leftist organisations. However, they failed to implement the plans and practicalities necessary. Debates continued and concentrated on a National liberation Movement for Kurdistan, and in particular, in Bakur Kurdistan the need became a practical demand. The questions arose among those young, energetic, talented and radical university students who sacrifice all of their private and personal belongings for the betterment of all. The PKK was established by those students, and from the debates of that time, became a national-political-military movement mobilizing millions to stand and defend their national, political and cultural rights in Bakur Kurdistan, which later came to influence the other three parts of Kurdistan too.

The PKK encountered a very harsh response from its birth by the Turkish state as well as Turkish left, Turkish ultra-nationalists, Turkish Islamists, Kurdish nationalist organisations and Kurdish tribal leaders. The reasons were too many, the most obvious ones were as follows: the PKK was arguing its ideological and theoretical paradigm that Kurdistan is a country and that the people of Kurdistan are a nation. Kurdistan and the Kurdish nation have been divided into four parts between four colonialist states. While these four states are not allowing any legal and constitutional rights, and they do not recognise the Kurds and Kurdistan as a nation and as a country the only way left is to organise Kurdistan national liberation movement for national right to self-determination. This strategic aim will only be possible to organise a party, a popular front and a guerrilla army through the Prolonged Popular War strategy to separate Kurdistan from colonialists. For this purpose those who admit to Kurdistan National Liberation should not think any private and personal life, only become professional full-time revolutionary militants. This was a bold line that separated the PKK from all other Turkish and Kurdish leftist and nationalist organisations and parties at its formation.

The PKK in its interpretation of the world, the region and the history of Kurdistan boldly pressed on the centrality of the Kurdish question in the equation of the power balance and peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. Iran with a consistent historical long tradition of the statehood, Turkey with the same experience of the Seljuk's, Ottomans and the new republic of Turkey both have used extensive use of force against the will of Kurdish peoples' statehood. New states of Iraq and Syria, since their independence from the mandate regimes, followed exactly what the Turkish and Iran states were implementing. The PKK in its founding Manifesto boldly pressed on the importance and demand for a state of independent, united and democratic Kurdistan. To achieve that demand was a very hard and costly struggle in its organisation.

As it emerged in the highly controversial politically fragile moment in International, regional and domestic situations, the PKK defined itself as a part of national liberation movements of the anti-colonialism, which would be supported by international labour movements in the developed countries and the Socialist System led by Soviet Union in the world. The factors and conditions that the PKK (during its transformation period) had based its new paradigm for a Kurdistan revolution on were suddenly faced with dramatic changes: Soviet Union and the world socialist system collapsed, Marxist-Leninist doctrine failed to secure socialism, and the Western Liberal democracies became the winners. In the region of the Middle East, Israel and the Palestinians entered into negotiating the peace, and Bashur Kurdistan became a protected place by the UN and the US, where a new Kurdish entity of the KRG was born. The KRG's two main leaders of the PUK and KDP were invited to presidential palace of Turkey. President of Turkey Turgut Özal talked about negotiating even a federal solution to Kurdish question, and most importantly as if in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey a little window of legal-democratic-political activities occurred. These domestic, regional and international changes put impacts on the PKK to make reformations in its ideological, political and national programme.

These international, regional and domestic changes had impacts on the PKK to adapt its ideological and political demands with the spirit of the time. Indirectly with the mediation of late Jalal Talabani, the PKK began negotiating peace with the Turkish state and announced its first ceasefire exactly twenty years after the existence of those indirect negotiations cost the life of Turgut Özal. The second and third ceasefires resulted in the imprisonment of Abdullah Öcalan. In prison, Öcalan concentrated on radical democratic politics, taking examples of the UK, Switzerland, Spain and the EU, even the US. Finally the paradigm change transformation shifted towards Murray Bookchin's radical democracy or Municipalism to organise society without questioning national borders of the state in Turkey.

According to Öcalan's lawyers as mentioned in the earlier chapters, he had long debates with the security and intelligent apparatus of Turkish state on the case of transforming the PKK, and came to conclude that there could be a general amnesty and some cultural and political rights could be given. So, the PKK transformed all the fundamental principles it stood for. From 1999 to 2009 the PKK announced four more ceasefires in order to give an opportunity for a peaceful democratic solution. The Turkish state not only rejected a democratic solution, but also detained more than ten thousand legal political activists and imprisoned them.

