# The Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey: From Class to Nation (1959-1974) and from Nation to "Revolution" (1974-1984)

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# Approvals

"The Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey: From Class to Nation (1959-1974) and from Nation to "Revolution" (1974-1984)," a dissertation prepared by Ahmet Alış in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, has been approved on 10 November 2017 by:

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# Abstract

"The Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey: From Class to Nation (1959-1974) and from Nation to "Revolution" (1974-1984)"

Ahmet Alış, Doctoral Candidate at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2017

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This dissertation examines modern Kurdish activism in Turkey from 1959 to 1984, in two different periods. The dissertation classifies and contextualizes the period between 1959 and 1974 as the departure stage - or Phase A - of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement, which witnessed a shift from "class" to "nation" in political discussions and activism. Accordingly, the period between 1974 and 1984 constituted the maneuver stage -or Phase B- of Kurdish activism, which was dominated by a blunt ideological dogmatism and numerous factional splits over debates about the socialist "revolution." The dissertation contributes to the field, by providing new empirical and analytical analyses of Kurdish activism. It also sheds light on the composition of a little known Kurdish activism of the 1960s and 1970s, by exploring the experiences and roles of actual persons and generations, the political identities and affiliations of which were eclipsed by political schisms.

The main question of the dissertation is to examine how shifts within the Kurdish discourse and activism happened and who were the activists of the movement. The dissertation explores a wide array of issues and actors pertaining to the political and sociological changes that Kurdish society went through. In addition to a multi-sited fieldwork consisting of seventy-four semi-structured interviews, this dissertation employs an interdisciplinary methodology relying on a wide range of primary sources, such as periodicals, magazines, booklets, party programs, and court files on one hand, and relevant secondary sociopolitical literature on the Middle East and Turkey on the other.

104,000 words

# Özet

"Türkiye'de Kürt Etno-bölgesel Hareketi: Sınıftan Millete (1959-1974), Milletten "Devrime" (1974-1984)"

Ahmet Alış, Doktora Adayı, 2017
Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü

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Bu tez, Türkiye'deki Kürt siyasi aktivizmini 1959 ile 1984 yılları arasında iki farklı döneme ayırarak incelemektedir. Tez, temel olarak Kürt meselesinin tanımlanmasında Sınıftan Millete doğru bir geçiş yaşanan 1959 ile 1974 arasındaki dönemi başlangıç aşaması veya A Safhası olarak değerlendirmekte ve kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Aynı doğrultuda, ideolojik dogmatizm ve sosyalist "devrim" üzerine birçok ayrışma ve hizipleşmenin baskın olduğu 1974 ile 1984 arasındaki dönem de manevra aşaması veya B Safhası olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Kürt aktivizminin yeni empirik ve analitik incelemeleriyle alana bir katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Tez ayrıca siyasal tercihleri ve kimlikleri ayrışmalar ile etkilenen gerçek kişi ve nesillerin deneyim ve rollerinin üzerinde durarak 1960 ve 1970'lerdeki az bilinen Kürt aktivizminin bileşim ve oluşumunu da açıklamaktadır. Tezin ana konusu, söz konusu dönemlerde Kürt söylem ve aktivizmi arasındaki farklı geçişlerin nasıl gerçekleştiği ve genel olarak hareketi oluşturan aktivistlerin kimler olduğudur. Tezde Kürt toplumunun sonuç olarak içinden geçtiği siyasal ve sosyolojik değişimlerle ilişkili çok çeşitli konu ve aktörleri incelemektedir. Yarı yapılandırılmış yetmiş dört mülakat ve gözlemlerden oluşan çok bağlamlı bir alan araştırmasına ek olarak bu tez dergi, kitapçık, parti programı ve mahkeme belgeleri gibi kapsamlı birincil kaynaklar ve Orta Doğu ve Türkiye üzerine ilgili ikincil kaynaklar kullanmaktadır.

104.000 kelime

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This work is respectfully dedicated to M. Zeki Çılgın (Seyda),
who, with his life story and sudden tragic death,
epitomized the story of his generation.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ADYÖD | *Ankara Demokratik Yüksek Öğrenim Derneği* (Ankara Democratic Higher Education Association) |
| AKP | *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party) |
| AP | *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party) |
| ARGK | *Artêşa Rizgariya Gelê Kurdistan* (Kurdistan People's Liberation Army) |
| ASKD-DER | *Anti-Sömürgeci Demokratik Kültür Derneği* (Anti-Colonial Democratic Cultural Association) |
| CENTO | Central Treaty Organization |
| CHP | *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party) |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DDKAD | *Devrimci Demokratik Kadınlar Derneği* (Revolutionary Democratic Women Association) |
| DDKD | *Devrimci Demokratik Kültür Dernekleri* (Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations) |
| DDKO | *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları* (Revolutionary Cultural Hearts of the East) |
| DHKD | *Devrimci Halk Kültür Derneği* (Revolutionary People's Cultural Association) |
| Dev-Genç | *Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Dernekleri Federasyonu* (Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey |
| Dev-Yol | *Devrimci Yol* (Revolutionary Path) |

| | |
|---|---|
| DİSK | *Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* (Confederation of Revolutionary Labor Unions) |
| DP | *Demokrat Parti* (Democrat Party) |
| DYÖKD | *Diyarbakır Yüksek Öğrenim Kültür Derneği (*Diyarbakır Democratic Higher Education Association) |
| ERNK | *Eniya Rizgariya Netewa Kurdistan* (National Liberation Front of Kurdistan) |
| FKBDC | *Faşizme Karşı Birleşik Direniş Cephesi* (Unified Resistance Front Against Fascism) |
| FKF | *Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu* (Federation of Idea Clubs) |
| HDP | *Halkların Demokratik Partisi* (Peoples' Democratic Party) |
| HEP | *Halkın Emek Partisi* (People's Labor Party) |
| HK | *Halkın Kurtuluşu* (Liberation of People) |
| HRK | *Hêzên Rizgariya Kurdistan* (Kurdistan Liberation Forces) |
| İYÖKD | *Istanbul Yüksek Öğrenim Kültür Derneği* (Istanbul Democratic Higher Education Association) |
| KDP | *Kurdistan Democratic Party* (of Iraq) |
| KDPI | Kurdistan Democratic Party (of Iran) |
| KDPS | *Kurdistan Democratic Party* (of Syria) |
| KİP | *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi* (Workers' Party of Kurdistan) |
| KKÖ | *Kürdistan Özerk Örgütü* (Autonomous Organization of Kurdistan) |
| KKEP | *Kürdistan Komünist Emek Partisi* (Communist Labor Party of Kurdistan) |
| KMD | *Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği* (Society for the Struggle Against Communism) |
| Komalah | *Revolutionary Organization of Toilers in Iranian Kurdistan* |
| KOMKAR | *Kürdistan İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu* (Federation of Kurdistan Workers' Associations) |
| KSSE | *Kurdish Students Society in Europe* |
| KUK | *Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları* (National Liberators of Kurdistan) |
| KUK-SE | *Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları-Sosyalist Eğilim* (National Liberators of Kurdistan-Socialist Tendency) |

| | |
|---|---|
| MDD | *Milli Demokratik Devrim* (National Democratic Revolution) |
| MHP | *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party) |
| MNP | *Milli Nizam Partisi* (National Order Party) |
| MSP | *Milli Selamet Partisi* (National Salvation Party) |
| MTTB | *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği* (National Turkish Students' Association) |
| NATO | *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* |
| OHAL | *Olağanüstü Hal* (State of Emergency) |
| PKK | *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* (Kurdistan Workers' Party) |
| PLO | *Palestinian Liberation Organization* |
| PPKK | *Partiya Pêşenga Karkerên Kürdistan* (Avant-garde Workers' Party of Kurdistan) |
| SDP | *Sosyalist Devrim Partisi* (Socialist Revolution Party) |
| SKD | *Sosyalist Kültür Derneği* (Socialist Culture Association) |
| Sol-Birlik | *Türkiye ve Türkiye Kürdistanı Sol Birliği* (The Union for the Left in Turkey and Kurdistan in Turkey) |
| STMA | *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi* (Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Struggles) |
| SVP | *Sosyalist Vatan Partisi* (Socialist Motherland Party) |
| TEP | *Türkiye Emekçi Partisi* (Laborers' Party of Turkey) |
| THKO | *Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu* (People's Liberation Army of Turkey) |
| THKP-C | *Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Parti-Cephesi* (People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey) |
| TİP | *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (Turkish Labor Party) |
| TİİKP | *Türkiye İhtilalci İşçi Köylü Partisi* (Revolutionary Workers and Peasants' Party of Turkey) |
| TİKKO | *Türkiye İşci ve Köylü Kurtuluş Ordusu* (Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey) |
| TİKP | *Türkiye İşçi Köylü Partisi* (Workers and Peasants' Party of Turkey) |
| T'de-KDP | *Türkiye'de Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi* (Kurdistan Democratic Party in Turkey) |

| | |
|---|---|
| TKDP | *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi* (Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey) |
| TKEP | *Türkiye Komünist Emek Partisi* (Communist Labor Party of Turkey) |
| TKP | *Türkiye Komünist Partisi* (Communist Party of Turkey) |
| TKP/ML | *Türkiye Komünist Partisi/Marksist-Leninist* (Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist–Leninist) |
| TKP/İS | *Türkiye Komünist Partisi/İşçinin Sesi* (Communist Party of Turkey/Workers' Voice) |
| TKSP | *Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi* (Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey) |
| TÖS | *Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası* (Teachers' Union of Turkey) |
| TÖB-DER | *Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği* (All Teachers' Unity and Solidarity Association) |
| TSİP | *Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi* (Socialist Workers' Party of Turkey |
| UDG | *Ulusal Demokratik Güçbirliği* (National Democratic Front) |
| UKO | *Ulusal Kurtuluş Ordusu* (National Liberation Army) |
| USSR | *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* |
| ÜDT | *Üç Dünya Teorisi* (Three Worlds Theory) |
| YNK | *Yekîtiya Nîştimanî ya Kurdistan* (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) |
| YSK | *Yekitiya Sosyalista Kurdistan* (Socialist Union of Kurdistan) |
| YTP | *Yeni Türkiye Partisi* (New Turkey Party) |

## Annotated Chronology of Regional and International Events

| | |
|---|---|
| 1945 | End of World War II. |
| 1946 | Cold War Era (1946-1991). |
| 1946 | The Republic of Mahabad established, lasting less than a year, The KDP was formed. |
| 1966 | China's Cultural Revolution-led by Mao Zedong. |
| 1967 | Six-Day War or Arab-Israeli War. |
| 1968 | Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party came to power after a coup d'état |
| 1968 | Al-Fatah (Palestinian National Liberation Movement) was formed, led by Yasser Arafat. |
| 1970 | Autonomy agreement signed between Baghdad and the Kurds in March. |
| 1973 | Arab-Israeli war initiated by Egypt and Syria. |
| 1974 | Cyprus civil war and Turkish intervention. |
| 1975 | Algier Agreement between Iran and Iraq–Kurdish uprising led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani collapsed in Iraq. |
| 1975 | Lebanese Civil War (1975-1992). |
| 1978 | Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt. |
| 1979 | Shah of Iran toppled in the Iranian Revolution, also called the Islamic Revolution. |
| 1979 | Kurdish armed rebellion in Iran, crushed in 1984. |
| 1979 | Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan (1979-1989). |
| 1980 | Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). |
| 1980 | Soviet-Syrian Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation. |
| 1982 | Lebanon invaded by Israel. |
| 1991 | Dissolution of the USSR. |

## Annotated Chronology of Relevant Events (1959-1984)

1959

September 17 — The arrest of the 49'ers. Outstanding Kurdish students and intellectuals were arrested for their activism. The acquaintance the activists later provided the basis of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement.

1960

May 27 — The Turkish army took over power for the first time.

June 1 — 484 individuals, mostly DP supporters, were arrested and sent to Sivas.

October 19 — Exile of fifty-five aghas and tribal leaders to the western provinces.

1961

February 11 — As a successor to the DP, the *Adalet Partisi* was founded by Ragıp Gümüşpala. Süleyman Demirel became chairman in November 1964. Demirel essentially represented the anti-left camp, with a conservative center-right alternative, he led the formation of the *Milliyetçi Cephe* cabinets in the 1970s.

February 13 — The *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* was established by a group of unionists. In 1962, Mehmet Ali Aybar, a socialist intellectual, became chairman, marking the beginning of the TİP's success in the 1960s. Aybar resigned in 1969 when the TİP witnessed rifts within the party. The second TİP, founded by Behice Boran–who was also an important figure and chairman of the TİP for a short while–should not be confused with the first TİP.

September 11 — The Kurdish rebellion in Iraq, led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani, began. It continued until March 1970, when an autonomy agreement was signed by the parties.

September16-17 Former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and two DP ministers were executed.

October 15 General elections. The CHP became the largest party.

December 20 The first issue of the periodical *Yön* appeared. The *Yön* circle consisted mainly of neo-Kemalist leftists led by Doğan Avcıoğlu and Şevket Süreyya Aydemir. The periodical continued to be published until June 1967. *Yön* also attracted some Kurdish activists, such as Sait Kırmızıtoprak, who was known as Dr. Şivan.

1962

April *Barış Dünyası*, a liberal Turkish journal owned by Ahmet Hamdi Başer, appeared. The journal published Musa Anter's articles on various issues such as Kurdish religion and language causing a polemic with socialist Kurdish activists led by Dr. Şivan. Barış Dünyası was closed in 1963 after the arrest of the 23'ers.

October *Dicle-Fırat*, owned by Edip Karahan, appeared. Overall, eight issues were published. The journal is a milestone in terms of its influence in the 1960s. The journal gathered influential activists and openly challenged official ideology, which denied the Kurds' existence.

November Kurdish students from Iran and Iraq opened the Istanbul Branch of the Kurdish Students Society in Europe.

1963

January *Sosyalist Kültür Derneği* was established. The association had three branches, in Ankara, Istanbul, and Diyarbakır. The *Doğulu* Group, which later would emerge from the TİP first organized around this association, led by Tarık Ziya Ekinci and Naci Kutlay.

April The first of two issues of *Deng* appeared. In May, after its second issue took the initiative of *Dicle-Fırat* a step further

by publicly defending the distinctiveness of the Kurdish people, the publication was banned.

May — *Roja Newe*, owned by Doğan Kılıç Şıhhesenanlı, appeared. Şıhhesenanlı also published two controversial books; *Kürtlerin Men-şei ve Kürt Dili İncelemeleri* by Minorsky in 1963, and *Barzani ve Kürdistan Cumhuriyeti Kuruluşu* in 1968.

*Reya Rast*, led by Ziya Şerefhanoğlu, appeared.

June 4 — The arrest of the 23'ers. In addition to a Kurdish student from Iran and six Kurdish students from Iraq, twenty-three individuals were arrested. *Deng*, *Roja Newe*, *Reya Rast*, and *Barış Dünyası* were closed, and their writers–such as Edip Karahan, Musa Anter, Yaşar Kaya, Ziya Şerefhanoğlu, and Meded Serhat–were arrested.

1965

July 11 — *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi* was clandestinely established by Sait Elçi, Şerafettin Elçi, Şakir Özdemir, Ömer Turan, and Derviş Akgül (Derwişê Sado). During the first meeting of the party, Sait Elçi was elected leader and Şerafettin Elçi as secretary. Faik Bucak later replaced Sait Elçi as leader.

July 8 — *Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası* was established. The union brought together many left-wing teachers who later established TÖB-DER.

October 10 — General elections. The DP's successor, the AP, won the election. The TİP won fifteen seats, as a result of national remainder system.

October — *Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu* was established. The federation later changed its name to *Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Dernekleri Federasyonu* (*Dev-Genç*) in October 1969.

October 24 — According to the census, around three million people, corresponding to 10 per cent of the total population indicated their first or second language as Kurdish. Thereafter, the

question about mother tongue was removed, making it difficult to obtain a reliable number for the Kurdish population in Turkey in the following years.

1966

February — Leo Huberman's *The ABC of Socialism* was translated by Alaattin Bilgi and published in Turkish by Sol Yayınları. This short book was one of the most influential books introducing socialism to young activists, including prominent Kurdish activists.

July 4 — Faik Bucak was assassinated. He had been arrested in the 49'ers incident. Although, he initially wanted to join parliament by establishing the local branch of *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* in Urfa, he eventually ran as independent candidate in 1965 when his candidacy was rejected by the AP. He later became the leader of the TKDP in 1965.

August — Yeni Akış was published by Mehmet Ali Aslan. Writers, such as Mehmet Ali Aslan, Abbas İzol, and Kemal Burkay were arrested.

November 17 — The periodical *Türk Solu* began to be published by Mihri Belli, an old socialist who introduced the MDD to students, who would later found several clandestine political parties, such as Mahir Çayan.

November 20-24 — The second congress of the TİP was held in Malatya. The party was divided between, the pro-*Sosyalist Devrim*, which became the official strategy of the party, and the pro-*Milli Demokratik Devrim*, which was led by Mihri Belli and some students.

1967

February 12 — Maden-İş, Lastik-İş and Gıda-İş established *Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*. The DİSK was one of the most influential political actors that supported the TİP in the 1960s and the CHP in the 1970s.

August 3 — A product of *Doğuculuk* and the underdevelopment political framework, the first of the *Doğu Mitingleri* was held in Silvan, followed by those in Diyarbakır, Siverek, Batman, Tunceli, Ağrı, and Ankara over the course of a few months. For the first time, Kurdish people marched in protest in Turkey.

October — Josef Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question*, was translated into Turkish by Muzaffer Kabagil and published by *Sol Yayınları*. Along with Lenin's book, the socialist movement in Turkey changed its scope and arguments from developmentalism to wider discussions within Marxism, most notably the national question.

1968

Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, a prominent Kurdish writer and intellectual, published his *Kurdish Alphabet* in 1968 and transliterated Ehmed-i Xani's classic *Mem û Zîn*, which was originally published in 1692. In addition, he translated and transliterated William Eagleton's *The Kurdish Republic* from 1946 and excerpts from el-Farıki's book, *Merwani Kurdish State,* from the 1970s.

Vladimir Lenin's *Nations' Right to Self- Determination,* was translated into Turkish by Muzaffer Ardos and published by *Sol Yayınları*. The discourse developed by Kurdish activists about nation and the national question relied heavily on Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question* and Lenin's work.

August 21 — The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, also known as the Prague Spring. This event was used as a pretext for the split within the TİP.

September 27 — A total eleven TKDP activists were arrested in Diyarbakır, but their trial was held in Antalya. Şakir Epözdemir and Sait Elçi, who were then the party's leaders, defended their party and its demand of autonomy.

1969

February 16 The visit of the Sixth Fleet of the United States visit was protected by students who later attacked military personnel and developed harsh anti-American attitudes.

May *Devrim Doğu Kültür Ocakları* was established by a group of Kurdish students and TİP activists in Ankara and Istanbul. Before its closure, the DDKO had seven branches, bringing together Kurdish students and holding meetings and seminars.

October 4 Dr. Şivan and some of his friends left for Iraq to establish contact with the leadership of the KDP and *Barzani* in order to investigate the possibility of logistical support for their activism.

October 10 FKF changed its title to *Dev-Genç*. The association gave birth to four clandestine parties, established by student leaders. Hüseyin İnan, Deniz Gezmiş, and friends established the THKO in 1970, around the same time that Mahir Çayan and his friends established the THKP-C, Doğu Perinçek and his friends established the TİİKP in 1971, and İbrahim Kaypakkaya and his friends established the TKP/ML (and its armed wing the TİKKO) in 1972.

October 12 General elections. The AP won the election, and the TİP only won two seats in parliament.

*Doğu* journal published its only issue in Istanbul. The journal had the motto, "Long live Turkish-Kurdish Fraternity."

1970

March 11 The Kurdish rebellion in Iraq concluded with an autonomy agreement between the KDP and Iraq. However, the agreement was short-lived and was not implemented, due to provisions about the status of Kirkuk and other Kurdish areas.

June 15-16 Around 70,000 workers marched in protest in Istanbul and Kocaeli. The event was not anticipated by any of the socialist groups and marked a historical change.

June 28-29 *T'deKDP* was founded by the following people, aliases precede real names. 1. Dr. Şivan/Sait Kırmızıtoprak, 2. Çeko/Hikmet Buluttekin, 3. Brüsk/Hasan Yıkmış, 4. Kurdo/Ömer Çetin, 5. Muhterem Biçimli, 6. Zendu/Abdulkerim Ceylan, 7. Soro/H.Nazmi Balkaş, 8. Ahmet Aras, and 9. Zerdeşt/ Necmettin Büyükkaya.

October 29 The fourth congress of the TİP was held. The Aybar group was not included, and Behice Boran's group passed a resolution, proposed by the Kurdish students close to Dr. Şivan and the DDKO, to obtain their support. The resolution openly supported Kurdish rights and recognized their political demands, causing the closure of the TİP.

1971

March 12 The military memorandum. The Turkish military issued a memorandum asking from the government to have a strong hold on ongoing events, caused by the increasing radicalism of the student movement and clandestine political offshoot of the *Dev-Genç*. As a result, Prime Minister Demirel resigned, and for two years, appointed cabinets would govern the country.

April 26 The DDKO branches were all closed. Martial law was declared in larger cities such as Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, and Diyarbakır.

May 20 *Milli Nizam Partisi,* the predecessor of the *Milli Selamet Partisi* was closed. The leader, Necmettin Erbakan, increased the influence of his conservative Islamic ideology – to be later formulated as *Milli Görüş* (National Vision) in the 1970s – and took part in coalition cabinets. The MSP, through its student organizations such as *Akıncılar*, gained strength among Kurdish voters.

June 1 Sait Elçi – the leader of the TKDP –, Abdullatif Savaş, and Mehemede Bego were killed on the order of Dr. Şivan as they escaped to Iraq after the military intervention. Later, Dr. Şivan, Hikmet Buluttekin, and Hasan Yıkmış were arrested by the KDP and executed on the order of the remaining members of the TKDP on 26 November.

May 17 THKP-C leader Mahir Çayan and his friends kidnapped the Israeli Consul Efraim Elrom to negotiate the execution of Deniz Gezmiş and his friends. Elrom was killed when their demands were not met.

July 20 The TİP was closed by court order.

September 3 *Türkiye Öğretmenler Birliği*, which later changed its name to TÖB-DER, was established. The TÖB-DER, which had more than 650 branches and 200,000 members, was widely organized among Kurdish activists.

1972

March 30 Mahir Çayan and his friends were killed in Kızıldere.

April 7 Abdullah Öcalan, then an average student, was arrested for handing out leaflets condemning the killings of Mahir Çayan and his friends. Öcalan spent seven months in jail, shaping his ideological orientation and preferences. Even today, the PKK and Öcalan identify themselves as the *Dev-Genç* and sometimes as the heirs of the THKP-C and Mahir Çayan.

May 6 Three leaders of the THKO–Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Aslan, and Hüseyin İnan– were executed. After this, most student activists and Kurdish socialists lost faith in democratic ways of gaining power.

May 7-8 Bülent Ecevit became the new leader of the CHP, defeating İsmet İnönü, who had been the leader of the party for more than three decades. Ecevit, used sobriquet *Karaoğlan* in the 1970s was very popular.

December 11 The DDKO trial ended in Diyarbakır, resulting in sixty-six activists being sentenced to a total of around 1,000 years of imprisonment.

1973

April Abdullah Öcalan and a few friends decided to form a new group, with no specific framework or organization.

May The MSP was established as the successor to the MNP.

May 18 The founder and leader of the clandestine TKP-ML and TİKKO İbrahim Kaypakkaya died during interrogation.

November 14 General elections. The CHP won the election, replacing the AP as the strongest party until the coup in 1980.

November *Istanbul Yüksek Öğrenim Kültür Derneği* was established by students with various political leanings. It was closed in 1975.

1974

March 11 The Kurdish rebellion in Iraq commenced. Within the span of a year, the KDP, which was supported by the US, Iran, and Israel and received a million dollars of aid each month, would seriously challenge the Iraqi government.

April 8 *Ankara Demokratik Yüksek Öğrenim Derneği* was established by socialist students, a majority of which were pro-*Dev-Genç* activists. Abdullah Öcalan and his friends used the association as a platform to organize, but less than a year later the association was closed.

April 26 General amnesty was granted by parliament under the initiative of Bülent Ecevit and the CHP. As a result, around 100 activists, who were arrested in the matters of the DDKO and the TKDP were released by 14 May 1974.

May 15 *Ankara Devrimci Demokratik Kültür Dernekleri* was established by activists who had yet to establish their own circles or groups, Ali Taşar, Mustafa Nuri Aksakal, İkram Delen, Rüştü Mütevellizade, Ahmet Göksü, Mehmet Şahin, Rifat

İlhan, Bülent Şahin, Hamit Geylani, Hazım Kılıç, and Sabri Kont among others.

June 22 — *Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi* was established. TSİP had close relations with the KİP/DDKD, due to its leader Ahmet Kaçmaz.

July 20 — Turkey intervened in Cyprus, which was highly controversial in the mid-1970s.

November 8 — Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's planned visit to Turkey was cancelled. Clashes between right and left–wing students at Istanbul University and ODTÜ, Hacettepe marked the beginning of a right–left rivalry in Turkey in the subsequent years.

December — *Komal Yayınevi* was established by the DDKO Ocak Komünü, particularly by the brothers, Mümtaz and Orhan Kotan, though the exact date is unknown. *Komal* published highly controversial books from 1975 onwards, including the DDKO trial files and books by Dr. Şivan and İsmail Beşikçi.

1975

January — *Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi* was clandestinely established by Kemal Burkay and his friends. The TKSP later published *Özgürlük Yolu*, *Roja Welat*, and other periodicals. In addition, an offshoot association, *Devrimci Halk Kültür Dernekleri* was established in 1976.

February 5 — The United States arms embargo was imposed after the Turkish intervention in Cyprus and later partially lifted.

February — Kurdish activists, who would later divide into different camps established the *Istanbul DDKD*.

February 16 — TÖB-DER organized demonstrations in fifty-two to protest fascism and the cost of living.

March — Mihri Belli and his friends established the *Türkiye Emekçi Partisi*.

March 6 — The Algiers Agreement was signed between Iraq and Iran. Consequently, international support was withdrawn and the Kurdish rebellion was defeated. The KDP underwent a crisis, and thousands of people became refugees in Iran. In May, the *Patriotic Union of Kurdistan*, consisting of several small groups, was established under the leadership of Jalal Talabani.

April 12 — The first *Milliyetçi Cephe* cabinet was formed by the AP, the MSP, and the MHP. The government would remain in power until June 13, 1977.

