The Efficacy of Assimilation Politics within Occupied Territories: A Case Study of the Kurd Population within the Middle East

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Abstract

Why do some ruling ethnic groups in occupied territories decide to recognize, share power with, and allocate resources to ethnic minorities? Dominant ethnic ruling classes aim for cultural hegemony to legitimate their political rule and secure state power. The ethno-relations that predate the nation's establishment can impact which policies the ruling groups pursue and the ethnic minority group's place socially and in public perception. These factors impact how assimilation can be facilitated or thwarted with the state. This paper asks why some state policies aimed at assimilation of minorities are successful while others are met with resistance.

To address this question, I examine Kurdish assimilation policies in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. I analyze the role that educational suppression and economic underdevelopment played in either laying the seeds for resistance or by fragmenting the minority community further. I also consider the influence of foreign intervention, including supplying groups with weapons and material support, on shaping internal politics. By analyzing the relationship between the state and the strength of resistance movements, I argue that the most successful policies are ones that exploit the internal divisions of these communities and their geographical dispersion to limit mobilization. This is achieved through the dispersion of national propaganda vilifying Kurdish resistance, preferential treatment of certain sects of Kurds, and the devaluation of language. The four cases illustrate how the state's deployment of different policies around culture and economy align with the different historical trajectories of assimilation and resistance.

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Introduction

Countries with high ethnic demographic diversity must face the task of deciding which group will retain the most political power and how will they seek to legitimize their rule. The nuances of ethno-political rule have consistently led to conflicts over the establishment of cultural and political hegemony, especially within occupied areas. To consolidate and stabilize the dominant group's power, there must be a submerged minority group that solidifies and maintains the socio-political hierarchy. While each situation is unique and deals with a complex environment specific to its borders, the frequency of this occurrence raises the question if there is a specific formula or pathway that states can take to ensure that they are successful in their efforts; if there is a combination of elements that can be observed that leads to a conclusion linking likelihood of resistance and efficacy of assimilation policies.

By examining national identity assimilation in conjunction with cultural identity, this project explores why certain ethnic minority groups will claim that national identity as their own, while others resist or are reluctant to accept it. As a result, it will reveal the extent to which the minority group sheds its own needs to have an autonomous, national identity for the sake of integrating into the country. While many scholars claim that the process of assimilation occurs as an effect of socialization, I instead argue that by observing the range of state facilitated programs, I can demonstrate that assimilation is a purposeful and state facilitated phenomenon, justified under the guise of national unification. Depending on the strength of the regime and the credibility of their restrictive policy, the levels of assimilation may vary across civilizations. In doing so, I will attempt to answer the question: Why are some state policies aimed at assimilation met with success while others met with resistance?

To make this argument, I will be dissecting the case of the Kurdish question because it presents an interesting dynamic relation between Arabs or Persians and Kurds in their plight for power. While the Kurdish ethnic narrative has been defined as one of mere suppression since the twentieth century, these tensions are cemented within decades of grievances and unique situations within each of their countries of residence. Concentrated within four nations across the Middle East—Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Iraq— they have had varying levels of success in securing recognition and autonomy. Three of the Kurdish minority groups are originally subjects of the Ottoman empire in present day Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, while Kurds in Iran originate out of the Persian empires. Though originating from almost the same empire and residing within similar cultural contexts, Kurdish movements have hade unique trajectories towards legitimizing their cultural identity in the countries' sociopolitical contexts and achieving autonomy.

Through this paper, I will argue how Kurdish assimilation has been directly shaped by governmental policy. In specific, I have analyzed the roles that economic underdevelopment and educational suppressive policies have targeted and attempted to disempower Kurds. I have concluded that the most effective assimilation policies have been ones that have further fragmented Kurdish movements through utilization of their geographic isolation and internal divisions. Throughout this paper I will delve into what these policies have historically looked like and analyze their effectiveness, as to whether they instigated further resistance or have led to Kurds integrating into the dominant culture by forsaking their own.

Literature Review

Resistance and Rebellion under Occupation

In the face of governments' suppressive policies, culturally distant populations can respond by adhering to two routes: either they assimilate, or they will resist. By first investigating the causes and probability of resistance under occupation, we can link these factors to the likelihood of resistance under assimilation policy, as it is a pathway that is often utilized though not always successful. Oftentimes, ethnopolitical conflict ensues when an occupying force or dominant ethnic group gains exclusive access to the military, which allows the dominant group to impose restrictions and limitations. In response, the subjugated population can respond through rebellion as an attempt to improve living conditions. The two most prominent theories on the likelihood of resistance that I will be discussing include 1) the role of political dislocation and trust as well as 2) the role of the state in politically and socially excluding parts of society.

The first approach investigates whether occupiers can credibly commit to treating the population benignly and extending minorities their rights, especially within areas experiencing political dislocation. Tribal or ethnic groups that suddenly experience a fall from power or witnessing preferential treatments of other groups due to the instatement of a new governing body are more likely to resist. When the balance of political power is greatly disturbed due to the selective empowerment of certain groups at the expense of the disempowerment of others, old issues may be reignited that further alienates the political minority. A group's future behavior often stems directly from the past, specifically a complex history of violence predating the current situation. For example, when the Japanese occupation of Taiwan and Korea favored native elite, they experienced less resistance than when the Japanese government offered fewer opportunities for natives (Collard-Wexler 2013:63). Regimes require the forces and support of

domestic populations to stabilize their rule, or else their legitimacy can easily be questioned and exploited by movements. While many cases of occupation, such as that of South Africa over Angola, have utilized political dislocation as a political weapon to delegitimize other territories, it remains that if they want to establish a lasting relationship with the native population, they must make a tradeoff of some opportunities. When considering the Kurdish dilemma, I will dive into how Iran's strategic favoring of Shi'a Kurds heightened internal fragmentation and hindered resistance movements.

The general public's regard for its government is inherently tied to the trust that the two entities have developed which can easily be undermined through policies that would permanently weaken the minority's relative domestic position. During regime changes, mistrust can be heightened as because of the new governments' tendencies to disregard minority groups which entrenches feelings of mistreatments further and leads to subsequent disruption in the country's political environment. Within the Middle Eastern countries that I will be dissecting, each country goes through at least on regime change or experiences a drastic shift in power that dramatically alters the relation between the Kurds and the host government. These political changes could have been utilized as mechanisms to establish trust, as seen in Qasim's initial attempts in Iraq, but historically that has not been able to last due to greed. Research has shown that regardless of the levels of power a group had beforehand, "political dislocation, in the form of forceful regime change, increases the likelihood of resistance" (Collard-Wexler 2013:3). As the dominant group restructures society to its benefit, groups that feel wronged will harbor resentment towards the majority; eventually transforming into anger and an incentive to resist – such as was the case within Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Another possible indicator of resistance is the regime type which influences the effects of political dislocation because regimes that are more likely to make credible commitments and maintain trust with its minority groups are less likely to face resistance. For instance, democracies are more likely to abide by human rights agreements, leading to greater incentive to maintain the status quo rather than risk rebellion; minority groups in such situations pursue legal and other channels in the state to secure their needs (Collard-Wexler 2013:73). Similarly, governments with the same religious affinity as the minority groups, not necessarily having to be of the same ethnicity or language, are recognized to have greater legitimacy, shared values, and morals with the occupied. Religious affinity gives people a shared sense of identity and the occupied feel more ease than if the dominant power is of a different religious group who does not completely understand their beliefs. In some countries where religion is a part of the state, religious leaders are important political actors because of their potential ability to mobilize constituents and guide public opinion.

Based on the dynamic of regimes and their constituents, states have various pathways that they can pursue to utilize their power and implement policies. For instance, states can appeal to religious legitimacy to justify their actions, such as the case of the Islamic Republic in Iran or can economically develop the country through infrastructure or commerce to ensure citizen loyalty. States can also choose to utilize military power and violence so that citizens are compliant. As regime type is directly linked to the extent of unjust application of violence via the state, the degree of power asymmetry directly influences injustice through military domination. Power imbalances easily translate into asymmetrical war tactics which differs from that of interstate wars because of how actors interact, the tactics groups utilize, and the political role of the occupation (Collard-Wexler 2013:15). Minority groups seldom have the same access to

weaponry and unity in comparison to host governments who have a monopoly over violence and have public approval. In the case of the Kurdish dilemma, Kurdish movements have had to rely on foreign assistance and interstate cooperation to level the playing field and sustain their movement in face of adversity.

When groups do not see themselves represented by the government and are targeted by the military, then they may view their safety as already under attack. Together, the factors of political dislocation and regime type increase the chances of resistance by "alienating powerful segments of the occupied population, stirring domestic competition for power, victimizing the occupied population, and failing to credibly commit to treating the occupied population benignly or vacating occupied territory promptly" (Collard-Wexler 2013:80). Thus, with little at stake, there is sufficient motivation for ethnic groups to mobilize and seek better treatment. Throughout my project, eras in which we can observe a similar pattern of alienation and victimization of the Kurdish population has directly led to the formation of resistance movements. At times when the minority is partially appeased or they make progress socio-politically, there is decreased mobilization of resistance.

Another possible theory behind why ethnic groups may rebel points to the ways that state attempts to gain legitimacy entrench minorities deeper into the social hierarchy through inequitable distribution of resources and opportunity. Through analyses of how states choose to engage with these minority groups, it is apparent that politicians who favor certain co-ethnic groups in distributing public goods, resources, etc. will be met with higher chances of rebellion if the other groups united and large enough (Cederman, et. al. 2010:94). Political favoring during the allocation of public resources affords those groups accessibility to life-altering services, jobs, and rights merely due to their membership in the state-owning group and for having

representation in government. When the state of Turkey was experiencing a shortage of jobs, those opportunities first and foremost went to ethnic Turks rather than Kurds who struggled the most during financial hardship. Consequently, economic inequities have been cited as objectives to tackle by virtually each resistance movement's end goal plans.

Resource dispersion is an important area of discretion and disagreement that has the power to mobilize groups against the government if not calculated correctly. Similarly to Migdal's weak state-strong society theory, preferential allocation can be especially influential in weakly developed civil societies ruled by ethnic elites. So, there is a direct relationship between the degree of state power and the likelihood of an armed rebellion, making it so excluded groups are the most likely to support armed organizations and challenge the government through collective action (Cederman, et. al. 2010:95).

When considering how these groups can mobilize, there is a positive correlation between the likelihood of conflict and the size of an ethnic minority group, making it so that the larger the group the higher the chances that conflict may arise. The correlation can be explained by the fact that groups need to believe that their efforts have a possibility to succeed and because they must utilize the power of people to combat state power, especially in the cases of armed combat. The effects of being unable to mobilize hindering the movement can clearly be observed in the Iranian Kurdish movements' failures. In addition to the size of the group, conflict is more likely if these groups are disempowered, meaning that in the past they had access to executive power and a higher socioeconomic status than they are granted currently. The exclusion of large ethnic groups has more legitimacy and is more impactful for state peace than the inclusion of smaller groups ruled by minorities (Cederman, et. al. 2010:96). Within multi-ethnic countries, it is inevitable that states must make a tradeoff in strategically choosing the groups that will be given

access to political and social power while maintaining the most possible amount for themselves. While conducting my own research, it would be interesting to investigate the presence, or lack of, power-sharing regimes, and how the exclusion from central power has instigated conflict.

Within scholarly discussions of rebellion, it is important to consider the role that nationalism plays as a predictor of rebellions. For Collard-Wexler, nationalism is less likely to predict actual resistance, and there is no causal relationship that may help policymakers to predict resistance and countering its forces (Collard-Wexler 2013:84). On the other hand, Kivisto sees these nationalist movements as motivated by two objectives, either political economy or culture, which he defined as, "(1) the acquisition of a political voice and the improvement of the group's economic condition, and (2) the maintenance of a sentiment of loyalty to the distinctive traditions, language, and institutions of the race they represent" (Kivisto 2004:158). However, due to the presence of nationalism in both movements that resist and ones that do not it is hard to prove it to be influential enough on its own. However, as many Kurdish movements have categorized nationalist objectives through establishment of an autonomous sovereignty, nationalism will be a substantial portion of how I will track these movements over time.

While Collard-Wexler's research defines resistance as the deliberate use of violence by members of the occupied population against occupying forces or officials, for this paper I will be studying nonviolent demonstrations and efforts to disseminate and continue the practice of Kurdish culture despite the law. I have categorized resistance as any efforts that Kurds have taken to protest or undermine discriminatory policies. In discussing the likelihood of resistance, I have established how states can achieve the opposite results of these assimilatory policies.

Assimilation

Reflected in the actions of politicians of occupied territories who rule over ethnically diverse territories is the power of cultural rule and homogeneity in reducing resistance and reinforcing legitimacy. For many countries, attempts to establish the dominance of their ethnic identity becomes a vital component of domestic strategy. However, there does not seem to be a proven one-size fits all solution that can ensure the minority will comply and assimilate into the dominant culture. Rather, Robert E. Park establishes that if groups are racially segregated or classified as other, they cannot be effectively assimilated into society (Park & Burgess 1930:282). That is because the process of assimilation is not homogeneity but rather to create a unified community with a shared purpose and experience (Park 1924:759). For assimilation to be successful, governments need to gradually incorporate individuals into the broader society, so that with each generation the "others" become closer in experience and thought to the average citizen. The limitations of these findings are that they primarily analyze immigrant relations rather than ethnically diverse territories within occupied territories as is the scope of my project; but still presents applicable theories that I can compare the similarities of.

So, what initiates the process of the blurring of rigid and distinct identities to the point of eradication? The theory of denationalization describes the process in which the state relies on coercion to induce a targeted population to abandon their culture; however, Simons extends denationalization's definition to include non-coercive power that spurs assimilation out of an intellectual struggle between racial groups under one government (Simons 1901:791). Assimilation does not necessitate targeted force but rather is a process that occurs gradually over long periods of time. However, Simons's perspective is limited in how it constitutes violence and coercion by disregarding more implicit or seemingly benign means of assimilation. The

socialization of people can lead to biological intermixing that inevitably incurs homogeneity – regardless of how the two groups originally came into contact.

Rather than focus on the socialization process, Kivisto relies on definitions of multiculturalism to process assimilation: even though assimilation and homogeneity may be established this does not mean that all variation will be eradicate (Kivisto 2004:161). That means that increased points of contact among ethnic groups does not necessarily have to lead to assimilation as Simons's had argued. Rather, the two groups may coexist so that though uniformity may prevail in the aspects of language, government, law, and education, the personal attributes will continue to exist including religion and lifestyle. For the sake of his definition, assimilation is broken down into two aspects: 1) to make like – by acquiring one another's language, characteristic attitudes, and modes of behavior, and 2) to take up and incorporate – by incorporation of both individuals and ethnic groups into larger groups (Kivisto 2004:161). Assimilation describes therefore an expanding and increasingly complex situation that adapts to changes and increases with social interactions (Kivisto 2004:156). From this, we can begin to understand how groups may be encouraged to assimilate at the public level and still retain some of their individual autonomy.

For such intermixing and eradication of cultures to occur, there must also be an exchange of psychosocial elements to ensure friendly relations. According to Auerbach, the narratives propagated by a group have both an ability to enable or strengthen their identity as well as act as a barrier towards reaching resolutions (Auerbach 2020:127). Shared narratives are important for the establishment and consolidation of national identity because these stories include decades of injustice and issues between the minority and dominant groups. When groups refuse to reach a common narrative or tensions arise out of denial of lived experiences, cooperation between these

entities is bound to decrease (Auerbach 2020:100). For instance, tensions within present day South Korea and Japan persist to present day because of the Japanese government's refusal to issue an apology or acknowledge the harm they caused during their occupation. Similarly, the Islamic Republic of Iran's attempts to erase the discrimination of Kurds under the monarchical regime by stating that the nation was collectively and equally suffering then, increased tensions between the Kurds and the government. Governments are hesitant to recognize the other side's narrative and accepting their perspectives because it means that they must acknowledge the legitimacy of that group as well. The group that committed the injustice would be compelled to acknowledge their faults and work towards granting the minority group their rights back, which the country may be unwilling to do.

Thus, we can see how the processes of socialization and mutual communication influences rates of assimilation rather than inducing resistance movements. While Simons argues that high levels of inter-group contact will foster group homogeneity to a greater or lesser degree, his claim is an oversimplification of how assimilation has historically been a "purposive assimilation" that is "directed by the state" rather than merely a socialized phenomenon (Kivisto 2004:152). From this viewpoint, I will be analyzing the influence of state policy and strategies in the outcomes of assimilation likelihood of resistance to gain an understanding on what factors coerce ethnic groups to accept the dominant identity. Within the next section of the paper, I will be analyzing three instances where governments have occupied territories or gained dominance over a multiethnic society and attempted to achieve national unification through assimilation of minorities.

Internal Colonialism

The phenomena of internal colonialism can be used to describe the relationship of an ethnic divide between the dominant, hegemonic group and large ethnic minorities. Countries may economically exclude development and resources towards areas occupied by minority groups to create clear divisions between the core and the periphery -- the hegemon and the minority (Hassaniyan 2021:20). The theory of internal colonization emerged from the South Africa apartheid situation in which the country was internally divided in terms of power and wealth based on ethnic affiliation (Hind 1984:566). To achieve a colonial relationship, some of the methods that countries have implemented are economic underdevelopment of minority occupied areas, implementation of barriers for accessing equal rights and citizenship, and discriminatory policies (Hassaniyan 2021:21). As a result, groups feel alienated from the national center all the while the government is elevating the dominant culture within a socioeconomic context.

The resulting system aims to maintain power through strategic exclusion and disempowerment. A similar pattern can be observed within the countries that have occupied Kurds throughout the last century. To achieve goals of Arabization, the government deemed a policy of internal colonization as an appropriate strategy that will ensure national unity. Thus, Kurds have historically been barred from accessing their political and economic rights and experienced less economic prosperity related to the national average. Thus, Kurdish resistance movements have historically been reactive movements in response to sovereign violence.

Assimilation Policies

Language as a means of resistance and repression

Language is an important unifying force for and a reflection of the ways that communities can communicate with one another. In contrast to how English-only movements have historically been a means of forced assimilation of indigenous individuals and exclusion of immigrants in the US, the Korean government's implementation of a strict Hangul-only policy is a tool of resistance against forced assimilation (Hur 2018:738). Hangul policies are a modern response the Japanese colonial government forced assimilation policies that outlawed the language. While Korea was colonized, Japan removed Hangul from schools, forced citizens to take on Japanese names, and actively punished those who spoke the language against the wills of the imperialist presence (Hur 2018:718). Their policy included the racial categorization of Koreans as inferior to legitimize the rule of Japan; eliminating subjects regarding Korean history and geography from school curriculum to eliminate any ideas of national identity; requiring Japanese on legal documents, courts, political conferences, etc.; an imperial order forcing Koreans to change their names to Japanese names (Hur 2018:729). These policies were justified to eliminate prejudice between Korean and Japanese citizens by making them linguistically indistinguishable.

The assimilation policy adopted by the Japanese specifically targeted the language because it was a defining characteristic of Korean ethnicity. By suppressing and attempting to erase the language and alphabet, they forced Japanese to become Korea's national language and reduced the role of Hangul to merely a hobby or an elective (Hur 2018:728). In doing so, the Japanese colonial government was able to successfully implement its assimilation policies without exerting violence and the people were forced to accept the language for the sake of their

futures. The role of the state in squashing identity was able to occur solely through non-violent policies rather than through force and any resistance efforts were met with failure or force.

However, the Korean people actively protested these laws and transformed the meaning of the language into a symbol of resistance, independence, and autonomy (Hur 2018:731). As students resisted more and more, state violence became more necessary: the government utilized force to increase the number of enrolled students, such as jailing parents until they agreed to enroll their children (Hur 2018:729(. Those who spoke Korean during class were punished, expelled, and/or fined. Through this it is obvious that military rule is not nearly as effective as cultural rule policies. But at the same time, these strict rules against Korean national identity played a significant role in shaping the development of Korean nationalism in the future. So presently, Korean law that mandates Hangul on all formal and legal documents is not a way to suppress foreign language and diversity, but as a symbol of reclamation and pride.

Exclusionary Policies – Public Health

The execution of forced Romani assimilation policy in Hungary during the socialist era is another instance of non-violent, policy driven ethnic domination. Despite the formation of a new regime that outrightly rejected the previous period, the government carried over their predecessors practice of social exclusion. To combat nomadic Romani, many officials stressed the importance of educational and corrective punishment through forced labor to serve as a threat towards those who still chose to live nomadically (Hajnáczky 2022:133). The government justified the targeting of Romani dominated communities for public health reasons: they labeled Romani communities as a public health threat by highlighting a lice crisis and associating them with other epidemics.

While masqueraded as a means of helping a struggling population, politicians exploited these polices to eliminate the lifestyle of Romanies. The country formed committees and began asking the public to help deal with the Romani problem to ensure mobilization against the group. It was a public smear campaign to enable Hungarians to turn against a particular group. To do so, they assigned that, "the first task would be the elimination of the separate settlements and the placement of every Romani family in an appropriate field of work, and at a distance from each other, so that they would be dependent on melting into their new environment and without the opportunity of continuing their old lives" (Hajnáczky 2022:139). They specifically sought to dismantle groupings and settlements of Romani populations through attempts to disperse the populations. The government hoped that these polices would lead Romanies to seamlessly assimilate into the hegemonic Hungarian culture. The Hungarian government also created a tiered, hierarchical system that categorized the assimilation levels of Romani communities: integrated, in the process of integrating and not integrated. It is clear to see what the end goals of these policies were and how they specifically targeted those communities.

In terms of employment, many workforces refused to hire Romani people due to their lifestyles. Workers were averse to working with Romani populations due to perceived weaker performance and a threat of uncleanliness and infection, propaganda spread by the government (Hajnáczky 2022:151). Attempts to educate children were also unsuccessful due to a lack of resources given that would support the ability to go to school, they also were given separate classes (Hajnáczky 2022:154). In enforcing various policies, workers did not shy away from violence or humiliation of those settlements. Romani forced assimilation had failed and ending segregation had been only partially achieved. The government was unwilling to commit

resources and public funds to effectively assist these populations to ease their lifestyles but attempted to publicly shame them into eradicating their distinctive cultural indicators.

Educational Suppression to Promote Nationalism

A case of countries that were able to successfully establish a unified national identity through the suppression of cultural expression are that of Thailand and Malaysia. The countries of Thailand and Malaysia are home to dozens of distinct ethnic identities with complex histories. The government's implemented suppressive policies to promote patriotism and reduce racial tensions so that the countries' economic sectors would be able to compete on a global scale and to attract notable foreign investments (Bakar 2013:319). The objectives of these countries were to reach group homogeneity so that the nation could progress towards a harmonious and peaceful future. The suppression of individual ethnic identities to breed one, singular national identity meant that Karens, Laos, Shans, Lues, Mons, Chinese, Vietnamese, Khmer, and Malays groups are being collectively referred to as Thais (Bakar 2013:319). The Thailand case of assimilation is characterized by the formation of a melting plot that blurs and blends differences to create one all-encompassing unique identity. Some of the policies that the Thai government adopted is educational restrictions placed on ethnic Chinese minorities by enforcing a policy of instruction only with the Central Thai language. Nationalistic policies included saluting of the flag, daily broadcasts, etc. to encourage national patriotism and discourage other loyalties.

On a global scale, the existence of these various groups is erased and reduced to one collective population so that the entire country's population becomes labeled as one. From the viewpoint of governments, national homogeneity was an effective way to create a patriotic group of citizens, who could pledge their loyalty without considerations for ethnic affiliation. While group homogeneity may seem to have beneficial effects for achieving national unification, it may

also have the inverse effect of rebellious activity by minority ethnic groups due to the forceful assimilation (Bakar 2013:320). While the formation of these unique, native identities has been cemented over centuries and generations, it seems that it was much easier for them to unravel and dismantle. A similar strategy of national unification through erasure of ethnic minorities has been adopted by the countries host to the Kurdish minority yet have been met with varying levels of rebellion rather than an easy path of assimilation.

Conceptualization and Measurement

Cultural assimilation describes the process of an occupied, minority group integrating into the dominant framework by exchanging parts of their unique identity for the sake of belonging. Broadly speaking, it is the process in which a minority group comes to resemble that of the dominant group which could entail the integration of cultural elements such as language or the biological mixing between the groups that could naturally lead to multiculturalism (Bakar 2013). In addition, national identity is categorized through a person's identity or sense of belonging to that nation, usually unified through distinctive traditions, culture, and language. The two aspects I will be using to conceptualize national identity assimilation are the degree to which they accept or reject elements of the new culture and the extent to which they retain some distinctiveness and culture.

Bakar explores the ways in which cultural identity is at odds with national aspirations and globalization in the countries of Thailand and Malaysia. He attempts to balance how necessary progression towards the future is when it is at conjunction with identity itself. In this region, some of the countries are combining and assimilating the different ethnic identities to increase patriotism and reduce racial tensions, thus ensuring national solidarity (Bakar 2013:319). Bakar associates the process of assimilation with the formation of a melting pot in which differing

identities and cultures blend to form an all-encompassing unique identity. He defines assimilation as the "process of togetherness and unification between groups or individuals coming from different ethnicities and cultural setup and becoming one with a dominant ethnic" (Bakar 2013:317).