From 2009 to 2015 a further three ceasefires were announced, and while the Turkish state showed sincerity in these peace dialogues, the purpose of the state and the AKP government was to win the March 2014 local, August 2014 presidential and June 2015 parliamentary elections. The PKK and the AKP government engaged a dialogue via mediation of the HDP, which continued from January 2013 to July 2015. Within two and half years the PKK brought down Kurdistan National Liberation to the minimum, demanding democratic changes, which they were announced on 28th February 2015 in the Dolmabahçe Castle. Those demands were listed as ten titles:

- 1- Definition of democratic and content.
- 2- Definition of national and local dimensions of democratic resolution.
- 3- Legal and democratic safeguards for free citizenship.
- 4- Headings for relationship between democratic politics and the state and the society and for its institutionalization.
- 5- The social-economic dimensions of the process of resolution.
- 6- Addressing the relationship between democracy and security in the process of resolution in a manner that will protect public order and freedoms.
- 7- Safeguards for women and solutions for their legal, cultural and ecological problems.
- 8- The development of a pluralist democratic understanding recognising the concept of identity and its definition.

- 9- The democratic definition of a democratic republic, joint homeland and people, and the introduction of legal and constitutional safeguards within a pluralist, democratic system.
- 10- A new constitution that aims to embed all these democratic transformations (Basaran 2017: pp.135).

Three HDP MP representatives (Sirri Surreya Onder, Idris Baluken and Pervin Buldan) and three AKP government MPs officials (Yalçın Akdoğan, Mahir Onal and Efan Ala), with the presence of the state official Mehmet Dervisoglu who attended all talks between Öcalan and the HDP meetings in Imrali prison, announced these ten points as the topics to be negotiated with the monitoring committee in Imrali, whereby the PKK would then have an extraordinary congress to declare the end of the armed struggle in a live TV programme on 28th February. As soon as the live declaration ended, the AKP government spokesman Bulent Arinc declared that his government was committed to sending a monitoring committee to Imrali to complete the solution/peace process. The problem was the Turkish state, and the AKP government were not letting either an international or national monitoring committee to take part, because they did not want to have international involvement and international mediation.

The Turkish state and the AKP government not only declined an international monitoring committee to observe the progress, but also did not permit even an internal monitoring committee too. After the declaration of the ten points, Turkish president Recep Tayip Erdogan immediately rejected these and declared that he was waiting for that moment for long time ago. The AKP government, under leadership of Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, was keen to continue the process of dialogue and to negotiate it. But on 21st of March 2015, when Erdogan returned from Ukraine, he declared that there was no Kurdish question and that he was against such a deal to negotiate with terrorists in Turkey. Erdogan took a firm stand against the HDP and the PKK during the national parliamentary election

campaign of 7th June 2015. The results of elections were that the AKP lost overall majority and was not able to get vote of confidence. The HDP won Eighty MPs. And so, the so-called peace process collapsed. The AKP announced on the 1st November a call for renewing the elections date. The AKP entered to an anti-Kurdish coalition of ultra-nationalists, the deep state and Islamists.

Since eighteen years of officially declaring a democratic liberation process, the Turkish state has shown that it would not be able to enter a democratic process, because within a democratic environment, democratic dynamics are the winners. Therefore the autocratic nation-states could only be fuelled by using force against democratic dynamics. Even if the PKK and the pro-Kurdish democratic-legal-political movement accepted all of the demands of the state once again, the state will not negotiate any political settlements, similar to Northern Ireland or similar to the one in Scotland. The above mentioned Ten Points were simply showing that the PKK and pro-Kurdish legal political parties and civil organisations in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey were ready to compromise on minimum demands for the sake of peace, democratisation and solving Kurdish question. Even in the Ten Points nothing was mentioned about the issue of Kurds and Kurdistan other than the democratisation of Turkey, though the Turkish state and the AKP government rejected firmly.

While the Kurdish question has been transformed beyond a local question of Turkey's Democratisation, it is a question of a nation's universal national right to self-determination and it has been an international question related to four nation-states of the Middle East. Any democratic peaceful solutions to the question of the Kurds and Kurdistan, which has become an international question, could be negotiated internationally with the mediation of the UN, EU and related global organisations. It is not a local question of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria any more, it has transcended far beyond the borders of the Middle East. But also in terms of actors the PKK has to accommodate all pro-Kurdish political parties and pro-Kurdish legal

and cultural organisations in any future peace talks and negotiation. As this study has argued throughout, the Kurdish question is the mother of all national, ethnic, political and cultural questions of the Middle East. The solution of the Kurdish national question will open the gate of democratisation of the Middle East.