April 20-25 — Dr. Şivan's friends Ömer Çetin, Ahmet Karlı, Ziya Avcı, Sait Aydoğmuş, and Necmettin Büyükkaya decided to revive T'deKDP. The party's name was changed to KİP but was widely known as *Şivancılar.*

April 30 — Behice Boran and her friends established the TİP, or the second TİP, but it had almost no influence in the 1970s. The second TİP had close relations with the TKSP/ÖY group.

May 30 — Mehmet Ali Aybar and his friends established the *Sosyalist Partisi*, which was renamed *Sosyalist Devrim Partisi* in 1977.

June — The TKSP published the first issue of *Özgürlük Yolu*, which published forty-four issues before being closed in January 1979.

June 24 — MHP leader Alparslan Türkeş visited Diyarbakır. His visit was unwelcome and led to clashes, the death of three people, and dozens of injuries.

September 6 — The Lice earthquake caused more than 3,000 deaths. Emergent Kurdish groups were involved in aid activities.

October — Abdullah Öcalan's circle, known as the *Kürdistan Devrimcileri*, gathered in Ankara Dikmen and decided to organize in areas populated by Kurds.

### 1976

January 23 — The first branch of the pro-MSP student organization *Akıncılar*, a splinter of the *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*, opened

in Ankara. Numerous Kurdish students were members of both MTTB and the *Akıncılar*.

January 24 — The Ankara DDKD was closed by court order. Twelve activists were arrested and spent six months in prison.

February — The Istanbul DDKD was dissolved by its members, due to ideological differences and lack of finances. The former Ankara and Istanbul DDKD members later founded the Komal/Rizgari, TKSP/ÖY, KİP/DDKD, and *Kawa* groups.

March — The first issue of *Xebat*, a publication of the TKDP appeared.

March 21 — The first issue of *Rizgari* was published by the *Komal* circle. The state responded harshly to *Rizgari* and it was seized after the first issue.

Ali Rıza Koşar and his friends founded the *Beş Parçacılar* faction, a splinter group of *Halkın Kurtuluşu*. *Beş Parçacılar* held the similar ideological tendencies to the PKK and was removed after the *Kürdistan Devrimcileri* attacked and killed several leading activists of the already limited group.

April 23 — The Otis Pike Report by the United States Congress revealed that the United States had provided financial aid amounting to sixteen million dollars to Barzani through Iran and Israel.

September 18 — The DİSK organized protests of the State Security Courts.

November 25 — More than 4,000 people died in the Van earthquake. As was the case in Lice, Kurdish activists were involved in distributing aid and propagating their ideas.

November 27 — The CHP decided to join the *Socialist International*. This decision strengthened the CHP's patronage over other socialist groups. It was recognized by the *Soviet Communist Party* and supported by pro-Soviet groups, including the TKSP-ÖY.

1977

May 1 — During May Day celebrations in Taksim thirty-six protesters were killed by unidentified shootings at the shooters.

May 18 — Haki Karer, one of the most influential people in the *Kürdistan Devrimcileri* group, was killed in Gaziantep. *Beş Parçacılar* were accused of the killing, and Alaattin Kapan and other activists were subsequently killed by the group.

June — *Şivancılar* changed the name of T'deKDP to *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi*. *Pêşeng Bo Şoreş* was published by KİP and continued to be published through the 1980s.

July 21 — The second *Milliyetçi Cephe* cabinet was formed. The government would stay in power until 5 January 1978.

September 17 — The TKSP published twelve issues of *Roja Welat* newspaper before being closed. *Roja Welat* would later be published again by dissident groups within the TKSP in 1984.

September 10 — The draft of the PKK program, *Kürdistan Devriminin Yolu,* was written.

September 28 — The KİP established the first of thirty-eight branches of the DDKD in Diyarbakır.

November — The TKDP split into two groups. Derviş Akgül (Derwişê Sado), who had been secretary since 1973, was expelled from the party. Mustafa Fisli became the secretary of the party. Younger generations and more socialist wings used the name TKDP/KUK until 1981.

The *Kava* group, which was formed by former members of the Ankara and Istanbul DDKD split over the Three Worlds Theory.

The *Tekoşin* group was formed by splinter groups of *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergisi*, led by Seyfi Cengiz. The group was insignificant in terms of influence and the number of its activists.

December 11 — Elections for mayors and municipalities. Some Kurdish activists ran as independent candidates. Mehdi Zana won in Diyarbakır, by virtue of the support of various groups.

December — The first *anti-Sömürgeci Demokratik Kültür Derneği* opened in Ergani. The ASDK-DER opened in eight other places, remaining in the hands of Ala Rizgari, when the group split.

1978

February — The first issue of the KİP/DDKD's *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik Dergisi* appeared.

May 1 — Alaattin Kapan of Beş Parçacılar was assassinated in İskenderun by the later PKK during May Day celebrations.

May 1 — A dissident group within the TKDP began officially to use the name TKDP/KUK.

May 19 — Halil Çavgun was killed in Hilvan-Şanlıurfa. As a result, the *Kürdistan Devrimcileri* group began to attack the influential Süleymanlar tribe.

May — Clashes between the KDP and YNK continued, and 250-400 peshmergas were killed in Hakkari.

March 6 — Kenan Evren was appointed General Chief of Staff.

March 16 — An event in Beyazıt, at Istanbul University, resulted in the death of seven students. Hamit Akıl of the KİP/DDKD was among the dead, and thousands of people attended his funeral ceremony in Viranşehir.

March 20 — The DİSK organized protests, under the name of Warning to Fascism, two hours of strikes that affected all of Turkey.

September 26 — *Devrimci Demokratik Kadınlar Derneği* was established by pro-KİP/DDKD women.

November 22 — Ferit Uzun, one of the leading cadres of Dengê Kawa, was killed in Siverek-Şanlıurfa. First the Bucak tribe and then the PKK was accused of his murder. After Uzun's death, the group largely disappeared.

November 26-27 — The founding congress of the PKK in Fis-Diyarbakır selected Öcalan as party secretary.

December — The first issue of Kava was published by an anti-Three World Theory group led by Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu. In the same month, Dengê Kawa published its special issue.

*Ala Rizgari* split from Rizgari journal.

December 19-24 — The Kahramanmaraş massacre of Alevis, in which more than 100 people were killed.

December 26 — Martial law declared in thirteen cities after the Maraş incident. This latest declaration of martial law was the harbinger of the 12 September 1980 coup d'état. Most associations and publications by Kurdish activists were closed.

1979

January 20 — DHKD, *Roja Welat*, *Kava*, *Devrimci Halkın Birliği*, *Devrimci Yol,* and *Kurtuluş* were closed by martial law.

The *Tekoşin* group attracted PKK activists after the death of Haki Karer. As a result five leading activists from *Tekoşin* were killed by the PKK that same year, marking the end of the group.

February 1 — Ruhollah Khomeini returned to Tehran from Paris, where he had been in exile. The Iranian Revolution became the Islamic Revolution.

March 1 — Mulla Mustafa Barzani died in Washington.

March 5 — *Aydınlık Gazetesi*, led by Doğu Perinçek, published "Bilinmeyen Sol" (Unknown Left) over a period of a month. The newspapers disclosed almost all socialist groups and circles, fifteen groups of which were particularly active in Kurdish areas.

March 18 — The KDPI and *Komalah* took up arms and commenced the rebellion against Khomeini. The rebellion took control of the Kurdish areas for a few years, but was crushed in 1984.

June — The first issue of *Ala Rizgari* was published.

July 29 — Abdullah Öcalan left Turkey to establish contacts with Palestinian and Syrian groups. Hundreds of PKK activists later joined him.

July 30 — The PKK attacked Celal Bucak, a deputy from the AP and leaders of the influential Bucak tribe. Clashes continued sporadically.

November — The KİP/DDKD published *Jina Nû* journal and founded a publishing house with the same name.

November 5 — The PLO opened its representative office in Ankara. Yasser Arafat visited Ankara on the invitation of Prime Minister Ecevit.

November 12 — Edip Solmaz, mayor of Batman and a pro-PKK activist was assassinated. The PKK accused the local Ramanlar tribe and began attacks against them

December 27 — Kenan Evren and other commanders of armed forces sent a warning letter to Fahri Korutürk, then president of Turkey.

1980

January — *Ulusal Demokratik Güçbirliği* was formed by the TKSP, KİP, and TKDP/KUK. The declaration aimed to unite the three groups in cooperation, but each party accused the others for its failure.

Clashes between the PKK and the TKDP/KUK commenced continuing for months and causing hundreds of deaths on both sides.

January 24 — The IMF made decisions with respect to Turkey's becoming a more market-oriented country with liberal economic policies, but awaited implementation until after the coup.

March — The *Kürdistan Özerk Örgütü* was established within the THKO-MB, led by Teslim Töre. In 1982, it changed its name to *Türkiye Komünist Emek Partisi*, splitting the THKO-MB.

April — Ömer Çetin, secretary of the KİP, broke with the party, after his father was killed by the *Kava* group. He left to take over the family business.

April 21-27 — The PKK declared "Red Week."

May-July — The Çorum incidents caused the death of more than fifty.

June — The assassination of high profile individuals continued, including the CHP Istanbul deputy Abdurrahman Köksaloğlu, the prime minister appointed after the March 12 intervention Nihat Erim, and former DİSK president Kemal Türkler.

July 11 — *Bayrak Planı*, which was the set date for a military takeover was postponed when the new government received vote of confidence on 2 July.

September 6 — The Al-Quds meeting in Konya, led by the MSP, caused discontent within the military, especially given the meeting's open calls for an Islamic sharia state.

September 12 — The Turkish military took over power. The military coup of 12 September had a devastating impact on socialist and Kurdish movements in Turkey. Unions, associations, and later even political parties were closed.

September 22 — Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, attacked Iran and considered Iran weak due to the revolution and the ongoing Kurdish rebellion. The war would continue until 1988.

December 12 — In Qamishlo, a Syrian border town, fifteen *Kawa* militants were reportedly killed by Turkish Special Forces in the house where they were staying.

1981

March 13 — *Beşli Platform* (*Hevkari*) was initiated to form a joint front of the *Ala Rizgari*, KUK, PKK, TKSP, and KİP/DDKD. However, it failed early in the talks.

June 15-26 — The first conference of the PKK was held in Lebanon. The conference was held after other Kurdish groups demanded that the PKK was self-critical of it previous hostility towards them.

October 16 — Political parties were closed by the National Security Council.

October 16 — The TKDP/KUK held a conference and decided to use the name *Rizgarîxwazên Neteweyên Kurdistanê/Kurdistan*

*Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları* (RNK-KUK). In 1983, the *Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları-Sosyalist Eğilimi* (KUK-SE) split from the group in 1983.

1982

January 1 — The first issue of the pro-PKK *Serxwebûn* was published in Germany.

March 21 — Pro-PKK activist Mazlum Doğan set himself on fire to protest prison conditions in Diyarbakır.

May 17-18 — Pro-PKK activists Ferhat Kurtay, Mahmut Zengin, Eşref Anyık, and Necmi Öner committed suicide in the same way as Mazlum Doğan.

June 1 — The *Faşizme Karşı Birleşik Direniş Cephesi* was formed by the PKK, *Devrimci Yol*, *THKP-Acilciler*, SVP, TKEP, *Devrimci Savaş*, *TKP/İşçinin Sesi*, and the TEP.

June 2 — Israeli ground operations in Lebanon. The PKK had been staying in Palestinian camps in Beqaa for three years and clashed with the Israeli forces. As a result, eleven PKK activists were killed.

July — PKK activists staged a hunger strike. Leading founders of the PKK such as Kemal Pir, M. Hayri Durmuş, Akif Yılmaz, and Ali Çiçek would die in September as a result.

August 20-25 — The second congress of the PKK was held in Lebanon. At this congress, a "guerrilla war" strategy was adopted.

September 12 — It was announced that more than 40,000 people have been arrested in two years.

November 7 — The new constitution of 1982 was approved by 91 per cent of the votes. Kenan Evren became president.

1983

February-March — The KİP changed its name to *Partiya Pêşenga Karkerên Kürdistan*, PPKK, at its second congress. The younger group had already taken over the KİP by 1981.

March 31 — According to the government, 15,500 persons from leftist groups and 3,177 people from separatist groups were on trial.

May 27 — The first of several ground operations into Iraq was carried out to push PKK's nascent camps back.

July — The PKK and KDP signed a solidarity protocol which was terminated in 1987. The PKK took advantage of the weakness of the KDP to organize in the frontier area.

The *Hizbullah* group was founded by Hüseyin Velioğlu, a former member of the MTTB. Kurdish Islamists first organized within Vahdet Hareketi, which split into *Hizbullah İlim* and *Hizbullah Menzil*.

October 22 — Turkish was declared the only native language and use of other languages, specifically Kurdish was prohibited.

*Ala Rızgari* split into two smaller groups–*Yekitiya Sosyalista Kurdistan* led by İbrahim Güçlü, and *Berbanga Kurdistan* led by Hatice Yaşar.

November 6 — General elections. The *Anavatan Partisi*, under the leadership of Turgut Özal, gained 211 seats–more than half the seats in parliament. Özal and his party would dominate the political scene until the early 1990s.

1984 AND AFTERWARDS:

January 22 — Necmettin Büyükkaya, one of the founders of the DDKO and the KİP and one of most influential activists of the 1960s and 1970s– with strong relationships across the region– died in Diyarbakır after being tortured.

February — Zeki Adsız, Urfan Alparslan, and their friends split from the TKSP after a few years of dissidence. They formed the TKSP-Roja Welat group.

August 15 — The PKK launched two simultaneous attacks in Eruh-Siirt and Şemdinli-Hakkari. According to official statistics, the conflict resulted in more than 35, 000 deaths.

October 19 Three villages were evacuated, soon followed by fifty more. Overall, 3700 villages and other smaller settlements were evacuated.

December The *Sol-Birlik*, Unity of Left in Turkey and Kurdistan in Turkey was formed by the TKP, TSİP, TKEP, PPKK, TKSP and TKP.

The village guard system was introduced to fight the PKK in 1985. The number of local village guards armed and salaried by the state–which is currently 60.000–reached 90.000 in the 1990s.

Most political groups such as the TKSP, KİP/PPKK, Rizgari/Ala Rizgari, and the KUK terminated their activities and presence in Turkey, initially trying to regroup in Europe. By 1991 there was little political activism among the other groups, and with the collapse of the USSR, most of those remnants also disappeared.

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# 1

## Introduction

> *"History," said Stephen, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to escape."*
>
> James Joyce, *Ulysses*[1]

For now, let us think about a classroom of students, one of whom "succeeded" in becoming important, well-known, and more talked about than the rest. It is true that in most cases a classroom is centered around the "heroes," despite the fact that each student is more or less equivalent to each other, none "unique," but each different in their own way. In his latest novel, Julian Barnes puts a retired historian at the center of his story. Tony Webster, the historian, has big challenges even in decoding a story that, in his opinion, concerns few people in his own life. He aptly quotes one of his friends saying, "History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation."[2] Then Tony looks at his

1 The first line of a highly informative book on the Middle East by Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

2 This novel is more like a historiographical exercise, see Julian Barnes, *The Sense of Ending*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 59. Likewise, an earlier novel by Julio Cortazer is also

own situation in the story, adds that "He survived to tell the tale"—that's what people say, don't they? History isn't the lies of the victors...I know that now. It's more the memories of the survivors, most of whom are neither victorious nor defeated."[3]

The same analogy can be used in this research, which is based on hundreds of varying recollections and documents pertaining to Kurdish activism in the 1960s and 1970s. In other words, the leaders of the PKK (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* or Kurdistan Workers' Party), which was established in late 1978 and announced in 1979, turned out to be the "successful" ones, not in the period in question, of course, but afterwards. As a result, not only most researchers and scholars but also most of the "students" go back to that classroom and look at themselves, the other students of the 1970s, and the other political actors then wearing the spectacles of the so-called "victorious": Because the past is not past; it is, rather, continuously narrated.

At the outset, I assure readers who have been attracted to the title of this dissertation and expect to read about Kurds in Turkey in the 1970s; they will find information and data on that issue. However, both in this section and in the first chapter of this study, they will find that I conceptualize and narrate my topic in a rather new way. Most of the arguments and approaches of this research first appeared in embryonic form my master thesis, which was about the 1960s and more specifically about the affiliation of the Kurds with the Turkish Labor Party, which was established in 1961 and closed in 1971 (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi,* or the TİP).[4] This dissertation is a continuation of the research I began then and thereby a product of more than seven years of research.

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worth looking at to see how parallel narratives coincide inside a text, see Julio Cortázar, *62: A Model Kit,* trans. Gregory Rabassa (New Directions, 2000), (first published in 1968).

3 Julian Barnes, *The Sense of Ending*, 56.

4 I have to admit that after this research, I have discovered many analytical and historical mistakes in my first research, because I relied too much on the frameworks of the existing literature, see Ahmet Alış, "The Process of the Politicization of the Kurdish Identity in Turkey: the Kurds and the Turkish Labor Party (1961–1971) " (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University, 2009). However I improved the thesis, rewriting it into a book chapter later on. See Ahmet Alış, "Kürt Etnobölgesel Hareketin Doğuşu, Kitleselleşme Süreci ve Türkiye İşçi Partisi, 1959-1974," in

Although this section may seem a digression, I wish to elaborate on some issues such as history as an academic discipline, time, and historiography- all of which I deal with in more detail in terms of the subject of this study. They are crucial for the goals and objectives of this research. This study neither raises a question like Ted R. Gurr did in his argumentative and well-known book, *Why Men Rebel,*[5] nor like Mohammed M. Hafız - influenced by the title, in his book *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World.*[6] That is to say, this study does not intend to ask "Why Kurds Rebel," though a section is devoted to explain the ubiquitous phenomenon of armed struggle in the late 1970s.

Understanding of the activism of the Kurdish youth, most of whom were in their early 20s in the 1970s, will not only contribute to the history of Kurdish society, in my opinion, it will also provide several insights into comparative and theoretical studies. Recalling that even in the most authoritative works of nationalism, social movements, mobilization, and ethnicity, Kurds have found little space - often only a footnote- I believe that there is a great potential, if not need, to include the history of Kurdish society in future studies. This study is not only about the "high politics" of the 1960s and 1970s, which generally concerned the history of political ideas and ideological discourses. As can be seen in the following chapters, I call the generation of Kurdish activists in the 1970s "true believers," using Eric Hoffer's term.[7] This is also part of chapter five of this dissertation. In addition, this study endeavors to clarify ambiguity surrounding the different Kurdish political circles, groups, and parties in the 1970s, by employing a chronological track of each group's emergence and split, using mainly primary sources.

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*Türkiye Siyasetinde Kürtler: Direniş, Hak Arayışı, Katılım,* ed. Büşra Ersanlı, Günay Göksü Özdoğan and Nesrin Uçarlar, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012).

5 Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel,* Princeton (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970).

6 Mohammed M. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Colorado and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2003), (first published in 1970).

7 Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper-Collins e-books, originally published in 1951).

This study explores the way Kurdish activists perceived their times and futures, as well. One of my interviewees, who was influential at the time, has said, "if somebody had told us that revolution would come five years later (*i.e. by 1980*), they would have considered him crazy and blind to the footsteps of the imminent revolution."[8] Well, five years later, in 1980, that same person was in exile in Europe, waiting for a temporary visa so that he could stay in Sweden for some time more. Five years beyond that first five years, that is to say in the second half of the 1980s, most of his comrades "declared themselves as retired from utopian ideas," in other words mostly from socialism, while others continued to struggle. He has been living in Sweden for more than thirty years now.

Another important issue almost completely ignored among historians, is the debate about "time." Lennard Lundmark, in an article titled *Historian's Time*, justifiably argues that when history has been attacked in the recent decades, "surprisingly little has been said about its conception of time."[9] Here, I further argue that regarding Turkey and most of the Middle East, this issue is not even taken seriously by students.

In the early 1950s when Fernand Braudel, one of the most influential French historians of the twentieth century and a leader of the Annales School, proposed three types of historical time: *Longue durée* (the long term), the *courte durée* (the short term), and *histoire événementielle* (the history of events). Let alone earlier historians, Braudel and most ensuing historians looked at the historical time in an absolute way. Lundmark points out that in history, for Braudel, historical time was also "universal, imperious and it flows at the very rhythm of the earth's rotations."[10]

Likewise, Paul Ricoeur, one of the most distinguished philosophers of the twentieth century, in his important work titled *Time and Narrative,* summarized the intellectual tools that serve as connectors for historians: Calendar time, a threefold realm of generations, written documents, and archives.

8 Murad Ciwan, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, 22 October 2010.

9 This is a succinct yet informative article on the subject, see Lennart Lundmark, "The Historian's Time," *Time Society,* vol. 2 no. 1, (January 1993): 72.

10 Ibid., 63.

According to him, calendar time, that is to say the chronology that we use or confine ourselves with, has three distinctive features:

1A founding event, which is taken as beginning a new era,
2By referring to the axis defined by the founding event, it is possible to traverse time in two directions: From the past toward the present and from the present toward the past,
3Finally, we determine a set of units of measurement that serve to designate the constant intervals between the recurrence of cosmic phenomena.[11]

Regarding the concept of calendar time which I use in this dissertation, I could easily follow the conventional periodization implicitly or explicitly used in the Kurdish studies. That is to say, I could have approached Kurdish history as the late Ottoman era, the early Republican era, and the multi-party era, all of which can be sub-divided into several periods and are not covered in this study. Yet, what I realized during my research, was that this demarcation was problematic in many ways. Furthermore, the multi-party era could not be studied as a single period at all. Following Paul Ricoeur's critical approach, I divided the multi-party era into three calendar times: 1959-1974 (Phase A), 1974-1984 (Phase B), and 1984-1999 (Phase C), on which I elaborate later.[12]

In the same vein, the typology proposed by Miroslav Hroch, *Phase A, Phase B,* and *Phase C,* as alluded to above, has been employed in this study.[13]

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11 Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative,* Vol. 3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 106.

12 The same periodization was partly used in Ahmet Alış, "Kürt Etnobölgesel Hareketin Doğuşu."

13 Miroslav Hroch "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation," *New Left Review* I/198 ( Mar-Apr 1993). Some works that use Hroch's typology in Kurdish historiography are: Hamit Bozarslan, "Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey: From Tacit Contract to Rebellion (1919-1925)," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism,* ed. Abbas Vali (California: Mazda Publishers, 2003); Jordi Tejel, *Syria's Kurds: history, politics and society,* trans. Emily Well and Jane Welle (Londont: Routledge, 2009): Farideh Koohi-Kamali, *The political development of the Kurds in Iran: pastoral nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003): Cemil Gündoğdu, *Kawa Davası Savunması ve Kürtlerde Siyasi Savunma Geleneği* (Istanbul: Vate Yayınevi, 2007);

In line with Hroch's typology, albeit applying it to a different time and context, *Phase A* refers to the 1959-1974 period, which I studied in my M.A. thesis, while *Phase B* corresponds to 1974-1984 which, together with *Phase A*, is the historical time undertaken in this dissertation. And finally *Phase C* refers to the time period after 1984. Similarly, Partha Chatterjee, in his book titled, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, a Derivative Discourse,* argues that there are three moments through which Indian nationalism passed. They are the *moment of departure,* which is when a nationalist consciousness is encountered, *the moment of maneuver,* when activists positioned themselves and developed their discourse, and finally the *moment of arrival,* when nationalist thought attained its fullest development.[14] Additionally, John R. Bradly, in his book about the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, points out that Hassan Al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, had a three-stage strategy. The initial propaganda stage, the organization stage and the action stage. However, this typology is more suitable to the case of the PKK, and not to the entire period in question.[15]

For the purpose of this study, on the Kurdish case, Phase A is also called *the moment of departure,* which revolved around class aspect of the Kurds, or their economic backwardness in the 1960s. Therefore, Chapter 2 is called "From Class to Nation." Phase B is also called *the moment of maneuver,* which refers to a decade of positioning and ideological preparation, and therefore Chapter 3 is called "From Nation to Revolution" - not that Phase B ended with any sort of "revolution." Rather, the title is intended to frame the discourses and activism of the Phase B, which was a preparation for revolution from the perspectives of the activists. Phase C, which is not covered in this dissertation, but can be called the *moment of arrival* for the Kurdish activism initiated

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Yılmaz Özcan, "Kurdish Nation Formation in Turkey Through Hroch's A-B-C Model: the Role of Modernization in the Transition to the Phase C," in *Ideas and Identities*, ed. Jaci Eisenberg and Davide Rodogno (Bern, Peter Lang, 2014).

14 Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, a Derivative Discourse* (London: Zed Books, 1986).

15 See John R. Bradly, *Inside Egypt The Road to Revolution in the Land of the Pharaohs* (London: Palgrave, 2012).

around 1959. I dwell on each historical time and period in the following sections.

## § 1.1 Notes and Explanations of the Historiography of the Research

It is intriguing to know that when remembering and imagining activities inside our brains - that is to say, when we think about the past or contemplate the future - the processes are similar. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why we read a publication a decade earlier, we instantly get the feeling that the publication was not written "in our times."[16] The reason for that, Walter Benjamin argued, is because "history is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now."[17] One must remember that just like other social scientists, historians are thinking and writing about the "past" from "now." Therefore, Donald E. Brown rightly argues that historians must be aware of human nature in their profession.[18]

Speaking of history as a discipline, the first scholar that comes to mind is Ibn-Khaldun (1332-1406), whose pioneering study *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, still deserves the attention of history students. Khaldun argued that "history is a discipline that has a great number of approaches. Its useful aspects are very many. Its goal is distinguished."[19] The approach he proposed over seven centuries ago, though he himself could not achieve it in his book, has been embraced by historians and has proved him right.

16 Addis, D. R., et al. "Constructive episodic simulation of the future and the past: Distinct subsystems of a core brain network mediate imagining and remembering." *Neuropsychologia,* Vol:47 (2008), doi:10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2008.10.026.

17 Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections,* Walter Benjamin trans. Harry Zohn, edited and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt, preface by Leon Wieseltier (New York: Schoken Books, 2007), 261.

18 Donald E. Brown, "Human Nature and History," *History and Theory*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Theme Issue 38: The Return of Science: Evolutionary Ideas and History (Dec., 1999), 138.

19 Abd Ar Rahman bin Muhammed ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Abridged Edition), trans. Franz Rosenthal, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 11.