In addition, Bakar explores other definitions of assimilation, describing it as having a shared national identity in which some aspects over time begin to be shared, such as language or culture. Instead of looking at it as cultural homogeneity he saw it as a multicultural society with many ethnic identities and affiliations. The effects of this identity assimilation are the erasure of the existence of ethnic identities on a global scale, thus the entire country's population becomes labeled as one – such as the case of the Thais. While this may seem to have beneficial effects for the unification of a country it may also lead to rebellion on the side of minority ethnic groups because of forceful assimilation, leading to violence.

This is applicable to the scope of my project as it explores a similar case to the one I will be investigating, except in a different region. Specifically, its focus on national identity and the role of the state in facilitating the creation of this melting pot corroborates the perspective I adopt within my work. However, this piece does not settle onto a solid definition of what assimilation is, making it hard to apply it explicitly within my work. Because it is only dissecting two countries with similar conditions, the findings did not establish a solid, causal relationship nor is it able to be generalized to the scope of the area I will be analyzing. The conditions within Thailand and Malaysia that led to the formation of a homogenous national identity were presupposed by decades of naturally occurring biological mixing and benign cultural interactions, making it so that there were lower levels of animosity. However, the situation of the Kurd population residing within the Middle East is that they have often gravitated towards

certain areas and been antagonized by some countries' policy. But from this case, we can observe how past conflicts and the circumstances of a geographic location shapes interactions.

The case of Romani assimilation in Hungary can be explained by Simons's argument that the communication and mixing between the groups translates into higher points of contact and a more rapid rate of assimilation (Simons 1901:791). While there was limited biological intermixing, the government's attempted to maximize the psychological influences of socialization to assimilate its population with the least amounts of resistance. The strength of Simons's piece is that it outlines clear preconditions on how certain groups become subjugated beyond the scope of just the state. It also raises an interesting question that I will be exploring within discussions of Kurdish relation: how the explicit attacks on Kurdish identity and the restrictions placing on their cultural heritage prohibit the development of cultural homogeneity.

The shortcomings of Simons's piece is that it fails to appreciate the role of underlying social forces, which she described as merely human instinct. She views migration as merely a singular, individual choice, rather than the group phenomenon. The hyper-attention to individualized and small actions overlook the broader mechanisms at stake that are driving and influencing people to engage in those ways (Kivisto 2004:153). In addition, Simons misread the labor demands of a rapidly industrializing nation and was convinced that geographic concentration will slow down assimilation -- which through historical hindsight has been proven incorrect (Kivisto 2004:153). Her findings differ from my own work because it fails to take into consideration the means that the state can implicitly, yet intentionally, implement policies designed to reduce cultural heterogeneity.

Commonly cited, Mayo-Smith also explained assimilation as a process of embracing customs not necessarily requiring biological mixing (Mayo-Smith 1894:431). This means that

racial mixing is not as important as the influence of common occupations and methods that would develop similar mental faculties and character. Assimilation was used as a means of progress towards one, already-established system instead of the incorporation of multiple identities into one homogeneous existence. The social environment is responsible for this because of the powerful influence of education, of a common language, of the newspaper, of popular culture. Other forms of influence include the exercise of political rights, the ability to own property, self-determination, independence, public opinion, etc. Foreigner immigrants' level of assimilation is dependent on how receptive they are to outside forces regardless of how intelligent or developed their previous country/nationality was (Mayo-Smith 1894:654).

Mayo-Smith's piece emphasizes the importance and the influence of education on how effective assimilation is and how receptive the foreign population is (Mayo-Smith 1894:655). This is important in how we analyze the role of educational spheres and the exclusion of certain groups from historical teachings. It can be seen as a form of eradicating a group's influence and legitimacy. However, because of its focus on the assimilation of immigrants, it is limited in application to this project.

Contact between groups through the effects of globalization has made it easier for countries to spread their narrative and consequently to identify similarities (and differences) between the two entities. The threat of globalization has also made it so that certain groups and national countries fear the threat of assimilation through Americanization, making them more persistent in returning to their roots and strengthening a national/cultural identity at the expense of minority groups. The "fear of cultural assimilation is all the more powerful among Islamic nations that are trying to revive past glory" due to decades of occupation by western powers and the Ottoman Empire (Auerbach 2020:108). These countries have become occupied with

establishing this identity and will have rigid national narratives concerning their beliefs as the exclusive righteous and just truth. This article discusses the relevant geographic region I will be concerned with and attempts to provide an explanation as to why certain countries are more insistent on eradicating or minimizing the influence of ethnic minority groups. It would be an interesting factor to further explore within the countries I will be studying to investigation possible correlation.

Research Design

Contrary to prominent sociological research on assimilation that views assimilation because of social integration among cultural groups or biological intermixing, my own research considers the purposeful, state facilitated policies that have bred the turbulent environments presently existing. I argue against Simon's claim that the ways in which groups come into contact is irrelevant to the outcome of assimilation because it does not corroborate the evidence found within the Kurdish region. Rather, the Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria policies of targeted and forced assimilation necessitated the complex history between the minority and dominant groups that poses minorities as a threat to political legitimacy. While there is knowledge produced on the state facilitating resistance and on causes of assimilation that I have outlined above, there is a gap in the literature connecting the two ideas; thus, I will attempt to bridge those two categories with my work. For the purpose of this study, I will broaden the definition of assimilation to include whether the minority group identifies with the dominant state during times of occupation.

I will be conducting a case study on Kurdish cultural integration across the Middle Eastern countries of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Despite originating from similar conditions and empires, the policies that states have adopted has translated into varying levels of

assimilation. Prominent literature on Kurdish cultural assimilation draws its focus on the power of political parties such as the PKK and KDPS. Thus, since there is a broad range of published research conducted on this area, it will become a point of reference rather than the focal point of the paper. Instead, such events will be used to shed light on the causes behind why policies may be pushed or the emergence of waves of resistance.

International organizations and political science research have routinely engaged with the issue of Kurdish suppression as if they were of one group with shared interest. Rather, the Kurdish people's statelessness has resulted in extreme fragmentations within the countries they reside in. Political figures and published literature have consistently neglected internal tensions of religious affiliations, tribal belonging, or party politics, merging Kurds into a singular force or presence. While the reality is that politicians within these countries have strategically utilized these differences to increase their identity fragmentation and squash resistance efforts that could arise out of unification. Preliminary research within this area has concluded that their fragmentation results from the lack of a collective experience to form pride and dignity (Saeed 2023). By considering these factors, I hope to gain a deeper understanding to why movements have historically failed in certain areas but succeeded within other demographics, or groups may assimilate. It is essentially important to consider the development of such divisions and how they may merge, or diverge, over time based on the political environment.

To address the question of which actions lead to higher rates of assimilation, I will conduct a case study comparing state policies across the post-Ottoman nation-states that the Kurdish population resides within: Iraq, Syria, and Turkey in comparison to Iran, a post-Persian nation-state. The focus on these countries will allow me to control for the greatest number of confounding variables as both the environment and geographic regions are alike, with the

primary difference being the state policies following the fall of the empire. By conducting a qualitative analysis on the relationship between state policy and resistance movements (or the lack thereof), I hope to draw a conclusion on what kinds of policies have had the largest impact on facilitating the assimilation process.

These Middle Eastern countries have taken drastically differently approaches to integrating minority groups into the dominant framework which has translated into vastly different outcomes of Kurdish relations. Thus, making it so there is enough variation to allow for meaningful analysis. For instance, Iran has allowed for the development of the Kurdish language and history alongside influences from Persian languages. While on the other hand, Turkey engaged in large scale ethnic-cleansing in which they specifically targeted the use of the Kurdish language to establish their cultural hegemony.

The time frame of this study will be constrained between the post-World War I era until the turn of the twenty first century to gain a comprehensive and holistic picture of the development of state relations. The collapse of the ottoman empire in the 1920s, followed by its partition by Britain, France, and other Western powers created the states that I will delving into. This period is also when policies specifically targeting the Kurds were codified and which can be traced chronologically to explain rates of resistance. It is most effective to investigate within such a time frame and analyze the correlation of the independent and dependent variables to reveal the most apparent connections.

I propose to measure the degree of homogenization of national identity and group identification as it collides or concurs with state categorization. In addition to studying cultural homogenization regarding their practices and belief systems, I aspire to study national identification such as census reporting, whether the group is entitled to sovereignty, and the

rights that are extended to them such as through citizenship. This will lead to an investigation on the how and why certain groups may display higher rates of resistance and consistently plead for autonomy rather than succeeding into dominant society. Rather than a binary 0 or 1 measurement, I will conduct a scaled analysis on the degree to which this happens.

The two independent variables that will be considered are include the severity of state policy as well as the extent of influence of foreign intervention, as demonstrated from Table 1. I have categorized state policy under two umbrella terms: a policy of cultural maintenance and a policy of cultural assimilation. The former describes governmental policies that actively allocate resources or allow for the culture to flourish without limitations while the latter are state facilitated attempts to eliminate the presence of the minority.

To categorize the severity of assimilation policies through the various regime changes, I have adopted Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson's framework in which they created five categories for measuring state policy (Skutnabb-Kangas 1995:80).

(1) *Promotion* – the country actively allocates resources and support towards the development of Kurdish culture, such as making the language official, acknowledging the minority groups rights, and establishing public institutions instructing in Kurdish.

(2) *Permission* – the country allows for the culture to exist but does not support nor prohibit it.

(3) *Non-discrimination prescription* – the country makes it illegal to discriminate against those who are of the minority group or the use of the language.

(4) *Tolerance* – the country does not support the culture or language use but does not actively, overtly restrict is, such as delegating it only to the private sphere.

(5) *Prohibition* – forced assimilation policies to abandon and oppress minority group's culture (Skutnabb-Kangas 1995:80).

The following table uses the above terminology to categorize the expect state policy that the country will adopt:

Table 1: State Prescriptions

	Cultural maintenance	Cultural assimilation
No foreign intervention	permission	prohibition
Foreign intervention	promotion	tolerance

Table 1 predicts that in the absence of foreign intervention, countries that seek cultural assimilation of minorities will adopt a policy of prohibition through ratification of targeting policies and active enforcement. If the country favors a policy of cultural maintenance and there is still that absence of foreign intervention, then the country's policies can be categorized as giving permission. Kurds have routinely been favored more by foreign powers to destabilize the region and limited by their respective governments due to the possibility of separatism. As a result, foreign governments have played pivotal roles in shaping the Kurdish trajectory towards autonym. On the hand, when foreign powers intervene by supplying minorities with resources or playing a provisionary role, we can expect that countries who seek cultural assimilation will lean towards a policy of tolerance, in which they may restrict the practice of culture to the private sphere. When there is a presence of both foreign intervention and a policy of cultural

maintenance then the government will adopt a policy of promotion in which they allocate resources that would allow minorities to flourish.

State Policy

The two primary aspects of state policy that I will be investigating are educational and economic policy. Educational policy describes the realm of school curriculum and language use within the academic sphere, the sphere that directly guides public perception and national narratives, and bleads into the personal lives of its users. In studying educational policy will reveal the power of information disseminated about minority groups and how access to education will limit or allow such groups to flourish. UNESCO outlines that people should have the right to an education of their mother tongue to promote cultural linguistics (UNESCO 2022). Primary education is oftentimes the first moment in which children of different cultures interact, and in spreading harmful messages within these formative years, the country maintains prejudiced beliefs in students that grow up to be the national leaders. In dissecting the messages being sent on a national scale through propaganda and curricula to target or enrich society, we can learn who is valued within society. By studying national campaigns that seek to redefine historical heritage and the means in which how they have been vilified or affirmed by the government, we can learn about the social perception and national narratives of Kurds.

In addition, governments which limit the teaching of Kurdish to private schooling or outlaw its use within professional settings contain a particular classist undertone in dictating accessibility to education for Kurdish populations. As we delve into the differences across the board between countries, we can start by dissecting how language is being taught in schools and *who* is being afforded these privileges, such as limiting the Kurdish language to only the private sphere means that only those of upper-class backgrounds can afford to maintain their culture.

The ability to have Kurdish language as an elective or primary language of public schooling would indicate higher rates of support for these groups. While the outright rejection of any Kurdish languages in schools would indicate severe efforts to fragment the ability for children to pass on their heritage.

Because oftentimes school curriculum has been centralized at the hands of a national organization, historical narrative can easily be morphed to disregards the presence of Kurds or changes events to affirm propaganda. Thus, revealing to this study what concepts have been deemed worthy enough and what motivations could have led to such a decision.

In addition, oftentimes countries will limit the economic pursuits of its constituents and isolate individuals, while in other instances they may be allowed more leeway to pursue their financial interests and mobility. The breakdown of these policies to investigate whether rates of resistance decrease at times of economic prosperity as opposed to impoverishment would either confirm or disprove the implementation of economic peace theory within this territory. Analyses of economic policy will include locating territories that have historically housed large Kurdish populations and tracing whether the government implements specific policies within those areas. In addition, I will be collating data on other limitations placed on finances, property ownership or workplace discrimination that may take away from the Kurds ability to succeed.

Table 2: The Kurdish Minority

	Economic Prohibition (-)	Economic Promotion (+)
Educational Prohibition (-)	Devalued culture and political disempowerment	Devalued culture and political empowerment
Educational Promotion (+)	Cultural promotion and political disempowerment	Cultural promotion and political empowerment

Table 2 describes the effects of types of policies on the strength and viability of the Kurdish community. The term prohibition refers to laws that specifically outlaw educational capacity or under develop those sectors, thus acting as a barrier to accessibility. On the other hand, permission refers to policies that develop the educational or economic sectors such as through allocation of resources and public campaigns. Educational prohibition refers to policies that limit the use of minority language within institutions, lack of schools within minority areas, and the manipulation of historical curriculum within schools to fit a national narrative. The aim of these policies is to devalue the culture so that it will not be passed down throughout generations. Policies of educational promotion allow the use of the language and practice of culture, or even support it. In effect, the minority's culture will also be promoted and consequently passed down through generations rather than assimilated.

On the other axes, we can explore the effects of economic policies on the minority group's power. Economic prohibition refers to the underdevelopment of minority occupied regions and the lack of economic integration into the national sector. The Kurdish community has frequently occupied rural areas where they relied on agricultural production to make a living. Governments' industrialization and mechanization of agricultural has left Kurdish areas neglected and isolated from the central government. The alienation that results from the lack of economic power of the minority possesses translates into political disempowerment due to the preferential treatment given to those with a higher economic status. By contrast, economic promotion refers to economic development and thus access to political power. Throughout this paper, I will explore the linkage between the aims of economic (under)development at further entrenching Kurdish minority within a lower socio-political status.

Foreign Intervention:

Foreign intervention refers to the extent to which neighboring or stationary, yet powerful countries have influenced the outcomes of Kurdish relations. Western countries are the ones who mitigated these states' formation and in doing so left a slew of unfulfilled promises for the government to deal with once their role was finished. The United States has also directly contributed to the emergence of the bi-national government within Iraq through its involvement in the Gulf War and the supplies it granted Kurds to serve their own political interests. So, discussions of government influences on assimilation levels are incomplete without considering how foreign entities have spurred resistance or stifled it. In addition, I will be considering how the presence of Kurdish resistance in nearby countries have bled over state lines and how Kurdish groups have given assistance to one another. At the same time, due to outbreaks in nearby states, countries have sometimes response by passing limitation within their own country out of fear of pushback or aid by others. For instance, the neighboring countries of Iraq, Turkey, and Iran, have continuously instigated and supported movements within the Iraqi state that led to the infamous Anfal Operation. They have also routinely funded and instigated groups in other countries through hushed discussions. So, to understand state policy, I must consider the global context of such policies and how governments have felt threatened and inspired by other resistance efforts to pass their own.

Defining assimilation

For this study, we will be comparing levels of assimilation and levels of resistance through the analysis public cultural performativity and tracking the development of rebellions. When groups are still fighting for their rights and creating Kurdish nationalistic movements, that means that they are not aligning themselves with the identity of the mass public. These resistance

movements define the most potent aspects of resistance to assimilating to the dominant identity. In addition, because we are limited in the scope of this study making it so that we cannot measure private cultural activity, we will be looking at public displays of cultural performance, including foremost language acquisition and fluency, the presence of cultural festivals and events being celebrated, and identification.

The two dependent variables that will be studied in conjunction to contrive a relationship of correlation are levels of violence and resistance and levels of cultural integration. The former describes protests, demonstrations, presence of cultural celebration when it is outlawed, etc. On the other hand, the level of cultural integration categorizes the willingness of the group to interact with the dominant group and their receptivity to accept national identity. Through this we can attempt to understand the degree to which the minority group accepts or rejects elements of the majority culture.

Hypotheses

Within this paper, I will argue that the severity of educational and economic policies aimed at national unification through assimilation have a proportional relation to the levels of resistance. With this I hope to understand why certain measures were successful at subjecting its populace and why others have led to the opposite effect. Particularly which aspects of state policy have contributed to higher degrees of assimilation in contrast to which strategies have instead led people to embrace multiculturalism and coexistence rather than the eradication of their identities. I hope to learn whether this tradeoff can be accomplished within countries with centuries old ethnic relations and grievances. As conducted within Bakar's study, I will be studying variations in outcomes in the interactions between ethnic groups to determine the causes behind these differences.

Out of my preliminary research I have developed two theories that may explain such variation. The first of which is that there is a positive correlation between the intensity of repressive assimilation policy and the rejection of the dominant national identity. These direct attacks are easier to recognize as threatening as opposed to policies that may gradually facilitate assimilation through the encouragement of their own culture and the socialization of these groups. So, socialization would allow a natural intermixing between ideas and identities in which groups will slowly shed their own distinctiveness to belong to the dominant group.

The second theory states that policies that target the political and economic capacities of a group lead to higher rates of rejection. In reducing the political power of large ethnic groups, the lack of representation within this dominant national framework can be a cause for rebellion – especially when their needs are not being met and they are concentrated within a region. In addition, exclusion from economic opportunities and resources will spur sentiments that they are not contributing to society and thus alienate them. The combination of these two factors are probable and compelling reasons to risk everything at a chance of gaining rights which increases motivation. As a result, groups will have an easier time mobilizing constituents for their cause.

Throughout this paper, I will analyze the relationship between the dominant Arab or Persian ruling class and the Kurdish minority to prove these theoretical claims. Each country has a unique history with the minority group that predates their formation after the first World War that has influenced the trust that the people have in the government and the government's suspicions of separatism.

The Kurdish Dilemma

With the dissemination of the Ottoman and Persian empires during the early twentieth century, the issue of addressing the nation-less, yet prevalent, Kurdish population began to

pervade political spaces. As foreign powers sought to draw national boundaries and stabilize the area, inconsistent communications over the rights and sovereignty that will be afforded to the Kurds within Treaty signings instigated feelings of entitlement to the land. So, by tracing the historical development of the nations and their policies that house the Kurdish population, the variation in human rights violations witnessed presently can best be explained.

Currently, Kurds are divided prominently among the following countries:

- Turkey houses 43% of Kurdistan – 12-15 million people, 18% of national population
- Iran houses 31% of Kurdistan – 6.5 million people, 10% of national population
- Iraq houses 18% of Kurdistan – 3.5-4 million people, 15-20% of national population
- Syria houses 6% of Kurdistan – 1 million people, 10% of national population
- The Former Soviet Union (now Armenia and Azerbaijan) houses 2% of Kurdistan – approximately 200,000 people (Gunter 2004:198).

Figure 1 demonstrates the Kurdish demographic composition across carious countries; Figure 2 demonstrates the geographical dispersion of the Kurdish population among the states that they reside within.

Figure 1: Kurdistan Population Breakdown:

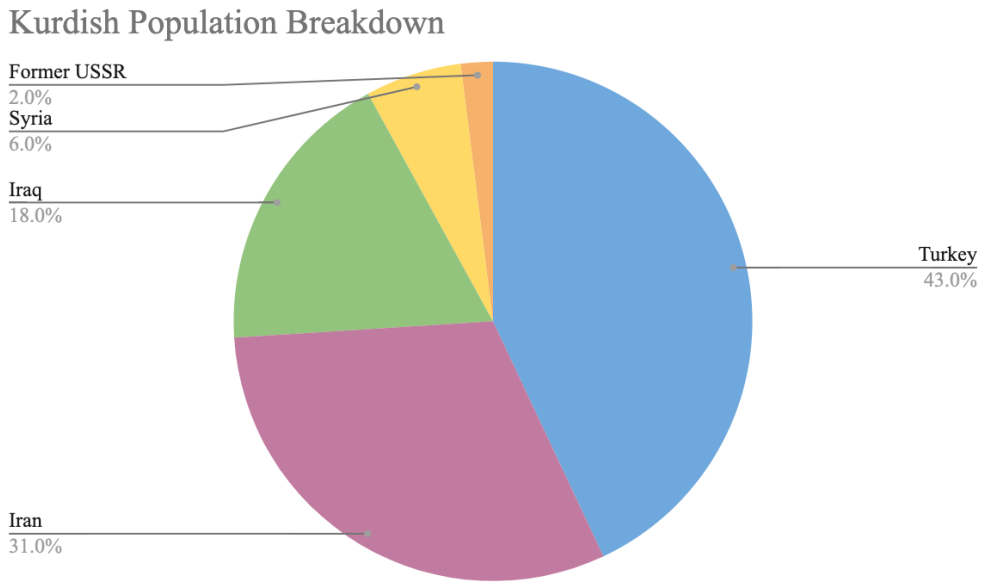
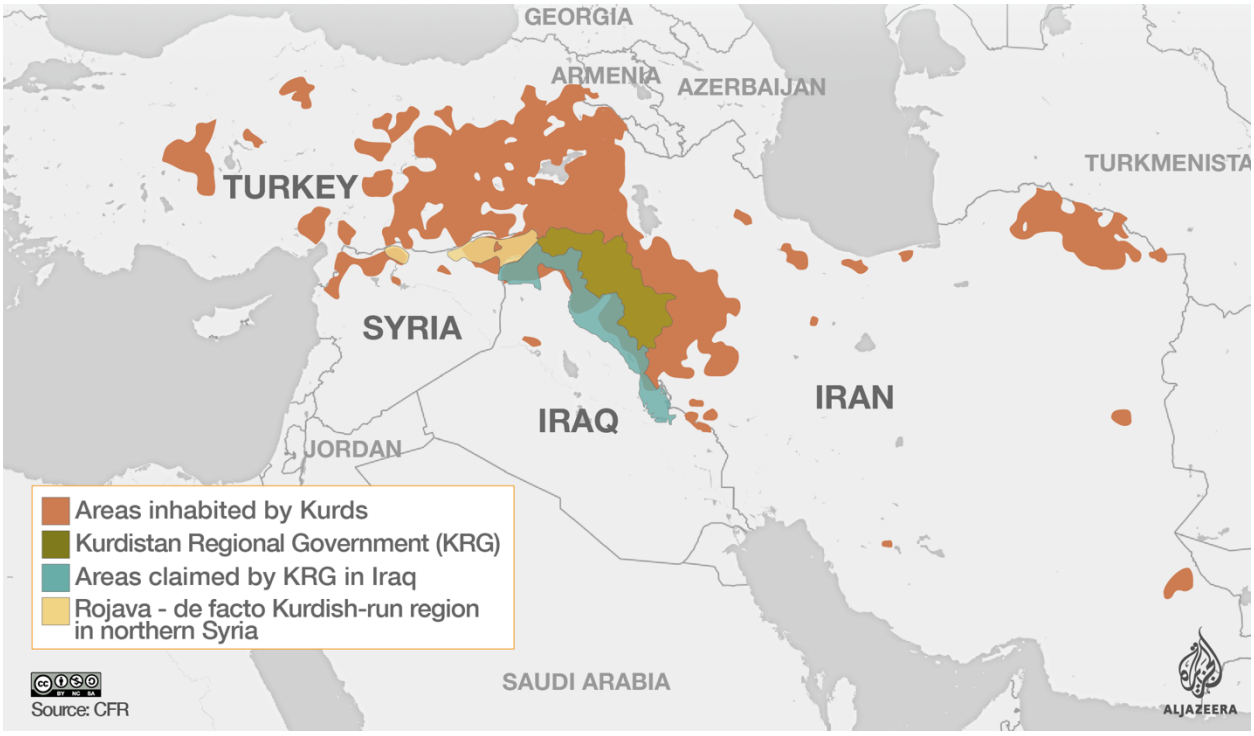


Figure 2: Kurdish Geographic Dispersion (Aljazeera 2017).



Turkey, Iraq, and Syria can be characterized as post-Ottoman civilization and because they have the most similarity in their origin, will compose the breadth of the paper. Iran and post-USSR territories, they originate from the Persian empire's reign and will be a crucial point of comparison (Gunter 2004:199). Iran's origin points differ from the other territories as it presupposes an era of violence that carries over the period within the scope of this project. These points of distinctions have led to the development of divergently varied tensions within interactions with the minority group. Thus, making it so that those areas do not have the same starting point of study, and excluded from the other focal points.

In the following paragraphs, I will delve into the established literature and provide background information on each territory to set the stage for the rest of my paper. It is important to note that while this may be a brief introduction to some of the tensions between the state and the minority group, the complexity of relations may be understated, but will be expanded on throughout this case study.