The national, political, cultural and social diversity and ill treatment of the Kurds at a status of less than slaves has caused the emergence of uprisings, rebellions and insurgencies in Kurdistan. As it has been shown in Chapter three, from 1806 up to 1970s all of the Kurdish uprisings had failed. These failures and the four states' national, political, economic, cultural and social colonisation policies caused the emergence of the last 29th radical-revolutionary rebellion led by the PKK. If Kurdish nationalist parties prior to the PKK had been able to secure the national and political rights of communities of Kurdistan, the PKK would have not emerged. A failed Kurdish primordial nationalism in 19th and at three quarters of 20th century caused the radical-revolutionary emergence of the PKK. Ideationally and virtually the PKK became the most secular, modern, patriot and revolutionary party in comparison to all prior Kurdish nationalist parties. Gradually it became the dominant party ideologically and politically in 1990s. Following the years of 1990s, it became a hegemonic party in Bakur and Rojava Kurdistan, and in it began in Rojhilat challenging the KDP-Iran and the Komala organisations too. The success of the PKK was hidden in its national, political and ideological defence of Kurdistan national liberation, strategic aim towards an independent Kurdistan state, and in its organisational practice that showed the masses what it was saying in theory was also being implemented in practice. Hence it was able to mobilise the masses in home and in the Diaspora.

The KDP's tradition led by the Barzani family in the last half of the 20th century, and still in the first and second decades of 21st century, has prevented any radical democratic changes in all parts of Kurdistan. In Bashur from 1962 to 66, primordial-nationalist tribalism

prevented any radical-democratic initiative to occur to lead the rebellion. It also prevented the radical-revolutionary fraction of the Rojhilat KDP too. In Bakur and Rojava radical-revolutionary initiatives had outcomes similar to Bashur and Rojhilat, but they were prevented by the KDP-Iraq in the first instance, which had been the hegemonic political power in Kurdistan from Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad until the failure of 1975.

The PKK shattered that taboo of the KDPs tradition, starting in Bakur and Rojava, then in Rojhilat, and then to some extent in Bashur, too. As a modernist movement taking some ethno-symbolic elements of nationalism in the creation of a party, popular front, guerrilla army, and mobilizing the people of Kurdistan (both at the home and within the diasporas establishment of cultural and diplomatic centres in most of European countries), it broke the taboo of the four colonialist states denial policies. That national, political and international performance of the PKK at the formation stage made the organisation the dominant and hegemonic power by the end of 1990. As it was becoming the most hegemonic actor of defending the KNLM, it could have had opened the gate of democratic politics between Kurdish political parties in the Diasporas. Although the other Kurdish political parties were blaming the PKK for not being democratic, as a national liberation movement the PKK had to accommodate them.

With the national and international political changes, the PKK also evolved to another stage of the reformation. At this stage, as explored in Chapter five, as a national and political actor with a considerable popular support and guerrilla army, it entered into a strategic and tactical engagement to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the Turkish state. It reformed its ideological and political manifesto. The issue, as always, was that the Turkish state did not make any strategic changes in its official ethnic-Turkish state policies. For democratization of Turkey and the solution of the Kurdish question, the PKK leader did not move to the mountains of Kurdistan but to Europe. This was because there was a sense that Europe was to

become the centre of liberal democracy, where it would help the process of democratization to uncover a just solution to the Kurdish question. What happened was that the PKK leader was not welcomed in Europe and was handed over to the Turkish state instead. It was the major mistake that the PKK organisation, and its leader, committed. In the PKK's history the first major mistake was after the detention of Sahin Dönmez in Elazig in May 1979; the PKK did not protect Mazlum Dogan, Hayri Durmus, Ferhat Kurtay, and Akif Yilmaz alongside hundreds of future leaders of Kurdistan national liberation. The second major mistake was not moving to the mountains of Kurdistan, or when Ocalan was in Italy he should have stayed in Italy.