In Turkey, challenges posed to official historiography have brought a great quality and richness to social science in the last two decades - if only we pretend for a moment, as most of scholars did and some still do, Turkey does not have a still unresolved Kurdish problem and that Kurds do not exist within the present borders of the Republican nation state. In the most assertive works on late Ottoman and the Republican era, Kurds are most of the time deliberately omitted or forgotten by the most prominent scholars in Turkey. İsmail Beşikçi's case, which cost him seventeen years imprisonment and great harassment, is the most known one. Beşikçi's insistence on the epistemological as well as the ethical aspects of the absence of the Kurds in academic research did not reach anyone's ears instead it caused him to get fired from the university in the early 1970s. The professor who spied on Beşikçi and informed against him later wrote several books on the Kurds, boldly claiming the Turkishness of the Kurds and the land they live on.[20]

It is not difficult to claim that if İsmail Beşikçi and Kurdish writers such as Mehmet Emin Bozarslan and Musa Anter could have carried out research regarding Kurdish society freely - like let's say their French contemporaries - academia and the situation of the social sciences in Turkey would have been very different now. As is known, Algeria has had a tremendous impact on the development and direction of the social sciences in France. Kurds, in my opinion, could have contributed to social sciences in a similar way, if only scholars had been independent of state ideology and could have escaped the consequences of doing research contrary to accepted frameworks.[21]

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20 See Barış Ünlü and Ozan Değer, eds. *İsmail Beşikçi,* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2011), 22.

21 French students mostly dominated the 1960s and 1970s, in the field of social theory. Frantz Fanon, Michael Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu and Jacques Derrida were among those who were affected by what happened in Algeria in the early 1960s. All these scholars greatly contributed to the social sciences. Foucault's approach to power replaced Marx as the center of critical theory, while Bourdieu's contribution to sociology can be regarded as important as that of Durkheim. For a short review of books on this subject, see Muriam Haleh Davis, "Algeria's Impact on French Philosophy: Between Poststructuralist Theory and Colonial Practice," Jun 06 2011, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1764/algerias-impact-on-french-philosophy_between-posts.

Today, we can argue that the situation regarding studies on Kurds is quite different. There is a growing scholarship on the subject, and I am fully aware of the fact that this dissertation owes much to this scholarship. It would not have been possible to write this dissertation a decade ago, if not for both the merits and shortcomings of these earlier studies. It is not an exaggeration to talk about a school of students in Kurdish history nowadays. Journals such as *Toplum ve Kuram, Kürt Tarihi,* and *Kurdish Studies* came out as a result of the successful attempt of the Kurdish Studies Network to bring students into Kurdish studies.[22]

First and foremost, one should bear in mind the transformation of history writing and criticisms of its very existence as an academic discipline. Edward Carr, in his short seminal book, argued that "my first answer therefore to the question 'What is history?' is that it is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past."[23] Regarding history as an academic discipline, the proof or truth of certain subjects of study are debatable. In line with developments in other fields of scientific research, history is undergoing unceasing changes as a result of the accumulation of knowledge in the field. Edward Palmer Thompson, one of the most influential historians of the twentieth century said in his late years, "I don't want to tell anyone how to write history. They must find out in their own way."[24] This is true to the extent that the essentials and prerequisites for writing in a manner that requires a "training in history" are met.[25]

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22 See http://kurdishstudiesnetwork.net/, accessed September 2, 2016.

23 Edward H. Carr, *What is History?* second edition, ed. R. W. Davies, (London: Penguin Books, 1987), 30.

24 Edward Palmer (E.P.) Thompson, "Agenda for Radical History," in *The Essential E.P. Thompson*, ed. Dorothy Thompson (New York: The New Press, 2001), 494.

25 In line with the developments in natural sciences, e.g. physics, social sciences in general and history in particular also changed its focal point and orientation both in terms of its subjects and in terms of its time span. For example, thanks to physicians like Niels Bohr, when Albert Einstein was most celebrated, modern physics started to look at the subatomic levels, which resulted in grand changes not only in modern physics but in all aspects of life. Likewise, from the early 1960s, historical studies, now more an interdisciplinary field, started to look at subjects which would have been considered trivial a decade earlier.

In history, with Marxist school on one hand and the French "Annales" school on the other, social scientists after the 1960s studied subjects that had almost never been studied before.[26] Clifford Geert's well-known anthropological research, *Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight* [27], is one of the most celebrated. Later, Edward Said's seminal *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*[28] and Michael Foucault's studies on prisons, madness, and similar topics show how new ways of research, both in terms of subject and approach, could be conducted.[29] This development led to the emergence of what is later called social history and later historical sociology. As aptly defined by Dennis Smith, "Historical sociology is carried out by historians and sociologists investigating the mutual interpretation of past and present, events and processes, acting and structuration."[30] In addition to French historians, a new generation of British Marxist historians also enriched and improved the field.

As early as the 1970s, one of the most important historians of the twentieth century, Eric Hobsbawn, summarized and in a way named the new emerging discipline as the "history of society." This study claims to belong the same discipline within history, in other words, it is about the history of Kurdish society taking a close look at political groups and activists in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Hobsbawn the history of society has three features: First, "the history of society is *history*: That is to say it has real chronological time as one of its dimensions." Second, "the history of society is, among other things, that of specific units of people living together and definable in sociological term." Third, "the history of society requires us to apply, if not a formalized and

26 Lynn Hunt, "Introduction: History, Culture, and Text," in *The New Cultural History: Essays Studies On the History of Society and Culture,* ed. Lynn Hunt (California: University of California Press, 1989), 1.

27 Clifford Geertz, "Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," *Daedalus* Vol. 101, No. 1, Myth, Symbol, and Culture (Winter, 1972).

28 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin, 1978). For an example discussion of Said's orientalism in the Kurdish case, see Christopher Houston, "An anti-history of a non-people: Kurds, colonialism, and nationalism in the history of anthropology," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (2009).

29 See Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

30 Dennis Smith, *The Rise of Historical Sociology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press,1991), 3.

elaborate model of such structures, then at least an approximate order of research priorities and a working assumption of what constitutes the central nexus or complex of connections of our subject, through of course these things imply a model."[31]

As Georg G. Iggers argues, a fictional element enters into all historical discourse.[32] But one should bear in mind what Hobsbawn argued long ago:

> We are concerned not only with structures and their mechanisms of persistence and change, and with the general possibilities and patterns of their transformations, but also with what actually happened. If we are not, then (as Fernand Braudel has reminded us in this article on "Histoire et Longue Durée"), we are not historians. [33]

As we are concerned with what actually happened, based on all the sources available to us, we should recall to what Thompson directed our attention.

> In recovering that process, in showing how causation actually eventuated, we must, insofar as the discipline can enforce, hold our own values in abeyance. But once this history has been recovered, we are at liberty to offer our judgment upon it. Such judgment must itself be under historical controls.[34]

The term historical control is important. This control mechanism should be on the historian's desks not only when they write about a certain topic, but also when they read others' work as well. With respect to this dissertation, it could easily follow the mainstream narrative regarding the history of Kurdish society and their struggle throughout the century. That is to say, it could easily have regarded the activism and political history of the Kurds as "Kurdish nationalism." However, this *narrative* was not and still does not seem to be

31 Eric Hobsbawm, "From Social History to the History of Society," in *On History*, Eric Hobsbawm (New York: The New Press, 1997), 79-81.

32 Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 2.

33 Hobsbawm, "From Social History to the History of Society," 80.

34 Edward Palmer Thompson, "Historical Logic," in *The Essential E.P. Thompson*, ed. Dorothy Thompson (New York: The New Press, 2001), 450.

convincing in many respects. The difficulties of framing and terming historical time and movement of this research emerged as a consequence of the disagreement with the "nationalist" school therefore, the title of the study is "ethno-regional movement," not national, or "nationalist movement," a point which is elaborated upon in detail in the following sections.

## § 1.2 Structure, Methodological Approach and Shortfalls of the Research

Almost all Kurdish activism of the 1920s and 1930s was regarded as reactionary and feudalist by communist and socialist movements in Turkey, particularly by the Turkish Communist Party (*Türkiye Komünist Partisi*, or TKP). In the 1960s and 1970s, as is explained in detail in the next chapters, ethnic claims raised by Kurdish socialists caused them to be labeled "bourgeois nationalists," and "chauvinists." Accordingly, many Kurdish activists, as is clear from their publications, statements, and other primary sources, did their best to prove the stereotype wrong: That is to say, Kurdish youth tried hard not to be seen as "nationalist" - a pejorative among socialist groups.

Nevertheless, the Kurdish movement and it political activism in the 1960s and 1970s is mainly studied as a "nationalist" movement. The literature of nationalism still predominates explanations of Kurdish activism of the time. By contrast, this dissertation goes beyond the literature of nationalism, employing an interdisciplinary point of view. For example, one of the questions it tries to answer differently is why Kurdish youth affiliated with leftist ideology and why they could not form their own organizations from the beginning. What were the political motivations of various Kurdish groups, how did nation and class situate itself in their arguments? Why and how did activists get involved in a political ideology?

Leo Tolstoy's praise famously quoted, "historians are like deaf people who go on answering questions that no one has asked them."[35] However, the research questions formulated at the beginning of this research, in 2010, have

35 For an excellent analysis of Tolstoy's views on history see Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay in Tolstoy's view of History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1953).

been asked for several reasons. They were incorporated into the interview questions which were designed to be open-ended and semi-structured, and included questions about each interviewee's background.

Main research questions that shape this study are as follows:

- What are the internal and external ideological and practical sources of Kurdish activism in the 1960s and 1970s?
- What does the existing literature on Kurdish activism tell us about the 1970s?
- What was the composition of the movement in the 1970s, in terms of groups and political parties?
- What was the agenda of Kurdish groups, in terms of their political goals, objectives, issues, and praxis?
- What are the continuities and changes in this period?
- Why and how did Kurds in Turkey get involved with and become so influenced by the socialist movement of Turkey?
- Who were the activists, and what were their socioeconomic, political, and cultural backgrounds?
- What factors and reasons were behind activists' allegiances and adherence to a group or party?
- Why and how did all this activism of the 1970s end up with the PKK dominating Kurdish activism since the mid-1980s?
- Why were Islamic and the conservative Kurdish activism absent?
- What was the place of women in the movement?
- How can we interpret and analyze Kurdish activism of the 1970s on a regional level and in a historical context?

In order to explain and explore each issue, the structure of this dissertation has been modified several times until it reached its final form here. The dissertation consists of five chapters. In the first, introductory chapter, theoretical and conceptual discussions are followed by a section on the subject and objectives of the study. Some relevant theoretical studies as well as the relevant existing literature on the subject of study are introduced and reviewed.

The second chapter, titled *From Class to Nation (1959-1974): Memories without History,* begins with a summary of overall historical and political

developments in the Middle East and Turkey in relation to Kurds in the 1970s. It demonstrates the use of power among different nation states and further explains the symbiotic relationship that the Kurds have had with the existing state structures in the Middle East. Explaining national and class aspects of Kurdish movement in Turkey, the chapter elaborates on the politicization of Kurdish culture and ethnicity in the 1960s. Finally, the chapter discusses the shift by Kurdish activists from class-based economic claims to nation-based ethnic claims. In this chapter, my main emphasis is on socialist groups and emerging generation of Kurdish youth, who would later become the avant-garde of activism in the 1970s. This period is called "From a Class to a Nation," referring to how both socialists and Kurdish activists of the time regarded it.

In the third chapter, titled *From Nation to "Revolution" (1974-1984): A Historical Framework for Kurdish Activism in the 1970s*, a short background of political and social developments among Kurds in Turkey is given. Moreover, this chapter delves into various actors and events in order to summarize a wide range of historical moments and political activism. Although the chapter juxtaposes Kurdish and Turkish political movements from the beginning of the 1960s, it also compares and explores how the two historical times were experienced by both Turkish and Kurdish activists. This period, which is Phase B of the modern Kurdish ethno-regional movement in Turkey (if the previous one can be regarded as the Phase A) is called "From a Nation to a Revolution," implying the agenda and aspirations of Kurdish activists and the way they saw their "question."

The fourth chapter, titled *True Believers, Last Romantics: A Framework of "Low Politics" of the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement,* not only looks at ideological discussions of the time, but compares them with praxis employing mostly interviews and primary sources, such as journals, newspapers, and memoirs.. The chapter also gives an account of the ideological discussions as well as the practical consequences of separate organizations from the Turkish predominant groups. Furthermore, the chapter offers insights into intra-Kurdish factionalism and struggles throughout the 1960s and 1970s. It provides an account of the demographics and dynamics of Kurdish activism of the time. It provides readers with insight into the different patterns of politicization of Kurdish youth. It also includes individual experiences and

reflections of the time - needless to say retrospectively - through the activists' own eyes. The chapter draws analytical as well as critical similarities and differences between different groups and individuals. It endeavors to answers, why certain activists affiliated with specific groups and how they were politicized. Furthermore, this chapter provides a framework of Kurdish culture and society, focusing on religion, women, language, and culture.

The final chapter is titled *Conclusion: Socialist in Form, National in Content,* and concludes my arguments and findings. The final chapter also contains hypotheses to answer to the aforementioned questions examined and explored throughout the text.

This study employs methods and techniques present in the recent interdisciplinary historiography of history as an academic discipline. Interdisciplinary studies nowadays no longer make writing history "at a desk" or shutting one's self off "in a library" possible. Therefore, following what Khaldun proposed long ago - i.e. the use of different methods as well as the integration of other disciplines, such as history, sociology, political science, and anthropology - has become a necessity in the study of history, especially when it concerns contemporary topics.

In this regard and for the general purpose of this study, individuals, ideas, events, time, space, concepts, data and so on have to be synthesized and connected in a way that an issue as complex as the Kurdish movement of the 1970s can be explained "as a whole"[36] to the extent that a single study is able to achieve that. This study methodically employs and integrates at a minimum history, sociology, and political science, as well as techniques such as archival research, statistical data analysis, oral history, participant observation and so on. Furthermore, the approach of the study regarding the time and periodization of the era, as mentioned earlier, differs from the existing literature, as explained in the following sections of this chapter.

The materials of the research can be categorized in three groups. First, recent relevant publications, such as books, articles, theses and so on, that can be regarded as secondary sources. Second, documents, publications, and

36 For a useful introduction to the interdisciplinary approach, see Allen F. Repko, *Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory,* 2nd Ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage publications, 2012).

periodicals of Kurdish groups to which I had access at the *Milli Kütüphane* in Ankara, the *Kitebxaneya Kurdi* in Stockholm, the *Kurdish Institute* in Paris, *TÜSTAV* in Istanbul, and several other private libraries and collections. The third and most important category of sources is my fieldwork and in-depth face-to-face interviews carried out in seven countries and thirteen cities over the course of five years.

In addition to many unrecorded interviews and discussions with activists such as Tarık Ziya Ekinci, Kemal Burkay, Ömer Çetin, Mümtaz Kotan, Leyla Zana, Emine Ayna, Rohat Alakom and so on, I conducted seventy four semi-structured interviews that allowed the interviewees to explore his or her own accounts and recollections of the 1960s and 1970s in one or two hours of the interview. Although the majority of interviews were conducted in Kurmanji-Kurdish, some interviews were carried out in Turkish, according to the interviewee's preference. In selecting my interviewees, I found it important not to only interview "high profile" activists one of a single group. Therefore, particular attention is paid to interviewing top, middle, and low-ranking activists from various groups - as well as women activists and a few Islamic activists - so that different narratives could merge into a single picture of the era. Also, I was fortunate to observe how these activists, who were younger than me in the 1970s - live now and how they have "changed" over the time.

Of course, I was well aware of the shortcomings of the interviews and kept in mind Thucydides' point that "people adapt their memories to suit their sufferings."[37] That is why crosschecking statements, arguments, and dates was a priority. For example, although many interviewees said, "in 1974, Ankara DDKD (*Devrimci*[38] *Demokratik Kültür Dernekleri* or the Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations) was established," none knew the date or even the month, a detail not available in any of the secondary sources. This information is crucial because that same year, before and after the DDKD, other

37 Christopher Houston, *Kurdistan: Crafting of National Selves* (Bloomington& Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), 9.

38 As one of the most commonly used words by socialists at the time, *devrimci* can be translated as both progressive and revolutionary. It can also be both case and adjectival at the same time. All the same, *devrimci* is translated as "revolutionary" in this study.

organizations were formed, paving the way for separate groupings among Kurdish activists.[39]

Likewise, on several occasions when interviewees said there were several or many, (*pirr* or *gelek* in Kurdish) branches of this or that association, I could not get a specific number, which is again absent in the written sources, even though some interviewees were among the founders,. It is true that employing interviews and fieldwork in historical work affects the way history is written.[40] Furthermore, Edward Said has pointed out that invention is part of personal recollections of tradition or collective experience, as well.[41] Said also rightly argues that memory is refashioned and interfered, so that it can provide a basis for "coherent identity, a national narrative, and a place in the world."[42] To overcome such difficulties, a counter check with information collected from periodicals, journals, party publications, and secondary sources has been used as strengthening the oral history.

The political affiliation or groups of interviewees are not indicated in bibliography for each separate individual, because most were actively involved in political activism with different groups. Now they are either nonpartisan or in some cases working with groups other than their original one, so it would create confusion to indicate multiple affiliations over the time.

All in all, interviewees consist of eleven activists from the KİP (*Kürdistan İşçi Partisi* or the Workers' Party of Kurdistan)/DDKD/PPKK (*Partiya Pêşenga Karkerên Kürdistan* or the Avant-garde Workers' Party of Kurdistan), which were splinter groups of the T'deKDP and can be categorized as a single center

39 The Ankara DDKD was officially founded on 15 May 1974, and closed by the martial law court on January 26, 1976. For a detailed, annoted choronology of the events, see An Annoted Chronology of Events.

40 Rob Perks and Aliaster Thomson, ed., *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). In Turkey as the pioneers in this field, see Arzu Öztürkmen, "Folklore and nationalism in Turkey" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1993), ProQuest. Paper AAI9413885; Leyla Neyzi, "Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey," in *Turkey's Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem, Philip Robins (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

41 Edward W. Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," *Critical Inquiry,* Vol. 26, No. 2 (Winter, 2000), 175.

42 Ibid., 180.

line, known as *Şıvancılar* (heirs of T'deKDP and Dr. Şivan) or *Devrimci Demokratlar* (Revolutionary Democrats' Circle). While nine activists were adherents of the TKSP (*Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi* or The Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey)/ÖY(*Özgürlük Yolu* or The Path of Freedom)/*Roja Welat* (The Sun of the Fatherland) center line, seven interviewees were among the center line of *Kürdistan Devrimcileri* (Revolutionaries of Kurdistan), which became the PKK in 1978. Seven activists were affiliated with the *Komal/Rizgari/Ala Rizgari* (Liberation and The Flag of Liberation) axis, whereas eight interviewees were affiliated with the Kava/Dengê Kawa-Red Kawa axis. Additionally, eight activists were part of the TKDP-KUK-KUK,SE (*Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları-Sosyalist Eğilim* or The National Liberators of Kurdistan-Socialist Tendency), seven individuals were Islamic activists, and four individuals were from Turkish communist and socialist movements.[43] Finally, eleven interviewees were from among the 49'ers and TİP or can simply be categorized as nonaligned.

Some shortfalls of this research can be described as follows. The research does not cover all Kurds, focusing mainly on the Kurdish ethno-regional movement in Turkey even though it engages in relevant discussions of the other Kurdish activisms in the Middle East. The literature covered in this research is in English, Turkish, and Kurdish. Therefore, works published in other languages such as Arabic, Persian, French, or Russian are not covered. Moreover, the research has examined the politics of the Middle East, Turkish socialists, mainstream political parties, and right-wing activists hastily due to a lack of scope. Additionally, the research was designed to cover many actors of the Kurdish ethno-regional movement. Its scope therefore prevents an all-around analysis of each circle, group, party, and factional split. Also, this research does not rely on a comparative approach. Instead it includes the developments in the Middle East pertaining to Kurds, particularly Kurds in Iraq and Iran. Finally, the research has been carried out with the lack of an agreed upon consensus in terms of periodization, definition, and historical framework of the subject.

43 Although each group is explained in the following chapters, Appendix A can be referred to for the geneology of each group. See Appendix A: A Comprehensive Family Tree of the Kurdish Movement in Turkey, 1959-1984.

## § 1.3 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework and Key Concepts

In this section, I first present some important discussions and works from the field of nationalism, without going into detail about what a nation is or should be. However, some conceptual and theoretical discussions about nationalism, especially as a movement, are introduced. Then I explore themes surrounding the issue of nationalism and national movements in Marxism. Finally, the key concepts used in this study are introduced to elucidate their usage throughout the study.

As a point of departure, it is important to note that there is an immense literature on nationalism that is ever growing without any consensus on basic definitions of nation and nationalism. However, there is an agreed upon categorization: That is to say, it is agreed upon that most of the literature of nationalism can be divided into the primordialist, modernist, and ethno-symbolist schools. These three schools deal with the origin of nations, their features, as well as their objectives in different ways.[44] According to the primordialist school, nations have existed since time immemorial, while the modernist view argues that "nationalism is a cultural and political ideology of modernity."[45]

Geertz's study, in which he studies the "primordial sentiments in civil politics"[46] are regarded as part of the primordial school. Among many others, in the modernist school, Benedict Anderson's book *Imagined Communities* is widely acclaimed for its new formulation of the origins of nations and nationalist ideology. As evident from the title, Anderson argues that nationality - or nation-ness - and nationalism are imagined "cultural artifacts of particular

44 For a general introduction, see Alain Dieckhoff & Christophe Jaffrelot, eds., *Revisiting Nationalism – Theories and Processes* (Hurst & Company, 2005); Philip Spencer & Howard Wollman, *Nationalism – A Critical Introduction* (London: Sage Publications, 2003); Umut Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları* (Istanbul: Sarmal Yayınları, 1999).

45 David McCrone, *The Sociology of Nationalism: Tomorrow's Ancestors* (London: Routledge, 1998).

46 For example, see Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states," in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. Clifford Geertz (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

kind."[47] Finally, Anderson argues that nation states newly founded as an outcome of anti colonial struggle were the last wave of nationalism. [48] In line with Anderson, Eric Hobsbawn argues that nationalism invents and reinvents the past: Therefore, tradition itself is invented.[49] The ethno-symbolist school, with Anthony D. Smith as its most known advocate, combines both primordial feelings and the sense of belonging among the members of a nation with symbolic fabrication of national identity in the name of the masses. In other words, the national is an amalgamation of the new and the old. Smith argues that nationalism is an ideological movement grounded in the multidimensional national identifications of an ethnic community - or an *ethnie.*[50]

Paul R. Brass, who wrote extensively on the role of elites in nationalist movements, rightly points out that "nationalism is a political movement by definition."[51] Therefore, nationalism needs to have both organizational and human resources to gain support and mobilize people to compete with rival groups asserting the same goals, as well as with the state, which suppresses such political movements. In addition, John Hutchinson defines nations as "zones of conflict" because each national identity is situated within conflicts that nations have caused.[52] John Breuilly's seminal book, *Nationalism and the State,* which approaches nationalism as a way of doing politics constitutes the main argument regarding the definition of nationalism.[53] According to Breuilly, "nationalism is primarily related to politics, which is about power, in particular state power."[54] In other words, nationalism is a base on which

47 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso: 1991).

48 Ibid., 113-140.

49 Eric J. Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1.

50 See Anthony D. Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986); *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), and *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

51 Paul R. Brass, "Ethnic Groups and Nationalities," in *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe,* ed. Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, Inc. 1980), 40.

52 John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 4.

53 John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982).

54 Ibid., 1-2.

"obtaining and using state power" is the main objective. This research is concerned not only with the ideological aspect of nationalism but also with the "movement" aspect of nationalism. [55]

In his book *Containing Nationalism,* Michael Hechter differentiates among types of nationalism and provides a conceptual definition of the dominant nationalism - called "state-building nationalism" - which is a suitable term to define Turkish nationalism. State-building nationalism, in Hechter's definition, "is the nationalism that is embodied in the attempt to assimilate or incorporate culturally distinctive territories in a given state. It is the result of the conscious efforts of central rulers to make a multicultural population culturally homogenous." [56]

Not only were there several groups and parties calling themselves "Marxist-Leninist," but most socialists groups - both Kurdish and Turkish - genuinely believed that Marx and Engel's proposed solution to "national questions" was applicable and reasonable with regard to the Kurdish case. However, as is nowadays evident, the solution or theory proposed by Marxism for solving ethnic and national questions was Janus-faced and vague. As generally agreed, Marx and Engels, as well as other socialist thinkers, underestimated the importance of national suppression and therefore of national movements. National questions and ethnic issues were approached in oversimplified "black and white, reactionary and progressive"[57] terms – terms also used by the TKP and other Marxist groups in Turkey up until the late 1960s. Furthermore, as Kevin B. Anderson points out, Marx's perspective on this ranged from supporting colonization - and thereby the modernization of Eastern or backwards nation - to backing the independence of Poland and Ireland. [58]

55 See John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, ed., *Nationalism, Oxford Readers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

56 Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 15.

57 Tom Bottomore, ed., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought,* 2nd Ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1991), 394.

58 Kevin B. Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 2.

The ambivalent attitude regarding nations and nationalism as a "fading phenomenon" that would be a thing of past has proved to be wrong.[59] Also, being preoccupied with class and the class struggle of uprooted people and the proletariat, not only Karl Marx himself, but also later Marxist thinkers disdained nationalist sentiments and nationalism as a political movement. However, as a pragmatic necessity, national issues were also regarded as part of class struggle or as an intermediary path to class struggle. However, there is no disagreement that the concept of class itself is a modern concept and that Marxism does not have a coherent approach to it. Although Murat Belge points out that the Turkish left did not coherently talk about a variety of issues - from health to urbanization, and especially about the national problem. Kurdish socialists were even more ambiguous in approaching these issues.[60]

For Kurdish activists, none of the works on nationalism and the national question mattered. Most were not available at that time anyway. Nationalism and the national question were explained and discussed according to two Marxist thinkers, Vladimir Lenin and Josef Stalin. Lenin's *Nations' Right to Self- Determination,* was translated into Turkish in 1968[61], while Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question*, was published in 1967.[62] Stalin's definition of a nation "as a community of people with common language, territory, economic life," resembling Smith's definition of *ethnie:* "a name, common ancestry, even as a myth, shared historical memories, historic territory, and a measure of solidarity."[63] By the 1970s, there was a general consensus that the Kurds were a "nation" (*ulus*). The bulk of debates were more centered on how the Kurdish nation should organize and be a part of the revolutionary movement than on whether or not comprised a nation.