Turkey

Turkish Kurds' fight originated from the preliminary empty promise for autonomy, breeding sufficient grounds for retaliation. Following World War One, President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points established that non-Turkish minorities would be granted the right to autonomous development (Gunter 2004:199). The treaty gave Kurds a false hope for a state and thus began supporting the recommended boundaries being created. The promise of autonomy was reiterated within the Treaty of Sevres. However, following Kurdish support for Turkey's reigning president at the time, Ataturk, under the guise of Islamic unity, the subsequent and more definitive Treaty of Lausanne (1923) recognized the Republic of Turkey without special

consideration for Kurds, which came as a shock to those who had become hopeful (Gunter 2004:199).

In addition, as Ataturk attempted to establish national unification and legitimacy in newly formed Turkey, Kurdish revolts quickly followed suit in a last-ditch effort to seize power before their identity lost prominence in the political landscape. Unfortunately, this completely backfired as their morale and efforts were defeated beyond immediate reconciliation. This also became the basis for the reasoning provided by authorities who began eliminating anything that might even suggest establishing a separate Kurdish nation – including language, cultural clothing, and personal names (Gunter 2004:200).

In efforts to suppress the breadth of the Kurdish population and minimize any power they may possibly have to gain, the government embarked on a series of targeted policies. For instance, Turkey refused to recognize anyone who speaks Turkish as being ethnically Kurdish on census reports, thus effectively decreasing the accuracy of reportable numbers and making it difficult to assess the full extent of the situation (Gunter 1988:390). It also gave Turkey the ability to underscore Kurdish presence, making it so that movements were unaware of how populous their possible alliance would be. Other infringements include propaganda culminating in the origins of both Turks and Kurds, forcible isolation of some sects and explicit bans on the use of their language (Gunter 1988:399). Thus, we can clearly see how the positioning of the moral threat of Kurds to the public was weaponized to illicitly garner public support for their assimilation.

Iraq

Iraq has experienced Kurdish revolt from the moment of the nation's annexation from Great Britain, for three reasons: they composed a large critical mass, Iraq's lack of legitimacy as

a political entity, and its continuous, strong religious divides between Sunni and Shia religious sects. The strength of these revolts and the community instilled a fear in Iraqi leaders that Kurdish succession would deplete their already unstable population –specifically the Shia population who would take with them fertile land, rich with oil, that can prove to be economically disadvantageous (Gunter 2004:201). Their fears came to fruition as the first appointed local Kurdish leader by Britain immediately enticed rebellion and began secret dealings with the Turks. Despite being quickly struck down by Britain's forces, this will set the precedent for decades of unrest and mistrust.

Already exasperated tensions between the two were made worse as President Saddam Hussein came into power, unwavering in his violence against rebellions. Most prominently, the Anfal campaigns in the 1980s and subsequent chemical attack against Halabja left their marks on the country to this day. The Anfal operation, response to Kurdish revolt during the Iran–Iraq War, resulted in the mass murder of almost 100,000 noncombatant Kurds (Gunter 1993:296). The Anfal Campaign was the greenlight for Kurds to lose their belief in the legitimacy of the Baghdad government and its ability to serve their interests.

As one war ended, another began: the Gulf War. Kurdish uprisings once again erupted, exploiting the country's preoccupation with the war time as an opportunity to attack. These uprisings merely led to mass amounts of refugees, forcing the US to intervene, and creating a haven in northern Iraq – later becoming the de facto Kurdish state (Gunter 2004:202).

When the U.S. brokered the formation of a new Iraqi state and gave Kurds 13% of oil receipts, it seemed that there was finally a chance for some peace and prosperity. Their stability was momentarily threatened by the U.S's declaration of the Iraq war. But the Republic of Iraq's Constitution in 2005 gave more power and control to regional governments, such as to allocate

controls of oil and production. The aim of which was to increase cooperation between the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and Baghdad's government (Gunter 2011:1625). But, still, suspicion and animosity continue to threaten the political stability of the Iraqi state. Under the Al-Maliki's government discretion, the government began seeking to re-impose authority over the KRG while public opinion sought a more centralized government (Gunter 2011:1627). Current relations remain tense, however there has been a halt in the ability for the central government to outrightly impose human rights violations upon its people.

Syria

In direct opposition to the experiences of other Kurds, Syrian Kurds were able to maintain their cultural distinction, despite linguistic Arabization and political involvement, due to their collective emphasis on public expression. Due the government's focus on economic prosperity and the lack of intervention with ethnic relations, a uniquely Kurdish problem did not exist. Rather during the mandate and early periods, ethnic groups were free to live harmoniously with Syrians and practice their culture.

The 1970s marked a departure away from a harmonious way of life towards the development of an authoritarian regime that sought to shape Syrian society and cleanse it of its ethnic diversity (Tejel 2009:88). The government approached its goal of ethnic unification by delegitimization of the differences between ethnic minority groups and Arab Syrians which quickly translated into hypervisibility of the Kurdish community. The government demanded adherence or passive obedience as it began to restrict language, folklore and thus posed a direct attack on the survival of their identity (Tejel 2009:84).

Up until this point, Syrians never have taken up arms against their government, so they were unable to present themselves as legitimate actors and openly negotiate with the central

government. Such actions necessitate some type of armed conflict that would make their threats be seen as legitimate. They also were marginal actors on the political arena due to the political system's exclusivity that has left them on the periphery. They have instead favored strategic political participation without openly nationalist identification until 1957 in which KDPS sought an improvement of living conditions, but still did not consider liberation (Tejel 2009:92). Lastly, they chose to borrow from Marxist and western ideologies, not embracing an Islamist doctrine. These factors set them apart from the fights of countries like Turkey and Iraq as evident by their current conditions.

To maintain their culture within such turbulent times, Kurds turned to a reliance on language transmission, folklore telling and festivals to celebrate holidays. Kurds also began a process of informal transmissions of identity through social units, such as the mother, and through the formation of organizations that protected their norms and cultural matters. It was not until the Syrian state began viewing Kurdish cultural activities as political acts rather than a means of cultural identification that transformed them into wanting political powers. In response, PKK played a role in this politicization by placing themselves at the forefront of efforts to take previously private means of dissemination of culture and transform it into the public arena: such as through public literary programs, folklore festivals, reinvention of their flag and history (Tejel 2009:104). At the same time, the PKK inspired a cultural awakening that increased rates of publications and an increase in group sponsored cultural activities. Because these activities became inherently entwined with political unity, the effort to revitalize culture also increased internal divisions within culture and politics that de-unified the population.

Iran

While it is true that there is a more robust population of Kurds within Iran, their movement for independence has been one of the weakest and least successful. The weakness of Iran's Kurdish movements is a result of Iran's government consistently leveraging its powers, making it much stronger than that of countries such as Turkey or Iraq. Their methodologies have routinely involved assassination of any Kurdish organization's or party's leaders as they believed it would dismantle and disorient those parties (Gunter 2004:203). In addition, prior to the formation of the Iranian state, the Safavid Empire – one of the most powerful of the Persian empire's reign, had taken significant efforts to destroy Kurdish principles (Bengio 2017:33). The culmination of these factors has led to the fragmentation of the Kurdish identity, diverging from the paths of the post-Ottoman states.

As an Islamic republic, Iran has consistently appealed to religious sects to divide support and de-strengthen Kurdish movements. Most of Iran's Kurds are part of the Sunni faith and thus have consistently felt alienated within the Shia regime. But efforts to unite the Kurdish community into a national movement are complicated due the presence of a Shia Kurdish minority that have been routinely favored by the government. The government has turned to appealing to these Shia Kurds through their religious affinity to enhance division within internal coalitions (Bengio 2017:35). Despite public outrage internationally over the Islamic empire, the Kurdish population never utilized that to yield support because they are either too weak to dislodge the government or because they feared retaliation. In addition, international support for Kurds was unviable because of the strengthening of Iran's Islamic republic due to the lifting of sanctions and growing trading partnerships. The position of Iran's Kurds, thus, contrasts with the

situation in Iraq where the US and Britain have intervened multiple times to help (Bengio 2017:34).

Turkish Policy Analysis

Pre – World War II Developments

The root of the present animosity between the Kurd population under Turkish rule can be traced to the fall of the Ottoman Empire. With its fall, the Western powers, were tasked with dividing up its geographical composition into what is present day Iraq, Iran, and Turkey. In the process, a string of false promises and covert negotiations amplified pre-existing tensions of the prominent Kurdish population.

The first of such promises can be found within Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen points of 1918. Within his twelfth point he declared that the non-Turkish minorities of the Ottoman Empire should be granted the right of "autonomous development" (Wilson 1918). This speech created the expectation that Kurds will one day have the ability to be a free state. In turn, their eventual denial of such a right under subsequent treaties and sovereignties became the fuel that ignited protest. In addition to this speech, the Treaty of Sevres solidified the promise of autonomy and independence as a tangible goal, if they were to cooperate with these foreign entities. Within Article 62 it provided for "local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas" and in Article 64 even looked forward to the possibility that "the Kurdish peoples" might be granted "independence from Turkey" (Treaty of Sevres 1920). The combination of a verbal promise and a written treaty signified potential future autonomy, thus making it a greater shock when Turkey would be made a state without any special provisions for its minority populations.

From the timeframe of 1923 until 1991, the Turkish government adopted a policy of cultural assimilation, particularly one of prohibition. The government continuously placed

limitation on the abilities of Kurds to practice their culture and even response with violence to any resistance efforts. They employed both a pattern of educational suppression and economic underdevelopment within Kurdish Southeastern territories that has isolated and alienated Kurds from the Turk populace. Though the movement has been partially successful at achieving success, they were limited in mobilization efforts due to the variety of resistance movements that existed, inspired by varying ideologies. Rather than have one group to focus resources and mobilization for, there was dozens of groups forming that challenged one another and even struggled to gain support because of disagreements on tactics – particularly violent versus nonviolent approaches.

In October of 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne established Turkey as an official sovereign without mentioning Kurdish rights or protections, under President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Treaty of Lausanne 1923). In fact, Kurdish support and cooperation for Atatürk leading up to this moment was instrumental in endowing the government with necessary legitimacy, as Kurdish separatist movements would threaten Turkey's claims and disrupt treaty agreements. When Atatürk came to power, rather than recognizing the diverse minority, the presidency made the choice to seek national unity through the establishment of a secular and purely Turkish state. The threat of Kurdish separatism was monumental for the decisions made by each of the four states because they were such a sizeable majority that lived often on desirable land – fertile land for agriculture in Syria and oil rich land in Iraq. But up until this point ethnic consciousness was not as strong and defined as it is presently. The boundaries of what defined a Turk as opposed to a Kurd was more fluid, and it was the lack of acknowledgement of the latter group created the necessary conditions for years of unrest.

The Treaty of Lausanne also created an obligation to provide instruction in minority languages within primary schools located in towns and districts where a considerable proportion of non-Muslim nationals reside (Treaty of Lausanne 1923). As most Kurds were Muslim, the stipulation of protection for non-Muslim minorities would not apply to them and thus no instructional courses were taught in Kurdish. Rather, suppression of the Kurdish language became embedded within government agenda.

In 1924, the Turkish government implemented the Law of the Unification of Instruction which abolished all religious instruction in state schools and placed all schools under the control of the Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı or the Ministry of National Education (MEB) (Aydin 2020). the law centralized all education under the purview of the national government with the hopes of eradicating the duality of secular and religious educational institutions. In turn, the government granted the MEB power to set the curricula as well as prepare and approve textbooks and teaching materials for use within the classroom. In consequence, the government could directly influence the extent of the inclusion of Kurdish history within historical teachings, leading to their identities fading into the periphery. The laws that targeted the educational capacity of Kurds translated into large inequalities in access to quality education for most, and as a result the dominant religious ideology has diminished critical thinking of topics concerning nationalism and ethnic diversity at schools.

Government economic initiatives within the 1920s were motivated by the goal to foster the private industry. Turkey chose to pursue a *devletcilik-etatism* economic system, referring to a system of massive state intervention (White 1998:143). Due to insufficient entrepreneurship and a lack of capital within the private sector, the government developed state economic enterprises to act as engines of industrial and regional development. Turkey justified its strong

interventionist role both economically and ideologically by depicting the private sector as weak and suspectable to speculation. The *devletcilik-etatism* economic strategy empowered the government to control the private sector and became the legal framework for economically suppressing Kurdish areas. In consequence, while ethnically Turkish cities were flourishing. Southern and Southeastern areas, such as Anatolia, were severely underdeveloped due to a lack of governmental policy of economic integration. Economic underdevelopment is a strategy that was also utilized by Syria and Iran to keep the Kurdish population from accessing power and because they were actively prioritizing other constituents. In addition, the Principles of Economic Contract of the Izmir Economic Congress laid out mutual responsibilities of labor and capital in achieving this goal, referred to as corporatism (White 1998:144). Under this contract, all leftist organizations were banned, unions were placed under state control and the right to strike was denied.

The first major revolt was the rising of Sheik Said in 1925, less than two years after Turkey's formation. Garnering the support of nearly fifteen thousand fighters, Said sought to liberate the Kurds, yet he was met with the Turkish military sending over three times the number of soldiers and an immediate Turkish victory. The revolt ended with the destruction of approximately 8,758 houses and over the death of 15,000 people, including the rebellion's leaders, thus ushering a phase of Kurdish displacement (Gunter 2004:202). The government was patricianly threatened by these revolts because they occurred within the Kurdish area of Mosul: an area that Turkey advocated to rule during treaty dealings because it believed that it would be best able to represent their needs. The success of this revolt would have undermined such a claim.

The first revolt proved to be a blessing for Atatürk as it provided perfect reasoning for why Kurdish suppression was necessary for national success. Turkey quickly implemented a nationwide strategic policy of Kurdish suppression that outlawed any semblance of Kurdish culture within both the private and public spheres. These policies were aimed at eroding Kurds' beliefs so that they would eventually consider themselves as part of Turkish society, just as the government wants them to be. Beginning with the re-identification of Kurdish population through the euphemism "mountain Turks," Kurds would no longer be referred to as their own ethnic identity but rather to be viewed as a subsection of Turkish ethnicity (Gunter 2004:202). Because many Kurds resided within these isolated mountainous regions, inaccessible to the larger population, the government hoped that Kurds would gradually forget their mother tongue. In an aggressive nationalist campaign, the anti-Kurd campaign gave politicians a specific target for their assimilatory policies and a place to direct disdain, a scapegoat. The attempts to historically integrate Kurdish identity into that of the Turks, so that they begin to lose their autonomous identity over time also meant that they were retroactively rewriting history so that it would be harder to measure the size of Kurdish populations and their influence, thereby eradicating their existence. To ensure cooperation, there was a strict enforcement of the above terminology in both professional and political spheres as well as within academics, publications and educational spheres when referring to the Kurds.

In addition to the linguistic changes, Atatürk proceeded by outlawing all aspects of Kurdish identity: clothing, language, names, and folklore. One such example is the Hat Law, Law No. 671 on Hats, which banned Kurdish traditional attire, specifically men's headgear (Gunter 2019:12). The Hat Law was met with protest within Anatolian provinces. People held responsible for involvement in political demonstrations or distribution of posters and leaflets

against these laws, were either arrested or sentenced to death. They did however get to keep some rights: citizenship and ability to participate civically, to wield electoral power, hold prestigious positions in government and society, governmental attempts to integrate the west into universities, and did not originally prevent private usage of Kurdish language.

The Turkish Penal Code

In 1926, the government established the Turkish Penal Code, an important piece of legislature that justified the imprisonment and execution of thousands of individuals for decades to come (Amnesty International 1977). For decades, the articles outlined within Appendix D gave the judicial system the right to punish anyone who threatened Turkish nationalism and state unification through imprisonment or even death at times. In doing so, the government was able to dismantle separatists' movements and execute their leaders before the rebellions ballooned into more powerful organizations. Article 141 was used to imprison any such left-wing organizations and groups, or anyone suspected of such activity. Under Article 142, Journalists, publishers, writers, translators, academics, and anyone who is suspected of dissemination of material the authorities believe to be left-wing is liable to imprisonment. To persecute anyone who performs violent political acts and involvement with rebellious activities, Article 146 states that. The extent to which Turkey utilized their legal system to pursue punitive action for Kurds threatening their regime is unparalleled within any of the other three states.

The penal code also criminalized any actions that may be perceived to be a threat towards or advocating against the political stability of the regime, such as article 158 that made insults towards the president illegal or Article 159 that criminalized insults towards the government, the judiciary, the armed forces, or the security forces (Amnesty International 1977:3). Under Articles 311, 312, and 163, activity that would incite hatred or organizations oriented towards opposing

national ideology could face imprisonment (Amnesty International 1977:3). The Turkish Bar association has called for the abolition of Articles 141, 142 and 163 and the Turkish legal profession generally has been very active in its efforts to protect human rights, as shown by the declarations of the major Bar Associations on issues such as violence, torture and repressive legislation. People were imprisoned because of their political or religious beliefs are Articles 158, 159, 163, 311 and 312 (Amnesty International 1977:3).

The next major political revolt occurred in 1930 within the Republic of Ararat, self-proclaimed as a Kurdish state, stemmed from eastern Turkey. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Lebanon trained Kurds and assisted in the development the Khoybun party, a nationalist Kurdish organization that would engage in armed conflict under General Ihsan Nuri Pasha (Gunter 2019:12). The Armenian groups were motivated to assist as they were incapable of organizing their own armed movements against Turkey due to their smaller size. Conflict would continuously escalate throughout summer until the Turkish Air Force bombed Mount Ararat from every direction leading in Khoybun's defeat. Turkey successfully regained its control over the territory and the breadth of military violence in retaliation demoralized the Kurd cause. The Khoybun party were persecuted causing them to flee to Syria where they laid the roots for their own nationalist movements and began the process of language standardization.

In 1934, the government sought new means of limiting Kurdish lineage by passing the Surname Law. It stipulated that each citizen must adopt a Turkish family name and outlawed any tribal associations (Aslan 2009). The Surname Law had many important functions for achieving the original goal of Kurdish assimilation, including detribalization, fostering Turkishness within foreign ethnicities, to strengthen Turkish national identity so that its citizens are ethnically indistinguishable. The pressure to adopt a Turkish surname was felt more by non-Muslim

minorities who feared discrimination through their ethnically marked names. The law would be stay in effect until 1980 and succeeded in changing the names of 67 percent of subdistricts and 63 percent of villages in Southeastern and Eastern Turkey, including the renaming of the Tunceli province from Dersim to Tunceli through the Law on Administration of the Tunceli Province in 1936.

In 1936, the government passed Law No. 1164 which allowed the state to establish an Inspectorates-General: granting authorities with full military and judicial powers over civilians of Kurdish districts. Most notably, the Fourth Inspectorates General's crackdowns and forced resettlements within the Dersim region led to infamous Dersim rebellion which lasted from 1936 to 1938 (Gunter 2019). The Fourth Inspectorates General exploited their power by forcing all young boys and girls to be relocated to boarding schools outside of the region where they would be Turkified. The country created the Elazig Girls' Institute in 1937 with the sole purpose of transforming the young women from Kurdish to Turkish (Aslan 2011:75). As a result of the armed altercation, approximately forty thousand individuals were killed and over three thousand Kurds were deported. The government would justify their decisions within Dersim for years by claiming that the rebellious populace needed discipline and punishment for the sake of national peace.

In contrast with Syrian and Irani Kurds, Kurds within Turkey retained vital political and civic rights which allowed them to leverage their civic power for representation. They were guaranteed citizenship, the ability to participate civically, and to hold electoral power. Over time civic power was a critical avenue of changing law and policy and to ensure that more benign candidates are elected who would assist the Kurdish case. Kurds were also allowed to be accepted into prestigious government roles and other socially respectable positions, with the

necessary credentials and support. The government attempted to integrate the Kurdish west into universities and even allowed them to pursue higher education; however, the country's job market and university acceptance was extremely rigorous due to economic hardships that limited their accessibility to these spaces. It is evident that even when the government made attempts to integrate Kurds, the preferential treatment for urban cities and Turks maintained the high barrier of entry of prestigious employment and education for Kurds.

The Aftermath of World War II

Following World War II, Kurds utilized their electoral capacity to occupy crucial governmental positions where they could implicitly lead to better conditions for their community. The new constitution of 1961 granted citizens more civil liberties when it came to press and speech (Gunter 2019:15). Although the constitution maintained the ban on forming any regional or ethnic associations that might impair Turkish unity, the Turkish Kurds still benefitted from these new freedoms. For instance, it allowed them to occupy new positions in which officials were able to progress public health within the eastern under-developed regions, but who were later forced to resign for regionalism. The 1950s also marked the beginning of publications and press that examined the Turkish problem, which the government would eventually ban. However, it was the start of a future where Kurdish rights and identity would not be met with such strong animosity. The ability to retain voting rights was crucial for Kurdish rights as it allowed them to bargain their support for the most appealing party, usually those aligned with social democrats (Gunter 2019:19).

The 1960s was an era of strict suppression of the educational sphere for Kurdish citizens through the government's attempt to weaken the Kurdish ethnicity. For instance, Turkish language boarding schools were created and popularized with the intention of separating Kurdish

children from their parents and to "Turkify" them; within these schools, students who were caught speaking their native tongue were punished. The military government intensified its efforts of the Turkification of Kurdish villages and town names, in addition to the continued propagation of Kurds as part of Turk ethnicity, as witnessed within General Gursel's 1961 published book that claimed that Kurds were Turkish in origin and of the same ethnicity (Gunter 2019). In addition, Anatolia, a Kurdish city, was signaled out by Turkish leaders as a "gate and fortress" for the country's stability, meaning that it was essential to secure its cooperation for the sake of Turkish nationalism (Gunter 2019:15). In response to the government's actions, a 1961 demonstration across multiple major cities sought to reclaim their heritage and to compel the government to recognize their national rights (Gunter 2019:15). While the demonstration did not yield any immediate success, it established the seeds for succussive, more violent demonstrations.

As the government tightening its control over Kurds, major resistant Kurdish parties began to emerge in Turkey that sought cultural rights and economic equality, with an eventual end goal of independence. Many of these revolts drew inspiration from Barzani's model in Iraq, such as the emergence of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Turkey (KDPT) in 1965 (Gunter 2019:16). Though it started with those two goals, the murder of the party's leader in the 1960s led to party splits that would eventually spur more radical thought and talks of armed attacks. Their activities would come to a halt when the party's leaders would flee to Iraq after being persecuted by the government.

The legally oriented political party known as the Turkish Worker's Party (TWP) representing leftist thought was founded within that decade. The TWP secured fifteen seats in the 1965 elections and used their platform to acknowledge the Kurdish situation within political

platforms (Gunter 2019:16). The party also passed a 1970 resolution that was the first to outline and recognize Kurdish assimilation (Gunter 2019:16). But as the new military backed government came into power in 1971, it would dissolve the TWP and sentence its main leaders to prison under accusation of separatist's activities for advocating for Kurdish rights. The effects of its dissolution meant that there would be a disproportionate representation of Kurds within revolutionary leftist movements, such as Cayan's Turkish Peoples Liberation Party and Front (THKP-C) and Gezmis's Turkish Peoples Liberation Army (THKO) both of whose leaders would be killed in 1972 (Gunter 2019:17). Cayan's radical teachings within the THKP-C of armed violence and power through force and fear, would inspire around 20 terrorist groups of its like in the 1970s (Gunter 2019:17). The government would consistently force the leaders of these parties were to flee or be murdered.

While these movements were mainly characterized through their use of violence, there were also many protests that were non-violent in nature yet still met with animosity. For instance, in 1967, Kurdish national committees within eastern Turkey sought to condemn the government for neglecting the educational and economic needs of the district. These rallies very meticulously avoided the use of the word "Kurd" to avoid radical associations and government accusation but as such regions were populated by Kurds the association was clear. Subsequent demonstrations would also break out in 1968, with no avail. The first legal Kurdish organization Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKO) was formed in 1969 to address economic problems and Turkish military violence within the area (Gunter 2019:18). Within the same year, the DDKO's leader and another student Kurdish organization's leader was murdered, resulting in larger scale demonstrations.

At the same time, Turkey sought to economically progress by reshaping its agricultural and mechanical industries that left Kurdish regions severely under-developed. Rather than relying on individuals to harvest crops and conduct manual labor in the fields, the introduction of each tractor meant that 10 to 50 rural laborers were no longer needed (White 1998:150). Instead of producing more jobs, Turkey's rapid phase of industrialization could not generate enough economic opportunity to keep its populace steadily employed; thus, leaving thousands out of jobs and increasing relative deprivation. The government's economic policies greatly reduced the Kurdish population within Turkey's Kurdish regions, which were primarily rural, as they sought work by relocating into urban environments. The process of urbanization also demystified the apparent disparity in distribution of wealth and goods and services to these rural areas. In fact, due to heavy concentration of ruralism in East and Southeastern Turkey, Kurdish areas ended up facing the highest levels of inflation, unemployment, and under-development.