Analysing the paradigm change and transformation, the PKK focused on non-violent civil disobedience movements around the world during its five years ceasefires – how could they put pressure on Turkish state to accommodate pro-Kurdish democratic opposition and reach a peaceful settlement in the Kurdish question? For the sake of a peaceful settlement, and removing the PKK from the list of terrorist organisations, it changed its name its organisational structure and its national liberation strategy. But all these changes did not have any positive response neither from European Union nor from the Turkish state. The new names of the organisation, KADEK and then Kongra Gel, were also put in the proscribed terrorist organisations list. In the end it become obvious that there was no need for that much comprehensive change as the PKK had implemented; this was the third major mistake of the organisation of the PKK. A prisoner is never free; a leader such as Öcalan during his meetings with his lawyers sent messages to the PKK for changes, but the organisation should have had the experience to not implement the demands or the commands of its imprisoned leader in as much as he asked for, but gradually. The PKK transformed its ideology, its strategic and tactical manifesto and even changed its name too. Although the transformation

safeguarded the organisation from a failure similar to the one in 1975 in Bashur, it did not have to implement all those changes that were not necessary.

This transformation process was in parallel with the AKP governance and acceptance of Turkey's EU membership candidacy. The pro-Kurdish political movement flourished in Bakur Kurdistan and Turkey, they won hundreds of Municipalities and entered the parliament in Turkey. The PKK, one after another, declared ceasefires and engaged in dialogue with the Turkish state by mediation of an international organisation for the solution of the Kurdish question by non-violent means. What the PKK and the pro-Kurdish political-democratic movement understood from the dialogue with the Turkish state was a similar solution to Scotland and the UK, or a Cantonal system of Switzerland. This understanding was not matched with the one in mind of the Turkish state. That process was called the Oslo process, which failed when the AKP won overall majority in The 11th June 2011 general parliamentary elections.

Chapter seven explored how such a transformation and paradigm change was a process of organising a civil society and organising a peaceful democratic social movement based on municipal councillors to make a different governing from the one run by the state. However, as soon as the state became aware of that, the process became crippled and thousands of elected and legal political activists were imprisoned. While the democratic political pro-Kurdish movement crippled in the urban areas of Bakur Kurdistan, the PKK was in an intensive war with the TAF in the rural areas up to the end of 2012.

From 3rd January 2013 to 24th of July 2015 the AKP government initiated the process called the solution, or peace process. After two years of engagement and meetings by mediation of the HDP between the AKP government and the PKK, both parties had finally produced ten point negotiating titles. The AKP government and the state understood how to win the general parliamentary election and fully decommission the PKK, while the PKK and

the HDP were dreaming about how to democratize Turkey through that dialogue and negotiations. As soon as the election campaign of 7th June 2015 was over, and the AKP lost overwhelming majority, the solution/peace process failed and the most intensive war between the PKK and all Turkish security and Armed forces began and continues up to now.

Once again, almost all of the pro-Kurdish political party members of the HDP and DBP, activists, MPs, co-chairs, and elected co-mayors and councillors have been imprisoned. The process of achieving a civil society and democratic autonomous Kurdistan totally failed. The Turkish state and the AKP government in an ultra-nationalist coalition have shown that it has started a process similar to the Armenian Genocide in 1915.

These events, as explored in Chapter 8, have resulted in a costly human, material and environmental loss, especially after the failure of this final solution/peace process. From 1984 to 1999 the PKK fought for an independent, united and democratic Kurdistan, which was a national liberation strategy. The Turkish state officially declared that they could negotiate federalism. When the PKK reformed the national liberation to federalism, the state began discussions with Öcalan regarding autonomy. When the PKK and Öcalan talked about autonomy, the Turkish state suggested the democratisation of Turkey. Nowadays, the PKK begins discussions about the democratisation of Turkey, and the Turkish state and the AKP government enters an ultra-nationalist coalition aimed the annihilation of the PKK and at destroying the pro-Kurdish legal democratic political movement.

Finally the process of implementing Democratic liberation in order to establish Democratic Autonomy in Bakur Kurdistan and the process of democratic republic, democratic nation and Democratic Confederalism has failed. If the process of Democratic Federation of Northern Syria becomes successful, and the YPG and YPJ under the banner of Democratic Syrian Forces and their alliance continues with the US led international anti-ISIS coalition, then a huge pressure would be on Turkey. Turkey would only come to terms of

negotiating peace with the Kurdistan National Liberation/Freedom Movement if it gained international recognition. The PKK has to understand that the principles and the reasons that caused its emergence are still there and the Turkish state mentality has not changed. The only ways left is reformulating its paradigm towards the National Right to Self-Determination and a Kurdistan centred paradigm. During its emergence the PKK thought that eventually the Soviet Union led Socialist camp would support the Kurdistan National Liberation. It did not happen and it failed as a system, but today, the US led international coalition is supporting Bashur and Rojava Kurdistan. The paradigm change and transformation of the PKK will continue in the form of retransformation, and presumably the US led coalition will support Bashur and Rojava Kurdistan and eventually Rojhilat and Bakur Kurdistan too. Although the transformation of the PKK was politically and nationally criticised firmly, nevertheless the PKK and all its associations overcame the odds and kept their organisational strength and brought Kurdish question to the table of the super powers of the world. As time changes, the transformation process will evolve to retransformation, all the while, also strengthening its relations with the US, the UK and EU, due to the international character of the Kurdish Question, and its significance within the Middle East.