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59 Neil A. Martin, "Marxism, Nationalism, and Russia," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 29, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1968), 231.

60 See Ahmet Samim, "The Left," in *Turkey in Transition; New Perspectives,* eds. Irvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 170.

61 Josef Stalin, *Marksizm ve Milli Mesele*, trans. Muzaffer. Kabagil (Ankara: Sol, 1967).

62 Vladimir Lenin, *Ulusların Kendi Kaderini Tayin Hakkı*, trans. Muzaffer Ardos (Ankara: Sol, 1968).

63 Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation,* 13.

On one hand, Lenin openly supported the right of self-determination with the option of separation and independence, and on the other, he argued that the proletariat must fight all kinds of nationalism.[64] Lenin made a distinction between oppressive nations and the nationalism of small nations, or oppressed nations (*ezen ve ezilen ulus milliyetçiliği)*,[65] which became a popular issue of debate in the 1970s. Paradoxically, Lenin also argued for and favored "bourgeois nationalism, even if it meant the collapse of local Communist movement."[66] Moreover, as the inherited influence of Lenin's intertwinement of colonialism with natural reaction it got, nationalism was commonly accepted by socialist groups in the 1970s. Particularly in the Kurdish case, they took the stance that anti colonial struggle, class struggle and national struggle were all the same and served the greater good, which was socialism.[67]

According to Walker Connor, the right of self-determination was used for pragmatic purposes to bring together different groups for the success of the socialist revolution.[68] As will be seen in the next chapters, this was true for the Kurdish-Turkish case too, even after the "nation-ness" of the Kurds was acknowledged. The national struggle was not supported by the majority of the socialists, since it was deemed to hamper class struggle. Similarly, Smith points out that although the proletariat is supposed to first fight against its own national bourgeoisie, the national movements "may only be supported by socialists where it hastens the overthrow of feudalism or bourgeois domination."[69]

In short, the vague and Janus-faced Marxist approach to national questions, especially that of Lenin and later Stalin, caused much of the confusion among various socialist groups in Turkey. One side, namely the Turkish socialists, tended to look at the issue as a "fight against all nationalisms" – as a

64 Horace B. Davis, *Nationalism and Socialism; Marxist and Labor Theories of Nationalism to 1917* (New York and London: Montly Review Press, 1967), 199.

65 Lenin, *Ulusların Kendi Kaderini Tayin Hakkı,* 72.

66 Geoffrey Wheeler, "Soviet Interests in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey," *The World Today*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (May, 1968), 198.

67 James M. Blaut, *The National Question: Decolonizing the Theory of Nationalism,* with a foreword by Juan Mari Bras (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd. 1987), 2.

68 Walker Connor, *The National question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1984).

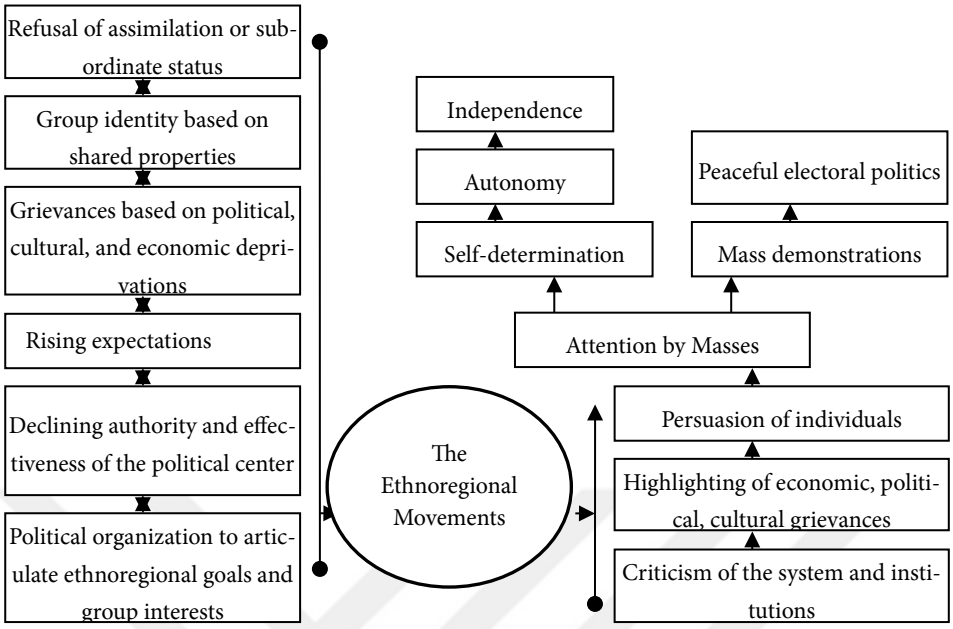
69 Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation,* 25.

reactionary or counter-revolutionary aspect of the demand for rights – rather than an issue of class. The other side consisting of Kurdish groups, reminded their Turkish counterparts that they, as the proletariat and avant-garde, should follow Lenin's dictum and demand freedom for oppressed nations, even if the oppressor is their own nation. Kurds favored the right of self-determination with "unconditional" approval or even secession, as argued by Lenin, albeit in an ambiguous and unformed way. Therefore, Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* became the main reference for "milli mesele" (or the national issue) in Turkey alongside other classical Marxist works, a fact that is explored in Chapter 4 in more detail.

Rather than proposing a new theoretical explanation, the theoretical approach of this study can be seen as a blending of different approaches to nationalism, national movements, and ethnoregional movements. As a first attempt to formulate the conceptual framework of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement and the subject of this study, Figure 1 is based on Marvin W. Mikesell and Alexander B. Murphy's informative article where they provide useful frameworks to classify different minority group aspirations, and also on Milton, J. Esman's article, from which the title is borrowed.[70]

70 Marvin W. Mikesell and Alexander B. Murphy, "A Framework for Comparative Study of Minority-Group Aspirations," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 81, no. 4 (December 1991); Milton J. Esman, "Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialized Societies," in *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World,* ed. Milton, J. Esman (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Pres, 1977), also Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich, eds., *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

Figure 1.1 Ethnoregional Movements




SOURCE Ahmet Alış, "The Process of the Politicization of the Kurdish Identity in Turkey: the Kurds and the Turkish Labor Party (1961–1971) " (Master thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2009), 22.

Ethnoregional movements, the term borrowed from Milton J. Esman, are twofold.[71] First, an ethnoregional movement is constructed on the ethnic distinctiveness of the population based upon ethnicity, religion, race, language and so on. Second, the movement emerges and is positioned as a response to a region's economic underdevelopment. Therefore, economic and ethnic aspects of the movement are always intertwined. It is not the same with the ethnoregionalism appearing in the western world. It is different because the ethnoregional movement employed in the former is not derived from the permission of the central state: Rather, it emerges and develops against the nation state.

71 See Esman, "Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialized Societies," 372-373.

As Michael Hetcher and Margaret Levi point out, "ethnoregional movements rest upon regional claims to ethnic distinctiveness, with a particular focus on language, religion or other separating markers."[72] This was formulated as "Doğu" or "the East of Turkey" in the 1960s both in terms of economic backwardness and in terms of Kurdish ethnicity. Esman points out that modernization provides activists with tools to reflect upon their region's economic situation in comparison with the rest of the country.[73] This phenomenon can be observed in the Kurdish case, especially among the movement's first generation - the 1958'ers - the generation that dominated Phase A - who went to cities such as Ankara and Istanbul and experienced the huge economic differences between the East and West of the country, which were then formulated as Kurdish and Turkish regions of Turkey.

An ethnoregional movement differs from a social movements in a number of ways. First, as McCarty and Zald put it, although the movement can lead to a social movement as it undertakes resource mobilization with various ideological and strategic goals, such as "mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers, achieving change in targets."[74] In line with their counterparts in other cases, the activists of ethnoregional movements are a well-educated, younger generation of society with various occupations and class backgrounds who are mostly inclined toward leftist and particularly socialist ideology for various reasons. Foremost, as Esman emphasizes, the two struggles - namely the socialist and nationalist struggles - are interlinked and seen as inseparable from each other.[75]

In the same way that socialist parties and groups would renew and recondition their ideology to better address the ethnic aspect of the ethnoregional movement to atone for a hard line and a monistic class struggle and benefit

72 The literature on ethnoregionalism is scant and mostly is about Western world, emphasizing economic aspects of the movement, for example, see Michael Hechter and Margaret Levi, "The Comparative Analysis of Ethnoregional Movements," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2/3 (1979).

73 Esman, "Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialized Societies," 374.

74 See John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *The American Journal of Sociology,* 82, no. 6 (May, 1977), 1217.

75 Esman, "Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialized Societies," p.379.

from the "potential" of the movement by combining ethnic grievances with class related economic grievances.[76] An ethnoregional movement, particularly in the Kurdish case, is also about politicizing "a hitherto passive *ethnie* into an active ethnopolitical community."[77] This is the case in Phase B of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement.

In doing so, the movement pursues intermediate goals that can be categorized as criticism of the system, by highlighting existing economic, political, and cultural grievances and thereby persuading people. As a full-fledged ethnoregional movement, the next phase is followed by attention from the masses, which leads to two parallel steps to continue the movement by mass demonstrations and peaceful electoral politics or to demand structural changes within the existing state system, such as autonomy or independence. The inclination towards nonstructural changes and peaceful solutions vis-à-vis structural demands are closely related to the response of the state. However, a movement - in this the case the Kurdish ethnoregional movement in the 1970s - can employ the two strategies at the same time without regard to the consequences in terms of the state's response.

So, it is now time to explore and demarcate the phases of the Kurdish regional movement. As already mentioned, this study borrows the typology offered by Miroslav Hroch[78] in his research on Eastern European national movements, particularly the Czech and Serbian national movements, as well as the typology proposed by Partha Chatterjee. It is important to note that the story of the Kurdish movement is dissimilar in terms of both goals and political space when compared to Hroch's and Chattarjee's case studies. Although Hroch studied "small nations" with successful national movements, considering the activism and results of the so-called Phase C, one can argue that the

76 Donald L Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley; Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2000), 334-337.

77 Smith, *National Identity*, p.125.

78 Although some works by Hroch repeats the same arguments, for this study several different works are examined. See especially, *In the National Interest: Demands and Goals of European National Movements of the Nineteenth Century: a Comparative Perspective* (Prague: Charles University, 2000).

Kurdish case is an unsuccessful movement which repeats itself in different historical periods. For example, Hamit Bozarslan applies Hroch's typology to the earlier activism of the Kurds and points out that the Kurdish movement was unable to make the transition from stage B to C, characterized, according to Hroch, by "the rise of a mass national movement."[79] I elaborate and examine the overall evaluation of Phases A, B, and C in relation to Kurdish activism in Chapter 5. The objective is not to demonstrate the similarities between Eastern European national movements, in which "small nations" were created, but rather to use the same typology of stage-by-stage development for the Kurdish ethnoregional movement.

Additionally, Partha Chatterjee, a prominent postcolonial and subaltern studies scholar, in his important book within the field of nationalism mentioned earlier, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, a Derivative Discourse,* as well as in his later book, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories,* takes a closer look at Indian nationalism employing a critical perspective. Arguing that nationalism - both good and bad - was a product of political developments in the history of Europe,[80] he draws attention to the dissimilarity of Western and third world ways of "imagining" nations. With the particular case study of India, he constructs a conceptual framework based on the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci's passive revolution and war of positions.[81] The specific stages that Indian nationalism went through are called *moments,* and according to Chattarjee, Indian post-colonial nationalism went through the *moment of departure* which is when a nationalist consciousness is encountered, *the moment of maneuver* when activists positioned themselves and developed their discourse, and

79 Hamit Bozarslan, "Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey," 168.

80 Partha Chatterjee. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 4.

81 Although it has different meanings, "war of positions" is a subtle way of positioning oneself. In Gramsci's case, the proletariat and Communist Party take a tactical and informal position due to a lack of the space and possible movement for a "war of maneuver." See Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London:University of California Press, 1980).

finally the *moment of arrival* when nationalist thought attained its fullest development."[82]

In short, Phase A or the moment of departure is the initial stage, which Hroch calls "the scholarly phase" And when national movements put great focus on history, language, culture and other distinctive elements of their ethnicity, it is the first component of an ethnoregional movement. Ethnicity should not be confused with ethnic politics.[83] It is used interchangeably with nationality and culture.[84] In the Kurdish case in Turkey, this phase corresponds to the period, examined in Chapter 2, between 1959, when the 49'ers were arrested, and 1974, when Kurdish activists were released and fugitive activists could reengage in political activities after an amnesty.

Phase B or the moment of maneuver is the phase of national agitation, or open organizational and ideological construction - in which Hroch argues that the nation is in the process of "forming." Hroch continues by asserting that in this stage of activism, "the nation forming process was still in a backward or embryonic stage of evolution, and the successful formation of the nation was no means yet guaranteed."[85] This phase corresponds to the time between 1974 and 1984, when the PKK initiated organized attacks on the Turkish state. My early observations prove Hroch's conclusion that the Kurdish "nation-forming" or "nation-building" process of the 1970s did not succeed in bringing about the ideological and practical reality of a Kurdish nation for reasons and factors explained in the following chapters. In the same vein, Hroch remarks on the composition of the participants of Phase B. The Kurdish ethnoregional movement was composed of well-educated activists, mostly

82 Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World,* 50-51. For the Indian case, the coming of Mahatma Gandhi corresponds to *the moment of maneuver,* while Jawaharlal Nehru's nationalism was ideologically reconstructed starting from his take over after India became independent in 1947.

83 Henry E. Hale, *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

84 See J. Milton Yinger, "Ethnicity," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 11 (1985).

85 Hroch, *In the National Interest,* 13-14.

university graduates, students and university drop-outs, and similarly that peasants and workers were generally absent.[86]

Finally, Phase C or the moment of arrival is when a mass national movement takes place after the successful agitation and propaganda of Phase B. Of course, this is not the end of the national movement. As Hroch puts it, "the end of the national movement may be considered as the time when all the goals of the movement has essentially been achieved which usually occurred with the attainment of increased autonomy or political independence."[87] This study covers this phase briefly and only in relation to the previous two stages.

It must be noted that between each phase there are years of transition. For example, although the amnesty in1974 is chosen as the founding event of Phase B, using Ricour's concept referred to earlier, one can say that after the arrest of activists in 1971, there was a three-year period of transition during which imprisoned and fugitive activists could evaluate the previous period and prepare for the subsequent phase. Similarly, despite the fact that the political developments of 1984 is selected as the founding event of Phase C, there was an almost a four-year preparation period since the 12 September 1980 coup d'état that was decisive.

Finally, in addition to previous discussions on the theoretical framework of this study (and except for specific usage of the following terms by political groups or circles of the time) the study construes the following terms as defined here. As McCarty and Zald points out, "*cadre, constituent, conscience constituent, adherent,* and *supporter* all may be components of a social movement."[88] The term *activist* refers anyone who was actively involved in any of the political movements, groups, parties, or publications in one way or another. The terms *follower* and *sympathizer* are used to refer to those who were adherents of a certain group, political party or idea. The term *intellectual* refers to writers, orators, and publishers that had *relative autonomy,* using Karl Mannheim's definition, over the state and establishment. They demonstrated

86 Ibid., 59-61.

87 Ibid., 14.

88 See McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements, " 1221.

that autonomy in their social and political activities.[89] Along the same lines, the *intelligentsia* refers to intellectuals, critics, and writers, as a whole.

Terry Eagleton defines ideology as "a set of beliefs which coheres and inspires a specific group or class in the pursuit of political interests judged to be desirable."[90] In addition to Eagleton's definition, the term *ideology* is also used in line with Antonio Gramsci, referring to "the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc."[91] The term *class* refers both to status groups and social rankings among people in a society. The terms *leftist* and *socialist* are used interchangeably, referring to those employing a socialist, Marxist ideology. The terms *radical* and *extreme* refer to political ideas, individuals, or actions, especially of the far-right and far-left, that favored revolutionary changes at almost any cost and employed violent methods to achieve their goals, which they generally called "revolution."

The term *circle* refers to a loose circle of activists, around either a political publication or an association. The term *political party* refers to both legal and illegal political organizations with a tangible party organization and program, while the term *political group* refers to informal organizations of groups of people gathered around a loose political ideology.[92]

## § 1.4 A Short Literature Review: A Critique of Kurdish Nationalism and PKK Centrism

Most of the literature on the Kurds focuses on one aspect of modern Kurdish history and neglects the paradoxical situation of the Kurds, struggling to get their own polity and to be recognized within Turkey. Abdullah Öcalan stated as early as 1990 that "we reached out our own realities within the enlightenment process of Turkey. It is important to look at [the PKK] as a part of the

89 Jeremy Jennings and Tony Kemp-Welch, eds. *Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 10.

90 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 44.

91 Bottomore, *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought,* 251.

92 David Robertson, *The Routledge Dictionary of Politics,* 3rd ed., (USA and Canada, 2004): Jennings and Kemp-Welch, eds. *Intellectuals in Politics*.

enlightenment and freedom movement of Turkey."[93] The evolution of the Kurdish movement in Turkey demonstrates that the Kurds have a symbiotic relation with Turkey.[94] With regard to the Kurdish movement in the 1970s, the symbiotic relationship continued. This relationship is important for understanding not only the motivations of Kurdish activists in the 1970s, but also to get further insight into ordinary Kurdish people's neglect of all ideological political discussions.

The findings of this research suggest that the 1970s in general confirm this relationship, and this symbiotic relationship, which was, most likely, the main reason behind the demise of most activism. They also might answer some perplexing questions about some of those active groups in those years, how they almost suddenly disappeared from the political scene. Of course, countrywide events, such as the coup in 1980, influenced and accelerated their demise, however, regional and intra-group factors are also important for understanding this phenomenon. In this sense, this symbiotic relationship is the reason for the failure of the Kurdish movement in Turkey, with respect to the struggle to gain independence or even local autonomy.

Nationalism, despite its different variations, is a linear perception of national movements. Even though the movement part of nationalism may collapse, and the actors change entirely, the ideology part of nationalism - which is the assumption that people of the same nation and ethnicity have a distinct, embedded awareness and politicization of their identity - remains the same. However, an ethnoregional movement underlines the inception, development,

93 Unless otherwise stated, all translations, from Turkish or Kurdish, are mine, and done loosely to convey the meaning of the source. "Biz, Türkiye'nin aydınlanma süreci içinde kendi gerçeklerimize uzandık. Türkiye'nin aydınlanma ve özgürlük hareketinin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmesi büyük önem taşıyor." Doğu Perinçek, *Abdullah Öcalan ile Görüşme,* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 3.Baskı, 1990), 15.

94 For a few prominent works, see Mehrdad R. Izady. *A Concise Handbook: the Kurds,* (Washington, DC and London: Taylor& Francis, 1992); Gérard Chaliand, Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou and Michael Palli, eds., *A People Without A Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan*, (London: Zed, 1993); and David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996).

and arrival episodes of the narrative of a political movement – that is motivated or even driven by nationalism.

Martin Strohmeir *Crucial Images in the Presentation of a Kurdish National Identity: Heroes and patriots, traitors and foes,* draws attention to the distinction between ethnicity and national identity - in other words, the distinction between recognizing one's own distinct ethnicity and culture and defining their belonging and identity based on ethnicity. [95] By contrast, Ofra Bengio, who has written extensively on Kurds in Iraq, argues that Kurds have all the peculiarities of a nation as well as of those an "ethnie" the term of Anthony D. Smith, which is a different definition of what is regarded as a "nation" by many scholars. [96]

As Bozarslan states, nationalism is not detached from other ideologies, but is eclectic in its methodology and adopts different ideological discourses of a given time, be they Marxism, political Islam, and so on. [97] It is generally agreed that the collapse of the *millet* system, which was composed of religious differentiation and Muslims enjoying the privileges of the dominant religion and not in the modern sense of ethnic and national dominance, is when Kurdish case became forefront. This study does not immerse itself in discussions about the characteristics of Kurds, but rather provides what the actors of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement have had argued and discussed in this regard. However, this study agrees with Houston that Kurdish ethnicity "is a relational act, something made by-not given to-every Kurd." [98]

In early academic approaches to Kurdish society, pioneers such as Celadet Alî Bedirxan, using the pseudonym of Dr. Bletch, defined the Kurdish question as a "question of national liberation," a definition which was embraced

95 Martin Strohmeier, *Crucial Images in the Presentation of a Kurdish National Identity: heroes and patriots, traitors and foes* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003), 1.

96 Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012), 5.

97 Hamit Bozarslan, "Some Remarks on Kurdish Historiographical Discourse in Turkey (1919-1980)," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism,* ed. Abbas Vali (California: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 20.

98 Houston, *Kurdistan: Crafting of National Selves*, 6.

by subsequent Kurdish scholars such as İsmet Şerif Vanly in 1970.[99] Emerging as a reflection of early Kurdish rebellions during the single-party era, namely from 1925 to 1945, Kurdish political actors and their political activism was regarded as nationalism, aiming at founding a Kurdish nation-state, which is the reason that "re-emergence" literature on the Kurdish activism is vast. Following this approach, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement of the 1960s and 1970s was simply regarded either as a continuation or as a reemergence of Kurdish nationalism.

By contrast, this study formulates the Kurdish question as an "ethnoregional" question, based on the political history and praxis of the activists concerned, which were regarded simply as a question of economic backwardness and cultural rights in the 1960s and as a national question in the 1970s. This study distinguishes between the politicization of Kurdish ethnicity – in the sense that Smith describes as *ethnie* – and Kurdish nationalism as a political movement. Therefore, the politicization of Kurdish ethnicity is regarded as a "political resource,"[100] and not as Kurdish nationalism per se.

Many students consider the politicization of Kurdish culture, and its re-emergence in the public sphere – whether through publications or political organizations – as Kurdish nationalism, and therefore as the re-emergence of Kurdish nationalism. However, as Jeff Pratt rightly puts it in *Nation and Identity: The Anthropology of Political Movements,* this process of the politicization of culture is about demarcation between politicized cultures and other ones.[101] Perhaps that explains why so many scholars conceive the appearance of Kurdish poems or classic books, such as *Mem û Zîn*, a classical literary work by Ehmedê Xanî, or even works about the Kurdish language itself during the

99 Cle mence Scalbert-Yücel and Marie Le Ray, "Power, ideology, knowledge - deconstructing Kurdish Studies," *European Journal of Turkish Studies,* 5 (Online), (2006). http://www.ejts.org/document777.html. Also see Ismet Serif Vanly, *Survey of the National Question of Turkish Kurdistan* (Europe: Hevra, Organization of the Revolutionary Kurds of Turkey in Europe, 1971).

100 For theoretical discussions, see Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 138.

101 Pratt, *Class, Nation and Identity,* 12.

1960s as the politicization of Kurdish culture or the primordium stage of nation-building process in the early 1960s.

Regarding scholarship on Kurdish history, we can recall what Ibn Khaldun stated about the importance of different generations:

> They neglected the importance of change over the generations in their treatment of the (historical material), because they had no one who could interpret it for them.[102]

In addition to shortcomings of narrative and historical time in the existing literature, what is missing in most Kurdish studies is the issue of generations. In other words, as Alfred Schutz, who influenced anthropologist Geertz and whose typology is an important element of anthropology, introduced the concepts as "realm of contemporaries, predecessors, and successors,"[103] which is regarded almost as a single generation in most Kurdish studies. In doing so, this approach is understandable and follows the same line with the narrative, historical time and nationalist framework. Since different periods are regarded as a single period and different narratives in various historical times are categorized as Kurdish nationalism, the ideas of contemporaries – and not just anonymous contemporaneity – and generations is not even considered.

As is the case in Iran[104]and Iraq,[105] Kurdish nationalism is a modern phenomenon and not monolithic, adapting to different times with alternate demands and activisms. Moreover, unlike predecessors composed of "two distinct social strata, namely urban educated classes and tribal milieu,"[106] according to Martin van Bruinessen, the activists of Phase A and Phase B differed from each other, the latter being antagonist towards tribalism. In this

102 Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 7.

103 For the typology, see Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*.

104 See Farideh Koohi-Kamali, *The political development of the Kurds in Iran: pastoral nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Abbas Vali, *Kurds and the state in Iran: the Making of Kurdish Identity,* (London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2011).

105 See Mahir A. Aziz, *The Kurds of Iraq: Nationalism and Identity in Iraqi Kurdistan* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011); Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq*.

106 Martin van Bruinessen, "The Kurds between Iran and Iraq," *MERIP Middle East Report*, No. 141, Hidden Wars (Jul. - Aug., 1986), 16.

regard, it is argued in this research that for the three phases, there are three different generations, not only in terms of biological time but also in relation to their ideological and political experiences. They are, respectively, the '58'ers (Phase A or the moment of departure: 1959-1974), the 68'ers (Phase B or the moment of maneuver: 1974-1984), and finally the 78'ers (Phase C or the moment of arrival: 1984-1999). I shall elaborate on these groups in the following chapters.

With regard to socialist and Marxist movements in Turkey, Mete Tunçay's work on early socialist and Marxist parties is a seminal.[107] In addition, Kemal Karpat's article "The Turkish Left,"[108] George Harris', *The Origins of Communism in Turkey,*[109] and his later article, "The Left in Turkey"[110] together with Sabri Sayarı's article "The Terrorist Movement in Turkey: Social Composition and Generational Changes,"[111] also examine leftist movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Robert W. Olson's early article, "Al-Fatah in Turkey: Its Influence on the March 12 Coup," which will be discussed in the following chapters, presaged the prospects of the leftist movement in the 1970s.[112]

It is important to mention Çetin Yetkin's *Türkiye'de Soldaki Bölünmeler; 1960–1970* (Factionalism of left in Turkey: 1960-1970)[113] written in 1970, Jacob Landau's early work in 1974, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, [114] and Igor

107 Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar, I-II (1925–1936)* (Istanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1991, first published in 1967).

108 Karpat, H. Kemal, "The Turkish Left," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 1, (2) Left-Wing intellectuals between the wars (1966).

109 George S. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey* (Standford, California; Hoover Institution Publications, 1967).

110 George S. Harris, "The Left in Turkey." *Problems of Communism* 29, no. 4 (1980).

111 Both Harris and Sayarı deal with this issue within the framework of terrorism. For example, Sayarı uses the word terror-ist more than 157 times in an eleven-page article. See Sabri Sayarı, "The Terrorist Movement in Turkey: Social Composition and Generational Changes," *Conflict Quarterly: Journal of the Centre for Conflict Studies, University of New Brunswick* (1987).