Going into the 1960s, the government decided to reimpose devletcilik economics, otherwise referred to as state-controlled economics. They first began by creating the State Planning Organization and redrawing up Five Year Plans. Under these state-owned enterprises, poor farmers, and wage-earners throughout all of Turkey suffered, particularly in Kurdish regions who were earning only 74.8% of the nation's average household income in 1968; whereas Istanbul and Ankara citizens were earning almost double of the nation's average (White 1998:145). The issue with state-owned enterprises was that they were not making a desirable profit and were worsening Turkey's balance of payment problem, ensuing higher rates of inflation.

State Militarization in the 1970s

Due to high levels of political unrest particularly within eastern Turkey, on March 12, 1971, the government introduced a direct military intervention program which identified Kurdish nationalism and political extremism of the last decade as a dire threat towards the nation's political stability (Gunter 2019:31). In doing so, the government solidified the identification of Kurdish activists as terrorists and vilified their cause to the public. In all four countries, the government attempted to vilify the Kurdish cause, especially within Iran because it limited their ability to mobilize and garner support. To make matters worse, Parliament received information that Turkish Kurdish movements were cooperating with Iraq's KDP. Throughout the 1970s, Kurds would bargain their support to the most appealing political party as they were unable to establish their own, which usually meant that social democrats and left leaning parties greatly bore Kurdish support (Gunter 2019:19). The ability for Kurds to leveraging their votes demonstrates the importance of retaining their political and citizenship rights that are not afforded within other countries, as they were able to leverage votes for acknowledgement of their needs.

The government continued to enforce the previous laws limiting Kurdish rights and introduced a few more to mitigate the movement's growing influence. The 1972 Registration Law stipulated that names which did not conform with national culture and that offended the public cannot be given to children, carrying major implications for Kurds who have been identified as threatening national stability (Aslan 2009). Kurdish individuals were able to negotiate with officials to name their child as they wish because it was left to the discretion and interpretation of those offices. In 1973, the State Security Courts were established with the intention to replace military tribunals that were met with stark criticism by legal authorities

(Amnesty International 1977). While in theory these courts were meant to combat both extreme right-wing and left-wing offences, in practice, they only dealt with leftist associations. As Kurds often lent their support to the left, the intentions of these courts were to target Kurdish activity.

Despite these changes, Turkey still suffered from political instability and increasing terrorist and extremist activity which was exasperated by the Kurdish dilemma. The country struggled to restructure its economic structure during periods of rapid industrialization that was decreasing demand for low skilled labor while the Turkish population was growing. Despite growing demand, the country was unable to supply enough economic opportunities for its people. Industrialization's role in devaluing unskilled labor meant that there was an increased demand for, yet limited supply of, educational opportunity (White 1998:150). The shortage of opportunity heightened the stakes for educational performance and increased competition for university admittance. Hundreds of thousands of the country's youths who managed to secure higher education were left with no means of re-integrating into the employment structure. Thus, they struggled to find employment which led to highly educated individuals settling for positions with minor salaries and opportunity, despite their credentials.

Universities were also gaining a reputation for acting as a hot bed for terrorist thought and extremist activity. The government struggled to control their activity because the Law of Autonomy offered universities protections from police regulation. The Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) was founded in 1974 within these universities by Abdullah Ocalan (Gunter 2019:57). The PKK was characterized by its violent and radical message, but arguably was one of the most successful Kurdish parties. Ocalan was born of the lowest social class and felt the brunt end of social and economic exclusion due to the rural transformations which left him hungry for action rather than theoretical debates about rights (Gunter 2019:57). It is no surprise that most

movements, apart from the KDP and the PUK whose members were educated urbanites, emerged from the most excluded portions of Kurdish society.

Similarly to their successors, the PKK called into attention issues of economic exploitation, national identification, and excessive Turkish military presence within Kurdish villages. Their end goals were to establish an independent Kurdish state and to amend historical misconceptions propagated by the government (Gunter 2019:58). Beginning in Eastern Anatolia the protests would quickly spread to the town of Diyarbakir. They would categorize the case of Turkish (as well as Syria, Iraq, and Iran) rule of Kurds as a classic example of colonialization. Inspired by Marxist thought, Ocalan was critical of how capitalistic development and the saturation of land in certain hands directly led to rising unemployment and their current economic exploitation (Gunter 2019:58). The reliance on Marxist theory can also be explained due to the involvement of the Soviet Union within Kurdish politics during the early twentieth century. Despite the prevalent discontent with the group's violent and radical actions by their own community, the PKK was able to justify their actions by claiming that they are merely reactive responses to the state's harsh policy.

While Kurdish groups did not always find success, the sheer breadth of nationalist groups emerging during the late 20th century signified the widespread need for change. Some other Kurdish resistance groups include the Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Association (DKDD) and the Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan (SPTK) which was less radical and believed that it would be possible to live in harmony under a democratic state (Gunter 2019:63-64). The SPTK was interested in issues of Kurdish education, language use within publishing industry, and acknowledging the role that the government has played in erasing Kurdish heritage.

By the end of the 1970s, Turkey was facing severe economic and political crises. The economic situation of the country was making the disparities in distribution of wealth, goods, and services more apparent. High rates of inflation and unemployment continued to burden the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey the most but was still weighing down the rest of the country. By the end of the decade, inflation had exceeded 100% which led to more violent incidents and demonstrations to erupt (White 1998:147).

Due to the failures and shortcomings of SPOs, the 1970s introduced a new system of privatization of state agencies with hopes that it would alleviate some of the state's financial problems and create more desirable economic conditions (White 1998:145). In doing so they hoped to combat the surges in oil prices and the ballooning state debt with the introduction of a capitalist regime and foreign borrowing, ending *devletcilik*. The cost of these policies was felt primarily by Kurdish rural regions which had negatively disproportionate household incomes compared to Turkish cities.

By the 1980s, the culmination of these economic policies had alienated numerous social groups, most notably the Kurds. The exclusion and economic underappreciation felt by the Kurds originates from the ways the disempowerment of farmers and underdevelopment of rural areas, which contrasts with how in the mid-20th century their efforts to incorporate various social and ethnic groups into economic development projects were and into the elite sectors of society. The complete lack of Kurdish integration by the late 1900s was due to decades of chronic under development.

Militarized State and Crackdown of the 1980s

As a result of political deadlock and extremist violence, the Chief of the General Staff General Kenan Evren led a coup d'état in September of 1980. For three years straight the country

was ruled by the Turkish armed forces (Gunter 2019:19). Though a general election would restore democracy three years later, a full restoration did not occur until 1989. The political instability of the 1980s intensified Turkish nationalism and the direct suppression of Kurdish identity. The new government banned all Kurdish political parties and executed the leaders who did not flee. The rise of violence within Turkey was due to high levels of unemployment, victimization of the youth and consistent foreign instigation. Just as the decades before, the 1980s government adopted a policy of cultural assimilation so that Kurds would abandon their culture.

Prime Minster Ozal introduced new economic reforms between 1980-1982 that shrunk subsistence farming to almost nothing. Ozal sought to mitigate the harmful effects of these economic reforms by introducing support prices through public agencies. The results of economic reform were disastrous for the rural Kurdish community as it depressed their agricultural prices further. As they were growing cotton and tobacco, the Turkish currency was rapidly depreciating in the 1980s for the benefit of exporters at the expense of farmers.

To control the breeding of right-wing and left-wing thought brewing within universities, the government passed the Law on the Higher Education no. 2547 that de-autonomized universities (Gunter 2019:28). The established Council of Higher Education supervised the sector and required professors to increase Turkish nationalism by putting patriotic duties into practice. The law remains controversial due to its anti-democratic nature as universities would depend on the Council for their internal affairs and to guide thought.

In 1982, the government ratified a new constitution that sanctioned the suppression of Kurdish language and culture. Article 42.9 stated that:

> "No language other than Turkish shall be taught as mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institutions of training or education. Foreign languages to be taught in institutions of

> training and education and the rules to be followed by schools conducting training and education in a foreign language shall be determined by law. The provisions of international treaties are reserved," (Turkey Const. 1982, art. 42, sec. 9).

The constitution mandated Turkish to be the primary language of instruction within the primary education sector and gave the government the ability to determine which languages can be offered. Despite the ability for foreign schools to teach Western languages, such as German or English, the constitution would only strictly outlaw the languages of minority ethnic groups – such as Kurds. Other articles such as 26, 28, 57 and 89 would have the abundant and overt characterization of citizens as being solely members of the Turkish nation (Turkey Const. 1982, art. 26, 28, 57, 89). The language of the document thus created an exclusively Turkish ethnic spirit that disregarded the presence of Kurdish minority.

By 1982, government offices strictly enforced the policy of Turkish-only naming with the threat of persecution. Those who refused would be taken to court that regarded Kurdish names as a threat towards good morals and national culture as it clashed with national propaganda. The government would destroy any inscriptions that validated Kurdish rights, they would continue their practice of renaming villages and provinces into Turkish names. The government also sought to address how concentrations of Kurdish populations have led to increased resistance by forcibly displacing Kurdish communities among Turkish towns in Western Turkey. Many esteemed individuals who would even incidentally use the word Kurd or employ language that can be suspected of pushing an agenda were met with bans and arrests under the purview of the penal code.

The Law No. 2932, “The Law Concerning Publications and Broadcasts in Languages Other Than Turkish" in 1983 had profound influence on limiting speech. The law infamously states that:

> "No other language than Turkish may be used or taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens in education and training institutions...It is forbidden to express, promote or publish thoughts in any language apart from the primary official language of states recognized by the Turkish State" (Human Rights Watch 1999).

The law prohibited the use of any language other than Turkish as a mother tongue, regardless of ethnicity. In addition, any publications in Kurdish were completely prohibited, while those who spoke, sang, or wrote in the language were put on probation, interrogated, and litigated. While such a ban would conventionally only affect those of literate backgrounds, they made sure to target all by placing specific bans on any semblance of Kurdish identity that may be practiced. One such instance was the outlaw of folk songs in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia because they could be used for ethnic purposes or even separatist reasons. While not strictly enforced, they would make an example out of individuals who broke the status quo. Such an example was the arrest of prominent sociologist Ismail Beşikçi because of his claim that current Kurdish violence is reaction to repression rather than unprompted (Gunter 2019:47).

Also in 1983 was the Political Parties Law No. 2820, “Preventing the Creation of Minorities,” that forbade any political party from representing minorities based on any national or religious or language differences (Human Rights Watch 1999). Additionally, they cannot seek to disrupt national unity or disseminate languages other than that of Turkish. They are forbidden from printing any statues, programs or propaganda or speaking in languages other than Turkish. They were forced to take a stance against communities and individuals that would pose a threat to Turkish nationalism. The effect of such strict prohibitions was to outlaw the recognition of any minority so that the question of the Kurdish dilemma cannot be legally discussed on a political arena. The government also succeeded in banning any political party associated with a minority group or advocating for their rights, regardless of if they were non-violent or not.

The state attempted to break the backbone of Kurdish separatism by persecuting anyone who was associated with any Kurdish party, particularly the PKK. Under the jurisdiction of the penal code, the PKK was categorized as a terrorist organization trying to establish a Marxist state in Eastern Anatolia through arms and was indicted by the government. In response, Ocalan was forced to flee, while those who remained were either sentenced to lengthy prison time or death. The government apprehended over 20,000 suspects and charged 15,000 individuals with terrorist membership, of those it charged 3,000 of separatist activity. Amnesty International reported on the commonplace use of torture and expressed concern about Diyarbakir prisons located in a Kurdish region (Amnesty International 1977:7). The PKK utilized bordering states to regroup and even staged an ambush near the Iraqi border in 1983. Their increased presence along the border resulted in increased border security measures.

Within these border towns, the PKK generally supplied them with resources and armed the local populace to defend themselves in exchange for their allyship. In recognizing how the isolation of these rural villages has translated into lack of goods and services, the PKK began increasing the country's access to health, medicine, and resources, which gained them the towns' sympathy (Gunter 2019:72). Their location was ideal for PKK regrouping because Turkish authority struggled to transport and communicate with these remote areas. So, rather than increasing militarized presence further, they aimed at building infrastructure and investments within these areas to integrate them into Turkish society. At the same time, the PKK's ties with Iraq's KDP were dissolving because of their violence against women, children and even some of the KDP's own members that violated their agreement. In response to the refusal of other groups to cooperate with them, the PKK changed its policy to target economic infrastructure rather than

civilians in 1988. They were met with undeclared martial law instituted by the regional governor due to erupted fighting.

By 1987 Ozal introduced a Keynesian economic model which halted privatization to wield the support of the middle class and began to pour around 2 billion US dollars into the countryside including the Kurdish population was residing (White 1998:147). Again, due to the retention of political and civic rights for the Kurdish population, they were offered political influence which forced the government to address when they wanted their votes. Despite its goals, the policy would trigger inflation once again causing a decline in the Turkish stock market. Counterintuitively, Ozal's attempts at securing political support by addressing underdevelopment exasperated economic distress.

By the end of the 1980s, there was a general ease on the use of the word "Kurd" but publications on the Kurdish issue were still met with punitive actions. In 1988 a member of Parliament even attempted to broach the Kurdish issue but was met with strict disapproval and protest by other members. To dismiss his claims, Parliament forbade the reiteration of the speech outside the room. But the end of the decade was a general shift towards allowing the use of Kurdish in private spheres while still being publicly suppressed when used to criticize the government.

Policy Shifts of the 1990s to Present

From the years of 1991 to present times, the Turkish government shifted from a policy of prohibition towards one of tolerance. Tolerance refers to the government refusing to acknowledge or accept the culture, but not actively suppressing it. Usually, this means that the culture is practiced within the private sphere with limited public expressions – either due to discrimination or policy. The 1990s began with a positive shift for Kurdish constituents through

the lift on the use of the Kurdish language in 1991 through government repeal of law 2932 (Aslan 2009). Though many restrictions would remain, the repeal of the law permitted the use of Kurdish music and videos to be shared and allowed the press to discuss the Kurdish dilemma for the first time. To regulate the production of private programs, the government established the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RÜTK) which actively limited Kurdish programs with accusations of separatism (Human Rights Watch 1999).

However, the effects of decades long suppression continued to negatively affect the lives of Kurdish individuals. More than 2 million Kurds have been forcibly displaced from their Kurdish villages by the Turkish military since 1993. The PKK and Turkish authority continue to engage in heightened warfare that the government has used to justify generalized punishments of the group to the entire population, regardless of their involvement. In response, Turkish military have flattened multiple cities if they were suspected of housing the PKK, largely within Kurdish areas under guise of security. Reports conducted by the US's Department of State reported that Turkish government was responsible for evacuating and burning 2297 villages (Gunter 2019:123). The government refused to compensate or resettle the individuals despite the allocation of aid for such a cause.

To combat economic suppression, the government implemented new austerity packages that sought to address economic exploitation and inflation rates. In hopes of attracting new foreign investments to the country, they halted previous privatization attempts and issuing one off tax that aimed at fostering real growth. As a result, the IMF pledged over $740 million dollars to assist with the recovery process, but their debt continued to grow due to the previous loans they have taken out (White 1998:147). With the loan they had initially hoped to create a safety net for government workers who would lose their jobs once those companies become

privatized. To slow the inflation levels, the Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's government's austerity' rescue package was implemented in 1994, with the exemption of Anatolia (White 1998:47). Despite government attempts to reduce suppression of Kurds, they still experience the worst rates of economic underdevelopment.

Iraq Policy Analysis

The Foundations of Iraqi-Kurdish relations

Just as it was the case with Turkey, the decades long tensions between the Kurdish minority and the Iraqi host country can be traced back to post World War 1 land allocation. As Great Britain tackled the difficult task of dividing up Ottoman territory into individual countries, Iraq's borders were drawn out of the Ottoman provinces of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. Despite holding a significant land mass, Iraq's precarious position was due to how little legitimacy that the government held politically as well as the significant religious sects that could lead to infighting. The large Kurdish demographic residing within Iraq and the fact that these Kurdish majority areas held two thirds of the oil production and reserves, made the Iraqi government extremely fearful of Kurdish separatism as their secession would dismantle the economic state of the country (Gunter 2004:201).

The role of British involvement would not end with drawing up the borders as they would frequently use Kurdish resistance as a bargaining counter to force successive Iraqi governments to carry out their objectives. Soon after Iraq's formation, Britain incited further destruction by meticulously bombing Kurdish areas and exiling Kurds. It is important to note that the question of whether Turkey or Iraq should control Sulaimaniya was frequently brought up by Britain, even though Kurds confirms that they would rather join Iraq as they had already suffered immensely under Turkish, Ottoman rule. At the end, the 1924 Iraqi-British Treaty granted the

areas of Sulaimaniya and Mosul to Iraq and granted Turkey with other compensation (Jawad 2008:26). The joint British-Iraqi memorandum in 1922 stipulated that Kurds would be given the right to establish their own local governments within Kurdistan, including sending representatives to Baghdad to stay involved politically (Jawad 2008:26). The country would never grant that right to Kurds and this proved to be another case of Britain manipulating Kurdish sentiments with ulterior motives.

As part of the emerging monarchy's national policy, it appointed influential Kurdish figures into the power structure. Under the monarchical system, a Kurd was appointed at the head of almost every single cabinet position and ministry position, including defense, interior and army chief (Jawad 2008:27). Despite their political power, the Kurdish nationalist movement had no influence and remained a relative secret when they sought to collaborate with Iraqi nationalist movements to benefit both parties. Thus, Kurdish sentiments could be distinguished into two categories: loyal Kurds who could be absorbed by the government to be endowed special privileges and the opposing Kurds who refused to take part. The latter would later form resistance groups such as the KDP. However, under the monarchy there was no need to address the Kurdish question because rebellions will be quickly defeated led by Mahmud al-Barzanji from 1919-1922 and 1922-1924 (Jawad 2008:27).

In 1930, Iraq signed a treaty with the League of Nations so that they could be admitted as an independent state (Jawad 2008:27). The treaty sparked controversy within Kurdish communities who called out the lack of cultural rights afforded to Kurds within its clauses (Jawad 2008:27). These revolts would not amount to significant traction as once the treaty was signed, Britain conducted an air raid among Kurdish communities to squash rebellion.

Kurdish control of most of the oil reserves would lead to further disagreements when Iraq shifted from an agriculturally based society into one dependent on the oil sector (Ekland, et. al. 2017: 2). The revenues brought in by oil instigated a rapid urbanization process inviting population growth at the expense of the agricultural sector's stagnation. Kurdistan would be subjected to severe warfare and political conflict for the next forty years due to the wealth they were sitting on.

From the years of 1925 until 1970, the country of Iraq would allow for the cultural maintenance of Kurdistan through adoption of a policy of permission. Under this type of policy, the country did not take drastic measures to prohibit the use of the language or culture, yet they did little to nothing to promote the culture. The tensions between Kurdish movements and the Iraqi government derive from the need for policy that would acknowledge their cultural rights and resource allocation to economically assist Kurdish areas.

Establishing a Democratic government

Tensions heightened during World War II (1939-1946) due to diverging perspectives on Iraq's refusal to join the British cause. Kurdish alignment with Britain translated to disagreements with the country's apathy. Some Iraqi nationalists would use these cases to support an accusation of Kurdish loyalty to Britain, despite counterevidence. In 1946, steadfast supporters of Kurdish autonomy and independence, Mustafa Barzani formed Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) which developed into one of the most influential Kurdish movements to exist (Gunter 1996:226). Due to it being the first modern Kurdish political party absorbed a wide spectrum of political ideologies from left wing communists to tribal conservatives, unlike the PKK's ideology that alienated large portions of the Kurdish community. Critical to its formation were the influences of foreign powers, such as the Soviet Union's encouragement and support of

Barzani as well as Iran housing Kurds who had previously fled that would form the KDP. During the mid-twentieth century, Kurds retained their civic and political rights. So, throughout the next few decades, the party leveraged their support towards campaigning Arab leaders who made promises of assisting their community. Yet upon succeeding these leaders would turn their backs on Kurds by repressing their rights further and increasing the militarization of Kurdish areas.

Tensions between the dominant and minority groups were exacerbated by political and economic grievances that have been piling for decades. The first of which being the growth of Arab nationalist thought that sought to eradicate Britain's imperialistic influence which was controlling all sectors of the country's governance: from national to regional politics to economics (Eppel 1998). At its current state, the economic climate had worsened due to high rates of inflation that pushed the country from a recession into a full-fledged depression.

In 1958, these tumultuous sentiments finally amounted to a secret military coup carried out by the Iraqi Free Officer group to overthrow the monarchy (Eppel 1998). Shortly after the coup, the group implemented a constitution that introduced the country as a republic, Arab nation with a state religion of Islam. Paragraph two guaranteed the Kurds certain freedoms such as permission to publish newspapers, permission for their leaders to return, and the release of Kurdish prisoners. However, these were symbolic displays of appeasement rather than signifying true change, evident by the lack of Kurdish participation in the government and the lack of national rights extended to them. Prime Minster Qasim allowed for the licensing of the KDP if they changed their name and program to one, he could approve of (Jawad 2008:28). While Kurdish communities agreed to settle to these conditions as they marked a positive step forward, it is important to note the fragility of these permissions because they relied on the government's consistent approval which easily could be abolished or repealed.

While the Prime Minister developed friendly relations with Barzani because he could be a powerful military ally, Qasim was under overpowering pressures from his peers to repress Kurds. In 1959, Barzani proved his loyalty to Qasim by acting as a confidant for potential uprisings of pan-Arab nationalists, Ba'athists, and within Kirkuk (Jawad 2008:28). In his rise to power, Barzani eliminated rival tribes and incited violence, despite warnings from the Prime Minister to avoid doing so. As a result, in 1960 relations between the KDP and the Prime Minister were shattered. Fearing Barzani's hegemonic control over Kurds, Qasim began diversifying his acknowledgements of Kurdish associations and strengthened his relations with smaller tribes (Gunter 1996:228). Despite the development of these relation, there was a lack of significant efforts being taken towards Kurdish autonomy and rights which left the community unsatisfied. Qasim opted to adopt militarized reactions to suppress conflict rather than integrate Kurdish grievances into helpful policies.

Iraqi-Kurdish War

With guarantees and acknowledgements that Qasim was extending, the government adopted a paternalistic attitude towards the Kurdish community that viewed their complaints as signs of ungratefulness than legitimate issues. Frustrated by the lack of action and the government's dismissive attitude, Barzani led the 1961 First Iraqi-Kurdish War that lasted nearly a decade. Barzani successfully leaded his troops into the heavily militarized regions of Kurdistan and issued an ultimatum citing their various grievances and signifying a potential end. Because their requests were beyond the interests of Qasim, he replied by ignoring their complaints and ordered for Kurdistan to be bombed. Though Kurds were previously divided, the brutality of the government infamously caused the shift of Kurdish support to root for Barzani's win.

The war ended in a stalemate and negotiation agreements began in 1970 to ensure an end to riots. The sheer violence of the war resulted in an estimated 6,600-10,000 and the displacement of at least 80,000 people from their homes (University of Central Arkansas). Their insurrection would span into the Ba'athist government's rule who also struggled to defeat the cause.

Both sides, the Kurds and Iraqi military, received support from foreign support that not only prolonged the conflict but demonstrated foreign ulterior motives in the area. The US was a major supplier of thousands of napalm balms to the Ba'athist government: estimates range between 1,000 to 4,000 bombs that were used to incinerate Kurdish villages and livestock, contributing to their displacement (Wolfe-Hunnicutt 2011:127). The UK would also sell these napalm bombs to the Iraqi government because they opposed Kurdish organizations' communist ideologies and allyship with the Soviet Union (Wolfe-Hunnicutt 2011:127). In addition, Syria was undergoing a similar campaign of vilifying Kurds and Arabizing their territory. To showcase their support Syria provided military support through aircrafts and armored vehicles, as well as supplied around 6,000 soldiers to the government (Kreyenbroek & Sperl1992:152).

On the other hand, Iran and Israel supported Kurdish autonomy by provided military support to Kurds with hopes of weakening the Iraqi state. Israel's tense relations with Iraq stem from previous conflicts in 1948 when Iraq refused to support a ceasefire and actively fought against Israel's autonomy. Thus, Israel hoped that this war would keep them destabilized. Iran supported the Kurds to strengthen its own political and military power. Iran hoped that by supporting insurrection, the government would be worn out and disempowered. In addition, their support came with the stipulation that the Kurds would not aid Irani Kurds. Neither of these countries had any legitimate concern for Kurdish rights but wanted to gain from the weakening

of the Iraqi government, especially Iran who was similarly suppressing their own Kurdish population.

Between the years of 1963 to 1969, multiple peace agreements and ceasefires would be negotiated, none of which implemented. Due to the Ba'ath's party continuous transition in and out of power and multiple coups to replace the government, there was significant political instability that limited the actions of the government. Due consistent changes in power, promises of eliminating the conflict were quickly be met with a change in political power that would reignite the campaign. As the Ba'ath party would govern over Iraq from 1967-2003, the cyclic nature of the Kurdish War would end with the 1970 agreement. The Iraqi government initiated the 1970 Peace Agreement that would lead to the promotion of Kurdish self-rule, extension of freedoms, political rights and representation that were to be implemented within four years (McDowall 1996:327). While the law was replaced with a much weaker law of autonomy in Kurdistan in 1974, it still mitigated the conflict shortly. The principal fault of the policy is that it meticulously left out the area of Kirkuk that was rich in oil. The Ba'ath party's continued targeting of Kurdish political leaders and violation of their rights proved that this policy was merely performative.