Bibliography

- Abramowitz, Morton (ed) (2000): *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, New York: The Century Foundation Press.
- Ahmad, Kamal Madhar (1994): *Kurdistan During the First World War*. London: Saqi books.
- Ahmed, M. A. Mohammed and Gunter, Michael (ed.) (2007): *The Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism*. Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers Inc.
- Allsopp, Harriet (2015): *The Kurds of Syria: Political Parties an Identity in the Middle East*, London and New York: I. B. TAURIS.
- Anderson, Benedict (1983): *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso Editions and New Left Books.
- Armstrong, John (1982): *Nations before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Arnason, Johann (1990): 'Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity', in Featherstone (1990, 207-36).
- Badiou, Alain (2012): *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, London and New York: Verso.
- Barkey, Henry J. and Fuller Graham E. (1998): *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.
- Barth, Fredrick (ed.) (1969): *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Barzani, Massoud (2003): *Mustafa Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement*, New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Basaran, Ezgi (2017): *Frontline Turkey: The Conflict at the Heart of the Middle East*, London: I.B.Tauris.
- Bass, Gary J (2008): *Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf
- Bayik, Cemil –Heval Cuma – (1998): *Mejuy Parti Krekarani Kurdistan (The History of Kurdistan Workers' Party)*, Qandil: The PKK Educational Centre's publishing.
- Beşikçi, Ismail (2004) *International Colony Kurdistan*, Reading, London: Parvana, Taderon Press.

- Bendix, Reinhard (1966): *Nation-Building and Citizenship*, New York: John Wiley.
- Bhabha, Homi (ed.) (1990): *Nation and Narration*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Birand, Mehmet Ali (1992): *Apo ve PKK (Apo and the PKK)*, Eight Edition, Istanbul: Milliyet Yayinlari.
- Birch, Anthony (1989): *Nationalism and National Integration*, London: Unwin Hyman.
- Boyce, George (1985): *Nationalism in Ireland*, Croom: Helm.
- Brand, Jack (1978): *The Scottish National Movement*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Breuilly, John (1982): *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Brubaker, Rogers (1996): *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brubaker, Rogers (2004) *Ethnicity without Groups*, Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press.
- Bruinessen, Martin Van (1992): *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political structure of Kurdistan*. London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.
- Bryman, Alan (2008): *Social Research Method*, Third Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bulloch, John and Harvey Morris (1992): *No Friends But the Mountains: The Tragic History of the Kurds*. London: Viking.
- Chaliand, Gerard (ed.) (1993): *A People Without A Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan*, London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Chaliand, Gerard (1994): *The Kurdish Tragedy*, London: Zed Books.
- Casier, Marlies & Jongerden, Joost (ed.) (2011): *Nationalisms and Politics in Turkey: Political Islam, Kemalism and the Kurdish issue*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Caspersen, Nina & Stansfield, Gareth (ed) 2011: *Unrecognised States in the International System*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Cemal, Hasan (2007): *Kürtler (The Kurds)*, Eighteenth Edition, Istanbul: Dogan Kitap.
- Cemal, Hasan (2011): *Kürt Sorununa Yeni Bakış: Barişa Emanet Olun (A New Look at the Kurdish Question: Be Entrusted to Peace)*, Istanbul: Everest Yayinlari.
- Cemal, Hasan (2014): *Çözüm Sürecinde Kürdistan Günlükleri (Kurdistan Dairy During the Solution Process)*, Istanbul: Everest Yayinlari.