112 Robert W. Olson, "Al-Fatah in Turkey: Its Influence on the March 12 Coup," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 9, No. 2 (May, 1973).

113 Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye'de Soldaki Bölünmeler; 1960–1970* (Ankara: Toplum Yayınları, 1970).

114 Jacob Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974).

Lipovsky's *The Socialist Movements in Turkey 1960–1980,*[115] which together provide rich discussions of the era. However, although the authors mention Kurds in socialist movements of the 1970s, they do not sufficiently examine how and to what extent Kurdish activists, took part. Finally, Murat Belge's book chapter from 1987, The Left," written under the pseudonym Ahmet Samim "tackles various issues regarding the discourse and strategy of the left and mainly of Turkish socialists, in Turkey.[116]

Moreover, two seminal encyclopedic works compiled by İletişim Yayınları, *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*[117] (Encyclopedia of socialism and social struggles) and *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*[118] (Political thoughts in modern Turkey), must be mentioned since both systematically examine the socialist and Marxist movements in Turkey and includes Kurdish activism, as well. Additionally, Özgür Mutlu Ulus' *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* gives insights into the relationship between leftist groups and the army in the 1960s.[119] Two issues of the quarterly magazine, *Toplum ve Bilim*[120] no. 78 from 1998, *Türkiye'de Solun Kaynakları* (Sources of the left in Turkey), and no. 125 from 2013, *1970'ler : Kapanmamış Parantez* (The 1970s: An unfinished struggle) contain outstanding analyses and discussions on the subject and period of this study. The book by Vehbi Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu*[121] (The left in Turkey in the 1970s), fills a gap in the scattered literature on the Turkish Left and particularly their organizational history. Finally, as one of the most useful outcomes of the spread of the Internet, the website *Sol Yayın* has been collecting

115 Igor Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movements in Turkey 1960–1980* (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1992).

116 Ahmet, "The Left."

117 Volumes 6 and 7 especially cover the 1960s and 1970s. See *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi Cilt 6–7.* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985).

118 In particular Volume 8, titled *Left,* covers a wide range of themes and issues. See Murat Gültekingil, ed., *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce cilt 8: Sol* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007).

119 Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2011).

120 Toplum ve Bilim 78, Güz 1998: *Türkiye'de Solun Kaynakları*, and Toplum ve Bilim 127, 2013: *1970'ler: Kapanmamış Parantez.*

121 Vehbi Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2013).

and publishing most periodicals and magazines published by socialist groups in Turkey.[122]

This study owes much to earlier works on Kurds. Research by İsmail Beşikçi, who is a pioneer in the field and the author of *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni*[123] among many other books: Martin van Bruinessen, the author of *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*[124] among many other important works: Hamit Bozarslan the author of *Violence in the Middle East: From political struggle to self-sacrifice*[125] among numerous articles and books: Abbas Vali, who has written about Kurdish nationalism in Iran and about theoretical issues in the field and among whose works is *Kurds and the State in Iran: The Making of Kurdish Identity*:[126] David McDowall, whose notable *A Modern History of the Kurds*[127] still receives interest: And Mesut Yeğen, the author of *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu* (The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse)[128] have contributed immensely to this study, although this study shares the disagreement about the way Kurdish activism is generally framed within Kurdish nationalism, as has been mentioned above.

Moreover, although these scholars have studied a wide range of issues concerning the history of Kurdish society, the period under question has not been studied enough in the existing literature. Except for *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*'s section on Kurds, *Sosyalizm ve Kürtler* (Socialism

122 See http://www.solyayin.com/, accessed September 2, 2016.

123 İsmail Beşikçi, *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni; Sosyo-ekonomik ve Etnik Temeller* (Ankara: Yurt, 1992) (first edition in 1969).

124 Bruinessen, Martin van, *Agha, Shaikh and State; the Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London; New Jersey: Zed Books, 1992).

125 Hamit Bozarslan, *Violence in the Middle East: from Political Struggle to Self-sacrifice* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2004).

126 Abbas Vali, *Kurds and the state in Iran*.

127 David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*..

128 Mesut Yeğen. *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006).

and the Kurds),[129] Bozarslan's two articles,[130] and Yeğen's *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce,*[131] in the same volume, the period of the 1970s and the socialist Kurdish movement have not been sufficiently studied, only occasionally mentioned in general terms. Rafet Ballı's *Kürt Dosyası* (the Kurdish file),[132] a journalistic work that includes interviews with most leaders of Kurdish political groups of the 1970s, is worth mentioning because it provides readers with an early narrative told by the movement's leaders. To fill the gap, as one of the few works exclusively studying the same period as this research, Harun Ercan's master thesis, *Dynamics of Mobilization and Radicalization of the Kurdish Movement in the 1970s in Turkey,* stands out for its interdisciplinary methodology and contents.[133] However, it lacks a multi-dimensional perspective and endeavors instead to find out why the Kurdish movement got radicalized.

129 STMA, Vol:7, especially 2111-2133.

130 Hamit Bozarslan, "Why the Armed Struggle?" Understanding the Violence in Kurdistan of Turkey", in *The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey,* ed. Ferhad Ibrahim and Gülistan Gürbey (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); "Kürd Milliyetçiliği ve Kürd Hareketi (1898–2000)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik,* ed. Tanıl Bora (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003).

131 Mesut Yeğen. "Türkiye Solu ve Kürt Sorunu," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce Cilt 8: Sol*, ed. Murat Gültekingil (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007).

132 Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası,* 3rd ed. (Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1992). As has been a quite commonly been the case, Turkish journalists have been interested in writing the "geneology" of leftist and Kurdish groups for several reasons. As early as 1979, *Aydınlık* newspaper –owned by Doğu Perinçek, who was the leading figure of Maoist *Aydınlık* group which organized under the names of TİİKP (*Türkiye İhtilalci İşçi Köylü Partisi* or Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey) and later TİKP (*Türkiye İşçi Köylü Partisi* or Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey, 1978) – published a series of articles by Nuri Çolakoğlu, titled "*Bilinmeyen Sol"* (Unknown Left). They revealed the names of the leaders and the organizational features of fourty-nine circles or groups of socialist activists, sometimes exposing activists' addresses. That caused a fury among socialist groups of the time. Rafet Ballı is currently writing for *Aydınlık* and *Ulusal Kanal,* headed by Doğu Perinçek, also interviewed Abdullah Öcalan. See Doğu Perinçek, *Abdullah Öcalan ile Görüşme.*

133 Harun Ercan, "Dynamics of Mobilization and Radicalization of the Kurdish Movement in the 1970s in Turkey" (Master thesis, Koç University, 2010).

Finally, recent compilation by Emir Ali Türkmen ve Abdurrahman Özmen, *Kürdistan Sosyalist Solu: 60'lardan 2000'lere Seçme Metinler*[134] (Kurdistan socialist left: Selected texts from the 1960s through the 2000s) includes two significant, previously published articles by Hamit Bozarslan and Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, as well as selected texts from leading figures of the main Kurdish groups. However, the book does not include any texts from one of the largest and most important group of the 1970s, the KİP/DDKD. Nor does the book mention any splinter groups of the time. Bozarslan's aforementioned article is the preface of the book, while Akkaya's article, "Kürt Hareketinin Örgütlenme Süreci Olarak 1970'ler"[135] (The 1970s as the process of organization for the Kurdish movement) is the concluding article of the book.

This study, along with earlier works by Bruinessen and Bozarslan, is another attempt to confute the exceptionalism of the PKK and PKK-centric readings of the 1960s and 1970s. In other words, it engages with other actors and discourses in a fair and equivalent manner. Even though there is no academic work on any of the groups in question, except the *DDKOs*[136]– e.g., none on the *DDKDs,* the *Komal-Rizgari/Ala-Rizgari,* the *TKSP/ÖY,* the *KİP/DDKD*[137]*,* the *Kava/Dengê Kawa/Red Kawa*,[138] the TKDP/KUK/KUK-SE,

134 Emir Ali Türkmen and Abdurrahman Özme, comp., *Kürdistan Sosyalist Solu: 60'lardan 2000'lere Seçme Metinler* (Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları, 2013).

135 Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, "Kürt hareketinin örgütlenme süreci olarak 1970'ler," *Toplum ve Bilim* Sayı: (Sayı: 127, 2013).

136 Azad Zana Gündoğan's early master Thesis focuses on the Eastern Meetings of 1967 and touches on the DDKOs as well, see Azat Zana Gündoğan, "The Kurdish Political Mobilization in the 1960s: The Case of "the Eastern Meetings"" (master thesis, the Middle East Technical University, 2005). Also, two other master theses have studied the DDKOs. See Selin Yeleser, "A Turning Point in the Formation of the Kurdish Left in Turkey: The Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths (1969 – 1971)" (master thesis, Boğaziçi University, , 2011); Gökhan Çal, "Kürt Siyasal Hareketinde Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Deneyimi (1969-1971)" (master thesis, Ankara University, 2014).

137 Şefiq Öncü's a biography of Vedat Aydın, touches on several issues and is important, since Oncu himself was an activists of the KİP/DDKD. See M. Şefiq Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın, (*A Cause, An Era, A Protogonist) (Istanbul: Avesta, 2013).

138 Cemil Gündoğan, who was also a Kava follower at the time, wrote an exceptional book on Kava. See Cemil Gündoğan, *Kawa Davası Savunması ve Kürtlerde Siyasi Savunma Geleneği,*

the *Halkın Kurtuluşu/Beş Parçacılar*, the *Kurtuluş/Tekoşin*, or the *TKEP/KKP/KKEP* – the corpus of research on the PKK is still growing.[139] Abdullah Öcalan is claimed to be the author of dozens of books, some of which have been translated into German, English, Italian, French, and Spanish. Besides, there are several books of interviews with Öcalan. In other words, the history of the PKK has already been widely written and discussed, by its creator as well as outsiders. As Recep Maraşlı, an activists from *Rizgari,* puts it:

> Regarding the contemporary history of (Kurdistan), there are numerous texts which relate this history almost exclusively with the PKK. One of the common points of these texts is that there is nothing before [the emergence of] the PKK. The claim of [its] "perpetualness" is contrary to both the Kurdish reality and the logic of history. [140]

(Istanbul: Vate Yayınevi, 2007), and a later book chapter where he discusses the influence of Turkish modernity and its education system on the discourse of Kurdish socialists in the 1970s. See Cemil Gündoğan, "Geleneğin Değersizleşmesi Kürt Hareketinin 1970'lerde Gelenekselle İlişkisi Üzerine, " in *Türkiye Siyasetinde Kürtler: Direniş, Hak Arayışı, Katılım,* eds. Büşra Ersanlı, Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Nesrin Uçarlar (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012).

139 Among others, see Ismet, G. Imset, *The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey (1973-1992)* (Ankara: Turkish Daily News Publications, 1992); Paul J. White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers? The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey* (London, New York: Zed Books, 2000); Ali Kemal Özcan, *Turkey's Kurds; A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006); Alice Marcus, *Blood and Belief, the PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Cengiz Güneş, "From Protest to Resistance and Beyond: The Contemporary Kurdish National Movement in Turkey" (PhD diss., University of Essex, 2010) which is also published as a book, *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey: From protest to resistance* (London: Routledge, 2012); Joost Jongerden and Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, "Born from the Left: The Making of the PKK," in *Nationalism and Politics in Turkey: Political Islam, Kemalism and the Kurdish Issue,* eds. Marlies Casier and Joost Jongerden (London: Routledge, 2011); Joost Jongerden, Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, *PKK Üzerine Yazılar (*Essays on the PKK), (Istanbul: Vate Yayınları, 2013).

140 "Yakın dönem Kürdistan tarihi söz konusu olduğunda bunun hemen hemen "PKK ile bağlantılı bir tarih" olarak ele alındığı birçok metin bulunuyor. Bu metinlerin ortak noktalarından biri de "PKK'nin öncesi" bulunmadığıdır. "Öncesizlik" iddiaları hem Kürdistan gerçekliğine, hem de tarihin mantığına aykırıdır." Recep Maraşlı, "Rizgarî'nin Sosyalist

As is well-known, the official historiography of Turkey and particularly that of the Turkish Republic, was long repeated within the framework of *Nutuk* (Speech), which not only started the national struggle of the new republic but the entire process of modernization of Turkey on 19 May 1919 when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk arrived in Samsun. However, studies on the so-called Young Turk Revolution of the Committee of Union and Progress, which brought about the Second Constitutional Era in 1908, not only broke the spell of Kemalist historiography but made it impossible to ignore the earlier reforms and policies that had provided the basis for the new republic. [141]

Along the same lines, Phase A and B of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement bear a resemblance to pre-Republic Turkey, in terms of importance and the way the two periods are treated in academic works. Likewise, the recently growing historiography of the Kurds in Turkey seems to stick to the PKK and its role, though touching on issues from a time in the 1970s when the PKK was just like any other groups. Of course, the PKK had "different" attributes, so did all other groups. The context of the 1970s cannot be explained without the PKK's place in that context and the legacy it inherited from its counterparts. Each of the studies mentioned below have their merits in terms of the subjects they cover, and this research owes much to them, especially regarding the PKK. However, this study takes them as secondary sources on the subject and period covered by this dissertation, which is critical towards them in terms of the lack of coverage of actors other than the PKK.

This study disagree regarding the "exceptionalism and exclusive weight" given to the PKK with respect to Phase A and B of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. To exemplify, although Bruinessen approached the rise of the PKK

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Hareket ve Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluş Mücadelesindeki Yeri Üzerine Bir Deneme –I," *Mesafe,* Issue:4 Spring 1 (2010), 68.

141 Erich Jan Zurcher and Feroz Ahmad are first to come to mind in challenging and changing the official historiography of Kemalism and its exceptionalist claims. See Erich Jan Zurcher *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984). Also, Zurcher's *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, Co Ltd Publishers, 1994) is a highly regarded text book. Furthermore, see Feroz Ahmad, ed., *From Empire to Republic; Essays on the late Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, vol.2,* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2008).

circumspectly in his early article, "Between Guerrilla War and Political Murder: The Workers' Party of Kurdistan,"[142] referring to PKK's early, relentless assaults on the other Kurdish groups, especially after the 1990s one can understand the impact of the PKK. Even İsmail Beşikçi, who praised the "scientific method," wrote highly problematic books, such as *PKK Üzerine Düşünceler: Özgürlüğün Bedeli (*Thoughts on the PKK: The cost of freedom),[143] and *Hayali Kürdistan'ın Dirilişi (*Resurrection of the imaginary Kurdistan)[144] when he was in prison in Bursa for writing on the Kurds in 1998. Beşikçi, in short, wrote that the PKK was unprecedented and unique. However, this does not vindicate a retrospective, decontextualized approach to the 1970s, from which Beşikçi himself had drifted away by the mid-2000s.

Finally, among many short-lived periodicals of Kurdish history, the quarterly magazine, *Bîr* (Memory) published critical issues on recent Kurdish history. Its issues dealing with the DDKOs (*Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları* or Revolutionary Cultural Hearts of the East, 1969) contain original articles by activists. Similarly, *Toplum ve Kuram* (Society and Theory) and the latest volume of *Kürt Tarihi* (Kurdish History) have produced valuable knowledge within the studies of Kurdish society.[145] Furthermore, websites and online forums are new channels where unsystematic knowledge is produced and disseminated by Kurdish activists.[146] *Kurdish Studies Network* and its email group

142 Martin van Bruinessen, "Between Guerrilla War and Political Murder: The Workers' Party of Kurdistan," *Middle East Report,* No. 153, Islam and the State (Jul. - Aug., 1988).

143 İsmail Beşikçi, *PKK Üzerine Düşünceler: Özgürlüğün Bedeli* (Istanbul: Melse Yayınları, 1992).

144 İsmail Beşikçi, *Hayali Kürdistan'ın Dirilişi,* (Istanbul: Aram yayınları, 1998), 39.

145 More information about *Bîr* is available on its webpage, http://www.kovarabir.com/. For *Toplum ve Kuram,* see http://zanenstitu.org/toplum-ve-kuram/, and for *Kürt Tarihi* visit their official webpage on http://www.kurttarihidergisi.org/, accessed September 2, 2016.

146 For example, http://www.dengekurdistan.nu/ (a website of the TKSP-ÖY containing the archive of Roja Welat) http://www.kurdinfo.com/ (a website of former DDKD/KİP activists): https://newroz.com/ (a website of former Kava activists): http://www.rizgari.com/ (a website of formerRizgari/Ala-Rizgari activists) and http://www.serxwebun.org/ (a website of the PKK containing the archive of Serxwebûn), accessed September 2, 2016.

serve as an important platform, where students and scholars of Kurdish studies interact and exchange information.[147]

As a still growing archive, the *arsivakurd* initiative is becoming a treasure that will help future researchers find and collect primary sources including publications by Kurdish activists.[148] Lastly, a list of documentaries has provided even more material on the subject and period of this study.[149]

147 See http://kurdishstudiesnetwork.net/, accessed September 2, 2016.

148 See http://arsivakurd.org/, accessed September 2, 2016.

149 Mehmet Ali Birand, *Abdullah Öcalan Röportajı,* (first time aired on Show Tv), 1992, available on YouTube: Ahmet Soner, *İsmail Beşikçi Belgeseli ( 36 Kitap = 13 Cezaevi),* DVD Documentary, 1997; Mustafa Ünlü, *12 Eylül Belgeseli*, DVD Documentary, 1998; Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, *Diroka Ji Agir (Ateşten Tarih)-PKK Belgeseli*, (first time aired on Roj Tv), 2005, available on youtube: Çayan Demirel, *5 No'lu Cezaevi,* DVD Documentary, 2009; Çayan Demirel, *Dr. Şivan,* DVD Documentary, 2013.

# 2

## From Class to Nation (1959-1974): Memories without History

This chapter first provides a short historical account of the political space in the Middle East, to better situate Kurdish history within the states they live. The chapter then deals with different Kurdish movements in the region – in Iraq, Iran and Syria. Then it focuses on Turkey, and especially its political history and policies regarding Kurds and Kurdish activism. The main emphasis of this chapter is a thorough examination of the political activism of the Kurds between 1959 and 1974, which is to say Phase A of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement and the socialist movement in Turkey, including its influence on nascent Kurdish activism. The chapter also offers insights into the evolution of the Kurdish perspective of their own situation from an economic to a cultural issue – a shift from class to nation in ideological discourse and providing a framework in which various actors interact and pave the way for the second phase of Kurdish activism in the 1970s.

## § 2.1 Power and Politics in the Middle East and Turkey

*The Kurdish tragedy was imposed largely by history and geography.*

Henry A. Kissinger[1]

As Walker Connor aptly observed, "state borders and ethnic borders seldom coincide."[2] This is especially true in the case of the Middle East.[3] Connor also points out that ethnic groups with a border with state borders "are likely agents of political instability."[4] Of course, the political systems of states play a crucial role in shaping the future of such instabilities.[5] However, as Brass argues, the political instability created by ethnic demands are viewed as a "zero-sum games" in most cases and eventually lead to oppressive denial or political and administrative concessions, both of which can be observed in the Kurdish case.[6]

1 Henry A. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 577.

2 Walker Connor, "The Ethnopolitical Challenge and Governmental Response," in *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe,* ed. Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, Inc. 1980), 147.

3 I use the term Middle East as a geographical indicator to include modern nation-states, such as Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebonan to clarify the political space of the Kurds where they have long lived. As Simon Bromley, Peter Mansfield, and Fred Halliday separetely underline the problematic usage of the term Middle East, replacing the term with "Near East," which refers an artifical region, of course. For the discussion about the term and the history of the Middle East, see Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East,* Second Edition, *Revised and updated by Nicolas Pelham* (London: Penguin Books, 2003); Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations;* Simon Bromley, "The States-system in the Middle East: Origins, Development, and Prospects," in *A Companion to the History of the Middle East,* ed. Youssef M. Choueiri (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

4 Walker Connor, "The Ethnopolitical Challenge and Governmental Response," 173.

5 Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk; A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts,* with contributions by Barbara Harff, Monty G. Marshall, James R. Scarritt (Washington D.C. : United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 135.

6 Paul R. Brass, "Ethnic Groups and Nationalities," in *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe,* ed. Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, Inc. 1980), 49.

In addition, Tedd R. Gurr points out that limiting access of minority and non-dominant national groups to political power and sharing political power was preferred by Middle Eastern states to accommodating demands. Therefore, the region was and still is on the front of political and social grievances caused by a high levels of discrimination.[7] Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich concordantly suggest that the Middle East is better explained by "models of society and politics whose point of departure is conflict rather than integration. "[8]

Bruinessen remarks that the Kurdish question and Palestinian issue are the two major national problems in the contemporary Middle East, both of which principal to the way the Middle East was divided and created during and after World War I. In *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World,* Margaret MacMillan demonstrates the important historical events that really changed the world in the early twentieth century:

> Some of the most intractable problems of the modern world have roots in decisions made right after the end of the Great War. Among them one could list the four Balkan wars between 1991 and 1999; the crisis over Iraq; the continuing quest of the Kurds for self-determination; disputes between Greece and Turkey; and the endless struggle between Arabs and Jews over land that each thought had been promised them.[9]

Regarding the two major issues Bruinessen highlights – the Palestinian and Kurdish issues – the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided the Ottoman-dominated Middle East between Britain and France and was created by and named after British and French representatives Sir Mark Sykes and Georges Picot in 1916, is the first and most important agreement. In addition, the dialogue between French and British Prime Ministers, Georges Clemenceau and

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7 Gurr, *Minorities at Risk;* 67-74. In the preface, Gurr mentions that Kurds are one of the most visible groups fighting to take their place in "the world order."

8 Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich, "The Study of Ethnic Politics in the Middle East," in *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, eds. Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

9 Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House: 2001), .ix.

David Lloyd George during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, illuminates how artificial the process by which the modern Middle East came into existence.

> "Well,' said Clemenceau, "what are we to discuss? "
> Lloyd George replied, "Mesopotamia and Palestine. "
> Clemenceau: "Tell me what you want. "
> Lloyd George: "I want Mosul. "
> Clemenceau: "You shall have it. Anything else? "
> Lloyd George: "Yes I want Jerusalem too. "
> Clemenceau: "You shall have it but Pichon will make difficulties about Mosul. "[10]

Undoubtedly, the legacy of how the modern Middle East was created affected all actors – both nation states and the Kurds. Henry Kissinger's quote at the beginning is therefore true – history and geography are to blame for the large part of the Kurdish issue, not only in Turkey but also the rest of the region. As Shafiq Tawfiq Qazzaz writes in his doctoral dissertation, the Kurdish issue always overlaps and clashes with nation states striving for the integration of their citizens, impinging upon and being affected by Kurdish activism at the same time.[11] The developments of these early years constituted the main argument of Kurdish groups later in the 1970s. When they read and wrote Kurdish history and explained the perennial Kurdish issue, they always return to the region's founding years, which also led to the creation of modern Turkey.

As Roger Owen notes, the twentieth century is characterized by "the process of state creation, in the twin sense of creating both new sovereign entities and new centers of power and control."[12] According to Antony Giddens, this process was heavily based on internal pacification of opposition to what he

10 Stephen Pichon was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Clemenceau's cabinet. See Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World,* 381-382.

11 Qazzaz, Shafiq Tawfiq, *Nationalism and Cultural Pluralism: the Kurdish Case* (PhD diss., The American University, 1971), 4.

12 Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East,* 3rd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.

calls the absolutist state.[13] This internal pacification, of course, did removed neither all opposition nor all discontent with the way modern nation states were built. For example, in his book on Algeria and Egypt, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World,* Mohammed M. Hafez concludes that, "Muslims rebel because they encounter an ill-fated combination of political and institutional exclusion, on the one hand, and reactive and indiscriminative repression on the other."[14] In the same way, Bozarslan suggests that violence in the Middle East is relational and closely linked to the political structures on which states exercise their powers. [15]

After the demise of the Ottoman Empire came the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, followed by that of Iraq in 1923, Egypt in 1936, Syria in 1943, Lebanon and Jordan in 1946, and finally Israel in 1948.[16] Joel Migdal, in his prominent book on state-society relations in the third world, distinguishes between strong and weak states. Strong states are capable of "*penetrating* society, *regulating* social relations, *extracting* resources, and *appropriating* or using resources in determined ways," to achieve modernization, while weak states, as is evident from the name, lack the capacity to impose and achieve policies and actions.[17]

The nation states in the region, both strong and weak, were the main social engineers[18] that determined political and social developments within their own borders as well as across the region. Turkey and Iran, two nation states where Kurds constitute the second largest ethnic group, seem to fit the "strong state" category given that these states successfully brought most bureaucratic and civil powers in Turkey and Iran – although it is debatable whether the

13 Antony Giddens, *The Nation-state and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), 189.

14 Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel,* 199-200.

15 Hamit Bozarslan, *Violence in the Middle East,* 8.

16 See Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*.

17 Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 4-5.

18 See Iliya F. Harik, "The Ethnic Revolution and Political Integration in the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Jul., 1972).

states really penetrated society.[19] As Halliday argues, not only states but also the social movements that challenged the states in the region sought control over this process of domination.[20] Additionally, Esman and Rabinovich observed that "the tactics of struggle by ethnic communities in the Middle East are no different from those employed outside the region by similar groups seeking to impress their demands on the public agendas and to promote and protect their group interests."[21]

The impact of modernization and different economic developments affected both the way Kurds received state led reforms and the way they expressed their dissidence towards the state-building nationalisms in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.[22] As Albert Hourani emphasizes, nationalism, because it came to the region from outside, i.e. from Europe, was a vague phenomenon with ambivalent meanings in the region.[23] In addition, nationalism, especially national unity, was believed to be the reason behind the success of the European powers and was regarded as an instrument for integrating old social and religious convictions into "secular-social, political, and economic systems"[24] – in other words into modern nation states. Similarly, Peter Mansfield argues that nationalism and socialism were the impetus behind political developments as well as conflicts in the Middle East. However, one needs to include Islamism to better differentiate between the Arabism of the time and the small nationalisms of each nation state. Especially after the revolution in Iran in

19 For a comparative study on Turkey and Iran, see Touraj Atabaki and Eric J. Zürcher, eds., *Men of Order: Authoritatian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004).

20 Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations,* 133.

21 Milton J. Esman, "Ethnic Politics: How Qnique is the Middle East?," in *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East,* eds. Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 280.

22 Farideh Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran: Pastoral Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), xi.

23 Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 186.

24 Richard J. Estes, "Social Development Trends in the Middle East, 1970-1997: The Search for Modernity," Social *Indicators Research,* Vol. 50, No. 1 (Apr., 2000), 75.