As a result of Kurdish displeasure with the lack of action being taken by the government following these peace talks, Barzani engaged in another armed resistance between the years of 1974-1975. Unlike the previous time, their quick defeat was a combination of a lack of weaponry and a strengthening Iraqi force. The government responded by exiling the KDP from the country, gaining control over the Northern region, and initiating a rigorous Arabization program.

Kurdish Suppression under the Ba'ath Party

The Ba'ath party is a political party that has held power in both Iraq and Syria, it governed the nation of Iraq from the years of 1968 until 2003. Its politics are derived from Arab nationalist and socialist thought, most notably Saddam Hussein would lead starting in 1979. Their policies were frequently aimed at rebuilding the country's infrastructure and nationalizing the oil industry. From the years of 1970 until 1990, the government's policy towards Kurds was one of strict prohibition, utilizing violence to squash any rebellions.

Iraq's agricultural sector is located within its northern, Kurdistan region, primarily produced wheat, rice, dates, and cotton. Thus, the privatization of state-owned industries in 1970 limited the number of families that could maximize short term returns at the expense of food sustainability which impacted Kurdish regions the most (Ekland, et. al. 2017: 2). In 1975, the government gained direct control over agricultural land by reallocating Kurdish tribal owner territory into Arab hands because of the Land Reform law (Springborg 1987:16).

Within the educational realm, the government drastically increased literacy rates and pushed for a higher educational standard. In 1976, two laws were passed that transformed the educational industry. First the Compulsory Education Law established the right to education and made it so that education at all levels was free of charge to all (De Santisteban 2005:62). The government allocated large sums of money towards the development of the educational sector and as a result the country was regarded as having one of the best educational systems in the Arab world. In addition, the higher education sector was taught by highly trained professionals and was consistently meeting international standards. The second law was the Combatting Illiteracy Law No. 92 in which the government launched a campaign to improve national literacy

levels, with the most significant improvements occurring for women (De Santisteban 2005:65). The effects of these two laws would be felt nationwide, even with rural or Kurdish areas.

The government's zero tolerance policy within the 1980s had disastrous consequences for the Kurdish community's resistance efforts. The Arabization process included the deportation and displacement of Kurds to southern Iraq or who were forced to flee the country, and Kurdish villages such as Halabja and Qala Diza were routinely razed (Human Rights Watch 1993). Rather than limit the spread of Kurdish languages or their cultural expression, the Iraqi government sought to displace Kurds and dismantle them from positions of power so that they could regain control over the oil sector and to ensure political stability.

During the Iraq-Iran War (1980-1988), Kurdish fighters utilized the country's preoccupation in the east to stage an uprising. At a time in which Iraq's national security at risk, they did not exercise mercy to anyone they deemed a threat. Thus, when the Kurds allied with Iran to attack the Iraqi army, the government responded with the Anfal Campaign (1987-1989). Four months prior to the campaign the government issued an ultimatum to Kurdish villages: either they agree to forceful relocation or lose their Iraqi citizenship (Human Rights Watch 1993). The census gave the government a clear approximation of who was living within these areas so that they could be relocated while anyone who chose to remain became a victim of the brutality of the Anfal Campaign.

The purpose of the Anfal campaign was to eliminate Kurdish rebels and to Arabize the territory of Kirkuk which held the nation's oil reserves. Comprising of eight stages, the government began through the dispersion of chemical attacks and a military blitz, followed by ground troops invading from all sides to destroy, loot and set fire to villages (Human Rights Watch 1993). The villagers were then transported to nearby transit camps and holding centers

while soldiers hunted down any fugitives. The estimated death toll of the campaign is anywhere between 50,000 to 100,000 people with the destruction of over 2000 villages destroyed that completely decimated the economy and infrastructure of Kurdish rural areas (Black 1993).

As part of the Anfal campaign, the secretary general, Ali Hassan al-Majid, was given full powers over rural Kurds' fate (Human Rights Watch 1993). Al-Majid would issue two directives outlining who would be targeted and expanded on the repressive actions permissible by the military. His first directive outlined prohibited areas that the military targeted, anyone found within them after their warning would be immediately killed. His second directive ordered army commanders to commit mass murder after interrogation of anyone who may have information about the whereabouts of other Kurds. These directives were important for the Anfal campaign because they identified a clear enemy and codified the genocide. Those arrested were subjected to starvation, disease, and neglect within prisons, if not immediately killed.

In 1988, the US brokered a ceasefire with KDP's Barzani and PUK's Talabani, with a promise of receiving 13 percent of oil from the country's productions beginning in 1995 (World Affairs 2004). At this point, the Iraqi government were convinced that they had succeeded in dispelling any Kurdish resistance efforts so Iraq passed Decree no. 736 of the Revolutionary Command Council that would grant amnesty to all Kurds, except for PUK's Talabani who they deemed a traitor (Human Rights Watch 1993). As a result, women, children, and the elderly were released from camps, while their men continued to be detained. The government had no intention of allowing Kurds to exercise any civil and political rights or accessing any economic opportunities until their loyalty was proven. Areas that had been deemed prohibited by al-Majid's directives would remain as so to avoid regrouping efforts.

U.S. Intervention

From the years of 1991 to 2003, official Iraqi troops and personnel withdrew from the Kurdistan region to focus on other internal struggles. The withdrawal left the region under the provisions of the PUK and KDP. The parties' inability to cooperate and subsequent fighting came at the expense of the Kurdish people, whether it be through failing elections, cooperation with any foreign power for control, or calling for assistance from the Iraqi government to expel the other group. Though previously supportive of the Kurds' rights, Arab Iraqis began to grow wary of the Kurdish struggles and the narratives they were propagating. Both the PUK and KDP were willing to cooperate with the US to overthrow the Iraqi government so that they could establish a federalist state. The issues that the public had with these plans was that rather than focusing on establishing a solid democratic state with just laws and regulations, parties were tunnel visioned on merely their own interests, alienating a large populace. In addition, their use of violent force to "annex" Kirkuk as it was their rightful land was misplaced. Census reports demonstrate that Kurdish people did not constitute a majority of the city's demographic, partially because of the forced displacement decades prior of Kurdish tribes by granting the land to Arabs instead (Jawad 2008:36). These public disagreements about the validity of the Kurdish cause's narratives weakened their appeal with Arabs.

Nearing the end of the Ba'athist's regime control, the party sought to retain its popularity through Ministry of Education Law No. 34/19 that granted the Ministry of Education the ability to control curriculums and monitor schools attentively (De Santisteban 2005:63). The Ministry utilized their power to spread teachings of history, geography and literature that served their political agendas and increased political control over university research. In addition, they implemented an economic blockade on northern Iraq that froze its banking assets and paralyzed

their banking services. Following the UN's memorandum of understanding with the Iraqi government it began a relief operation, mainly focusing on Kurdish regions due to the blockade. Due to the government's blockade, NGOs were forced to funnel money and assistance through informal systems, often buying food and petrol from the Baghdad areas and transporting that to the North. Not only was the agricultural sector still severely limited, these programs disincentivized the industry. The first public move that the US would make to support groups opposing the Ba'ath party was through the Iraq Liberation Act in 1998 that supplied the groups $97 million worth of weapons, training, and financing (RefWorld 2004).

The Iraqi Kurdistan Region

At the turn of the millennia, the US's military involvement and the weakening Iraqi government led to the Kurdish region to institute a de facto Kurdish state that would eventually become a federal state the following year in 2003 (Gunter 2004:203). After the US invasion of Iraq, the region was able to undergo a period of rapid economic growth. Due to the lack of violence within the area, they were able to attract investments and economic propositions with foreign companies, particularly over their oil wells. As of 2009, their per capita income was 200% greater than other regions in Iraq which allowed the region to urbanize and develop far quicker than the rest of the country who was still dealing with the aftermath of the war (Lange 2022).

To ensure equal representation of the various sects, Iraq adopted the *muhasasa* system, a political system that divides power based on religious/ethnic sects. Under the quota system seats in council and governmental positions of authority were divided up among Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkmens according to the country's demographic makeup (Al-Mawlawi 2023). For instance, under the *muhasasa* system the president would be of Kurdish origin, the president

is of Shia faith and the Council of Representatives is of Sunni faith, etc. Within the country's new constitution in 2005, the Kurdish region was recognized as a legitimate, autonomous region reigning over Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok. The constitution also recognized that:

> "The Arabic language and the Kurdish language are the two official languages of Iraq. The right of Iraqis to educate their children in their mother tongue, such as Turkmen, Assyrian, and Armenian shall be guaranteed in government educational institutions in accordance with educational guidelines, or in any other language in private educational institutions" (Iraq Const. 2005, art. 4, sec. 1).

While the ability to speak and teach Kurdish has consistently been present in Iraq, the cementation of the official language and recognition of their rights was important to the people. With the formation of the Kurdistan region, the country shifted from a policy of prohibition into promotion as evident by their political representation, language instruction, and economic prosperity.

Syria Policy Analysis

Kurdish Autonomy under the French Mandate

The Kurdish problem under Syrian authority differs immensely from the cases of Iraq and Turkey due to the French government's differing political strategy from that of Britain. Rather than making false promises and actively exploiting the Kurdish population as a political weapon, the French allowed the Kurds to live harmoniously with Syrians and to practice their culture. The only similarly lies in early discussions of granting a Kurdish specific law of autonomy in the 1920s by the French, to which the plans never come into fruition when they just grouped their rights with that of the rest of the Syrian population in the following years (Tejel 2009:27). The government's decision was met with a series of petitions for autonomy in return

they would help the government deal with growing Arab nationalist sentiments. One such incidence occurred in 1928 in which Kurds issued a memorandum to the French asking for French aid for Kurdish refugees, Kurdish language instruction within schools, and to have autonomy in the northern region (Tejel 2009:28). Their concerns were not addressed. But under the French mandate the government generally gave permission for Kurds to operate and practice as they please, though they promoted Kurdish culture in the larger populace.

Kurds primarily resided within the North and Eastern regions of Syria: within the cities of Jazira, Afrin, and Kobani in addition to considerable populations within Aleppo and Damascus. In the 1920s, there was a shift in the majority and minority groupings within the northeastern region due to the Terrier Plan. The Terrier Plan welcomed tens of thousands of Kurdish refugees escaping Turkish persecution by crossing at the Syrian border (Tejel 2009:29). The French were inclined to accept them because they could be a powerful ally against the local population. Thus, over the next decade there were 20 times more Kurdish villages were formed than at the start. In return, the government granted refugees with identity cards that allowed them to reside and move freely. In addition, the government created a Kurdish course within a higher education institute within the northern region. The two groups maintained good relations until 1936 when the Kurdish migration naturally halted, and the French government left the area.

Unlike the case of that within Turkey and Iraq, there was a lack of Kurdish mobilization or sense of community because of segmentation and fragmentation. Prior to WWI, issues were primarily divided between tribes and religious sects rather than ethnic identification. Ethnic belonging was regarded as a nationalistic nor political tool until the Western powers divided up the Middle East after WWI. In addition, the northern Syrian region suffered from poor infrastructure, such as roads, that limited Kurdish communities across cities. For Kurds, their

isolation meant that each area lived different lifestyles and occupied diverse environments. Thus, the lack of a homogenous group identity and isolation meant that movements struggled to gain momentum nationally. Kurdish movements had a mere local impact within the cities that they were within – such as with the case of uprisings in Jazira or Murad. In addition, their isolated location developed into alienation from the Syrian government in Damascus as they often referred to French troops as a symbol of authority. They would in turn feel abandoned by politics, as evidenced by their poor roads, lack of hospitals, few schools, and their lack of administrative control.

During this decade, the strategies of Kurdish leaders focused on peaceful action through the development of political programs. While leaders attempted to hold positions of power within their own local communities, they were limited because all positions of power needed to be approved by the French (Tejel 2009:5). Within these positions, they often had to navigate antagonistic views from others and tread carefully around the Kurdish cause. Because of these factors, the Syrian Kurdish cause prioritized gaining autonomy over the Northern region and controlling the flow of goods and services.

An important influence on Kurdish community development was the influx of Kurdish intellectuals fleeing from Turkey in 1925 (Tejel 2009:17). Within Syria, the Khoybun party introduced their own ideologies and played an integral role in creating and organizing the Kurdish community (Tejel 2009:17). One such method was by supporting and funding publications on the Kurdish culture: language, the group's history, the differences in dialect, classics and folklore, music, etc. Publications utilized the radio and magazines to educate Kurds on their heritage and to inspire a cultural rebirth. In addition, due to the myriad of differences

within the Kurdish language that limited communicate with one another, the Khoybun party began an intentional movement to standardize the language and make it more accessible.

During the early twentieth century, public education was only provided in Arabic and French, except for Turkish in one ethnic region. Despite the government's hesitancy to recognize Kurdish as an official language, they did permit the teaching of it within the private sector. Due to a lack of economic development within the region, they had few schools within the northern region, and even less within more remote and rural areas. These areas were not prosperous and only a small fraction of individuals had the time or access for the few night courses or individual efforts, leaving only a small, educated circle. Often those educated in Kurdish were of a higher class due to the barriers of the government and inaccessibility to education.

Syrian Republic

The plight of WWII in Europe brought forth tremendous political and economic change within Syria. As France entered the World War in 1940, they had to pull out from Syria which they allowed to gain its independence. Within the years prior to this, the government was suffering due to rising levels of civil unrest as various groups sought independence. For instance, following the Franco-Syrian treat in 1936 that granted Syrian independence without any provisions for Jazira, Kurds aligned with the Christian community to form a bloc in Jazira to demand autonomy (Tejel 2009:29). Their demands were focused on economic development, gaining the ability to teach Kurdish within the public system, and administrative control over the region. In the following year a series of revolts and violence led to the dissemination of the national government as it was and gave rise to the formation of the Syrian Republic officially in 1945. As a post-colonial state, Syria saw the importance of establishing national unification and strengthening patriotism just as Turkey and Iraq saw fit.

While Kurds were not able to advance politically within this period, they went through a massive economic upheaval because of the war. In 1939 the agricultural supply chain was disrupted by the war, thus Syria opened a Grain Office, known as the Mirai, to supply food internally as well as to export to nearby countries (Tejel 2009:38). Concentrated within Jazira, these farms were primarily utilized by urbanities who were seeking to acquire valuable land. Within that period the expansion and development of an expansive irrigation system allowed for grain production to flourish even further. The mechanization of grain culture pushed many Kurds out of these rural spaces and into nearby cities. As result of the rural exodus, communist thought gained traction among Kurdish populations in which they would mobilize the lower class and laborers for a union movement.

Syrian Kurdish opposition groups' strategy in bargaining for rights has greatly differed from that of Turkey or Iran. Groups can approach with three strategies in mind either they utilize their political power to bargain for rights, they can negotiate with the government, or they can engage in an armed conflict. In the case of Syrian Kurds, they have never taken up arms against the government. Instead, they favored a path of strategic leverage of political participation to seek an improvement of their living conditions, rather than a merely Kurd nationalist movement (Tejel 2009:86). The strategy proved to be a double-edged sword, as it weakened their negotiation position and delegitimized their threats. Next, Kurdish groups have routinely borrowed their doctrines from a combination of westernism, Marxist and Islamist thought (Tejel 2009:85). While we do see the influences of western thought in the first half of the twentieth century and the shift towards communist thought in the latter half for Syrian groups, Islamist thought was never a principal feature of the group's ideology as it was in Turkey and Iran.

The first major political Kurdish entity to emerge from Syria was the Kurdish Democratic Party of Syria (KDPS) in 1956, taking over the role that Khoybun played in shaping Kurdish nationalism (Tejel 2009:86). Their emergence was greatly inspired by incapacity of the current leaders to guarantee Kurdish rights and the momentum of the KDP in Iraq. They had three primary objectives in mind: state recognition of Kurd's rights, economic development within Kurdish territories, and for Kurds to be nominated to government positions within their districts.

Suppression under the Ba'ath Authoritarian Regime

Up until the 1960s, though there was a series of parties and movements to expand cultural and political rights, the lack of an ethnically homogeneous nationalist Kurdish movement was indicative of the freedoms that they still possessed. They were able to freely practice their culture, to celebrate holidays, publish in their language, and even teach Kurdish within private settings. Their principal issues lie in the economic underdevelopment of the area, lack of political representation, and wanting to allow for Kurdish courses within free, public courses as well. Until this point, their experiences have been the opposite of that of Kurds within Turkey and Iraq who felt suppressed and antagonized from the onset of their nation's formation. Rather it was not until the Ba'athist party overthrew the republic to form an authoritarian regime seeking to Arabize the country that their experiences aligned with the Kurds of other countries, an overthrow occurred only a month after the same takeover by the Ba'ath in Iraq, in 1963.

The Ba'ath party had had plans for a coup d'état since the beginning of the decade and there had been numerous activities that were indicative of their growing influence, primarily among pan-Arab nationalists. Political instability through the years of 1961 to 1963 marked a secessionist period breaking from conservatist UAR control (Tejel 2009:86). In the years that follow, regionalist officers would foster economic growth in the country by nationalizing their

mines, oil, and other resource-based industries for profit. The economic model adopted allowed for investments to flow into the country so that it can industrialize, in turn adopting a more open economic policy. The period between 1962 until around 2012 mirrored many of the policies of Turkey within the mid-twentieth century of prohibition. Through this section, I will delve into Syria's prohibitive policies and how the government planned to disempower and exclude Kurds.

The most impactful piece of legislature to come out of this two-year period for Kurds was the distribution of a national census in 1962. The Damascus government feared the power that the KDP possessed in Iraq and the Iraqi government's inability to crush the cause quickly which led them to adopt a harsh program to avoid a similar fate. The national census was distributed primarily within the northern region to identify "alien infiltrators" and those who had illegally crossed the border from Turkey; as a result, 20 percent of the Kurdish population lost their Syrian citizenship and were left stateless (Human Rights Watch 1996). It's true effect was to Arabize the northeast which was rich with resource. As they were no longer citizens, Kurds lost many of their human rights such as the ability to own property, to have legally recognized marriages, to have a passport, freedom of movement, to own property, etc. (Human Rights Watch 1996). Kurds were also excluded from many employment opportunities, such as within government agencies or as doctors, and lost eligibility for government subsidies and healthcare programs.

Similarly to the strategy adopted by Turkey, the scope of the country's Arabization project infiltrated the academic sphere; as of 1967, teaching material and historian's work was to be rewritten to exclude Kurdish history and heritage (UN Human Rights Council 2009). The Arabization project focused on the strategic erasure of Kurdish ethnicity among notable events and people, through appropriation of Kurdish symbols, the renaming of Kurdish cities with Arab

names, and reidentification of Kurdish identity as a Syrian identity. The plan bore striking resemblance to that of Turkey's early policies of cultural assimilation. Schools became an important place of indoctrination into Ba'ath ideology and Arabization by establishing a surveillance system among students. Anyone who was accused of spreading other ethnic history or speaking Kurdish would be physically punished.

At the same time, Kurdish parents received significant pressures to not register their children with Kurdish names which would eliminate the ability to trace Kurdish identity through a lineage and would erase their presence in society. The northern region was subjected to frequent house raids and arrests, and police harassment. Unlike that of other countries, Syria did not see it necessary to mobilize its military against Kurds because of their weak capacity to resist. In 1969, the country passed a Syrian Citizenship Law in which the government refused to recognize the marriages of Syrian women to noncitizen men (Human Rights Watch 1996). The succession of a Syrian citizenship was dependent on the paternity of the child, regardless of what nationality the mother was of.

Syria adopted a new constitution in 1973 that officially recognized the Arab language as the sole official language of the country, excluding that of Kurdish (Syria Const. 1973, art. 4). The constitution forbade the Kurdish language from being taught in schools while languages of Armenian and Assyrian groups could continue instruction within private schools. In addition, the constitution forbad all political and social groups that did not share Arab national ideals within articles 10, 11, 15, and 20 (Syria Const. 1973, art. 10, 11, 15, 20). Most infamously, the Arab Belt Program within the same year codified Arabization efforts into state policy (UN Human Rights Council 2009). The plan sought to confiscate land from Kurds living north near the

Turkish border and grant it to Arabs. In turn, 140,000 Kurdish individuals were deported, and 332 villages were displaced, with no compensation for their land.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the country continued the exercise of predecessor suppressive laws and passed new legislature that extended the role of the government into the private sphere. In a 1986 decree by the governor of Hasakeh, the use of Kurdish language in the workplace was forbidden, thus reinforcing the inferiority of the language to that of Arabic (UN Human Rights Council 2009). In a follow-up decree two years later, the governor reiterated the language ban and extended it to weddings, festivals, marriage ceremonies, and such. Thus, it was no longer just banning the language within professional or public settings but also within private affairs, which encouraged surveillance among constituents. In a series of decrees and resolutions the government would continue to ban anything with Kurdish sentiments: registration of Kurdish cultural centers and bookstores (1992), naming private establishments with non-Arabic names (1994), etc. (Human Rights Watch 1996).

While these laws were not consistently applied and people were not always prosecuted for them, it is the theoretical power that they held that suffocated the Kurdish population. People could be tried for doing any of the above and their children would bear punishments if they were to participate with their own heritage. Thus, the country's plan to devalue and stigmatize Kurdish culture so that it would not be spread culturally as it was before was working. This is especially important because Kurdish culture's preservation was dependent on public expressions prior to these laws: such as public festivals during Newroz, the spread of folklore and the development of literature. Through the government's reliance on a policy of hypervisibility of the ethnic group, they politicized what it meant to be Kurdish and necessitated the emergence of a Kurdish nationalist sentiment

In response, groups, such as the PKK, took it upon themselves to foster a cultural reawakening by disseminating their history and hosting public literary programs and folklore festivals, regardless of the consequences. As resistance movements have often relied on infiltrating the political sphere to improve their living conditions, in 1994 the government took control over the votes and made it so that they must approve of anyone being elected to the regime.

Investigations into the government from the Human Rights Watch on if these policies and measures were still in effect were met with vague responses: "The Syrian constitution stipulates that Syria is part of the greater Arab nation and that Arabic is its official language. It stipulates further that the ban on the use of foreign languages in the workplace is not limited to the Kurdish language but includes all languages other than Arabic" (Human Rights Watch 1996). Their insinuation that this is not a discriminatory practice targeting Kurdish heritage, but merely a plan to enforce the Arabic language does not align with their own political behavior and permitting other languages to be taught privately. They responded that they did in fact admit students who were stateless into the public education sector, yet there are still significant records of discrimination. Due to their lack of registration, Kurdish students do not receive the same diploma as their Syrian peers, but a special notice of passing grade that is worth much less on the professional level. In the higher education sector, they also receive documents that are not officially recognized despite completing the same programs as their Syrian peers.

Iran policy Analysis

First half of twentieth century

The relation of the Kurds within Iran’s history in the twentieth century stands out from that of the post-Ottoman countries in that they began under different playing fields. The case of

Kurds within the Persian Empires, such as the Safavid, made it so that the Kurdish identity was more fragmented and less developed. In addition to the fact that the Kurdish culture has many overlaps with that of Persian, this made it so that they did not begin with a distinct, Kurdish nationalist sentiment like that of Turkey and Iraq. Rather, the role that Iran's government played in alienating and targeting Kurds through discriminatory policies is what strengthened the boundaries of the community. Iran's policy towards Kurds was one of forced assimilation by devaluing the Kurdish identity and through strategic violence towards separatists' movements.

In the case of Turkey, Iraq and Syria, foreign intervention was a crucial aspect in strengthening mobilization efforts and acquiring material support to sustain the movements. Recognizing this, Iran cooperated with Iraqi Kurds in the 1980s by supplying them with the support they needed to go up against the Ba'ath regime; in exchange, they would refuse to support both financially and intellectually the Iranian Kurdish movements (Bengio 2017:36). In fact, it is suspected that the KDP's Barzani had a direct role in the assassination of multiple Kurdish opposition leaders and their failures. In contrast to the case of Syria in which Turkish intellects greatly advised the development of Kurdish nationalism.

From the start of the twentieth century towards the end of the second world war, the nation of Iran underwent many political changes and was briefly occupied by western powers. It is within the first World War that the first traces of Kurdish nationalism would first pique and begin to develop to what it is today, prior to which it was not a primary political influence. Many tribal groups exploited the anarchy of the second World War, hoping to gain some sort of power. Notably, the Hama Rashid Revolt during 1942-44 laid the foundations for successive movements (Hassaniyan 2021:11).

Rez Shah pursued a similar policy to his neighboring countries of establishing a unitary national identity within his dynasty in the 1920s through language suppression. Within this period, Farsi was the only language that was taught within schools and used within government communication (Hassaniyan 2021:20). Though it was not explicitly written into the constitution, all civil service exams and official positions required the knowledge of speaking Farsi. The preferential treatment given to Farsi in comparison to Kurdish began the gradual process of devaluation that translates to present day decreasing levels of Kurdish being passed down as a mother tongue.