- Charountaki, Marianna (2011): *The Kurds and U.S. Foreign Policy: International relations in the Middle East since 1945*, London, New York: Routledge.
- Çandar, Cengiz (2012): *Mesopotamya Ekspresi: Bir Tarih Yolculugu, Turkiye, Kurtler, Ortadogu ve Bati (Mesopotamian Express: A Journey to History, Turkey, the Kurds, the Middle East and the West)*, Istanbul: İletişim.
- Democratic Society Congress (2011): *Draft Submission for a Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan*, Amed: DTK Pamphlet.
- Dogan, Mazlum (2011): *Toplu Yazilar (Collective Writings)*, Neuss: Mesopotamia Publishing.
- Dündar, Can (2012): *Birand: Bir Ömür, Ardına Bakmadan...(Birand: An Age, Without Looking Backward...)* Istanbul: Can.
- Dunne, T. Kurki, M. Smith, S (ed.) (2010): *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Second Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eagleton JR, William (1963): *The Kurdish Republic of 1946*. London, New York & Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Entessar, Nader (1992): *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*. Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Entessar, Nader (2010) *Kurdish Politics in the Middle East*, Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, and Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Gellner, Ernest (1983): *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Basil; Blackwell.
- Giddens, Anthony (1985): *The Nation-State and Violence*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Guibernau, Montserrat (1996): *Nationalisms: The Nation State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Guibernau, Montserrat (1999): *Nations Without States: Political Communities in a Global Age*. Malden & Oxford: Polity Press.
- Gürbey, Gulistan (1996) The Development of the Kurdish Nationalism Movement in Turkey since the 1980s, in *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, Robert Olson, ed., Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996, pp. 9-37.
- Harvie, Christopher (1998): *Scotland & Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics 1707 to the Present*. Third Edition. London & New York: Routledge.
- Hastings, A (1997): *The Construction of Nationhood*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hearn, Jonathan (2006): *Rethinking Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hechter, Michael (1987): 'Nationalism as group solidarity', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 10, 4, 415-26.

- Hinsley, F. H. (1973): *Nationalism and International System*, London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Hobsbawn, Eric (1990): *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hoffman, John & Graham, Paul. (2009): *Introduction to Political Theory*, Second Edition, Harlow, and Pearson Longman.
- Hutchinson, J. & Smith, A (1994): *Nationalism*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York.
- Gunes, Cengiz (2012): *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey: From Protest to Resistance*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Gunter, Michael M. (2004): *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds*. Lanham, Maryland & Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Gunter, Michael M. (2008): *The Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey*. New York & Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gunter, Michael M. (2014): *Out of Nowhere: The Kurds of Syria in Peace and War*, London: Hurst & Company.
- Izady, Mehrdad (1992): *The Kurds: A Concise Handbook*. USA: Taylor & Francis Inc.
- Jabar, Faleh A & Dawod, Hosham (2006): *The Kurds: Nationalism and Politics* (London, San Francisco, Beirut: Saqi.
- Jacoby, Tim and Özerdem, Alpaslan (2013): *Peace in Turkey: The Question of Human Security and Conflict Transformation*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Plymouth UK: Lexington Books.
- Jongerden, Joost and Akkaya, Ahmet Hamdi (2012): 'The Kurdistan Workers' Party and a New Left in Turkey: An Analysis of the Revolutionary Movement in Turkey through the PKK's Memorial Text on Haki Karer', *European journal of Turkish Studies*, 14.
- Jongerden, Joost and Akkaya, Ahmed Hamdi (2013): 'Democratic Confederalism as a Kurdish Spring: the PKK and the quest for radical democracy' in Mohammed Ahmet and Michael Gunter (eds), *The Kurdish Spring: Geopolitical Changes and the Kurds*, Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda.
- Jwaideh, Wadie (2006): *Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, USA.
- Kalkan, Duran (2006): *Kurdistan'da Demokratik Siyasetin Rolu Üzerine (About the Role of Democratic Politics in Kurdistan)*, Weşanên Serxwebun 141.
- Kapmaz, Cengiz (2010): *Öcalan'in İmralı Günleri (Öcalan's İmralı Days)*, Istanbul: İthaki.