1979, Islam became a battlefield for ideological dominance between Iran and Iraq.[25] Just like Arabism,[26] Kurdish aspirations would be influenced by socialism and especially by the Soviet-backed version. Likewise, Barry Rubin asserts that pan-Arabism, which envisioned a single polity of all Arab peoples affected the Middle East as much Marxism did Europe.[27]

In his seminal book on the history of the twentieth century, Eric J. Hobsbawn calls the period from 1914 until 1991 the "Age of Extremes," subdividing it into "the Age of Catastrophe" from 1914 to the end of World War II, 'the Golden Age' from the aftermath of the war until the early 1970s, and finally from the mid-1970s until the collapse of the USSR, "the Landslide."[28] While the Cold War (1945-1991) – or the Golden Age in Hobsbawn's terminology – brought stability to the European continent,[29] it became a global issue after the Korean War (1950 -1953) and the Cuban and Angolan conflicts,[30] after which the two super powers – the United States and the Soviet Union (or perhaps three with China) – competed for ideological supremacy. The Middle East probably was the most affected region in this regard. Even Fred Halliday argues that the Cold War began in the Middle East,[31] while Rashid Khalidi recently stated that the United States seems to operate in the Middle East as if the Cold War still exists.[32]

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25 Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, 401.

26 See Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1991), 401.

27 Barry Rubin, "Pan-Arab Nationalism: The Ideological Dream as Compelling Force," *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol. 26, No. 3/4, The Impact of Western Nationalisms: Essays Dedicated to Walter Z. Laqueur on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday. (Sep., 1991), 535.

28 Hobsbawm, Eric J., *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), 6.

29 Mark Mazower, *The Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Penguin, 2008), 249.

30 Robert Mcmahon, *The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 135.

31 See Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations,* 101.

32 Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: the Cold War and American dominance in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009), xv.

The power vacuum after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and later the retreat of former colonial powers, especially France and Britain, was filled by new alliances between newly created nation states in the Middle East, such as Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Libya.[33] Although their influence in the region was not significant prior to the Second World War, the role and impact of the United States and Soviet Union, each representing one pole of a so-called "bipolar" world was an underlying factor that shaped the politics of the region for at least three decades. Furthermore, in addition to internal pacification, the newly established nation states in the region had to take international and regional rivalries seriously. They benefited from inter-state regional hostilities as well as from the bipolar Cold War world through "a complex system of pacts,"[34] such as friendship agreements. One unsuccessful example, the CENTO (Central Treaty Organization), which was envisioned to be a regional NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) among the regions' states under the tutelage of the United States.

Earlier yet, Mustafa Kemal of Turkey, Reza Shah of Iran, Ibn Saud of Arabia, and Imam Yahya of Yemen, were all supported by the Soviets and envisaged to turn into Soviet allies, eventually becoming part of the so called socialist revolution. Yet none of these figures fulfilled Soviet expectations in that regard; rather, as soon as they consolidated their power, they avoided becoming part of the Soviet Union's "close allies." Some even allied themselves with the United States instead.[35] Up until the late 1970s, the Soviet Union maintained its major allies in the region – such as Egypt, Iraq and Syria – by backing them with military and economic aid. For the United States, Turkey and Iran were critical allies, both ideologically and geopolitically.[36]

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33 Beverley Milton-Edwards and Peter Hinchcliffe, *Conflicts in the Middle East since 1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.

34 Lise Storm, "Ethnonational Minorities in the Middle EastBerbers, Kurds, and Palestinians," in *A Companion to the History of the Middle East,* ed. Youssef M. Choueiri (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 481.

35 Erica Schoenberger and Stephanie Reich, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," *MERIP Reports*, No. 39 (Jul., 1975), 26.

36 Ibid., 15.

As will be touched at times since it involves the Kurds and purpose of this chapter, Turkey had many similarities and parallels with developments taking place in other states in the Middle East. Just like other nation states of the Middle East, which struggled with several coups and "revolutions"[37] during the period examined, the Turkish army intervened in the "democratic process" three times, through the first military coup of the Turkish Republic on May 27, 1960, the memorandum of March 12, 1971, and the September 12, 1980 coup d'état. These military interventions profoundly influenced Kurdish political space and discourse. The Iraqi army took over and overthrew the monarchy in 1958, and less than two year later the Democrat Party (DP) and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes would be overthrown by the coup of May 27, 1960 in Turkey.[38] Both the Turkish experience and other Middle Eastern cases verify Gurr's argument that violent attempts to take over power were more common than national elections.[39]

International developments need to be considered when it comes to Kurdish political movements in the region. For example, the Republic of Mahabad, which lasted less than a year under the leadership of Qazi Mohammed and General Mulla Mustafa Barzani, was declared in December 1945, while Iran was occupied by the Soviet Union. Of course, it later collapsed as the result of many factors but particularly the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Iran in accordance with the Yalta Agreement, which eventually cut international support and backing for the republic.[40] Subsequently, another opportunity came as a result of the power vacuum created during the Iranian revolution, in which Kurds took part fighting against Ruhollah Khomeini who would become the Supreme Leader of the new Iran for four years. The movement was crushed and had to give up its armed activities, at least within the urban areas.[41] But before it was suppressed, the KDPI (Kurdistan Democratic Party of

37 Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, *Conflicts in the Middle East since 1945,* 4.

38 William Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq* (London, SAQI & London Middle East Institute at SOAS, 2007), 22.

39 Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 3.

40 Vali, *Kurds and the state in Iran*, 35.

41 Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran,* 202.

Iran) had de facto autonomy in the Kurdish region, and as Bruinessen maintains, it effectively functioned as a government until 1983.[42]

According to Nikki R. Keddie, the Kurds, led by KDPI's Abdulrahman Ghassemlou[43] and Izzedin Huseyni, were excluded from participating in the new regime.[44] They were attacked because they were regarded "anti-regime," and as was the case with other oppositional groups and obstacles on the road to consolidating power, they were labeled enemies of the revolution.[45] Echoing the manifesto of the KDP in Iraq, "Democracy for Iraq, Autonomy for Kurdistan,"[46] the KDPI formulated its principal demand as "Democracy for Iran, Autonomy for Kurdistan."[47] Qassemlou, an intellectual and academic who was one of the most important Kurdish leaders in the 1970s, who took over the KDPI in 1973 and was assassinated by Iran in 1989, made it clear in an interview that the demands and solution for Kurds in Iran were "framed within the context of the Iranian state." No Kurdish force wanted to secede from Iran.[48] This is crucial when showing how Kurds in Iran and Iraq came to terms with the state borders of the 1970s, as well. As will be seen, the younger generation of Kurds in Turkey, although in practice showed the same symbiotic relationship with Turkey, in theory were the fiercest opponents of the established order in the region.

When the Hashemite monarchy was overthrown in 1958, Mustafa Barzani was able return to Iraq as Abdul Karim Qasim, the leader of the military coup

42 Bruinessen, "The Kurds between Iran and Iraq," 22.

43 See for example, Ghassemlou's article on the Kurds in Iran, Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, "Kurdistan in Iran," in *A People without a Country: The Kurds,* eds. Gérard Chaliand, Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou and Michael Pallis (London: Zed, 1993).

44 See Charles G. MacDonald, "The Kurdish Question in the 1980s," in *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, eds. Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

45 Nikki R. Keddie with a section by Yann Richard, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven &London Yale University Press, 2003), 247.

46 *Middle East Institute,* "Program and Administrative Regulations of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (1960)," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Autumn, 1961), 445.

47 See Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran*, 176.

48 Abdul-Rahman Qassemlu and Fred Halliday, "KDP's Qassemlu: 'The Clergy Have Confiscated the Revolution,'" *MERIP Reports,* No. 98, *Iran Two Years After* (Jul. - Aug., 1981), 17.

invited him to come back, after twelve years of exile in the Soviet Union. The Kurdish Revolt which was to follow, led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani first from 1961 to 1970[49] and then from 1974 to 1975 probably influenced Kurds and the modern states they inhabited, Iran, Turkey, and Syria more than any other regional development at the time, even though it took place in relatively small area where Kurds lived.[50] It led to the creation of the TKDP by Kurds in Turkey in 1965, as well as to ephemeral revolts in Iran in 1967 and 1968 which were led by Ismael Sharifzadeh, Sulaiman, and Abdullah Moeini, who inspired a later generation of Kurdish students to form Komalah, a Marxist (or Maoist, to be more precise) political organization.[51] By the same token, the Algiers Agreement between Iran and Iraq, announced on 15 March 1975 during an OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) summit in Algiers, resulted in destruction of the Kurdish armed revolt against Bagdad. It was another regional as well as international issue that changed the direction of the Kurdish movement. To this can be added the foundation of the splinter YNK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), led by Jalal Talabani, in the second half of the 1970s. Talabani was the leading figure in the YNK and became the President of Iraq in 2005.

As reported in *Middle East Research and Information Project* in 1974,[52] the agreement of 11 March in 1970 between Mulla Mustafa Barzani and Saddam Hussein, then Vice-President of Iraq, laid the framework for the autonomy of the Kurdish area of Iraq in which Kurdish would be the official language. The autonomous region would have its own regional parliament after a census to determine the extent of the Kurdish areas would include after four years. Due to disagreements over the disputed, oil-rich city of Kirkuk, and owing as much to direct political and material bolstering by the United States through the Shah of Iran (as the subsequent Pike Report revealed) the autonomy

49 For a detailed account, see Edgar O'Ballance, *The Kurdish Revolt, 1961-1970,* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1973).

50 For a historical account, see Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*.

51 Nozar Alaolmolki, "The New Iranian Left," *Middle East Journal,* 41:2 (1987: Spring), 231.

52 Middle East Research and Information Project, "Iraq and Kurdish Autonomy," *MERIP Reports*, No. 27 (Apr., 1974), 26

agreement of 1970 ended the negotiations between Barzani and Bagdad. The direct support by the United States came after Iraq reached an agreement with the Soviet Union in 1972, which was a challenge to the interests of the United States in the region.[53]

Named after Otis Pike, the congressman who prepared the report, the Pike Report revealed that under the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), supported the Kurdish rebellion from 1972 to 1975, at a cost of sixteen million dollars and at the initiation of the Shah of Iran and Israel. Predictably, support was abruptly cut, when the Algiers Agreement was concluded.[54] This, led to the collapse of the rebellion, and as the report states, more than 200,000 Kurds had to flee Iraq. [55] As the National Security Adviser and an important figure in United States foreign policy in the 1970s, Henry Kissinger also commented on the matter. He stated in his memoirs that the overall material assistance for the Kurds – through Israel, Britain, and Iran – was around one million dollars a month, which in his point of view, was "a negligible involvement" by Cold War standards. [56]

According to Mesud Barzani, Mustafa Barzani's son, both the United States and the Soviet Union supported the Algiers Agreement – the former as the protector of Iran and the latter as the protector of Iraq. It appeared that the impact of the Kurdish rebellion was too far-reaching and was challenging regional stability. By 1974, Iran was present on the battlefield.[57] Therefore, before and after the agreement was reached, the United States simply aimed to

53 Interestingly, Francish Fukuyama mentioned this issue as early as 1980. See Francis Fukuyama, *The Soviet Union and Iraq since 1968,* (Rand Corporation, July 1980). Accessed September 2, 2016, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/notes/2007/N1524.pdf: Also, Ayşegül Sever, "Power Led Outside Intervention in Kurdish Politics in Iraq and Turkey in the Early 1970s," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 49:2, 263-279, DOI: 10.1080/00263206.2012.759100, published online.

54 See Chris Kutschera, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketi,* trans. Fikret Başkaya (Istanbul: Avesta, 2001), 379.

55 *CIA: The Pike Report: With an Introduction by Philip Agee*, (Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1977).

56 Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 576.

57 Mesud Barzani, *Barzani ve Kürt Ulusal Özgürlük Hareketi II,* trans. Vahdettin İnce (Istanbul: Doz Yayınları, 2005), 340.

undermine Soviet influence.[58] Not only the superpowers, as Bruinessen notes, but both Iran under the Shah and Iraq under the Ba'ath party benefited from Kurdish resistance in the other state. Therefore, while Iran supported the Kurdish party in Iraq, namely the KDP, Iraq was assisting the KDPI and Komalah.[59]

In the meantime, the Ba'ath party came to power in Syria, as well, and then became part of the short-lived United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria, established in 1958, abolished in 1961, and led by Jamal Abdel Nasser, then President of Egypt, a charismatic leader and advocate of pan-Arabism. Most surviving members of Khoybun, formed in the late 1920s, and who organized the Ağrı or the Mt. Ararat rebellion of 1929 and 1930[60] such as Celadet Bedirxan, found shelter in Syria under the French mandate. After the rebellion was crushed by the Turkish government, as Jordi Tejel puts it in his book on the Kurds of Syria, the "sword was abandoned for the pen."[61] After this, mostly cultural and publication activities took place. The Kurdish Democratic Party of Syria (KDPS) was established in 1957 under the auspices of KDP in Iraq and was dominated by the propaganda of the KDP. Later, according to Radwan Ziadeh, active Kurdish parties fragmented into several groups, "divided over issues such as whether to work for Kurdish autonomy or work within the Communist Party and reject any Kurdish affiliation."[62]

Interestingly, the rise and fall of Kurdish opposition in Iraq and Iran, particularly in the form of armed resistance, were closely related to two factors, first, the political vacuum and the crisis of the old regime, and second, the interstate rivalry, both regionally and internationally. Therefore, Kurds in

58 For a review of the United States foreign policy regarding the Kurds, see Michael M. Gunter, "The Five Stages of American Foreign Policy towards the Kurds," *Insight Turkey* Vol. 13 / No. 2 / 2011.

59 See Bruinessen, "The Kurds between Iran and Iraq," 14.

60 C. J. Edmonds, "Kurdish Nationalism," *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 91.

61 Tejel, *Syria's Kurds*, 21.

62 Radwan Ziadeh, "The Kurds in Syria: Fueling Separatist Movements in the Region?" *United States Institute of Peace,* Special Report 220, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, April 2009), 5.

Syria and Turkey, by comparison to the former two groups, did not experience these in the 1960s and 1970s, although the assimilation and social engineering of Turkey and Syria was no less than that of other states. As William Hale argues unlike Iran, Turkey and Iraq worked together in joint opposition to Kurdish movements on the regional level.[63] As all these developments were happening in the region, the KDPs of Turkey and Syria were told to be "nice" to their central states – "do not provoke" them. The KDP and Mustafa Barzani were also seeking to strike a balance in the power games being played in the region and to make as many alliances as possible. As will be examined in more detail, the killings of the two Saits, or the *İki Sait Olayı,* and the situation of Kurds in Turkey need to be understood in the context and political framework developed above.

Finally, the fact was that the Kurds in Iran and Iraq had long before accepted existing state borders and positioned their demands accordingly, famously described by Jalal Talabani: *A Kurdish state is the dream of some Kurdish patriots and poets... realistic Kurdish politicians know that this (Kurdish state) is a dream.*[64] Nevertheless, Kurdish activists in Turkey did not call for "Democracy for Turkey, Autonomy for Kurdistan, " in line with the KDP in Iraq and Iran. After the mid-1970s, activists called one other a "collaborator of imperialism or "traitor" if disagreed with the idea of a "united, independent, democratic, socialist Kurdistan," even on paper. And since it was only on paper anyway, of course, most among the younger generation of activists had no idea what was going on in the region. Necmettin Büyükkaya, one of the founders of T'deKDP and KİP, who was among the most important activists of the time, wrote a letter regarding his visit to Tehran in 1979:

> Developments in Iran are not likely to happen again, and they were vital for us. However, there was not a single revolutionary present, neither Turkish nor Kurdish. Even newspapers began to cover and visit Iran after the Shah and Shapour Bakhtiar left the country. Indeed, I

63 Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq*, 26.

64 http://www.kurdishaspect.com/doc0207AA.html, February 7, 2007, accessed September 2, 2016.

> find very odd the lack of concern among Turkey's revolutionaries regarding such events that concern us so much.[65]

The following sections on Kurdish activism in the context of Turkey must be considered with reference to what has been discussed above.

## § 2.2 The Kurds in Turkey: A Symbiotic Relation with the State

As is known, the HDP (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi* or Peoples' Democratic Party), founded in 2012, mainly by members of the preceding Kurdish BDP (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*, or the Peace and Democracy Party) openly calls for *Türkiyelileşme*. Literally, this means to become part of Turkey, but the term mostly refers non-structural solutions to the Kurdish question such as subsidiarity and disarming PKK. This stance has been criticized by many. However, this policy was postulated before by Kurdish activists in different times, particularly in the 1960s. Historically, Kurdish demands present a sequential pattern in relation to their politics. In the evolution of Kurdish activists and their political orientations, the apparent pattern is that, starting from the early twentieth century, Kurdish activists sought a future with their Turkish counterparts. As this "togetherness" was not achieved in a way that took Kurdish demands into account, Kurdish ethnicity was the main source of conflict and the government's policies plays as the main propellant of it. Kurdish activists increased the stakes to include five countries, as was the case in the late 1970s. So, the departure point is Kurdish willingness to form a future and an administration with their counterparts. When that has not worked, the second point is the increasing departure from the initial demands. This has already been observed a few times.

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65 "İran'da yaşananlar tekrar görülmesi mümkün olmayan ve bizim için hayati olan pratik olaylardı. Oysa Türkiye'den Kürt olsun Türk olsun tek devrimciye rastlanmıyordu. Hatta gazeteciler bile ancak Şah ve Şahpur Bahtıyar gittikten sonra İran'la ilgilenmeye ve İran'a gelmeye başlamışlardı. Doğrusu çok yadırgıyorum Türkiyeli devrimcilerin bu kadar bizi ilgilendiren böylesi olaylar karşısındaki vurdumduymazlıklarını." Xorto, *O Bir Dağ Çiçeğiydi* (Spanga: Apec-Tryck, 1990), 66.

Initially, the publication of the first Kurdish newspaper, *Kurdistan (*1898-1902),[66] as well as the successive activism of Kurds during the Second Constitutional Era (1908-1918) clearly showed this pattern. For the Young Kurds,[67] there was a two-fold policy: On one hand elevation, *teali,* of Kurdish ethnicity and culture with emphasis on Kurdish language, together with a degree of political and administrative freedom (which was rarely verbalized as "autonomy") and on the other hand, a common future with the Turkish people and administration. The founding members of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP)[68] of Kurdish origin, such as Dr. Abdullah Cevdet and other adherents, who later overthrew Abdulhamid II, were as much Muslim and Ottomanist as the Turks and Arabs.[69]

Ottomanism, as an ideology based on the *millet* system, was inclusive in the respect that it embraced the *millets (*subjects of the empire, with a religious connotation) of the empire. Muhammad Amin Zaki, one of the most praised Kurdish historians states in the opening chapter of his influential *A Brief History of the Kurds and Kurdistan* that "the concept of Ottoman society had to some extent weakened the feeling of national solidarity amongst all of us."[70] Thus, according to Zaki, the demise of Ottomanism and the subsequent rise of Turkish nationalism set the stage for the emergence of modern Kurdish history writing.[71] However, with the gradual severance from Ottomanism by the Young Turks and the increasing exclusion of other ethnicities from the public domain – which one might call Turkification – Kurdish activists who were still

66 Mehmet Emin Bozarslan's transliteration can be referred to see the overall pro Ottomanist policy of Kurdish activists. See Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, trans., *Kurdistan: Rojnama Kurdi ya Pesin (Ilk Kurd Gazetesi,)1898-1902* (Uppsala: Deng, 1991).

67 This term coined by Djene Rhys Bajalan. See Djene Rhys Bajalan, "Kurds for the Empire: "The Young Kurds" (1898-1914)" (Master thesis, Istanbul Bilgi University, 2009).

68 For a general overview of the CUP, see Şükrü Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1995).

69 Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London and New york: Routledge, 1993), 31.

70 Quoted in Abbas Vali, "Genealogies of the Kurds: Constructions of Nation and National Identity in Kurdish Historical Writing," in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Abbas Vali (California: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 77.

71 Ibid., 78.

confused with Ottomanism even after the First World War, and did not demand independence,[72] later aligned with Mustafa Kemal and the War of Independence, in the name of Islam. Once the consolidation of power was achieved, the Kurdish demands were left out, and Kurdish activism moved into the second stage, which consisted of resistance to exclusionary policies and armed struggle.

Fred Halliday assertively argues that "the 1908 Young Turk revolution was arguably the greatest turning point in the modern history of the Middle East."[73] The Young Turk Movement promised equality for all subjects of the empire and, indeed, by 1908 had received support from non-Turkish nations, as well. However, as it brought about different end – with the economic and social exclusion of other *millets* as well as other ethnic groups, such as the Kurds – it led to increasing opposition and Arab nationalism in Syria.[74] This period was interrupted by the beginning of World War I and the Kemalist movement, which emerged from among the cadre of CUP. A younger generation of soldiers, such as Mustafa Kemal Paşa (Atatürk) and İsmet Paşa (İnönü) continued the policies after 1908 and took them a step further. With victory over the Greeks, and elimination of most of the leading CUP members and Paşas, Mustafa Kemal and the new Turkish Republic could be designed as a secular, nationalist nation-state.

During the time period from 1918 to 1922, Turkish leaders proclaimed their loyalty to Mehmet VI Vahideddin, who ruled from mid-1918 until the abolition of the sultanate in 1922. Ankara was very willing to show that it was in the same line with Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, when opening the *First Assembly* (23 April 1920).[75] Yet, the *Law on Fundamental Organization* ( Teşkilat-ı Esasiye Kanunu, 20 January 1921), which for the first time, gave unconditional sovereignty to the nation and is considered the first constitution of the Turkish Republic, can also be seen as the beginning of the establishment of the modern

72 See Şükrü Mehmet Sekban, *Kürt Sorunu* (Istanbul: Kamer, 1998).

73 Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations, 7.*

74 See Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

75 Mete Tuncay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması 1923-1931* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi, 2005), 70.

Turkish Republic. Although never implemented, the *Treaty of Sevres* (August 1920) was seen as the final nail in the coffin by Turkish soldiers and bureaucrats of the time. With the victory over the Greeks and successful diplomacy, Turkey emerged as a sovereign state that was legally recognized with the signing of the *Treaty of Lausanne* on 24 July 1923. Bolstered by the military and diplomatic victory, the principle of *national sovereignty* was the most effective weapon against rival forces such as the caliphate, which was later abolished in 1924.[76]

The term national, as became evident later, meant *Turkish*. Nevertheless, as Franck Tachau points out both terms lacked clear definitions.[77] But, as later formulated more clearly, "unity in ideals" constituted the basis of the new Turkish identity. According to Soner Çagaptay, it was an amalgamation that led to unity in language and citizenship.[78]

Founders of the republic such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü did their best to convince Kurdish leaders and notables and have their backing in a fight against a "common enemy," presented at the time as foreign forces like Britain, France, and Greece that were occupying different parts of the Ottoman state. For example, Atatürk's letter to Nihat Paşa who oversaw the Kurdish region Elcezire, delivered in a closed session of the parliament in 1922, stated the following:

> We find it necessary, from the viewpoint of both our domestic and foreign policy, to gradually establish a local administration in the regions where the Kurds live…[T]he right of nations to self-determination is a principle that has gained recognition worldwide. We have recognized this principle too…[A]s it was guessed, the influential Kurdish figures, their leaders, and those who implemented the organizations of local administrations up to now in the name of this purpose need to be won over so that when express their opinion they shall declare that they

76 Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, with an Introduction by Feroz Ahmad, (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 445.

77 Frank Tachau, "The Search for National Identity among the Turks,"*Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Vol. 8, Issue 3 (1963), 166.

78 Soner Cagaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey; Who is a Turk* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 95.

> already have a destiny and aspire to live under The Grand National Assembly of Turkey….[T]he accepted general outline is to make the hostility of the Kurds towards the French in Kurdistan and especially towards the British along the borders of Iraq irrevocable by armed struggle, to hinder an agreement between the Kurds and foreigners, to explain the reasons behind the gradual establishment of the local administrations, and thereby to get them to bond with us at heart and to strengthen their loyalty to us by appointing Kurdish leaders to administrative and military positions.[79]

Through a cunningly crafted strategy by Atatürk, in which local administration was not explained, the Kurds were won over against the British and the League of Nations – which were promoting the Fourteen Points of president Woodrow Wilson. Finally, most Kurdish notables were integrated into the government in high-ranking posts. However, these promises and the two-sided policy of the founders of the republic were not embraced by all Kurds and as such that it was opposed in seventeen rebellions.

Although a military source stated that there were seventeen Kurdish uprisings during the single-party era, most has neither a national outlook nor

79 "Kürtlerle meskûn menatıkta ise hem siyaseti dahiliyemiz ve hem de siyaseti hariciyemiz noktai nazarından tedricen mahalli bir idare ihdasını iltizam etmekteyiz.... milletlerin kendi mukadderatlarını bizzat idare etmeleri hakkı bütün dünyada kabul olunmuş bir prensiptir. Biz de bu prensibi kabul etmişizdir. Tahmin olunduğuna göre Kürtlerin bu zamana kadar idarei mahalliyeye ait teşkilatlarını ikmâl etmiş ve rüesa ve müteneffizanı bu gaye namına bizim tarafımızdan kazanılmış olması ve reylerini izhar ettikleri zaman kendi mukadderatlarına zaten sahip olduklarını türkiye büyük millet meclisi idaresinde yaşamaya talib olduklarını ilân etmelidir... Kürdistanda Kürtlerin fransızlar ve tahsisen ırak hududunda ingilizlere karşı husumetini müsellâh müsademe ile gayri kabili tadil bir dereceye vardırmak ve ecnebilerle kürtlerin itilâfına mani olmak, tedricen mahalli idareler tesisi esbabını ihzar etmek ve bu suretle kalben bize merburiyetlerini temin etmek, kürt rüesasının, mülki ve askeri makamatla tavzif ederek, bize merburiyetlerini tarsin etmek gibi hututu umumiye kabul olunmuştur." in "Merkez Kumandanı Nihat Paşa hakkında Adliye Encümeni mazbatası," in *TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, devre 1, cilt 3, içtima senesi III, 22. 07.1338 (1922),* pp.550-574. Available online at: https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/GZC/do1/CILT03/gcz01003078.pdf, accessed September 2, 2016.

national influence as did the Sheik Said rebellion of 1925, the Ağrı rebellion of 1927-1930, and the Dersim rebellion of 1937-1939.[80] The three main organizations founded after the demise of the ideology of Ottomanism, the *Kurdistan Teali Cemiyeti* (Association for the Advancement of Kurdistan, 1918), *Azadi* (Independence, founded in 1921), and *Khoybun* (Being Oneself, founded in 1927) were comprised mainly of former Kurdish military officers and intellectuals They could not defeat the Ankara government.[81]

In addition, as will be examined later, the younger generation of Kurds fiercely attacked during the founding years of the republic. Sait Kırmızıtoprak, also known as Dr. Şivan, who founded T'deKDP in 1970 and whose legacy lasted after his death in 1972 was already writing about the shift of the founders of the Turkish Republic who simply did the opposite of what they had initially promised the Kurds. As such, he quoted İsmet İnönü saying, "Turkey consists of two nations – Turks and Kurds – who jointly have the right to govern this country."[82] By the same token, as will be discussed in the following chapters, the first issue of *Rizgari* (Liberation) exclusively discussed that issue and stated that seventy-two Kurdish members of parliament had notified the League of Nations that the Kurds would not break from the Turks.[83]

As Mesut Yeğen points out, the denial of the existence of the Kurds within Turkey lasted up until the end of the 1980s.[84] Moreover, three revolutionary laws (*İnkilap Kanunları*) that accompanied the proclamation of the republic – namely the abolition of the caliphate, the replacement of the Ministry of Religious Law Foundation with the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the

80 Em. Kurmay Albay Resat Halli, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Ayaklanmalar 1924-1938* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Harp Dairesi Yayinlari, 1972), quoted in Mete Tuncay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması 1923-1931*, 134.