Like that of Turkish Kurds, a primary concern of uprising and rebellions within the start of the twentieth century was the socio-economic conditions that agrarian Kurdish farmers faced. Concentrated within western Iran, many Kurds relied on the century-long feudal system of sharecropping to sustain their livelihoods. Reportedly, 54 percent of Iran's cultivable land was based on a predatory system in which peasants worked for wealthy landowners to cultivate their crops in exchange for small profits and some crops (Hassaniyan 2021:39). Without government oversight and due to the cycle of dependence perpetuated, landlords were free to subject their peasants through whatever means they deemed fit: from corporal punishment to undermining the peasants' rights. Landowners ensured that the system in place would be maintained, and their wealth protected by limiting the movement of agrarian farmers as they did not have the means to move nor quit.

Infamously in 1930, the power of these feudal workers was further reduced through Reza Shah's land reform agenda (Hassaniyan 2021:37). In Shah's efforts to centralize power, he granted his most powerful allies, the landowners, even more freedom and appointed them to powerful positions within government. Thus, though he framed the reform to empower the

landless, it was a way to increase his supporter's political participation. Many successive tribal revolts were in response to the effects of his law.

For a brief period in 1947, Kurds managed to form of a semi-autonomous republic of Mahabad within the Kurdistan region (Hassaniyan 2021:44). Their existence served as model for other movements on what points to strive for: Kurdish administration, the free practice of their language and free displays of Kurdish national symbols. Their short-lived success came to an end with the reinstatement of the monarchy. Iran's most notable twentieth century Kurdish political party formed in the 1940s: the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI) (Hassaniyan 2021:38). They were adamant in calling for the self-determination and separatism of Kurds. But their exile during the Islamic Republic to Iraq greatly reduced their power and influence within the region.

While a series of smaller, tribal uprisings, from the poor and uneducated class, occurred periodically within the start of the 1900s, it was not until 1952 that major uprising warranted a national response. The Kurdish Peasant Uprising emerged out of recognition of these social inequalities and attempted to improve their living conditions rather than focus on nationalistic and cultural rights. The government had recently proposed the Act of 20 percent which would redistribute the wealth of landowners to peasants, twenty percent of their earnings would have to be pocketed by the workers (Hassaniyan 2021:41). However, the act was not implemented by the landowners nor enforced by the government which increased animosity. While the rebellion was able to sustain itself for a year, eventually the sheer violence enacted to the farmers by landowners and the Iranian military alike forced Kurds to surrender. The government's action included the burning of villages, looting of homes and physical assault. As a result, the landowners enacted crueler punishments and harsher treatments towards farmers.

The only positive consequence of this revolt was stronger class unity and origination. The movements failure lies in its inability to mobilize due to a limited geographical and demographical reach, the lack of strong leadership, and restricted resistance strategy without arms. Ultimately their efforts were not totally in vain as in 1962 the share-cropping system would be abolished with the 1962 land reform act of Pahlavi (Hassaniyan 2021:39). This land reform act redistributed the lands of the wealthy into smaller agricultural workers hands.

Up until the end of the 1960s, there had only been a homogenous representation of Kurdish nationalism through the KDPI. In 1969 the emergence of Komala, guided by leftist, communist thought, challenged that homogeneity as well as the dominant ideological framework being perpetuated (Hassaniyan 2021:54). The two groups occupied opposing positions when representing Kurdish nationalism making it so that their animosity caused further divergence within the movement. The fragmentation of leadership led to the hibernation of Kurdish activity. In addition, it was suspected that throughout the last decade the KDP, specifically Barzani, had cooperated with the Irani government in assassinating their leaders and disempowering them.

The Islamic Republic's New Approach

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 successfully overthrew the monarch and established an Islamic theocratic republic regime. The conditions that led to this overthrow and the development of a populist and Shia regime have to do with rising anti-imperial sentiment, economic challenges due to oil crisis, land reform policy that disempowered the wealthy, and the government's inability to follow through on promises. Previously exiled, Ayatollah Khomeini, took charge of this movement and held power for a decade under the republic (Hassaniyan 2021:85). Until this change, the government had a policy of tolerance in which it limited Kurdish

culture to the private sphere and silenced any revolts. However, the Islamic Republic actively prohibited Kurdish culture and the Sunni faith that has exasperated their suffering.

Many ethnic groups interpreted this revolution as a prime opportunity at mobilizing political activity to gain power when the new government would be founded, including the Kurds. In fact, this would mark the first mass Kurdish mobilization effort since the 1940s in which they submitted a demand for autonomy and recognition of their rights. To their dismay, the government was extremely fearful of the prevalence of Sunni worship and the cross-border potential for Kurdish separatism. Thus, they instead decided to adopt a policy of denying the groups' hardships and tribulations under the former government, claiming indeed that everyone had experienced equal suffering (Hassaniyan 2021:83). In contrast to the hypervisibility of Syrian Kurds, Iran wanted to make these differences invisible because diversity was seen as a threat to the building of a strong centralized regime.

Faced with the implementation of these new ideological systems, groups had two choices on how to react: either assimilate or resist. In response to the Kurd's decision to resist, Iran adopted a hard power policy. The government was harsh with their punishments and clear with their intentions: they would reject Kurdish demands and requests outright no matter their merit, they used massive military interventions to deal with issues, they threatened the use of physical force to crush the movement, and often killed leaders of these movements before they gained too much power and attention (Hassaniyan 2021:86). The government's actions often left the movement in disarray.

Prior to the hard power policy, Kurdish movements had mainly called for cultural and political autonomy within the country. But it became clear that the regime was unwilling to cooperate or negotiate. Thus, Kurds shifted in perspective and action towards wanting to be free

of the regime and actively fight against it. Shortly after, the government declared jihad against the Kurds, implying a religious justification to their actions (Bengio 2017:35).

The growing Kurdish popularity necessitated the government to shift public opinion so that they vilified the Kurdish sentiment. By portraying the Kurds as traitors of the country during their war with Iraq the Irani public opinion was shifted against Kurds. In addition, the government divided the Kurdish population and created enemies through the creation of a paramilitary group known as *Jash*. Created, sponsored, and armed by the Irani government, the paramilitary group composed of less than 25,000 local Kurds employed by the Guard Corps (Hassaniyan 2021:147). Combined with the KDP, they were able to dislodge the movements power, they infiltrated academic and professional settings to spread this anti-Kurdish sentiment and their impact goes beyond the militarization and surveillance of this region. They also brought great shame and were oppressed by local Kurdish communities for their betrayal. In the 1980s they also began a retribalization policy of Kurds that sponsored and armed the tribes and former feudalists (Hassaniyan 2021:147). Their role was to challenge the authority of the Kurdish movement's. the feudal class had been considerably weakened in the 1960s and was yearning for economic and political opportunity. In turn, they were integrated into the Guard Corps and caused mass disarray for the KDPI.

The impacts of suppressive policies between the year of 1978-1989 left over 50,000 individual's dead and forbade the Kurds from reaching any autonomy that they were seeking. It merely politicized the identity of Kurds in the face of Islamic nationalism (Hassaniyan 2021:92). The Irani government specifically targeted the Kurds because they were perceived to be a security threat. During this time, other minor religious groups received a more relaxed approach from the government in which they were free to practice their faith publicly. On the other hand,

the government desperately sought to justify their actions by prolonging the war with Iraq and creating a villainous narrative arc for resistance.

Discussion on Findings

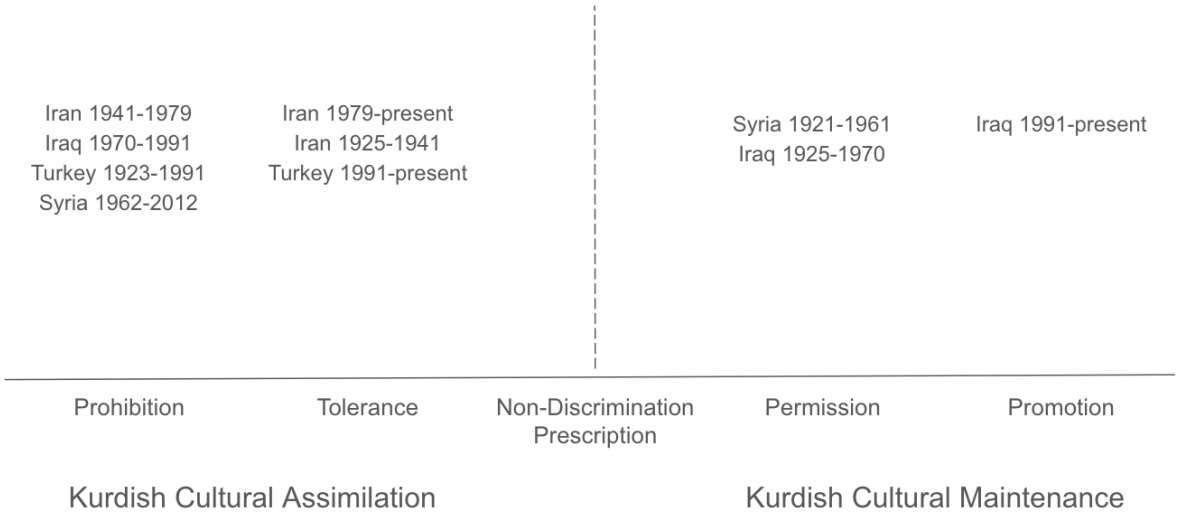
In comparing the progression of state policy towards the Kurdish question, we can narrow down these differences to three distinct traits that have shaped each country's movement. First, due to the concentrated geographic location of Kurds, governments have strategically controlled the economic development of Kurdish regions without explicitly characterizing their actions as ethnically oriented or motivated. Second, the governments have utilized the community's geographical dispersion to heighten internal divisions which has negatively impacted Kurdish mobilization efforts. Lastly, almost every government has attempted to achieve national unity through the promotion of one official language by devaluing the Kurdish language. By focusing on these three policy types, we can begin to understand the successes and failures of the government's efforts to assimilate minorities and limit Kurdish mobilization.

To deal with the Kurdish question, governments have fluctuated in what rights, if any at all, that they would be willing to extend to Kurds. While Turkey is a democracy, they have also engaged in one of the most repressive, cultural policies to eradicate Kurdish existence. Despite this, Kurds have had the ability to occupy national positions when they forsake to their heritage. Similarly, Iraq has historically allowed its people to maintain linguistic and cultural differences; but have been excluded from politics until the 21st century and during the Ba'ath regime, Kurds suffered from brutal and unparallel levels of violence. Yet, with Iraq, the Kurds have been the most successful in retaining their culture and winning their fight for self-determination due to their allyship with strong foreign powers and successful mobilization. While Iran has allowed for cultural formations, they also have politically excluded the group and utilized military power to

suppress them. There has been a poignant shift in Kurdish rights within Syrian society when the country transitioned from the most tolerant to the most repressive regime within the present day. While for decades Kurds were free to culturally practice, Syria's policy following the 1960s has been culturally, politically, and economically disempowering and suffocating.

Within Figure 3, I have mapped the shifts of assimilatory policies within each country using Skutnabb-Kangas's terminology: prohibition, tolerance, permission, and promotion. The shifts in policy coincide with a change in regime or new leadership which adopts a different approach to dealing with Kurds. Most notably, only one country can be categorized within "promotion" which is Iraq from 1991, in which the U.S. helped form the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region to present day. Through the following section, I will be delving into a comparison between the types of and the efficacy of the policies that each country pursued that constituted the below diagram.

Figure 3: Kurdish Cultural Assimilation Policies Categorization Framework



It is also important to note that these movements did not occur inside a bubble, rather countries were closely observing movements' successes and failures in neighboring countries to learn from them. That is why early twentieth century Turkish Kurdish policies echo within Syrian policies in the 1960s yet are made more effective by eliminating civic and political rights that has been a source of power for the community. In similar context, Iran's decision to weaken their own movement through cooperation with foreign Kurdish groups is made because of how transnational Kurdish collaboration has strengthened nationalistic cause and bestowed crucial material and financial support for neighboring movements. Thus, the similarities we observe across time and space are not coincidental, rather they are intentionally borrowed and improved upon from previous instances.

Table 3: The Kurdish Minority Examples:

	Economic Prohibition (-)	Economic Promotion (+)
Educational Prohibition (-)	Turkey (1923-1991) Syria (1962-2012)	Shi'a Kurds in Iran's Islamic Republic (1971-present)
Educational Promotion (+)	Syria (1921-1962)	Kurdistan (1991-present)

Similarly, with these new findings we can begin to map out how examples of how states mapped out onto Table 2, as can be seen in Table 3. Within the original table, we expected that the combination of economic prohibition and educational prohibition leads to devalued Kurdish culture and political disempowerment or an inaccessibility to political representation. Under Turkish rule between the years of 1923 until 1991 and under Syrian rule after the year of 1962, Kurds were prohibited from teaching or using their own language and suffered from chronic underdevelopment. The combination of both led to an inability to access political power or even

address their issues on a governmental scale and to the language being severely devalued. While Sunni Kurds suffer under similar circumstances within Iran, Shi'a Kurds religious affinity with the Islamic Republic has led to their ability to occupy governmental positions and be seen as credible actors at the expense of the Kurdish culture's development.

By contrast, because many of these states adopted a policy of economic underdevelopment for Kurds as a means of suppression, there are fewer instances to dissect. Prior to the Ba'ath regime's rise to power in Syria in 1962, Kurds had the ability to educate privately within their own language and to freely practice their culture. Within this era, though they lacked administrative autonomy and struggled to have their concerns be taken seriously by the government, their culture was able to flourish. Currently, only one state allows for both the economic development of Kurds as well promotion of their language and access to education: the Kurdistan Region within Iraq. Though not perfect, Kurdistan enjoys a standard of living and employment rates higher than that of the rest of Iraq in addition to their autonomous rule which has allowed for the promotion of their culture.

Devaluation of language

To understand the full magnitude of how much each group has assimilated, let us start by considering fluency of the Kurdish language. A principal issue that has defined every Kurdish resistance effort is the ability to learn Kurdish within schools and the free usage of the Kurdish language. To preface the following discourse, the Kurdish language itself has considerable variations in dialect that morph depending on grammar, pronunciation, etc. that act as a barrier towards cross-dialect communication. Thus, there have been significant steps taken to standardize the language so it survives assimilation efforts, as seen in Syria, but for the sake of this argument we will be discussing the Kurdish dialects. While it is hard to control the usage of

language within the private sphere, by outlawing its use publicly, the governments hope to enact a linguistic suicide among its users. Making it so that the language no longer has value to be passed down generationally.

Rather than accepting the variation of the country is what makes the country Turkey, the government interpreted it be necessary to establish one singular identity and language, an approach referred to as one language, unified culture approach. The government sought to make it so that there is no difference socially between a Turk and Kurd so that Kurdish backgrounds would be meaningless and thus a Kurdish education would have no place within the social structure. They particularly feared that in acknowledging such variation from the start, ethnic problems would threaten national unity and open a floodgate of diversity.

The country has experienced vast shifts in its language policy from one of toleration towards one of strict prohibition. Prohibition of the language was most apparent from the end of WWI in 1923 until the Gulf War in 1991. Within this period, it was consistently producing linguicide policies that targeted the public usage of Kurdish and has explicitly forbidden its use within educational institutions as well as professional environments. They have additionally defined Kurdish resistance as congruent with terrorist activity that vilified the community to the public eye. As a result, the use of Kurdish publicly began to carry harmful connotations. In doing so, the language has come to be associated with hazard, leaving determinantal consequences to future generations of Kurds in accessing their fundamental rights.

While since then there have been efforts to lean more towards tolerating the language and to produce laws the allow for the institutional use of the language, the effects of their hegemonic policies still prevail. When examining the Turkish government's steady devaluation of the Kurdish language through linguicide, we can expect to see the dwindling of the usage of

Kurdish. While the language has persisted within rural, Kurdish villages, the same cannot be said of those within urban areas (Sheyholislami 2022:361). Rather, there is a stark language shift that can be observed across generations as the young have started using the Kurdish language less (Sheyholislami 2022:361). In a study conducted by the Rawest Research Center, it was reported within the next generation of 18- to 30-year-old individuals that were surveyed, only 18 percent could speak, read, and write in Kurdish while only 44 percent could speak the language as of 2019 (Faidhi Dri 2020). When their grandparents may be solely fluent in Kurdish, their parents in Kurdish and Turkish, then the current generation are solely using Turkish in both personal and professional settings.

A similar pattern of gradual language assimilation can be observed within the Iranian case, who have not had as explicit laws outlawing the education in Kurdish. Rather it has covertly expressed laws that tolerate the usage of minority languages while actively discrimination against individuals who communicate in Kurdish within their daily lives. For instance, during the twenty-first century, the tolerance for minority languages in Iran has decreased to the point where they are not being taught within public nor private institutions and activists who utilize the language may be prosecuted. Although the country still tolerates the private use of Kurdish, there is no value to its public expression when it is severely limited.

Rather a study conducted by the Razi University displays that parents are choosing to teach Persian as a mother tongue and forsaking Kurdish because they feared that acquisition of two languages would impede their ability to acquire the prestigious Persian successfully, thus posing a detriment to their career (Weisi 2021:73). This monolingual approach to raising one's kid is not based on empirical research, rather it is an internalized belief system because of the

country's discrimination. Due to this, Persian literacy of rates within Kurdish regions have risen from 52% in 1976 to 90% in 2019 (Sheyholislami 2022:363).

Until the 1960s, the public expressions of Kurdish culture within Syria allowed them to flourish and to coexist peacefully with their numbers. They were also allowed to be taught Kurdish within the private sector or within night classes, just not within public schools. The lack of resistance movements that were defined by nationalistic causes are indicative of the appeasement of the people with how they were free to practice. However, the complete alienation and violence enacted towards its people in the 1960s ignited their need for Kurdish movements. In adopting a similar policy to that of early Turkey, the use of Kurdish within schools and publicly would be outlawed. In Syria, parents share a similar hesitancy to expose their children to the Kurdish language due to political instability. While the twenty first century ushered in the establishment of Kurdish schools, parents fear that the government can easily disaccredit those institutions and it may pose a greater hinderance to their children (Sheyholislami 2022:361).

The case of the Kurdish language within Iraq differs from the other nations due to the government's different policy approach and the movements power. The country has steadily promoted the language since the 1930s to the point that the language is taught outside of the Kurdistan region presently. By the 1940s, the Kurdish language had been standardized with its own vocabulary, prose, alphabet, and publications (Sheyholislami 2022:363). In the 1970s, the Kurdish movement succeeded in achieving Kurdish instruction within higher educational institutions and 20 years later achieved autonomous administration. In addition, the creation of bi-national state to acknowledge the Kurdistan region and includes both Arabic and Kurdish within the government and as an official language. Within Kurdistan the language is used in

every domain, public institution, and educational setting. Though there are still important steps to be taken, they have showed considerable progress, and it is estimated that 18% of the country speaks Kurdish.

Socioeconomic conditions

When analyzing the objectives of Kurdish movements, each wave has focused on improving the standards of living and calling attention to the chronic underdevelopment of Kurdish regions. Even when groups do not explicitly align themselves with Kurdish nationalistic causes, they still attempt to attract resources to their neglected regions. In fact, due to their isolated geographic locations, the governments have been able to implicitly weaken the Kurdish class through chronic underdevelopment. In three out of four countries, Kurds have historically occupied rural territories in which they made a living purely through agricultural production.

In analyzing the origins and ideologies of many of the most prominent Kurdish resistance efforts one common string ties each of their causes: economics. Economic aspirations characterize each of the movements even when nationalist causes do not. These movements are Kurdish in identity even when they do not self-ascribe as so do their demographical makeup. Geographical concertation and shared concerns are unifying factors for Kurds beyond just ethnic associations. Thus, it is important to study how government policy and neglect shaped the birth of these movements and why many of them transformed into nationalist causes.

At the start of the 20th century, Turkish Kurds occupied the southeast and eastern region of the country, isolated from metropolitan centers due to mountainous terrain. While they were able to sustain themselves through much of the decades prior, the government's rapid industrialization initiatives left behind agricultural workers in favor for cheaper imports. The government's neglect was apparent due to a lack of policy that would attempt to integrate Kurds

back into the economic sphere. Rather, the mechanization of farming left smaller agricultural workers struggling to survive and were comparatively impoverished in comparison to the rest of the nation. When the nation was suffering from a lack of economic opportunity and educational opportunity after WWII, the brunt end of the consequence was bore by the Kurdish regions who experienced the highest levels of inflation. The government's meticulous choice to abandon its Kurdish populace is reflective of their desires to disempower them and to integrate them into Turkish society through forced relocation to urban areas to survive.

The cultural oppression and economic suppression experienced by the Kurds within the nation provided them with enough incentive to gain power by any means necessary. It is interesting to witness how the most violent resistance Kurdish cause sprung out of Turkish rural areas in response to their frustration. In addition, the use of the Kurdish language is still prevalent within these geographically isolated regions due to the community that has been established and the use that it still holds. However, as individuals have begun integrating into urban, Turkish society due to economic suppression, we witness the fading of cultural practice in lieu of easier lifestyles. Thus, though movement has been gradual the effect of Turkish economic underdevelopment seems to translate into a greater likelihood of assimilation, though not without resistance.

Similarly to Turkey, Iran’s failure to address and restructure Kurdish feudalism as it progressed socially led to much its resistance movements throughout the twentieth century. The massive wealth disparity and dependency cycles that trapped individuals to their landlords necessitated these movements, though not originally aligned with resistance efforts. The ways that Kurds were effectively trapped to their landlords because of policy that catered to the wealthier class, kept them contained geographically and socioeconomically, thus disempowering

them from achieving higher status and opportunity. In combination with the mechanisms that the government has taken to weaken the movement, it is apparent that their economic shortcomings and lack of financial support afforded to other countries, greatly limited their ability to protest.

Similarly, Syria's Kurdish population were also reliant on agrarian and rural lifestyle, secluded to the north and northeast in which the country neglected their basic needs and rights. The lack of funding for the regions' development is evident by the absence of hospitals and limited schools due to poor infrastructure. During the second world war when economic opportunity was advantageous to Syrian farmers, the government decided to place Kurdish agrarian land into Arab hands with no compensation. It is apparent that the government feared what economic development can bring for This would translate into an Arabization program that reallocated Kurdish lands to Arabs without compensation to further displace them from any claims to wealth. There is a similar pattern of dispossession observed across Iraq and Turkey.

The outlier in this situation was Iraq because while Kurds may have relied partly on agriculture, they were also residing within major cities and most importantly resource rich land. The oil reserves and mineral deposits that they resided on empowered them to be seen as credible negotiators and gave the government something to seek when dealing with them. It also became the source of all their major disputes and fights with the government. The double-edged sword of residing on oil rich land was not always utilized because of the Iraqi government's mismanagement of economic activity. Due to their precarious position, Iraq was forced to borrow money from other countries and was unable to break into new markets. It is estimated that half of the Kurdish population were unemployed in the 1950s because of economic stagnation. Nonetheless, they were not as limited and isolated as their counterparts in other territories, making it so that rather than originating within a poor, rural class, mobilization

movements came from educated and more informed members of society. The Kurds in Iraq's accessibility to resources influenced the ways that the public could sympathize with their cause and the success of their mobilization efforts.

Within present times, the economic prosperity of Iraq's Kurdistan region in comparison to the rest of the country's economic situation is due to its stability and security. While the rest of the nation was suffering in consequence to the US invasion in 2003, the region was supported by the west and allowed to revitalize. Their autonomy also has shielded them from much of the civil conflict and violence that Iraq has experienced. Thus, it has been able to attract crucial economic investments and capital to build its urban centers and its steady trading sector.

When comparing the trajectory of the four nations economic policies as it relates to the Kurdish cause, there are obvious efforts at ensuring their economic underdevelopment. In turn, this has caused Kurds to slip into resistance efforts and adopt Marxist thought within their ideologies. When the PKK in Turkey exploited bordering towns for their support while in exile, they supported them with resources and services that they were not given beforehand. Rather the government's ability to minimize the movement was hindered by how little infrastructure connects these towns to the rest of society. These people were merely desperate to receive aid in a country that was neglecting them. Similarly, uprisings in Iran were originally a mere cause for ending feudal relations while those in Syria were to primarily for economic and political control. In the case of Iraq, though, economic stagnation was rampant and groups like the KDP were primarily calling for Kurdish cultural rights and after political power as they could support themselves through the oil excavation.

These economic policies are the beginning to the alienation of a powerful and prevalent ethnic group from the government. Groups that have once agreed to be represented by their

respective governments would later go on to aid in coups to overthrow it or shift towards advocating for separatism. It is important to note that initially these groups did not oppose being citizens of their respective countries, but when their rights were eradicated and they were no longer being represented by their governments, they chose to resist.

Geographical dispersion and Community Divisions

When the government would neglect the wellbeing and prosperity of its Kurdish constituents, the Kurds' next task was to mobilize enough of the community to enact change and be seen as credible negotiators. The issue was that while Kurds are geographically contained in a general direction, they were also dispersed among many villages and rural areas that set them apart from each other. Infrastructure such as roads that would connect these villages was purposefully lacking within these communities to keep them separated. In addition, many Kurds did not initially feel strong ethnic ties rather choosing to associate based on religious or tribal affiliation. As a result, the community's complex history under previous empires carried over into present times. Due to the physical dispersion of these villages, many had developed their own dialects that diversified the language's grammar, pronunciation and more, making it so that there needed to be standardization of the language if it were to persist under suppressive measures. These factors complicated mobilization efforts and each movement had to find the means to overcome this barrier that were met with varying levels of difficulty.