- Karasu, Mustafa (2009): *Radikal Demokrasi (Radical Democracy)*, Neuss: Weşanên Mesopotamya.
- Karayilan, Murat (2012): *Bir Savaşın Anatomisi: Kurdistan'da Askeri Çizgi (The Anatomy of a War: Military Doctrine in Kurdistan)*, Fourth Edition, Neuss: Mesopotamia Publishing House.
- Kaveh, Said (1996): *Looking Back in Time: Recapture Those Memories of Involvement with the KDP-Iran*, ISBN, 91 – 630 – 4077 – 8.
- Kedourie, Elie (1994): *Nationalism*. Fourth Expanded Edition. Oxford UK & Cambridge US: Blackwell.
- Khizri, Mohammad (2003): *Lapereyek Le Tekoshan û Jolanewey Salekani 42-47 – (1963- 68) Hizbi Demokrati Kurdistan (A Page from the KDP-Iran Struggle of 1963 – 68)*, Sweden: ISBN91-974681-0-X.
- Kirisçi, K. Winrow, Gareth M (1997): *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict*, London, Portland: Frank Cass.
- Klein, Janet (2011): *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Knapp, Michael. Flach, Anja & Ayboga, Ercan (2016): *Revolution in Rojava: Democratic Autonomy and Women's Liberation in Syrian Kurdistan*, London: Pluto Press.
- Kreyenbroek, P.G and S. Sperl (1992): *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Kreyenbroek, P & Allison, C (Ed) (1996): *Kurdish Culture and Identity*, London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.
- Laclau, Ernesto & Mouffe, Chantal (2001): *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, Second Edition, London and New York: VERSO.
- Laizer, Sheri (1996): *Martyrs, Traitors and Patriots: Kurdistan After the Gulf War*. London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.
- Lowe, Robert & Stansfield, Gareth (2010): *The Kurdish Policy Imperative*. London: Chatham House.
- Landman, Todd (2003): *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*. Second Edition, London: Routledge.
- Lipson, Leslie (1964): *The Democratic Civilisation*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Manafy, A (2004): *The Kurdish Political struggle in Iran, Iraq and Turkey: A Critical Analysis*, Oxford, And Lanham: University Press of America.
- Marsh, D., Stoker, G. (ed.) (2010): *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Third edition, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Marcus, Aliza (2009): *Blood and Belief; The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence*, New York and London: New York University Press.
- Mayall, James (1990): *Nationalism and International Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McDowall, David (1999): *Modern Syria: From Ottoman Rule to Pivotal Role in the Middle East*. Brighton: Sussex academic Press.
- MacDonald, Charles G & O'Leary Carole A (Ed) (2007): *Kurdish Identity: Human Rights and Political Status*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- McDowall, David (2000): *A Modern History of the Kurds*. London: I.B.Tauris.
- McDowall, David (1992): *The Kurds: A Nation Denied*. London: Minority Rights Publications.
- McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald (ed.) (1996): *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures, and Cultural Framings*, New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meho, Lokman I (2004): *The Kurdish Question in U.S. Foreign Policy: A Documentary Sourcebook*, Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger.
- Meiselas, Susan (2007): *Kurdistan: In the Shadow of History*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Melluci, Alberto (1988): 'Getting involved: Identity and Mobilization in Social Movements', *International Social Movement Research 1*, Greenwich: JAI Press, pp.329-348.
- Natali, Denise (2005): *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Nawshirwan, Mustafa (2011): *Karesati Hekkari (The Hakkari Catastrophe)*, Fourth Edition, Suliamania: Martyr Jamal Ali Bapir Publishing House.
- Oberschall, Anthony (1973) *Social Conflict and Social Movements*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Olson, Robert (1989): *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880-1925*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Olson, Robert (ed) (1996): *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Olson, Robert (2001) *Turkey's Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel and Russia, 1991-2000: the Kurdish and Islamist Questions*, Costa Mesa California: Mazda Publishers.
- O'Shea, Maria T. (2004): *Trapped Between the Map and Reality: Geography and Perceptions of Kurdistan*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Ozkirimli, Umut (2010): *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Second Edition, London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Özcan, Ali Kemal (2006): *Turkey's Kurds: A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan*, London and New York: Routledge.

Öcalan, Abdullah (1992): *Kurdistan Devriminin yolu – Manifesto – (the Path of Kurdistan Revolution – Manifesto -*, Fourth Edition, Köln: Weşanen Serxwebun (Independence Publishing).

Öcalan, Abdullah, (1999): *Declaration of the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*, London: Mesopotamian Publishers.

Öcalan, Abdullah (2011): *Prison Writings: The PKK and the Kurdish Question in the 21st Century*, London: Transmedia Publishing Ltd.

Öcalan, Abdullah (2012): *Prison Writings III: The Road Map to Negotiations*, Cologne: International Initiative Edition.

Öcalan, Abdullah (2013): *Liberating Life: Woman's Revolution*, Cologne: International Initiative Edition.

Öcalan, Abdullah (2015): *Manifesto for a Democratic Civilization – Volume I –* Porsgrunn – Norway: New Compass Press.