81 See Naci Kutlay, *Ittihat Terakkive Kürtler* (Ankara: Beybun, 1992).

82 See Sait Kırmızıtoprak's book, originally written in 1970 and later published by Komal. Dr. Şivan, *Kürt Millet Hareketleri ve Irakta Kürdistan İhtilali* (Stockholm: Apec Yayınları, 1997).

83 This issue was thoroughly explained in the first issue of *Rizgari.* Although the author's name is not included, the editorial article seems to be written by İsmail Beşikçi. See, *Rizgari*, Issue:1, March, 1975.

84 Yeğen, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse," 568.

unification of education – led to the bitter resentment among Kurdish leaders.[85] As Bruinessen noted, there was no reason for Kurdish activists, to keep their alliance with the Turkish government.[86] The Sheik Sait Rebellion, which Mete Tunçay[87] and Robert Olson[88] suggest was characteristically both religious and national, was, of course, neither the first nor the last rebellion again the new Ankara government. However, its suppression in 1925 further invigorated the Ankara government in the exercise of its concurrent state and nation-building, which was imagined to provide a new history, language, and identity.[89] As Martin Strohmeir states, the Kurds' perception of their own identity, which was heavily influenced by all these policies of assimilation and centralization[90] and the Turkish Republic's denial of their very existence, was a source of conflict during the single-part era (1925 to 1945)[91] when the Kurdish region was mostly administered and governed by special methods[92] and laws, such as the Resettlement Laws.[93]

However, the state's approach to Kurdish identity in Turkey has been complex, as well. The new government allied with local notables and gentry, so

85 See Hamit Bozarslan, "Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey," 171.

86 Bruinessan, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 281; also, Zurcher, *Turkey:A Modern History,* 178.

87 Tuncay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması*, 136.

88 Robert W. Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989); Also see Robert W. Olson, "The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism, " *Die Welt des Islams, New Series,* Vol. 40, Issue 1 (Mar., 2000).

89 Kemal Kirisci and Gareth M.Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey; An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (London: Franck Cass, 1997), 12.

90 Martin Strohmeir, *Crucial Images in the Presentation of a Kurdish National Identity: Heroes and Patriots, Traitors and Foes* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003), 3.

91 Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey,* 97.

92 Namely, Inspectorate Generals, but as Çagaptay states "in practice, however, the Inspectorates were created only in regions that were considered strategic or turbulent areas by Ankara, or had witnessed Kurdish uprisings." See Cagaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey,* 47.

93 See *2510 Sayılı Iskan Kanunu,* quoted in Celadet Ali Bedirxan, *Bir Kürt Aydınından Mustafa Kemal'e Mektup* (Istanbul. Doz Yayıncılık, 1992), 81.

long as they accepted the terms offered by the state. In addition, the state did not confront the "existence" of Kurdish society as such, preferring to ignore or ban its articulation in the public sphere. At the same time, the state continued to provide the same opportunities to all citizens provided they regard themselves Turkish. As was the case with regard to Kurds in other nation-states such as Iran,[94] Kurdish society remained uninfluenced by most of Ankara's nationalist reforms. In fact, the Republican Peoples' Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi,* CHP), which ruled the country for more than two decades, neither organized nor opened local branches in the eight provinces where Kurds constituted the majority.[95] Consequently, as Beşikçi wrote in 1969, that the state never penetrated Kurdish society fully.[96] Indeed, Kurdish regions in Turkey and also in other nation-states underwent less modernization and industrialization compared to the rest of their respective states.[97]

After the suppression of the Sheik Sait Rebellion in 1925, Turkey was ruled by the CHP until 1950, when a splinter group, which called for reforms in a document known as *Dörtlü Takrir (*Statement of the Four) was formed in 1946: Namely the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti*, or DP).[98] It then won the elections in 1950 and was the governing party until 1960.[99] The DP brought about substantial changes in Turkey although it maintained the state's ideology denying the Kurds. Importantly, DP elites were conscious of the potential of rural areas which constituted 70 percent of population. They politicized the

94 See Vali, *Kurds and the state in Iran,* 6.

95 Donald Everett Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk; Social Process in the Turkish Reformation* (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939), 177.

96 Beşikçi, *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni,* 241.

97 Nader Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 7.

98 See John M. Vanderlippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy* (Albany, State University of New York Pres 2005); Kemal Karpat, *Turkey's Politics; the Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959).

99 This transition is also regarded as return to the multi-party system. See M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Turkey's "return" to multi-party politics: a social interpretation," *East European Quarterly*, (March 22, 2006).

peasantry,[100] employing a populist language[101] that led to unprecedented economic changes after the harsh years of Second World War. [102] Şerif Mardin differentiates between the DP and the CHP, arguing that instead of a radical alteration of the peasants' place in the political system, the CHP and the Kemalists were preoccupied with building the nation and its symbols. Hence, they failed to connect with the rural masses.[103] Finally, as Frederic Frey underlines, the old elite of Turkish politics was being replaced by a new local oriented, generation of elites.[104]

Using Ilan Peleg's term, for Kurds the new Turkish republic was overall a *hegemonic state* that was, and still is, promoting a single ethnopolitical framework, which aims at creating "an acceptable, unchallenged social reality."[105] This framework is offered to the Kurds as well. It has already been opposed by seventeen rebellions, and by the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, this ethnopolitical framework or so-called social reality was challenged in all its aspects by new-comers to the political space, which can be called the 1958'ers. Although it is argued that the period of the DP was a great time for freedom,[106] particularly after the 27 May 1960 coup, the social reality proposed by the state – known as red lines of other ideologies[107] deemed harmful to the existence of

100 Çağlar Keyder, "The Political Economy of Turkish Democracy," in *Turkey in Transition; New Perspectives*, eds. Irvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 39.

101 See İlkay Sunar, "Demokrat Parti ve Populizm," in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi Cilt 8* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985).

102 Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London and New York: Verso, 1987), 153.

103 For a classic discussion, see Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" in *Political Participation in Turkey; Historical Background and Present Problems*, eds. Engin D. Akarlı with Gabriel Ben-Dor (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1975).

104 Frey, W. Frederick, *The Turkish Political Elite* (Cambridge: Massachusetts: The M.I.T Press, 1965), 197.

105 Ilan Peleg, *Democratizing the Hegemonic State: Political Transformation in the Age of Identity,* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

106 See, for example, Keyder, "The Political Economy of Turkish Democracy," 52.

107 Taha Parla, "Kemalizm, Türk Aydınlanması mı?," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce, Cilt:2 Kemalizm,* ed. Ahmet İnsel (Istanbul: İletişim, 4.Baskı, 2004), 313.

the state, such as communism, Islamism, and of course, Kurdish nationalism – were not open to argument. Now, let me continue with the historical background of socialist activism in Turkey before focusing specifically on the Kurds.

## § 2.3 The Socialist and Neo-Kemalist Movements of the 1960s

In the context of the 1960s and 1970s, the Turkish right[108] consisted mainly of anti-communist, nationalist, and conservative protectors of state order represented by a wide range of political and associated groups such as the Democrat Party and its successor, the Justice Party[109] (Adalet Partisi or AP, established by Ragıp Gümüşpala in 1961, but closely associated with Süleyman Demirel, who became the leader of the party in 1964), at the center: The ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party[110] (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi or MHP, established in 1969, after its predecessor the CKMP ( Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi or Republican Peasantry Nation Party, under the leadership of Alparslan Türkeş), changed its name, and the Islamist Conservative National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi, or MNP, established in 1969 by Necmettin Erbakan, who would later found the MSP (Milli Selamet Partisi or the National Salvation Party in 1973). [111] On the other side of the political spectrum, lacking a socio-economic differentiation in terms of activists,[112] the Turkish left, which sometimes included Kurds who affiliated with Turkish socialist groups, included progressive, relatively secular, anti-American revolutionary groups,

108 For a contextual analysis of Turkish right, see İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu, Güven Gürkan Öztan, comp., *Türk Sağı: Mitler, Fetişler, Düşman İmgeleri* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012).

109 For an analysis of the AP, see Tanel Demirel, *Adalet Partisi; Ideoloji ve Politika* (Istanbul: İletisim, 2004).

110 For an early analysis of the MHP, see Jacob M. Landau, "The Nationalist Action Party in Turkey," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Oct., 1982).

111 Tanıl Bora, "Türk Sağı: Siyasi Düşünce Tarihi Açısından Bir Çerçeve Denemesi," in *Türk Sağı: Mitler, Fetişler ve Düşman İmgeleri*, comp. İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu, Güven Gürkan Öztan(Istanbul: İletişim, 2012).

112 See Ali Carkoglu, "the Nature of Left-Right Ideological Self-placement in the Turkish Context," *Turkish Studies*, 8:2 (2007).

encompassing neo-Kemalists – such as the CHP – as well as socialist, Marxist, and Maoist groups under the Dev-Genç. [113]

After the Turkish military took over for the first time, a pattern to be repeated on March 12, 1971, and September 12, 1980, the new constitution extended individual rights[114] under the law as well as the right to organize, but it was also criticized for institutionalizing the role and political leverage of the military.[115] As a departure point, there is no doubt that the constitution of 1961 provided a positive basis for political activism in the 1960s; the number of associations increased dramatically[116] and unionization among workers and civil servants, especially teachers, increased by a factor of four with more than one million unionized workers by 1971.[117] However, as mentioned, the new era shaped by the constitution took the red lines of the republic for granted. Laws prohibiting communism and communist propaganda,[118] as well as laws that changed Kurdish names, banned any nationalist demands except for those of Turkish nation, and prohibited political parties from engaging in any minority or non-Turkish national activities or demands.[119]

Socialist ideology, functioning as an "indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure,"[120] can be traced to late Ottoman Era. The first socialist party to organize which focused on primarily workers with a non-Muslim background, was the Osmanlı Sosyalist Fırkası (Ottoman Socialist Party), established in 1910. Regarded as disruptive, socialism was banned throughout the single-party era and after. Nevertheless, the Kemalist regime of Turkey converted some former socialists into their ranks,

113 See Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey,* 141.

114 See for example, Article 12 regarding equality before law in *Constitution of Turkish Republic,* trans. Sadık Balkan, Ahmet E. Uysal and Kemal H. Karpat, (Ankara, 1961) www.anayasa.gen.tr/1961constitution-text.pdf, last accessed on September 2, 2016.

115 Parla, *Türkiye'de Anayasalar* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007), 142.

116 Ahmet N. Yücekök, *Türkiye'de Örgütlenmiş Dinin Sosyo-Ekonomik Tabanı (1946-1968)* (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1971), 132.

117 Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, 48-9.

118 Article 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code were the most draconic in this regard.

119 See Resmi Gazete, No: 12050, 16.*7.1965, Siyasi Partiler Kanunu,* No.648 approved on 3. 7,1965.

120 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction,* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), 2-3.

as was the case with the famous Kadro (or cadre) journal and the circle of Şevket Süreyya Aydemir and others who later became followers and ardent defenders of Kemalism in Turkey.[121]

When the country introduced the multiparty system in 1945, there was once again no room for socialist and communist ideologies. Although five political parties were established with the word socialist or worker in their names,[122] such as the Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi (Socialist Workers Party of Turkey) and the Türkiye Sosyalist Emekçi ve Köylü Partisi (Socialist Proletarian Peasants' Party of Turkey), were established, they were closed soon after.[123] Furthermore, the DP was even more antagonistic towards socialist ideology than the CHP.[124]

Despite the Kemalist regime's early hostility towards communism and Atatürk's approach to communism – saying that "communism is not an ideal, but a means for the Turks. The ideal of the Turks is the unity of the Turkish nation"[125] – the beginning of the 1960s provided a platform on which pro-development Kemalist ideas merged with socialist and Marxist theories of revolution. And it became a psychological refuge to a variety of groups experiencing new social and economic problems in the 1960s.[126]. Therefore, the first part of the 1960s epitomized the neo-Kemalist ideology in content, as it coalesced into one mainstream ideology of "devrimcilik," or revolutionism. Hence, it is possible to argue that the founding pillars of socialist ideology in the 1960s, called Türk Sosyalizmi (Turkish Socialism)[127] were that of Kemalism. This is understandable since both older and younger generations of

121 Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey*, 129.

122 See https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kutuphane/siyasi_partiler.html, accessed September 2, 2016.

123 Cem Eroğul, "The Establishment of Multiparty Rule: 1945-71," in *Turkey in Transition; New Perspectives*, eds. Irvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 109.

124 Samim, "The Left," 151.

125 Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey,* 129.

126 Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2002), 255-256.

127 For a good example, see Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, "Türk Sosyalizminin ilkeleri (Sosyalist Kültür Derneğine sunulan özel muhtıra)" *Yön*, no.56, (9 January 1963).

Turkish socialists were a product of Kemalist ideology and education,[128] and the Turkish Communist Party, as Belge points out, was influenced by Kemalist thought on modernization as well as its eclectic ideological spectrum.[129]

Sabiha Sertel, embracing the social democracy of the 1960s, argued that Turkish socialism was fed by Kemalism in terms of its nationalistic and so-called anti-imperialist discourse, socialism by its scientific approach, developmentalism by its solution to solving economic backwardness swiftly, and lastly social democracy by its populist paternalist approach to the people.[130] In the same vein, Mehmet Ali Aybar,[131] who became the leader of the TİP (Türkiye İşçi Partisi or the Turkish Labor Party) in 1962, defined Turkish socialism as an ideology of independence, populism, and nationalism, composed of intelligentsia, workers, and other revolutionary forces.[132]

Not only legally founded political parties, such as the TİP, but also the CHP had its own definition of Turkish socialism, expressed in "Ortanın Solu" (Center of the Left) which led the party, under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit, to join the Socialist International by the late 1970s. This – the neo-Kemalism of Turkish socialism, or as Landau defined it, "the moderate left"[133] – is one side of the story: The other gave birth to an estrangement from and disenchantment with Kemalism and particularly "the moderate left." The latter was comprised mostly of the students of the Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu (Federations of Idea Clubs) and Dev-Genç, (Revolutionary Youth) who later fell into disarray and founded various illegal political parties.

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128 Leyla Neyzi, "Object Or Subject? The Paradox of "Youth" in Turkey," *Int. J. Middle East Stud.* 33 (2001), 419.

129 Samim, "The Left," 150.

130 Sabiha Sertel, *Türkiye'de İlerici Akımlar* (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1969), 217-218.

131 For a biographical study, see Barış Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar ve Dönemi*. (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002).

132 Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm; Seçmeler 1945-1967* (Istanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1968), 494.

133 Jacob M. Landau, "Images of the Turkish Left" *Problems of Communism* 32, no. 5 (September-October 1983), 72.

I first discern the first basis on which socialist ideas spread: In other words the neo-Kemalist channel. *Yön* magazine (published between 1961-1967),[134] with a circulation of around seven thousand, was the most important platform for various individuals to express their opinions and formulate solutions to Turkey's economic and social problems. The "non-capitalist path" or the third way to development and modernization was developed and adopted by *Yön* as well as other socialist groups, such as the TİP. Jacobean in essence, the military was regarded as a progressive element of revolution that was envisioned to follow a transitional period under the shared leadership of progressive groups.[135] Doğan Avcıoğlu, the editor of the magazine and one of the most influential writers of the 1960s, formulated *milli devrimci kalkınma yolu* or the path for national revolutionary development, based on radical land reform and nationalization of various sectors. In many ways he reinterpreted the Dependency Theory of the 1950s, which argued that the "only way of avoiding dependency is creating an alternative system of production, a non-capitalist system of production,"[136] and also mirrored the ideology of the Ba'ath Party in Syria and Iraq that was used by the TİP in its program.[137]

Organizationally, the Socialist Culture Association (Sosyalist Kültür Derneği, SKD), which opened branches, in Ankara, Istanbul and Diyarbakır, can be seen as one of the first influential channels of Turkish socialism. The founding declaration of the SKD, in which Kemalism and the military coup of May 27, 1960 were praised for their efforts to abolish the exploitation of the

134 See Hikmet Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı: YÖN Hareketi* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986).

135 Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism,* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 24.

136 See also Harriet Friedmann and Jack Wayne. "Dependency Theory: A Critique," *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 2, no. 4 (Autumn, 1997).

137 Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni; Dün-Bugün-Yarın* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi,1968), 485. Avcıoğlu, differently than İdris Küçükömer, proposed a vernacular solution to the issues of being undeveloped or underdeveloped. For a comparision of their views, see Muhammed Fazıl Baş, "Power or the People: A Comparison of the Thoughts of Dogan Avcioglu and Idris Küçükömer Regarding the Intellectual Climate of the 1960s" (Master thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2008).

people,[138] was signed by hundreds of intellectuals close to *Yön* magazine. The SKD is important in regard to Kurds because a Kurdish group that would later be called *Doğulus,* or Easterners, and consisted of people such as Tarık Ziya Ekinci and Naci Kutlay, were active here before joining the TİP.

The literature on the Türkiye İşçi Partisi, or TİP, is growing.[139] The TİP was officially founded on 13 February 1961 by trade unionists who would later establish one of the most effective leftist organizations, the DİSK (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* or the Confederation of Revolutionary Labor Unions) in 1967. The TİP declared its foundation with the following statement: "The party was founded to protect the rights of the oppressed working class. Until now, workers have been lost in the cadres of various parties: However, now a party which represents the working class itself is being established."[140] When the party did not gain momentum, Mehmet Ali Aybar, a former socialist in the 1940s, was elected as party leader in May 1962. The moment changed the direction of the TİP substantially.

Not only did the TİP bring together other socialist groups that lacked political organization or had been banned from founding political parties, such as the Turkish Communist Party, the SKD, *Yön,* and individual Marxists like Behice Boran, Mihri Belli, and so on, the TİP gained a widespread organizational capacity by 1965, with branches in more than 40 cities and around 35,000 dues-paying members.[141] The party received around three percent of

138 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt: 6* (Istanbul: İletişim yayınları,1988), 471-472.

139 See, for example, Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tarihi*, 3 volume (Istanbul: BDS Yayıncılık,1988); Behice Boran, *İki Açıdan Türkiye İşçi Partisi Davası* (Istanbul: Bilim Yayınları, 1975); Sadun Aren, *TİP Olayı 1961–1971* (Istanbul: Cem Yayınevı, 1993); Tarık Ziya Ekinci, *Sol Siyaset Sorunları: Türkiye İşçi Partisi ve Kürt Aydınlanması* (Istanbul: Cem yayınevi, 2004); Artun Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa: Türkiye İşçi Partisi (1961–1971).* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2002).

140 "*Ezilen işçi sınıfının haklarını korumak için kurulduğunu, şimdiye kadar işçilerin, çeşitli partilerin kadroları içinde eriyip gittiğini, ama artık işçi sınıfını temsil eden bir parti bulunduğunu*" Vatan 14 February 1961. Quoted in Uğur Mumcu, *Aybar ile Söyleşi; Sosyalizm ve Bağımsızlık* (Ankara: Tekin Yayınevi, 1990), 27.

141 Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa*, 236.

the votes and won fifteen seats in parliament in 1965. This was a decisive moment and perhaps the paramount reason behind the interparty conflicts and splits it faced afterwards. During the second congress of the party in 1966, the party was divided into the Pro-Socialist Revolution (Sosyalist Devrim, SD), which became the official policy of the party,[142] and the Pro-National Democratic Revolution (Milli Demokratik Devrim, MDD), which shared the general goals proposed by the *Kadro* circle and *Yön*.[143] While Mehmet Ali Aybar, Sadun Aren, Behice Boran, and other influential members formed a camp against the pro-MDD camp led by Mihri Belli[144] and students, the pro-SD camp itself was divided, under the pretext of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. [145] Leading members of the party, such as Behice Boran and Sadun Aren, whose group was named for their publication, *Emek Grubu*, harshly criticized pro-Aybar group Boran herself later agreed that it was not about condemning the Soviet policy,[146] she later took over the party after the elections in 1969 when Aybar resigned from his post.

Until its closure in 1971, the TİP transformed itself from a minor political party into an umbrella organization for various groups – was a kind of federation of clubs [147] which, although it assertively claimed to be the party of workers, was generally controlled intellectuals and students.[148] As Mihri Belli stated, the majority of socialists and Marxists of the time tacitly supported Aybar and the TİP, and therefore it was organizing the party's branches.[149] However, each group within the party struggled for power within the party. By the

142 Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movements in Turkey,* 104-109.

143 As a matter of fact, *Kadro*'s influence is discernible in its definition of revolution, that would reemerge with alterations and become the *Milli Demokratik Devrim* (National Democratic Revolution) Just as Kadro did, MDD also had two stage path to revolution. See Mustafa Türkeş, "The Ideology of the *Kadro* [Cadre] Movement: A Patriotic Leftist Movement in Turkey," in *Turkey Before and After Atatürk*, ed. Sylvia Kedouir (London: Frank Cass, 1999).

144 See Mihri Belli, *Milli Demokratik Devrim* (Ankara: Şark Matbaası, 1970).

145 Mumcu, *Aybar ile Söyleşi; Sosyalizm ve Bağımsızlık,* 56.

146 Uğur Mumcu, *Bir Uzun Yürüyüş* (Ankara: Tekin Yayınevi, 1990), 63.

147 Naci Kutlay, *Anılarım,* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1998), 135.

148 Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movements in Turkey,* 117.

149 Yetkin, *Türkiye'de Soldaki Bölünmeler,* 232.

late 1960s, the organization had reached an irreversible point whereby student members of the FKF, which functioned as the party's youth organization changed its name to Dev-Genç, and moved forward to "non-parliamentary opposition." Consequently, as will be examined in the next chapter, the TİP gave birth to at least five separate political parties and experienced several other factional splits, with little influence.

Along the same lines, the TÖS, (Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası or the Teachers' Union of Turkey), which was established in 1965,[150] which later turned into the TÖB (Türkiye Öğretmenler Birliği or the Teachers' Association of Turkey) in 1971, and finally became the TÖB-DER, (Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği or All Teachers' Unity and Solidarity Association) in 1973, had around 650 branches across Turkey with around 200,000 registered members.[151] As will be discussed in the following chapters, the TÖB-DER and other teachers' organizations were an essential part of Kurdish activism.

Although trade unions were legal in 1952, the expanded rights to strike and organize only came in 1963. Together with Türk-İş, a conservative nationalist confederation, the DİSK influenced more than one million unionized workers. The foundation of the DİSK in 1967 as an umbrella organization of leftist workers' unions served as another channel through which the ideas of Turkish socialism were spread. The activism of the workers best expressed itself in the famous e *15-16 June* demonstrations whereby approximately 70,000 workers demonstrated in Istanbul and Kocaeli. This was a historical moment that dropped beneath the TİP's and students' radar.[152]

The parallel development of increasing student activism across the world – the 68 movement – naturally had repercussions at university campuses in Turkey. The socialist and leftist student activism of the late 1960s, manifested itself in everyday protests, occupations of universities, and so on. Naturally,

150 See the memoirs of TÖB-DER's chairman from 1975 to 1980, Gültekin Gazioğlu, *Roman Gibi Anılar* (Ankara:Eğitim-Sen Yayınları, 2010).

151 Yıldırım Koç, *100 Soruda Türkiye İşçi Sınıfı ve Sendikacılık Hareketi* (Istanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1988), 71.

152 Aren, *TİP Olayı, 1961–1971*,113.

there was student activism before the 1960s. It had positioned itself as protector of Kemalism against reactionary and conservative Islam. However, this activism evolved from regarding oneself as "protector of the Kemalist revolution," associated with the CHP and a wider spectrum revolving around the TİP, at least until 1968.[153] For example, the TİP's popularity among boarding students of Ankara and Istanbul was around 47 percent in 1965. [154] The Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu (Federations of Idea Clubs, or FKF) was established in 1965 to bring together smaller students' clubs and associations. As mentioned earlier, the FKF was closely related to the TİP up until 1968, then it moved closer to the MDD ideology which proposed a quicker, more radical solution to the problems.[155] It was first by a group around the journal *Türk Solu* (Turkish Left), published by Mihri Belli, and then by a group around *Aydınlık*, which was under the control of Mihri Belli and Mahir Çayan.[156]

In late 1969, the FKK changed its title to Dev-Genç (a shortened version of Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Dernekleri Federasyonu, or the Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey). This change was not merely about a name, but a fundamental change in the way students organized. As we will see, *Dev-Genç* is the originator for several influential organizations and parties established by students who were also members of the TİP. Four clandestine political parties were established by the members of Dev-Genç. In chronological order, student leaders Hüseyin İnan, Deniz Gezmiş, and their friends established the THKO (Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu or People's Liberation Army of Turkey) in 1970, around the same time as Mahir Çayan and his friends established the THKP-C, (Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Parti-Cephesi or the People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey), [157] Doğu Perinçek and his friends established the

153 Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movements in Turkey,* 118.

154 Yiğit Akın, "Türkiye Sol Hareketinin Önemli Polemikleri," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyaset, Cilt:8 Sol*, ed. Murat Gültekingil (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008), 90.

155 See Suavi Aydın, "Milli Demoratik Devrim'den 'Ulusal Sol'a Türk solunda özgücü eğilim," *Toplum ve Bilim 78: Türkiye'de Solun Kaynakları* (Güz 1998).