Governments felt threatened by the stark concentration of Kurdish communities within their respective regions in context of national unification goals and sought to address it through resettlement laws. The threat of Kurdish towards national unity can be witnessed starkly within Syrian and Turkish regions that adopted Arabization programs. The purpose of these laws was to dispossess Kurds of any land claims as well as to forcibly assimilate them through socialization

efforts. When placed outside these regional communities, the governments hoped that individuals will be forced to adopt to the language and customs of the nation.

The most prominent example of this within Turkish society is the resettlement law of 1934 that aimed to redistribute minorities into nearby Turkish villages. The resettlement law exemplifies the government's attempts to displace Kurds and other minorities with the aim of increasing social interactions among Turkish individuals so that they lose touch with their original culture. Similarly, within Syria, the ramifications of the Arab belt program made it so that over three hundred villages would be displaced. These laws sent a loud message to the people about the consequences of maintaining their culture and community unity.

With the lack of a community to share language with, the value of passing down their own culture to future generations loses value and might even be interpreted as potentially determinantal. The legal and social repercussions of such policies are the exact reason why the Kurdish language is not as common as it once was and why literacy levels have seen a decline. In addition, to discourage Kurds from rising to power, the appropriation of their land leaves them stateless and without wealth. Thus, instigating a cycle of poverty and keeping them within the lowest sector of society. Their lower social position allows for the government to frame resistance efforts as merely terrorist activity rather than a response to government actions. This vilifies the community and makes their claims uncredible.

The heterogeneous nature of Kurdish communities that left them with inherent divisions that could easily be exploited by their governments. Kurdish fragmentation is due to a culmination of various factors that make it hard for communities to be seen as one. The influence of tribal associations and clans within the empires beforehand persisted to the twentieth century making it so that there were natural grievances and divisions between one another that made

Kurds loyal to their respective familial ties rather than to a homogenous cause. For instance, Syrian Kurds did not see themselves as part of one singular cause but rather they formed closer bonds with those in their immediate surroundings. Thus, when groups attempted to mobilize constituents there was a large barrier to overcome being that of getting groups that have habitually been segmented from one another to root for the same causes.

The profound religious divisions within the Kurdish community such as Shia and Sunni Muslims, Christians, and Yazidis. While most Kurds identify with as Sunni Muslims, there are sizeable groups of other religious affiliations in certain countries. To certain subsects of this community, religious associations superseded ethnic affiliation and they saw that they would have more in common with someone of the same faith rather than someone of the same ethnicity.

Within Iran's case we also see the ways that the heterogeneous nature of Kurdish existence complicates and weakens their relations. While the majority were Sunni, there was still a significant proportion which were of Shia faith, split nearly in half. So much of the alienation that Kurds faced initially was due to their religious affiliation as the majority of which were Sunni Muslim in a Shia country. Under the right circumstances this would not necessarily be a point of division, but the Iranian government strategically utilized this division to turn the two sects against each other. The government attempted to distance Shia Kurds from others by allowing them to take up more prestigious positions and infiltrate an upper class of existence. In contrast, Sunni Kurds were less educated, had fewer positions within national institutions, and faced greater difficulty at gaining seats within local and national politics which was evidently effective as religious associations took precedence over ethnic ties. There was a lack of unity and even resentment at this divide that hindered movements as their lifestyles greatly diverged,

possibly one of the most egregious and effective means of weakening the movement. To further these divisions, the creation of a paramilitary group comprised of Kurdish individuals further weakened their ability to unite as it increased resentment and alienation.

Though there are similar, yet less pronounced, religious divides in Turkey and Syria among Kurds, the governments' never prioritized policies that would highlight these divides. Rather they focused on ethnicity and geographics which could be possibly explained by the fact that most of the Turkey and Syria follows the Sunni Muslim sect making it so that they felt no need to do so, as opposed to Iran's Shia government. While Iraq has similar religious qualms as a nation, 98% of Kurds follow the Sunni religious sect; during the height of Kurdish suppression in Iraq, it was ruled by a Sunni government making it so that they did not target these religious divisions and such divisions were not sizable enough to warrant an effect.

International Influence

In addition to the ways that the host government itself shaped the course of Kurdish nationalist movements, we must analyze the profound influence that neighboring countries and western powers supported or hindered these movements. As previously stated, much of the root cause of these movements can be traced back to the ways that the Middle East was divided post World War I by the Western powers. A string of false promises and strategic allyship spurred Kurdish unrest and subsequent governmental fear at the sizable ethnic minority it needed to control for the sake of legitimacy. When confronting this task, the government attempted to take considerable actions to limit the importation of ethnic nationalism and of material support that would threaten their power.

Almost each major Kurdish movement, regardless of its country of origin, has been influenced or collaborated with others to achieve their joint goal towards autonomy and self-

determination. The most important collaboration has been between Turkey's PKK and Iraq's KDP that have at times empowered one another and allowed for resources to be shared. Though their partnership did not persist, the KDP provided the PKK with a haven after persecution and even allowed it to utilize bordering areas. In addition, the exile of Kurdish intellectuals from Turkey to Syria in the early twentieth century spurred nationalist movements, spread the culture, and standardized the language. Decades later, the PKK would play an instrumental role in pushing for cultural activities and festivals within Syria in face of adversity. Without their assistance, it would have taken longer for the Syrian community to come together and to receive crucial aid.

In contrast, Iran's government policy of excluding the Kurds from outside assistance by funding foreign Kurdish nationalistic groups is one that has demobilized and disempowered the populace by not allowing them to gain arms or other financial support. They have done so through strategic allyship with the KDP so that they receive information on the Kurdish community's plans internally and to never assist their own Kurdish movements in exchange for material and financial support during their war with Iraq. Iran's allyship with the KDP caused much disarray for Iran's own Kurdish movements; for instance, Barzani directly contributed to the assassination of many Kurdish leaders, who were unable to find haven within Iraq's bordering territories.

On the other hand, Kurdish movements have also gained support from western powers such as the United States and Israel as well as nearby countries. U.S. support has greatly shaped the course of Kurdish development by equipping them with the necessary means to rebel. While these countries may perpetuate a belief that their support stems from altruistic reasons and

human rights concern, their dichotomous allyship and behaviors are rooted in self-interest and political power.

The case of American involvement within Iraq has been one that both benefited and hurt Kurdish citizens. While in the first half of the twentieth century, the US was in support of the Kurdish movement in Iraq, through the beginnings of Saddam Hussein's reign, the US and UK supplied the Iraqi government with napalm and arms to demolish their villages and cities. In the subsequent decades when the Iraqi government was no longer seen as an ally and serving western interest, the American government began supplying resistance movements with arms to weaken the government. Many times, American support was merely a political threat rather than a credible promise for Kurds, as they rebelled, they were forced to live with the consequences of their actions rather than receive American support. However, it is doubtful to say that Kurdish autonomy would have gone as far as it did in Iraq without the support it received in the 1990s to establish its autonomous region and who in their deals were able to ensure the use of oil as a source of revenue. America's role in toppling the Ba'ath regime in 2003 who was responsible for restricting the Kurds the most was instrumental for allowing the Kurdistan region to form as it is today.

While no other territory has received similar American intervention in helping them establish an autonomous region, nearby foreign countries have continuously allowed for those exiled from Turkey to find a haven to be protected from persecution, such as that of Syria and Iraq. Notable supports of the Turkish movement are that of the USSR and Armenia in the beginning of the 1900s who were potent forces in supplying the Kurds with material support and helping them organize into a powerful cause.

The lack of international support that Iranian Kurds received because the west favored their nuclear arms deals over the lives of the Kurds negatively shaped their outcome. They were never able to organize nor be a formidable threat to the government precisely because they lacked resources and were seen as incapable of dislodging their government. The lack of policy that would assist Kurds could have been a result of the recognized weakness of the Kurdish movements that did not have the ability to dislodge the government nor significantly disempower it. The western hemisphere also chose to prioritize nuclear arms discussions with Iran while overlooking their repressive measures at home. Rather when the west chose to lift sanctions in 2016, they aided in the weakening of the movement, thus the political manipulation of resistance movements within the Middle East have habitually been motivated by self-interest rather than their claimed altruistic human rights propaganda. Thus, movements struggled to mobilize and gain power.

Impact of Policy on Resistance

Prior to conducting these qualitative analyses, I had proposed two theories to describe the relationship between governmental policy and assimilation. After careful analysis of this relationship, it is apparent that the conversation is much more nuanced and complex than having one outcome.

The first theory predicted that there is a positive correlation between intensity of repressive assimilation policy and the rejection of dominant national identity. If we were to characterize the rejection of dominant national identity through the total amount of resistance movements that follow Kurdish nationalist ideology, then there is a pattern across post-Ottoman countries in which Kurdish violence and unrest peaks during authoritarian regimes due to their oppressive policies.

The conflict within Iran contrasts with the other three governments because while Iran has focused its policies on economic and political suppression, albeit without prioritizing cultural rights, they have most successfully eliminated the threat of Kurdish nationalist movements. They did so, not through the highly militarized response we see within Turkey and Iraq, but by targeting resistance movements themselves rather than the Kurdish community's rights. Iran's approach towards weaking the formation of cultural development differs from that taken by Turkey and Syria; while the latter favored suppression of the language explicitly and outlawing public displays of Kurdish culture, Iran sought to vilify the community through their ethnic associations with Kurdish movements and parties that they deemed as hazardous and dangerous. As a result, there is a hesitancy to practice and to engage with culture as individuals fear public ridicule and see little to no value to pass down their language. By contrast, Turkish and Syrian Kurds have more fervently held onto their culture due to the governments' explicit strategies and targeting of innocent people who have no association with these movements. Similarly, when Iraq responded to resistance efforts with the Anfal campaign, they created incentive for international sympathy and made Kurds appear as victims rather than perpetrators. Due to this, I argue that Turkey was largely unsuccessful, despite their best efforts, to characterize Kurds as domestic terrorists compared to Iran. Thus, while for certain countries intensive repressive policies have enacted resistance movements and incentivized community unification, that does not always translate into success nor to high rates of cultural promotion.

The latter theory predicted that policies that target economic and political capacity lead to the highest rates of rejection. When looking at the first part of the statement, the study has certainly proven that economic policies have caused the emergence of almost every single resistance movement. As most forms of power has ties with acquisition of wealth through

economic prosperity, it is evident that this is one means of limiting the Kurds' influence within society. That is why for the cases of Iran, Syria, and turkey, their most influential movements were born from poor rural classes rather than educated urban centers that we see in Iraq. Though it is important to note that those in Iraq also were experiencing economic hardships and pressures due to the oil reserves they held that characterized their fight -- especially within the city of Kirkuk. The objectives of each movement have also held an economic component displaying the effects of economic underdevelopment within such rejection.

However, analysis of the situation is complicated when considering political rights as the relationship is more nuanced. Syria exhibited the most blatant and nefarious eradication of political rights of Kurds through invalidating their citizenship that forbade them from the use of many public services and human rights. Prior to this, Kurds had actively advocated to gain autonomous administration of their region, essentially to be represented by Kurds within the purview of the government. The sentiment of seeking representation within the government rather than separating from its rule is one that echoes through many initial movements because they saw themselves existing within the country's context. That is why the Kurds in Mosul agreed to Iraqi rule and Iranian Kurds sought to gain more rights within Iranian government. Truly separatist ideas did not form until those countries showed their inability to cooperate and were neglecting their concerns.

Perhaps Syria's quest to eradicate citizenship rights was a result of observing Kurds within nearby countries who kept their civic rights; within those areas they were able to weaponize the size of the community to elect Kurdish people to government or those who agreed with their cause. Within Turkey and Iran those elected to government positions could not identify with their heritage nor share Kurdish nationalism, rather they were forced to forsake

their identities if they wished to participate. Though they were implicitly barred from attracting attention to the Kurdish question, they were still allowed to further the development of Kurdish regions implicitly for the period that they had power. But especially within Turkey those individuals would eventually be persecuted and accused of separatism nonetheless due to their penal code. Thus, though political rights certainly can lead to an increased capacity to resist, it can also be a means in which they are limited in outcome and disempowered.

Earlier in the paper, I introduced Collard-Wexler's theory about the impacts of regime type on resistance rates. However, the results I collected argue that the effects of regime type are limited, rather the policies that the state adopts and the accessibility to power and resources are more substantial indicators of how the minority group will respond. While democracies are expected to be able to make more credible promises and address constituents' concerns more thoroughly, that has not been the case within the Kurdish dilemma. The country of Turkey has ruled as a democracy since the 1920s, however the government have consistently limited the cultural capacity and economic development of Kurdish communities. As a result, Turkey's persistent enactment and enforcement of laws that justified the persecution of Kurds for practicing their culture has translated into the gradual devaluation and assimilation of Kurds. In response, Turkey has seen some of the highest levels of Kurdish resistance efforts, and certainly the most violent.

Another aspect of Collard-Wexler 's theory was how religious affinity between the government and its constituents can supersede ethnic affiliations, leading to fewer instances of resistance. The closest case of this occurrence is within the Islamic Republic of Iran that has nurtured a strong allyship with Shi'a Kurds. In that regard, the government's preferential treatment of Shi'a Kurds because they shared the same religious beliefs successfully limited

Kurdish resistance efforts. However, it seems that it was not only the religious affinity but also the economic and cultural privileges that produced their allyship.

Assimilation Levels

What differentiates Iraq from the rest of the country is that though they experienced the highest levels of state violence and direct suppression under the Ba'ath Regime from the 1960s-1991, outside of that era they were able to float in and out of political power and to form formidable resistance movements due to the KDP and PUK. For most of the twentieth century, the only large Kurdish party was the KDP who were able to cooperate with Qassim and they do not share the same religious divisions. It is interesting to note that, compared to the other governments, the country rarely pursued policies that would explicitly target Kurdish culture and language. Rather the failure of the government to destabilize the movement and the role that foreign intervention played in the region are why the group is the least assimilated, and most economically and politically prosperous. Currently approximately 95% of Kurds are native speakers of the language and they can publicly celebrate their culture within their own semi-autonomous region.

When analyzing the levels of Turkish assimilation, there is a huge jump we must make after speaking of the Kurdistan region. The government of Turkey has historically prioritized repressive cultural policy and chronic underdevelopment of the southeastern Kurdish region. Despite having the largest Kurdish population, only 45% of Kurds speak the language as their native tongue due to previous policies that banned such practices and continued devaluation of the language. Though Kurds can achieve economic prosperity within major urban centers, those still living in Kurdish regions still suffer economically, often hit with the brunt end of unemployment and inflation rates. Though there has been an additional Kurdish political party

formed recently, they have often been negatively associated with the PKK and often attacked. However, there has been a stagnation and decrease of political resistance movements in the face of this. Those who achieve economic and political success have often forsaken their Kurdish heritage to do so. In combination with strategic renaming and historical erasure, they have gradually ushered in Kurdish assimilation into Turkish society, at least of public expression.

Lastly, the case of Syrian assimilation levels after the 1960s regime is most similar to that of Turkish suppressive policy: an emphasis on cultural policy and political suppression that extends to present times. In a survey of 300 Syrian Kurds conducted by the Human Rights Association, they found that 233 identified as Syrian, 251 said that their family origins were Syrian and 198 did not favor Kurdish secession (Ziadeh 2009:5). In addition, there are still hundreds of thousands of Kurds who are stateless, recent Kurdish festivals were met with police violence, and parents are not comfortable to share their culture with the youth. Especially regarding those who exist outside the Kurdish reason, there is a clear pattern heading towards cultural assimilation, at least in terms of limiting public expression and associations.

For much of the twentieth century, Shia Kurds have successfully integrated into Iranian society and infiltrated positions of power by adhering to the hegemonic ideology and at the expense of Sunni Kurds. The government has allowed for cultural expressions legally and focused instead on politically excluding and military suppressing Kurdish movements. In practice, they have historically dealt with the Kurdish dilemma through neglect of their issues and social erasure. Because of this, the question of the Kurdish problem rarely arises with few resistance movements arising. The failures of the movements to attain any success despite attempts speak to the legitimacy of the government's power and Kurdish fragmentation that has translated into assimilation.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper I have sought to understand the variation in minority assimilation through a comparative analysis of the Kurdish dilemma. After dissecting the effects of regime changes and policy fluctuations, the most effective policies are ones that exploited the Kurdish community's isolation and division to weaken comradery. This relates back to Cederman's earlier argument of how the size of ethnic groups influences their ability to successfully rebel: in this case, despite constituting a sizeable proportion of the population, Kurds often struggled to mobilize due to governmental policies that heightened divisions delay resistance efforts even if it was through implicit means.

As per Collard-Wexler's theory on how political dislocations reduces the minority groups' trust in the government and rejection of national identity, Kurdish resistance was instigated by continuous false promises and non-credible commitments which alienated the group from the central government. Similarly, inequitable resource allocation in Syria and Turkey birthed strong feelings of alienation with their government and caused initially violent rebellions. However, these actions do not always translate into higher or lower rates of assimilation because governments can predict an initial pushback by minorities and effectively utilize their strength to undermine the longevity of the movement. But even when these policies were eventually repealed, their effects still lingered on their culture.

Furthermore, we can apply the scope of these findings to that of the earlier case studies discussed in the literature review of the treatment of Romani's under the Hungarian government, Korean culture under Japanese Occupation, and the Thailand and Malaysian governments' consolidation of the dozens of ethnic minorities into one national identity. Romani people within Hungary are still discriminated against in educational and economic opportunities as well as

socially excluded. Though there have been efforts to form organizations and clubs that foster the identity, their lack of homeland has severely weakened their negotiation efforts and political threats, allowing them to remain ignored politically. The statelessness felt by them is like that of Kurds, especially in Syria, who are politically excluded and discriminated against because of the power imbalance between the dominant and minority groups. As a result, many Romani people strategically avoid self-reporting as such on censuses to avoid the harmful connotations associated with their culture. Thus, the case of Romani assimilation in Hungary closely parallels that of Kurds across the Middle East as evident by the government's the similar utilization of geographic dispersion and vilification in the media to reduce mobilization efforts.

The countries of Thailand and Malaysia have both utilized military power to suppress separatist activities and resistance movements. Simultaneously, Thailand's government preferential treatment towards Central Thai increased the language and culture's attractiveness to minorities and their propaganda made the identity accessible. The cultural similarities shared across many of Thailand and Malaysia's ethnic minorities has made the assimilation process easier. Similarly, Iran had an easier time assimilating the Kurdish population due to the similarities across the two cultures. Thus, similarities between the minority and dominant group ease the process of assimilation in addition to the veneration of the dominant identity in a sociopolitical context.

In the case of Korea, Japan's economic and military dominance allowed them to adopt prohibitive measures for the sake of national unity and to reduce unrest. Most notably, Japan outlawed the use of Hangul, just as we see with Turkey and Syria. The Korean people notably resisted through the Independence Movement, armed resistance efforts, and through cultural preservation. The annexation of Korea after Japan's surrender during WWII showcases the

influences of foreign involvement on reshaping politics, just as the formation of the Kurdistan Region. While it may be difficult to approximate Japan-Korea relations without their surrender presently, we can expect that suppressive measures would have continued to escalate, and the Korean identity would have gradually been devalued like Kurdish identity has in Turkey.

Within all these cases, countries have economically disempowered and underdeveloped minority regions while reframing the narrative that their actions are justifiable for the sake of national unification rather than assimilation. The governments that succussed capitalized on policies that would weaken and divide the cause to reduce the threat of separatism and the political threat posed if the group is a credible negotiator. More impactful than purely advocating for nationalism and imposing educational limitations, governments who place the dominant identity on a pedestal at the expense of the devaluation of minority culture increases the desirability for minorities to integrate culturally, at least within public settings.

The tenacity of Kurdish culture and the strength of their movements has allowed for remnants of their lifestyles to persist to present times in almost every country. However, we are witnessing in the countries of Syria, Turkey, and Iran a gradual shift within the Kurdish community who, with each generation, are bargaining off aspects of their culture due to the implicit associations of the inferior status of their language. As governments have shut down their festivals, unaccredited their educational institutions and discriminated against their identity, we must face the question of whether we can expect this pattern to persist even in the absence of the oppressive twentieth century policies.

Appendix Index

Appendix 1: Iraq Policy Database

Policy	Domain	Year	Summary	Citation
Sykes-Picot Agreement of WW1	Political	1916	After World War I, Great Britain divided the Middle East, particularly to form the area of Iraq out of the provinces Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. The combination of large ethnic and religious groups made it so that Iraq feared Kurdish separatism. Kurdish regions held two thirds of the country's oil production, so their secession would greatly weaken Iraq's economic state.	(Gunter 2004:201)
Royal monarchy adopts an official national policy regarding the Kurds	Economic	1921	The royal monarchy absorbed influential Kurdish figures into senior positions within the government, making it so that almost every cabinet position was headed by a Kurd. There was substantial collaboration between the two groups, and thus Kurdish nationalist movements were not significant.	(Jawad 2008:27)
Joint Iraqi-British memorandum	Political	1924	The memorandum was supposed to give Kurds the right to establish their own government and send representatives to Baghdad which was not implemented.	(Jawad 2008:26)
Iraqi-British treaty	Political	1924	Sulaimaniya became part of Iraq.	(Jawad 2008: 26)
Treaty with League of Nations	Political	1930	As Iraq wanted to be admitted into the League of Nations as an intendent state, some of the treaty's clauses faced objection by the Kurdish community as there did not seem to be any acknowledgement of Kurdish cultural rights.	(Jawad 2008:26)
Development of Oil Sector	Economic	1930	Iraq shifted from an economic system mainly based on agricultural production towards one dependent on oil production. This accelerated their urbanization process and stagnated the agricultural sector. The shift made it so that the Kurdish regions would be targeted both political and economically for the next forty years, reducing the social wellbeing of the people and caused the underdevelopment of the agricultural sector.	(Ekland, et. al. 2017: 2)
New provisional constitution	Political	1958	Guaranteed freedoms for Kurds: publications of newspapers, the return of those who have been expelled and reparations for them, the release of Kurdish prisoners. As this was seen	(Jawad 2008: 27)

			as sufficient to appease the Kurdish sector, there were no efforts to integrate them politically, efforts to specify their cultural rights, or to codify their language rights. The KDP was given license only when they changed their name and program for his approval.	
Ba'ath Party seizes power	Political	1963	When the Ba'ath seized power, they looked down on the policy that the previous leader had taken in addressing insurgent Kurdish uprisings; instead, they use military force to silence the KDP.	(Jawad 2008:30)
Al-Bazzaz memorandum	Political	1966	The memorandum sought to create a comprehensive plan for ensuring the cultural and political rights of Kurds: establishing a Kurdish university, licensing Kurdish parties, and establishing another Kurdish party. The government would not effectively implement it because of the politician's weakness.	(Jawad 2008:30)
Iraqi–Kurdish Autonomy Agreement	Political	1970	After the Iraqi-Kurdish wars, they agreed to grant some rights and autonomy to the Kurds. This includes recognizing Kurdish as an official language, participation in government, reinforcement of Kurdish education, Kurdish areas will be ruled by their own people, the ability to establish organizations, allocation of funds for their development, pensions for martyrs, agrarian reform, ability to broadcast in Kurdish, appointment of a Kurd to be vice president, and unification of Kurdish areas to be self-governing. While the articles began to implement in the preliminary months in which they were passed, it became clear that this agreement was merely for show as the Ba'ath party continued to target Kurdish political leaders and violate their rights	(McDowall 1996: 327)
Saddam Hussein's privatization of state-owned industries	Economic	1970s-1980s	The privatization of these industries shifted ownership of food production into the hands of few families that controlled agricultural factories, such as wheat, rice, and barley. The methods taken favored short-term production over long term sustainability and thus in the 1990s, with the failure of irrigation projects, the agricultural sector weakened. By the end of the Iran-Iraq war, they were producing half as much produce.	(Ekland, et. al 2017:2)