Öcalan, Abdullah (2015): *Demokratik Kurtuluş ve Özgür Yaşamı İnşa: Imrali Notlari (Democratic Liberation and Building Free Life: Imrali Notes)*, Neuss: Weşanên Mezopotamya.

Pecora, Vincent P. (Ed.) *Nations and Identities*, Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publisher.

Pelletiere, Stephen C. (1984): *The Kurds: An Unstable Element in the Gulf*. Boulder & London: Westview Press.

Phillips, David L. (2015): *The Kurdish Spring: A New Map of the Middle East*, New Brunswick (U.S.A) and London (U.K): Transaction Publishers.

Perrot, Georges (2000) *Kurdên Haymanyê (Haymana's Kurds translated by Dr. Fawaz Husên)*. Stockholm: Apec Förlag.

Pope, Nicole & Pope, Hugh (2011): *Turkey Unveiled: A History of Modern Turkey*, New York and London: Overlook Duckworth.

Romano, David (2006) *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Puri, Jyoti (2004): *Encountering Nationalism*, Malden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.

Shapira, A., Stern, Yedida Z. and Yakobson, A. (ed.) (2013): *Nationalism and Binationalism: The Perils of Perfect Structures*. Volume 1. Brighton, Portland and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press.

Smith, Anthony D. (1971): *Theories of Nationalism*, London: Duckworth, and New York: Harper and Row.

- Smith, Anthony D. (ed.) (1976): *Nationalist Movements*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1979): *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Martin Robertson.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1991): *National Identity*. London & New York: Penguin Books.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1995): *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1999): *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Anthony D. (2001): *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology and History*. Malden & Cambridge: Polity.
- Spencer, Philip & Wollman, Howard (ed.) (2002): *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Stansfield, Gareth & Shareef, Mohammed (2017): *The Kurdish Question Revisited*, London: Hurst & Company.
- Stansfield, Gareth R V (2003): *Iraqi Kurdistan: Political Development and Emergent Democracy*, London, New York: Routledge Curzon.
- Tahiri, Hussein (2007): *The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State*, California: Mazda Publishers, Inc.
- Tan, Altan (2012): *Kürt Sorunu: Ya Tam Kardeslik, Ya Hep Birlikte Kölelik (Kurdish Questin: Either Equal Brotherhood Or Altogether Be Slaves)*, Istanbul: TIMAS.
- TATORT Kurdistan (2013): *Democratic Autonomy in North Kurdistan: The Council Movement, Gender Liberation and Ecology in Practice – A Reconnaissance Into South Eastern Turkey*, Porsgrunn-Norway: New Compass Press.
- Tejel, Jordi (2009): *Syria's Kurds: History, Politics and Society*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Tilly, Charles (1978) *From Mobilization to Revolution*, New York: Random House.
- Tilly, Charles and Lesley Wood J. (July, 2009): *Social Movements 1768-2008*, Paperback, Second Edition.
- Tunç, Aziz (2011): *Maraş Kiyimi: Tarihsel Arka Planı ve Anatomisi (The Maraş Genocide: The Anatomy and its Historical Background)*. Second Edition, Istanbul: Belge Yayinlari.
- Watts, Nicole F (2010) *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey*, University of Washington Press: Seattle.
- Weiss, Thomas G (2007): *Humanitarian Intervention*, Cambridge and Malden: Polity.
- Westwood, Sally & Phizacklea, Annie (ed.) (2000): *Trans-Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging*. London, New York: Routledge.

Wheeler, Nicholas J (2000): *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

White, Paul J (2000): *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernisers? The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey*, London, New York: Zed Books.

White, Paul (2015): *The PKK: Coming Down From The Mountains*, London: Zed Books.

Yildiz, Kerim (2005): *The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People*, London, New York: Pluto Press in Association with Kurdish Human Rights Project,

Yildiz, Kerim and Tom Blass (2004): *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*. London: Pluto Press.

Yucel, Muslim (2015): *Abdullah Öcalan: Amara'dan Imrali'ya (Abdullah Öcalan: From Amara to Imrali)*, Third Edition, Istanbul: ALFA.

Zeki Beg, Mihemed Emin (2002): *Dîroka Kurd û Kurdistanê, (History of the Kurds and Kurdistan)*. Istanbul: Avesta.

Kurdish weekly or monthly political magazines

Berxwedan (Resistance) (1983 – 1995)

Serxwebun (Independence) (1982 – present)