Land reform law	Economic	1975	The government targeted large estates of Kurdish tribal land and reallocated it to be in the direct control of the government,	(Springborg 1987:16)
Compulsory Education Law	Education	1976	Established the right to education from primary to university level, making the primary compulsory and all education was free of charge. As a result, the UN considered Iraq's education to be one of the best systems in the Arab world, enrollment levels were at 100% and they met international standards.	(De Santisteban 2005:62)
Eradication of Illiteracy Law, No 92	Education	1976	Launched a national campaign to improve national literacy levels, which increased rates especially amongst women.	(De Santisteban 2005:62)
Al-Majid's first directive	Political	1987	The directive banned anyone from entering or existing within the prohibited, Kurdish areas. Anyone who would be found would be killed as all Kurds were associated with insurgents. The directive defined which group would be targeted by the Anfal campaign and initiated the repressive activities to come.	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
Al-Majid's Second directive	Political	1987	The second directive was an incitement for mass murder, Army commanders were, "to carry out random bombardments, using artillery, helicopters and aircraft, at all times of the day or night, in order to kill the largest number of persons present in these prohibited zones" and that "All persons captured in those villages shall be detained and interrogated by the security services and those between the ages of 15 and 70 shall be executed after any useful information has been obtained from them, of which we should be duly notified."	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
Presidential order of October 15, 1987	Political	1987	The president instructed that the names of those who being captured or killed to be documented. Rather than engaging with them as a mass group, he wanted them to treat the prisoners on an individual basis and keep records of such. So, there are extensive records of everyone's personal information.	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
National Census Issued	Political	1987	Before the Anfal campaign, they sought to further define and understand how many Kurds were residing within this area. Thus, they issued a census that would detail who were still living in these government-controlled areas after being issued an ultimatum either to leave or lose citizenship and be regarded as traitors	(Human Rights Watch 1993)

			to the country (a death sentence). For the women, children and elderly who remained they were transferred to other rural areas/camps to stay in while they destroyed their villages.	
Special powers granted to Secretary General Al-Majid	Political	1987	For two years, Al-Majid was granted full powers to do as he pleases over the Northern region of Iraq, with authority over all agencies. His new powers enabled him to use the full wrath of the military and security services to solve the Kurdish problem.	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
Anfal Campaign	Political	1987-1989	Following Kurdish rebellion during the Iraq-Iran war, this campaign sought to eradicate all Kurdish rebel groups and to Arabize Kirkuk. There were eight stages to the campaign, each following the same pattern. First, they would ensue chemical attacks by air, followed by a military blitz in military bases. Then group troops move into the target area and destroy any houses or village centers, they looted possessions and set fire to homes. They seized all people in the area and transported the prisoners to nearby camps. To ensure no one is hiding, police would be sent into the town to hunt down fugitives and lure them out with false promises. The campaign exercised mass executions, causing tens of thousands to disappear. Among 50,000 to 100,000 people were killed, there was widespread chemical use producing disastrous consequences, arbitrary arrest, and the dissimilation of whole villages that left the Kurdish rural economy destroyed.	(Black 1993)
Decree no. 736 of the Revolutionary Command Council	Political	1988	The decree would grant an amnesty for all remaining Kurds, except for the PKK's leader. The decision was made because they have believed that they have weakened the cause and were no longer a threat to the government. The people had relinquished control over their villages.	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
Halabja Attacks	Political	1988	Saddam Hussein issued chemical attacks against the village.	(Human Rights Watch 1993)
US Ceasefire Issued	Political/ Economic	1988	Use brokered a ceasefire that would bring Barzani and Talabani, KDP and PKK respectively, together. Kurds would receive 13 percent of the country's oil productions in 1995.	(World Affairs 2004)

Kurdish agricultural policy	Economic	1990s	Unlike the case of farmers under the central government, the Kurdish regions had a different policy that did not oblige farmers to sell their crops to the government and was more operating in response to the market. This also meant there was no subsidies provided for their production.	(CRS Report 2004)
Economic blockade	Economic	1991	The Baghdad government imposed a blockade on the Kurdish region, making it so that they cannot import nor export goods. This made the illegal trade industry more profitable and increased smuggling. The government also froze the banking systems of the north, causing NGOs to take over their monetary transactions. Foreign aid agencies stepped in to assist with the banking systems and spur the agricultural halts.	(CRS Report 2004)
U.N. signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Iraq	Economic	1991	To offset the effects of the blockade, humanitarian agencies stepped into to buy petrol and food to transport to the norther region. This would surpass agricultural incentives for the area and create a dependency cycle.	(CRS Report 2004)
Public Distribution System (PDS)	Economic	1991	This was a food rationing system by the Iraqi Ministry of trade through the UN World Food Program. This had adverse consequences for farmers who could not compete with the importation of subsidized foods. But the relative economic situation of the region was growing.	(Ekland, et. al 2017:2)
Ministry of Education Law, No. 34, 19	Education	1998	The Ministry of Education assumed supervision and monitoring of all general educational policy. They had complete control over the curriculum and training within primary education. For universities the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research controlled their policies.	(De Santisteban 2005:62)
US Congress passes the Iraq Liberation Act	Political	1998	This bill allotted $97 million for weapons, training, and financing Iraq opposition groups. This was the first public move taken by the US against the Iraqi regime.	(RefWorld 2004)
Parliament forms de facto Kurdish region	Political	2002	The reunified parliament of the region forms a de facto region in Kurdistan and declared that post-Saddam Iraq would allow for their autonomy.	(Gunter 2004:202)

Iraq's 2005 Constitution	Education	2005	It states that: "The Arabic language and the Kurdish language are the two official languages of Iraq. The right of Iraqis to educate their children in their mother tongue, such as Turkmen, Assyrian, and Armenian shall be guaranteed in government educational institutions in accordance with educational guidelines, or in any other language in private educational institutions"	(Iraq Const. 2005)
Kurdistan Accrediting Association for Education	Education	2022	While there has been considerable movement to establish Kurdish institutions especially within the KRG, they are less prestigious and accredited than ones taught in Arabic. This policy is aimed at establishing quality standards and ensuring those institutions success.	(Issa 2003)

Appendix 2: Syria Policy Database

Policy	Domain	Year	Summary	Citation
Terrier Plan	Political	1920s	This plan accommodated for the tens of thousands of Kurdish individuals fleeing from Turkish persecution by granting them identity cards. This shifted the demographical makeup of the country and caused the number of villages to balloon. They would prove to be powerful allies for the French during the mandate.	(Tejel 2009:29)
Founded Grain Office, the Mira	Economic	1939	During WWII, the agricultural infrastructure would be disrupted. Syria founded the grain office which would supply the country and the nearby countries of the Levant with agricultural support. This caused a boom within the northern rural region and caused for Kurdish individuals to be pushed out for the land.	(Tejel 2009:37)
Decree No. 93	Political	1962	This distributed a census to assess the full scope of Kurdish citizenship within the country, and 20% of which would be stripped of their citizenship. They were left stateless without any claim to a nationality. The decree was a means to identify any "alien infiltrators" in the northeastern Syria instead of their stated purpose of identifying those who had illegally crossed the border. This marked a major step towards Arabizing the region which was rich with resources. Without a citizenship, they lost all rights that would be guaranteed to these individuals: right to vote, to own property, to have legally recognized marriages, to carry a passport, to own property, to gain employment in government agencies, to practice as a doctor or engineer, and eligibility for food subsidies or admittance to public hospitals.	(Human Rights Watch 1996)
Government controls education	Education	1967	Because the government gained control of the educational system, any references to Kurds were removed from geography books and the curriculum. The staff of the Civil Registry Departments were instructed to not allow for people to name their children with Kurdish names. The government is taking it upon themselves to play a revisionist of history that will justify their actions and the displacement of Kurds. In eradicating their role from history, they are ensuring their silence in the future. As names are an important source of heritage in forcing	(UN Human Rights Council 2009)

			citizens to register using Arabic names rather than Kurdish, on paper it Arabizes the territory and eliminates the ability to trace one's Kurdish heritage.	
Syrian Citizenship Law	Political	1969	The Syrian government's policy of refusing to recognize legally the marriages between Syrian women who are citizens and men who are foreigners. According to the law, women can pass on Syrian nationality to their children born in Syria only if the paternity of the child has not been legally established. In contrast, the law states that Syrian nationality is passed on to children born in Syria or outside the country if their father is of Syrian nationality.	(Human Rights Watch 1996)
Arab Belt Program	Economic	1973	In the areas in which Syria bordered Turkey and Iraq, Syrian authorities confiscated the Kurdish owned land and granted it to Arab individuals. People were not compensated for their land and were dispossessed.	(UN Human Rights Council 2009)
Article 4, Syrian Constitution	Education	1973	The Arab language is the official language. Kurdish language not recognized as an official language of the state	(Syria Const. 1973)
Article 10, 11, 15, and 20, Syrian Constitution	Political	1973	Criminalized any political and social groups that did not share Arab nationalists' ideals.	(Syria Const. 1973)
Decree issued by the governor of Hasakeh	Education	1986	This decree prohibited the use of Kurdish within the workplace. When confronted by the Human rights watch about these decrees in 1996, they stated that, "The Syrian constitution stipulates that Syria is part of the greater Arab nation and that Arabic is its official language. It stipulates further that the ban on the use of foreign languages in the workplace is not limited to the Kurdish language but includes all languages other than Arabic."	(Human Rights Watch 1996)
Decree issued by the governor of Hasakeh	Economic	1988	This decree reiterated the previous decree and added a stipulation that non-Arabic songs will be banned within festivals and wedding ceremonies. Combined they weakened the power of the Kurdish language and disincentives the acquisition/passing down of the language throughout generations. In punishing workers for speaking Kurdish, it reinforces the inferiority of the ethnic group within Syria.	(Human Rights Watch 1996)
Decree no. 122	Education	1992	Banned the registration of Kurdish names, Kurdish cultural centers, bookshops, etc.	(Human Rights Watch 1996)

Resolution number 932/Haa	Economic	1994	Prohibited the naming of public and private establishments with non-Arabic names, including clubs, hotels, entertainment centers, cafés, hostels, restaurants, etc. Current businessowners with these names were advised to change it or face closure, legal persecution, or fines.	(Human Rights Watch 1996)
Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform issued order number 2707/ S	Economic	2010	Residents within the province of Hasaka were instructed by the Ministry department to remove any peasants' names from the record of wages and rental context. The stated motivated was because they lacked the legal license necessary under the Act No. 41 of 2004 and its amendments. All of those removed were Kurdish citizens.	(UN Human Rights Council 2009)

Appendix 3: Iran Policy Database:

Policy	Domain	Year	Summary	Citation
share-cropping agricultural system	Economic	1600s-1962	This feudal agricultural system made it so that 54 percent of all cultivated land was based on share cropping. This meant that Kurdish workers were asked to work for wealthy landowners to cultivate their crops for a small share of profits. Because of the power imbalance and the dependency created, they often undermined the peasants' rights, and the workers were forced to endure due to limited movement opportunity because of the small earnings they made.	(Hassaniyan 2021:39)
Iranian Constitution	Political	1905	The constitution declared that Persian was to be the official language of the country, elevating its value among other ethnic minorities. It did not forbid the use of Kurdish as it was never mentioned.	(Hassaniyan 2021:20)
Reza Shah's (land) reform agenda	Economic	1930	This agenda reduced the power of the peasant class and empowered the wealthy landowners because they were valuable constituents for the leader. In turn, he appointed them to positions of political power so that he could consolidate power. In response, there were a string of tribal uprisings led by Kurdish leaders.	(Hassaniyan 2021:37)
Act of 20 Per Cent	Economic	1950s	Within this law, landowners were required to relinquish twenty percent of their earnings to be distributed to peasants. This redistributive policy also criminalized forced labor and illegal taxation to protect the peasants' rights, yet it would never be enforced by landowners or local leaders. This false promise would also increase tensions and initiate conflict among the peasant class.	(Hassaniyan 2021:37)
foreign assistance for Iraqi Kurds	Political	1960	Iran provided support for Kurds in Iraq consistently under their repressive regime, in turn they would refrain from supporting Kurds in Iran, and to even fight against them if need be. This policy greatly weakened the movement throughout the next decades as many groups gained their support and a haven from nearby countries.	(Bengio 2017:36)
1962 Land Reform law	Economic	1962	This law abolished the previous feudal system, and the land was redistributed into the hands of smaller agricultural workers.	(Hassaniyan 2021:40)

Islamic Republic forms	Political	1979	The new regime would succeed in consolidating power and began implementing a policy that denied the country's harsh treatment of minorities, especially within the Pahlavi dynasty.	(Hassaniyan 2021:83)
Hard power policy	Political	1979	The government was harsh with their punishments and clear with their intentions. They rejected Kurdish demands and requests outright no matter their merit, used massive military interventions to deal with issues, threatened the use of physical force to crush the movement, and often killed leaders of these movements before they gained too much power/attention -- thus leaving the movement in disarray. Prior to this, movements wanted to gain cultural and political rights within the country's framework. After it became clear that this regime had no intention of cooperating, they shifted towards wanting to be free of the regime and to fight against it, rather than within it.	(Hassaniyan 2021)
Declaration of Jihad	Political	1979	The government declares jihad against Kurdish movement, justifying their force with religious reasons.	(Bengio 2017: 35)
Jash	Political	1970s-1980s	Formation of a paramilitary group composed of under 25,000 local Kurds employed by the Guard Corps and military. They were created, sponsored, and armed by the Iran government to divide Kurds and create internal enemies. Combined with the help from the KDP, they were able to dislodge the movements power and breed anti-Kurdish sentiment within academic and professional, and increased the militarization and surveillance of these regions. Those who belonged to this group were shamed by the community and were oppressed for their betrayal.	(Hassaniyan 2021:147)
Retribalization policy of Kurds	Political	1980s	The country sought to further divide the movement by sponsoring and arming tribes and feudalists and convincing them that the current movement does not represent their needs. They were easy to target because of the economic and political power they had lost after the land reform law. The Mangor tribe, specifically, would cause great disarray for the Kurdish movement. These groups would eventually be integrated into the security force and were trained by the Guard Corps.	(Hassaniyan 2021:147)

Appendix 4: Turkey Policy Database

Policy	Domain	Year	Summary	Citation
Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points	Political	1918	The twelfth point declared that non-Turkish minorities under the Ottoman empire will be granted the right for autonomous development.	(Gunter 2019:11)
Treaty of Serves	Political	1920	Article 62 called for "local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas." Article 64 looked forward to the possibility that "the Kurdish peoples" might be granted "independence from Turkey."	(Gunter 2019:11)
Treaty of Lausanne	Political	1923	This treaty recognized Turkey without special considerations for Kurds, despite previous agreements. As the President attempted to unify his country, Kurdish revolts erupted in response to being blind sighted, but would end in defeat. This would prove to be sufficient justification to begin oppressing Kurdish groups with separatist accusations. It also obliged Turkey to establish primary schools within non-Muslim districts that would instruct in their languages. But because most Kurds were Muslim, this failed to be extended to them. The oppression of the Kurdish language has remained a steadfast feature of the government's agenda by framing it as hazardous and creating obstacles towards learning the language.	(Treaty of Lausanne 1923)
devletcilik-etatism, massive state intervention	Economic	1923	From 1923 until the 1950s, the state will adopt a strong interventionist role in economic policy. They developed state economic enterprises due to perceived inefficiency within the private sector, and that these SEEs would act as catalysts of economic development. The private sector was seen as weak due to its susceptibility to speculation.	(White 1998: 143)
Principles of Economic Contract of the Izmir Economic Congress	Economic	1923	This contract of corporatism was permanently embedded into the economic policy. In effect, it banned leftist organizations and strikes, and placed unions under the state. The state had monopolies over numerous production sectors such as tobacco, alcohol, petroleum, and sugar. By 1932 there were almost 1500 industrial enterprises.	(White 1998:144)

Law of Unification of Instruction (LoUoI)	Education	1924	The MEB would establish the country's curriculum and approve all teaching materials to be used within primary and secondary education. As the government geared to suppress the influence of Kurds, this made it so that mentions of Kurdish history could be left out or amended as the government saw fit. This created grave inequality with how groups can access education and embedded religious, nationalist ideology into these schools.	(Aydin 2020)
Strategic Kurdish assimilation	Political	1925	Following revolts, the country implemented a policy of strategic Kurdish assimilation through detribalization and by targeting their identity.	(Gunter 2019:12)
Hat Law (Law No. 671 on Hats)	Political	1925	Ban on Kurdish traditional attire -- specifically men's headgear	(Gunter 2019:12)
Turkish Penal Code, Article 141	Political	1926	"Whoever attempts to establish or establishes or arranges or conducts and administers the activities of societies in any way and under any name, or furnishes guidance in these respects, with the purpose of establishing domination of a social class over other social classes or exterminating a certain social class or overthrowing any of the established basic economic or social orders of the country, shall be punished by heavy imprisonment of from 8 to 15 years. Whoever conducts and administers more than one or all such societies shall be punished by death".	(Amnesty International 1977:3)
Turkish Penal Code, Article 142	Political	1926	"Whoever makes propaganda with the purpose of establishing the domination of one social class over others, exterminating any of the social classes, overthrowing any of the established basic economic or social orders of the country, or the political or legal system of the State, shall be punished by heavy imprisonment of from 5 to 10 years."	(Amnesty International 1977:3)
Turkish Penal Code, Article 146	Political	1926	"Whoever attempts by force, completely or partially to alter the Constitution, to abolish it, to prevent Parliament from discharging its functions..."	(Amnesty International 1977:3)
Turkish penal Code, Articles 158, 159, 163, 311 and 312.	Political	1926	Article 158 provides a sentence of up to 5 years imprisonment for insulting the President of the Republic and Article 159 a sentence of up to 6 years imprisonment for insulting the government, the judiciary, the armed forces, or the security forces. Articles 311 and 312 deal	(Amnesty International 1977:3)

			with incitement to commit offences; 312 stating that those who "...incite any social classes to hatred and hostility to the detriment of the public are punishable by imprisonment for from 3 months to 1 year." Under Article 163: "Whoever, opposes secularism, forms or organizes, plans, manages, or administers a society aiming, even partially, to impose religious principles on the basic social, economic, political or legal order of the state is punishable by imprisonment for from 2 to 7 years"	
The Surname Law	Education	1934	This law required each citizen to adopt a family name, but stipulated that citizens choose Turkish names. It forbade surnames related to tribes. Its purpose was to create Turkish national identity by making it ethnically indistinguishable. There was increased pressure of non-Muslims to adopt Turkish names as they feared discrimination. In effect, by 1980 the names of 67% of districts and 63% of villages were changed into Turkish names.	(Aslan 2009)
Law on autonomy (Law on the Higher Education (no. 4936))	Education	1946	Granted immunity for Turkish universities from police regulation. Universities breaded hot beds for "terrorist" thought and contributed to the country's extremism	(Gunter 2019:28)
Mechanization of agriculture	Economic	1950	In mechanizing the agricultural system, the rural Kurdish regions suffered as they could no longer compete and there was a lack of economic opportunity in the area. It changed the system of social stratification, increased the disparity of wealth, and for each tractor that was created, 10-50 workers were left without a job. These areas felt higher rates of inflation, unemployment, and underdevelopment as they were neglected. This also accelerated the rate of people migrating from the rural areas into urban environments.	(White 1998:141)
Reimposition of devletcilik economics	Economic	1960	This reinstated the role of the government as a strong force in the economic sector to modernize the country. They privatized state agencies but failed to make profits. This worsened the countries balance of payments problem and generated higher rates of inflation. This affected all wage-earners and poor farmers, but Kurdish southeastern regions were severely hurt. They were earnings 74.8% of the country’s average	(White 1998:144)

			income while Istanbul as earning 259% of that average.	
1960s Turkish language boarding schools	Education	1960	Students who were caught speaking Kurdish were punished. The country established Turkish language boarding schools that targeting Kurdish regions. Their goal was to separate children from their communities and to Turkify them through the academic sphere.	(Selvi 2021)
Turkish Constitution	Political	1961	The new Turkish constitution of 1961 granted considerably more civil liberties involving speech, press, and association than had previously existed. But they ban on forming regional or ethnic associations was still maintained. However, Kurds were granted new opportunities to occupy positions of power to progress development in their region, such as public health. This also marked the beginning of publications, that would be banned. The ability to retain voting rights was crucial in times of movement disarray as it allowed the Kurds to bargain their support for the most appealing party, usually those aligned with social democrats	(Gunter 2019:15)
TWP Resolution within the fourth congress	Political	1970	This first instance within Turkish politics that the Kurdish people were recognized explicitly by Parliament, stating that: “There is a Kurdish people in the East of Turkey…The fascist authorities representing the ruling classes have subjected the Kurdish people to a policy of assimilation and intimidation which has often become a bloody repression.” Those who contained to advocate for Kurdish peoples were still being imprisoned though, such as the TWP.	(Gunter 2019:16)
Military intervention	Political	1971	Marked direct military intervention that aligned Kurdish nationalism with political extremism that threatened the country’s stability. Partly a result of the parliament being informed of KDP supplying arms to the movement within their own country. This solidified the identification of Kurdish activists as terrorists.	(Gunter 2019:16)
1972 Registration Law Article 16/4	Education	1972	The law stipulated that names which do not conform to national culture, moral norms, customs, and traditions and which offend the public could not be given to children. But it was left up to discretion of those working within these registration offices to decide what	(Aslan 2009)

			constituted national culture, so many were able to get away with granting their children Kurdish names through negotiation.	
State Security Courts	Political	1973	These courts were designed to replace military tribunals, it constituted of five judges that were chosen by the Supreme Court. They were designed to deal with both right-wing and left-wing offenders, but in practice they were merely used against left wing thought, particularly because it aligned with Kurdish movements' ideology. Thus, they would be abolished two years later.	(Amnesty International 1977)
1980 Turkish coup d'état	Political	1980	For three years, the Turkish people would be ruled by the armed forces until it would be restored to a democracy through elections. This caused an intensification of nationalism and direct suppression of Kurdish identity. The country would take nine years to full transition into a democracy.	(Gunter 2019:71)
Ozal's economic reforms	Economic	1980	His economic policies caused subsistence farming to shrink severely and though he attempted support prices to offset the negative effects, they did not solve the issue. This hit rural Turkish Kurds hard as those who were supplying crops could not compete with the depreciation of the currency. This benefited exporters the most at the expense of farmers.	(White 1998:146)
Law on the Higher Education no. 2547	Education	1981	Universities lost any partial autonomy they had.	(Dogan 2021)
1982 constitution	Political	1982	This constitution characterizes its citizens through belonging to the Turkish nation, advocated for Turkish nationalism at the expense of the suppression of Kurdish languages and culture. This alienated the Kurdish population by proposing there is only one ideology to adhere to and that there is only ethnic identity of the country. As a result, many Kurds would be arrested if they were to speak, publish or sing in Kurdish. So, Kurds resorted to hiding their cultural and ethnic identity to avoid discrimination.	(Barkey 2011)
Article 42.9 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey	Education	1982	This gave the government the ability to determine which languages would be permitted to be taught in schools and mandates that Turkish be the primary language of education: "No language other than Turkish shall be taught	(RefWorld 1982)

			as mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institutions of training or education. Foreign languages to be taught in institutions of training and education and the rules to be followed by schools conducting training and education in a foreign language shall be determined by law. The provisions of international treaties are reserved."	
Article 81 of the 1983 Political Parties Law (No. 2820), "Preventing the Creation of Minorities,"	Political	1983	This law further reinforced the ban on the use of any language other than Turkish within the political realm. This hindered the ability to speak on the Kurdish problem in the political arena and effectively banned all political parties associated with ethnic groups, regardless of if they had a record of violence at all.	(Human Rights Watch 1999)
Law No. 2932, "The Law Concerning Publications and Broadcasts in Languages Other Than Turkish"	Education	1983	Declared that, "The mother tongue of all Turkish citizens is Turkish" and forbade the teaching of any other mother tongue. Prohibited the publication in Kurdish. Normally this would only target the educated and working class, but even those who were illiterate would be affected by this ban as it outlawed all traced of Kurdish identity, such as by banning folk songs. These laws would not be strictly enforced but people were still punished for their use and was used to create fear in the public.	(Human Rights Watch 1999)
Ozal's Keynesianism policies	Economic	1987	Realizing that the current economic system was merely targeting and helping the middle class who were not large enough to ensure his re-election, he reverted to a Keynesian system. He poured nearly $2 billion into the rural areas, particularly Kurdish southeast, and eastern region. This had adverse effects though by reigniting inflation and caused a decline within the stock market.	(White 1998:147)
Repeal of law 2932	Education	1991	Ban on the use of Kurdish language was lifted. However, these restrictions were still being enforced de factor as it did not influence the behavior of the local state officials. Its benefits were that Kurdish music and videos could be engaged in publicly, and they could talk on the Kurdish question freely within the press.	(Aslan 2009)
Turkish militarization and displacement	Political	1993	Due to conflicts between the PKK and Turkish government, at least 2 million Kurds have been displaced from their villages due to declarations of war against one another. The military	(White 1998:149)

			flattened major cities and they sent special units and death squads to attack cities. The government reportedly evacuated and burned down nearly 2297 villages. The government would be forced to resettle and compensate these people, but such assistance was rarely disbursed.	
Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's government's austerity' rescue package	Economic	1994	After the disbursement of austerity packages, the Kurdish region would not be supported and would suffer economically. Anatolia would be exempt from these packages due to the ongoing conflict with the PKK and the lack of economic activity in the region that was hurting public funds. The area lacked infrastructure and development that made it hard to attract capital. This is partly caused by the export of any surplus of the region to be used by the west. This alienated the Kurdish community further from Turkish nationalism.	(White 1998:147)
1994 RTÜK law	Education	1994	This law regulated radio and television broadcasting, that made it so that Turkish would be used exclusively.	(Human Rights Watch 1999)
Article 312 Turkish penal code	Political	1999	This imposed a three-year prison sentence for incitement to provoke hatred or animosity between groups of different race, religion, region, or social class. It is used to prosecute journalists that mention the Kurdish dilemma including those who even read lines of Kurdish text or call for peace.	(Meter 1999)
Law on Teaching in Different Languages and Dialects in Kurdistan Traditionally Used by Turkish Citizens in their Daily Live	Education	2003	This allowed for Kurdish to be taught within the private sphere, lasting for two years.	(Sheyholislami 2022:360)

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