156 For a biographical work, see Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Mahir; On'ların Öyküsü,* 11th ed. (Istanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2007).

157 For an informative introduction, See Ömer Laçiner,"THKP-C: Bir mecranın başlangıcı," *Toplum ve Bilim 78: Türkiye'de Solun Kaynakları* (Güz 1998).

TİİKP, (Türkiye İhtilalci İşçi Köylü Partisi or the Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey) in 1971, and, finally, İbrahim Kaypakkaya and his friends established the TKP/ML (Türkiye Komünist Partisi/Marksist-Leninist, or the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist–Leninist) and its armed wing TİKKO, (Türkiye İşci ve Köylü Kurtuluş Ordusu or the Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey) in 1972.[158]

## § 2.4 The Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement and Three Generations of Kurdish Activists

Following the conceptual typology proposed by Hroch and Chattarjee, the subject researched is divided into three periods with three founding events and respective years of transition. As already mentioned, the arrest of forty-nine Kurds in 1959 is considered in this dissertation as the initial founding event, and therefore as the beginning of the three periods of Kurdish activism in Turkey. The period from 1959 to 1974 is called Phase A, or the moment of departure. The general amnesty of 1974, which allowed many fugitives as well as incarcerated activists to return to the political sphere, is regarded as the founding event of Phase B, or the moment of maneuver. Systematic organized armed attacks by the PKK in 1984, after almost four years of preparation and debates by other groups, is considered the end of this phase and the beginning of Phase C, or the moment of arrival. But this phase is not in the scope of this dissertation.

The conceptual framework and periodization presented here are not widely accepted in the field, however. Most attempts at the periodization of Kurdish history and activism lack founding events[159] and coherent

158 Ersan, .9. Regarding the impact of the activism of these parties, see Olson, "Al-Fatah in Turkey."

159 For example, M. Hakan Yavuz examines the long history of the Kurdish activism in five stages. He regards the entire period between 1962 and 1983 as the third state of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. See M. Hakan Yavuz "Five stages of the construction of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 7: No.3, (Autumn 2001). In addition, Hamit Bozarslan identifies five periods in his research on Kurdish historiography. According to

interrelations of developments, activists, and activism. Many tend to use the periodization of modern Turkish history. Similarly, the categorization of Kurdish generations employed provides a framework for a political understanding of each of the periods used here. This dissertation distinguishes among three generations, namely the '58'ers, the '68'ers and '78'ers. Each generation is distinguished by their age, education, and political worldview, although, as we will see, there are also intra-generational divergences in terms of distinctive attributes.

As Karl Mannheim asserted, every moment of time is temporal with many dimensions and is therefore experienced by more than one generation at the same time.[160] This can be taken further by including *generational units,* which Mannheim used to demonstrate inter-generational differences. There are strong ties within each generational unit, which share a particular story of the time they experience. First, the '58'ers were, on average, in the mid-20s around 1958, thus born in the late 1930s and 1940s, and coming from high social classes and better educational and professional backgrounds. The '68'ers are those who were in their mid-20s around 1968, educated but insecure professionally who might be called intellectuals, as well. Finally, the '78'ers are comprised of those, who were in their mid-20s around 1978, with relatively little education and economic backgrounds.

As will be examined in depth in Chapter 4, there are characteristic patterns of activism in each generation. A conceptualization by Mark S. Granovetter explains how closely the individuals knew each other in the process of becoming part of a political movement.[161] Whereas the '58'ers shared a network of

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Bozarslan they are as follows, "i. The interregnum period of 1919-1923, ii. The period of establishment and enforcement of Kemalist rule in Turkey, from 1923-1938, iii. The period of silence, throughout the 1940s and 1950s, iv. The period of the renewal and expansion of Kurdish nationalism, from around 1960 t the beginning of the 1980s. v. The current period, beginning in 1984 and continuing through the 1990s." See Hamit Bozarslan, "Some Remarks on Kurdish Historiographical Discourse in Turkey," 21.

160 Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations," in *Karl Mannheim: Essays,* ed. Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge, 1972).

161 Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology,* Volume 78, Issue 6 (May, 1973). According to Granovetter, "most intuitive notions of the strength of an

strong ties, the '68'ers had both strong ties among their peers and a network of weaker ties with the '78'ers, who had the weaker ties in this regard. As will be seen, the '58'ers led the activism of the 1960s, or Phase A, at the time the '68'ers were adopting their political agenda and network of relations. However, the '68'ers grew apart from the '58'ers by the late 1960s producing different generational units that led to political dissidence. This put this generation forward as the avant-garde of the organizational as well as political activism of the 1970s, or Phase B. Although the study does not cover the '78'ers in detail, it engages with their entry into the political scene by the late 1970s and includes their contemporaneous activism with the '68'ers. Most leading posts were already taken as Kurdish circles and groups were generally in the hands of the '68'ers so the '78'ers generated factional splits, such as that of the KİP to the PPKK, or the TKSP to the TKSP-Roja Welat, and the KUK to the KUK-SE. Some followed in the footsteps of the 68ers, as was the case with the Rizgari and PKK activists. In what follows, I first deal with the '58'ers, who also constituted most of the individuals arrested during the events of 1959.

## § 2.5 The Arrest of the 49'ers and the Phase A or the Moment of Departure

Perhaps resembling activists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, who, according to Hakan Özoğlu, came from among well-off landowning notables in general,[162] the '58'ers had high status and were well-off, belonging to stratum of Kurdish society that was endeavoring to find a middle ground between being part of the Turkish system and the Kurdish ethnicity. The discussion about the convergence of Kurdish activism and socialism in the 1960s, especially with political parties such as the TİP, shall be understood from this

interpersonal tie should be satisfied by the following definition: the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie." Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," 1361.

162 Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 53.

angle in terms of it popularity among some Kurds. Their affiliation with leftist political groups in the 1960s and the type of socialism they were attracted to also resemble the way Ottomanism provided an ideological shelter or transitional power ideology. They can be regarded as political entrepreneurs with an ethnicity distinctive regional base as identified by Ebru Erdem.[163]

Because it produced many of the '58'ers, *the Dicle-Fırat Talebe Yurdu* (Dicle-Fırat Student Dormitory), which was founded in 1941 by Mustafa Remzi Bucak and later managed by Musa Anter provides a clear picture of the distinguishing features of this generation. Although the dormitory was romanticized and has been attributed roles different from those it carried out – such as being the center of Kurdish activism – it was open basically for business. It was so central that Musa Anter, who was among the arrested 49'ers and was one of the leading intellectuals of the 1960s, argued that the dormitory was opened to serve "wretched" (*perişan)* Kurdish students.[164] This argument was untenable for its founder Mustafa Remzi Bucak, who was a member of parliament for the DP in the 1950s. He pointed out that the dormitory played a vital role in the making of the Kurdish intellectual class (*Kürt aydın zümresi*).[165] Among others, Yusuf Azizoğlu became Minister of Health in the early 1960s and leader of the New Turkey Party: Tarık Ziya Ekinci, who was the most influential *Doğulu* in the Turkish Labor Party, was elected to parliament representing Diyarbakir in 1965: Faik Bucak, who opened the local branch of the Republican Peasant's Nationalist Party, which then turned into the MHP in the early 1960s, later became the Secretary of the clandestine TKDP in 1965:[166] Ziya Şerefhanoğlu was elected to the senate representing Bitlis: And Ali Karahan was elected to parliament.[167]

163 Ebru Erdem, "Political Salience of ethnic identities: A Comparative Study of Tajiks in Uzbekistan and Kurds in Turkey" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2006).

164 Musa Anter, *Hatiralarim, 1-2* (Istanbul: Avesta, 2nd edition, 2007), 61.

165 In the first of his book Mustafa Remzi Bucak describes how it played a central role in bringin Kurdish students together. See, Mustafa Remzi Bucak *Bir Kürt Aydınından İsmet İnönü'ye Mektup* (Istanbul: Doz Yayıncılık, 1991).

166 Ibid., 8.

167 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi,* Vol.7, 2129.

Kurdish students spoke Kurdish amongst themselves and discussed the issues pertaining to Kurdish society.[168] However, there is no evidence they questioned the extant ethnopolitical framework and social reality proposed by the Turkish state or the education they were receiving[169] (except for a few who began to challenge the framework during the first phase of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement). In my interview with Canip Yıldırım, he points out that his feudal family background secured him the attention of villagers' children, who called him "begim" (esquire).[170] Even Ümit Fırat, among the founders of the Ankara DDKO, noted the overwhelming socioeconomic similarity among students of the time, which changed a little with the addition of youth with middle class backgrounds among the group of '68'ers.[171] In contrast to Anter's claim, "wretched" or even impoverished Kurds did not have the means to send their children to school, especially not to a university. Later, when schools spread and relatively poorer families sent their children to boarding schools, the expectation was – as Muzaffer Ayata puts it – that children would learn Turkish and thereby secure a profession.[172]

A younger generation of Kurdish students, who would be part of '68'ers, entered the scene, and the Turkish state kept a close eye on the ethnic awareness and involvement of the Kurdish ethnicity among these Kurdish newcomers. As Erich Hoffman points out, the role of higher education was conspicuous during Phases B and C,[173] activists who has received their education previously were more equipped and ready to take the lead. A few detainers, especially individuals like Musa Anter had been long on the radar because of

168 Tarık Ziya Ekinci, "Sunuş," in *Amidalilar; Surgundeki Diyarbekirliler*, Şeyhmus Diken (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2007).

169 Hamit Bozarslan, "Kürd Milliyetçiliği," 850.

170 Canip Yıldırım, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, May 20, 2011.

171 Ümit Fırat, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, May 19, 2011.

172 Muzaffer Ayata, interview by the author, tape recording, Hamburg, February 3, 2012.

173 Erich Hoffmann, "The Role of Institutions of Higher and Secondary Learning," in *The Formation of National Elites: Comperative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940, Volume VI,* ed. Andreas Kappeler in collaboration with Fikret Adanir and Alan O'Day (Dartmouth: European Science Foundation, New York University Press, 1992), 280.

their cultural activities. As mentioned previously, in the same line with the CHP, the DP did not want any communist ideas to be used among the Kurds During the Cold War, especially after Mulla Mustafa Barzani returned to Iraq. Initially fifty Kurdish individuals were arrested on 17 September 1959, the number dropped to forty-nine, which gave the incident its name: *49'lar Olayı* or the arrest of 49'ers, Emin Batu died after 4 months of his arrest.[174]

174 Yaşar Karadoğan, in his article, provides additional information on detainess. I use his ordering here. See Yaşar Karadoğan, "Kürd Demokratik Mücadelesinde Bir Kilometre Taşı: 1967-1969 Doğu Mitingleri ve Kürd Uyanışı," *BÎR:* Araştırma ve İnceleme Dergisi: DDKO-I, no. 5, (2006). The names and professions of the 49'ers are as follows: 1- Şevket Turan, major in the army, 2-Naci Kutlay, professional doctor, 3-Ali Karahan, lawyer 4-Koço Elbistan, professional doctor, 5-Yavuz Çamlıbel, officer designate in the army, 6-Mehmet Ali Dinler, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 7-Yusuf Kaçar, student at school of construction technicians, 8-Nurettin Yılmaz, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 9-Ziya şerefhanoğlu, lawyer, 10-Medet Serhat, student at the Law faculty of Istanbul University, 11-Hasan Akkuş, student at the faculty of economics, 12-Örfi Akkoyunlu, manufacturer, 13-Selim Kılıçoğlu, first lieutenant in the army 14-Şahabettin Septioğlu, agricultural engineer, officer designate in the army, 15-Said Elçi, public accountant, 16-Sait Kırmızıtoprak, student at Istanbul medical faculty, 17-Yaşar Kaya, student at Istanbul University, 18-Faik Savaş, student at Istanbul University, 19-Haydar Aksu, legal practitioner, 20-Ziya Acar, student at the Law faculty of Istanbul University, 21-Fadıl Budak, student at the Law faculty of Istanbul University, 22-Halil Demirel, officer designate in the army, 23-Ferit Bilen, shopkeeper, 24-Esat Cemiloğlu, agricultural engineer, 25-Mustafa Nuri Direkçigil, health inspector, 26-Fevzi Avşar, student at Istanbul medical faculty, 27-Necati Siyahkan, student at the law faculty of Istanbul University, 28-Hasan Ulus, student, 29.Nazmi Balkaş, student at faculty of forestry of Istanbul University, 30-Hüseyin Oğuz Üçok, student at Istanbul medical faculty. 31-Mehmet Nazım Çiğdem, Constructor. 32-Fevzi Kartal, officer designate in the army. 33-Mehmet Aydemir, student at Istanbul medical faculty, 34-Abdurrahman Efem Dolak, journalist, 35-Musa Anter, journalists, 36-Canip Yıldırım, lawyer, 37-Emin Kotan, electrical engineer, 38-Ökkeş Karadağ, 39.Muhsin Şavata. Malatya, trader, 40-Turgut Akın, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 41-Sıtkı Elbistan. Hassa, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 42-Şerafettin Elçi, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 43-Mustafa Ramanlı, student at the Law faculty of Ankara University, 44-Mehmet Özer, student at Ankara medical faculty, 45-Feyzullah Demirtaş, agricultural technician, 46-Cezmi Balkaş, student at faculty of forestry of Istanbul University, 47-Halis Yokuş, student at faculty of mechanical engineering of Istanbul Technical University, 48-İsmet Balkaş, student at medical faculty, 49-Sait Bingöl, student at the faculty of economics.

The detainees came from different backgrounds, but students comprised half of their number.[175] As can be seen, detainees were carefully selected and most '58'ers, mentioned above, were not included since they had already made peace with the DP by abandoning ethnic politics.[176] Also, most detainees were known to be sympathetic to the CHP. The 49'ers were accused of promoting secessionism and communism,[177] both of which they denied.[178] The most serious line of accusation can be explained by the state's intention to send a clear message to intimidate nascent ethnic awareness among the Kurdish students, and keep an eye on students and new graduates from bringing Kurdish ethnicity into politics. Secondly, it was related to communism. According to Naci Kutlay, who was among detainees, to Turkey's alignment with NATO and the anti-communist camp, and the 49'ers were shown to be "communist," who aimed at establishing a Kurdish state in line with this ideology, all with the aim of getting economic and military aid from the United States.[179] This argument needs to be considered, because, by the late 1950s, the DP faced an economic crisis and could not receive foreign aid to help bolster its economic program.[180]

In fact, only seven among the 49'ers regarded themselves "leftist."[181] Among these, Canip Yıldırım, Musa Anter, and Naci Kutlay later joined the SKD and the TİP. On the other hand, some five years after their arrest, detainees Sait Elçi, Şerafettin Elçi, Sait Kırmızıtoprak, and Mehmet Ali Dinler would become the founders of the TKDP tradition –the second most important group of Kurdish activism in Turkey. They got to know each other thanks to their arrest: However, at the time, the majority still supported the CHP. For example, Şevket Turan, a major in the army, implored his fellows, "Virtually

175 See Naci Kutlay, *49'lar Dosyası* (Istanbul: Fırat, 1994), 11; also Yavuz Çamlıbel, *49'lar Davası: Bir Ülkenin İdamlık Kürtleri* (Ankara: Algıyayın, 2007).

176 For example, Yusuf Azizoğlu, Mustafa Ekinci, and Mustafa Remzi Bucak were members of parliament from the DP. See M. Şefiq Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın*, 27.

177 *Milliyet*, January 1, 1961, quoted in Malmisanij and Mahmud Lewendi, *Li Kurdistana Bakur u li Tirkiyé Rojnamegeriya Kurdi (1908-1992)* (Ankara: Özge Yayıncılık, 1992), 124.

178 Anter, *Hatıralarım,* 172.

179 Naci Kutlay, *21.Yüzyıla Girerken Kürtler* (Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2002), 533-34.

180 Zürcher, 224.

181 Kutlay, *Anılarım*, 95.

all of you here are pro-CHP. The harm that the CHP did to the Kurds is *sui generis*. I can't understand how a Kurd can support the CHP." [182] The justification propounded by, for example, Nurettin Yılmaz – who later entered parliament as a CHP representative in 1973 – was that they regarded the CHP as democratic and leftist or in the case of Canip Yıldırım, it was regarded as the lesser of the two evils.[183]

Abdulmelik Fırat, a grandson of Sheik Said, who was a deputy of the DP at the time, stated in his memoir that in a meeting with Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and President Celal Bayar, generals from the army presented an "intelligence report," claiming that the Kurds were about to rebel. Even though it did not convince some attendees at the meeting, it was decided that the suspects would be arrested.[184] What alarmed the government the most was *İleri Yurt* newspaper, owned by Abdurrahman Efhem Dolak and managed by Canip Yıldırım, which published the articles of Musa Anter. Anter's Kurdish poem *Qimil* (Pest) was regarded as the final straw. Not only was the poem in Kurdish, but it ended with the line "wait my sister, your siblings are coming to save you from your troubles." [185] As will be examined in the following sections, Musa Anter was mainly concerned with economic problems and deprivation, and the poem attempted to depict the misery of the people.

## § 2.6 Kurdish Political Activism in the 1960s[186]

First of all, it is important to note that the population of Turkey increased from twenty seven million in 1960 to fifty million in 1985 – almost doubling during the time covered. For example the population of Diyarbakir, more than

182 Nurettin Yılmaz, *Yakın Tarihin Tanığıyım* (Diyarbakır: Veng Yayınları, 2008), 29.

183 Canip Yıldırım, interview by the author. Also see Orhan Miroğlu, *Canip Yıldırım'la Söyleşi: Hevsel Bahçesinden Bir Dut Ağacı* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005).

184 Abdulmelik Fırat, *Fırat Mahzun Akar* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1996), 71.

185 The poem and other writings from İleri Yurt were published in a book with the same title. See Musa Anter, *Kımıl,* (Istanbul: Yeni Matbaa, 1962).

186 For a detailed family tree of groups, circles, and publications from 1959 to 1984, see Appendix A.

doubled during this time.[187] Also, the urban population increased from thirty percent in total in 1960 to thirty seven percent in 1970, and forty five percent in 1980.[188] The median age of the population between 1965 and 1975 was nineteen, the youngest at any time in Turkish history. The population of Turkey was thirty one million in 1965, around ten percent of which was Kurdish. Although some scholars approximate a percentage almost twice as high,[189] they provide no evidence or methodological explanation, so I have adopted Servet Mutlu's figures.[190] The population of the Kurds in Turkey, or the Kurdish components, as Mutlu puts it, apparently increased from three million in 1965 to at least five million by the mid-1970s. Twenty-eight percent was urbanized. These figures show that the population was quite young, rural and – as internal migration accelerated –unemployed or occupying informal jobs.[191]

It is noteworthy to state Musa Anter's definition of this period, because, as will be seen, the activism of this time both formed its own identity and organized accordingly. In a discussion with an activist from the '78'ers, the activist said to Anter, "What have you done, grandpa? We started from scratch (below zero)." Anter replied "Bless your heart! Son, it is true that you started from scratch, but we devoted our lives to bring to the surface."[192]

The arrest of the 49'ers brought together almost all important Kurdish individuals, most of whom had not been acquainted before, paving the way for the creation of groups among the detainees and thereby creating the new

187 McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 401.

188 See Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey,* 153.

189 For example, Mehrdad R. Izady claims that there were 5.25 million Kurds, constituting almost 20% of the total population in 1965. See Mehrdad R. Izady, *Kürtler: Bir El Kitabı,* tran. Cemal Atila (Istanbul: Doz Yayınları, 2004), 223.

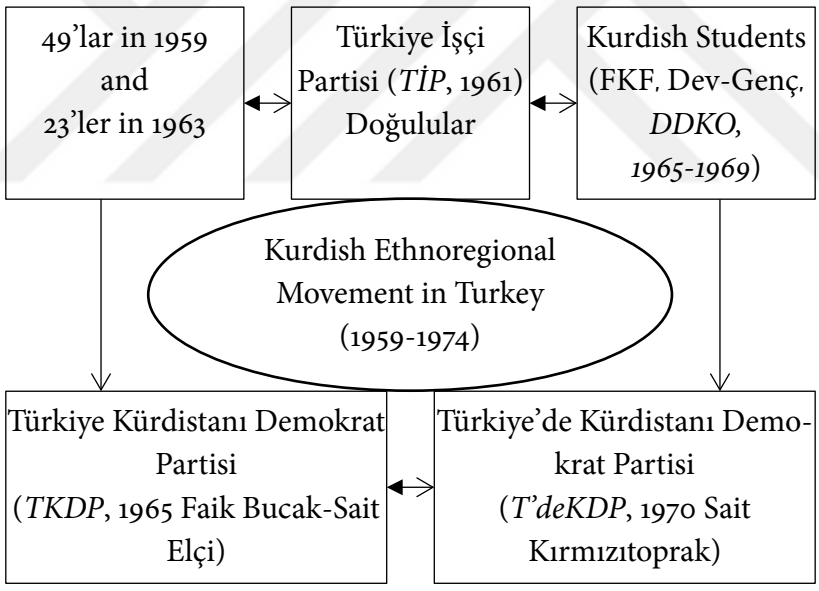
190 Servet Mutlu, "Ethnic Kurds in Turkey: A Demographic Study," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 28, No. 4 (Nov., 1996).

191 See Appendix D, Population of the Fifteen Provinces in 1970. Also see T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı: Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri, 25.10.1970,* (Yayın No: 756, Ankara, 1977). (Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics of Population), and .T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı: Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri, 26.10.1975,* (Yayın No: 988, Ankara 1982). (Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics of Population).

192 Musa Anter, *Çinara Min,* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1999), 16.

generational unit of the '58'ers: Prospective TİP and TKDP (Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi, or Kurdistan Democrat Party of Turkey, 1965) activists and leaders. Therefore, it qualifies as the founding event or the beginning of Phase A of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. The political activism of the Kurds, thereafter, fell into two main groups. As shown in Figure 2, after the arrest of the 49'ers, the widest group of Kurdish activism clustered around the TİP and stayed in line with the DDKOs (Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları or Revolutionary Cultural Hearts of the East, 1969). Meanwhile, the TKDP and its splinter group T'de KDP (Türkiye'de Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi, or Kurdistan Democrat Party in Turkey), sponsored by the KDP of Iraq, which was led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani, constituted the second group of Kurdish activism.

Figure 2.1
Actors of the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey (1959-1974)




Of course, the arrest of the 49'ers was not the last attempt to detain people for their political affiliations or publication activities. Immediately after the military coup on 27 May 1960, 484 individuals who supported the DP –not all

whom were Kurdish–were apprehended and held in a detention camp Sivas.[193] After the detention in Sivas, fifty-five Kurdish notables were sent into exile or "resettled" in Western Anatolian cities. Statements by President Cemal Gürsel summed up the new era. He openly threatened to create a bloodbath of the "mountain Turks," an official term implying that Kurds were Turks who had forgotten their Turkishness.[194] Gürsel was made honorary president of the KMD, (Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği or Society for Struggle Against Communism) in 1963.[195] Furthermore, in reaction to Kurdish cassettes, taped music and similar activities, especially outside of Turkey, the Kurdish language was banned by decree, "in any form published, recorded, taped, or such,"[196] as examined in Chapter 4. Anti-Kurdish and anti-communist policies dominated the political scene in the 1960s. The timidity of Kurdish activism, in general, and of the '58'ers, in particular, is primarily explained by this political atmosphere.

### 2.6.1 *The TİP and Doğulular*

The election of Mehmet Ali Aybar as party leader was an important event, motivating Kurdish entry into the TİP starting in 1962. For Kurdish activists, the TİP, although going through changes, was characterized by Aybar in the 1960s. Furthermore, the TİP was seen and used as a venue for organizing voters and finding a way into parliament. Although it is true that many Kurds were ideologically attracted to the TİP, in the mid-1960s, the main reason many new activists affiliated with the TİP was to get elected to parliament.

193 For a journalistic account, see Nevzat Çiçek, *27 Mayıs'ın Öteki Yüzü: Sivas Kampı,* (Istanbul: Lagin Yayınları, 2010).

194 Quoted in Özcan, 86. Gürsel also wrote the foreword for the book titled *Doğu Vilayetleri ve Varto Tarihi* by Mehmet Şerif Fırat, which was reprinted in 1961. The book, along other later examples, examplfied the Turkish state's approach which denied the existence of Kurdish ethnicity and considered them "pure Turkish stock." See Mehmet Şerif Fırat, *Doğu illeri ve Varto Tarihi* (Ankara: Milli Egitim Basımevi, 1961).

195 William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* (London: Routledge, 1994), 177.

196 T.C. Resmi Gazete, 24 February 1967, Issue: 12527 Decision Number: 6/7635.

Other parties, namely the AP and the CHP, were already allied with stronger figures in the Kurdish region.[197]

The way Kurdish masses were included in the political process in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in elections, was based on tribal affiliation,[198] and in most cases, an influential religious leader, sheik, or tribal leader – agha – would either be the candidate or determine who would become the representative.[199] Therefore, party identity or ideology in the 1960s meant virtually nothing in the region. Thus, one can see the TİP and its members in the region employed the same methods, although they denied it. That is why, for example, some villages voted entirely for or against a political party, which also was the case for the TİP.[200]

As mentioned earlier, the SKD, or Socialist Culture Association, was opened in 1963 in Diyarbakır.[201] Activists, such as Tarık Ziya Ekinci and Naci Kutlay, were attracted to the TİP through the SKD, which was in the hands of *Yön* and at the time not critical towards the TİP.[202] The first branch to open in a Kurdish city was that in Diyarbakır, followed by Malatya, Urfa (in Siverek), Mardin (in Derik), Van, Muş, Ağrı, Kars, Siirt, Elazığ, and Tunceli,[203] and later Erzurum and Bitlis.[204]To name some of the most outstanding members of the TİP – who were called the *Doğulu Group* (Easterner Group) – Tarık Ziya Ekinci, Naci Kutlay, Mehmet Ali Aslan, Kemal Burkay, Tahsin Ekinci, Edip Karahan, Canip Yıldırım, Örfi Akkoyunlu, Yaşar Kaya, Enver Aytekin, and Musa Anter not only opened party branches but inspired local figures, such as

197 See Ahmet Alış, *The Process of the Politicization of the Kurdish Identity.*

198 Lale Yalçın-Heckmann, "On Kinship, Tribalism and Ethnicity in Eastern Turkey," in *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, comp. and ed. Peter Alford Andrews (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989), 626.

199 Mehmed Emin Bozarslan, *Doğunun Sorunları* (Diyarbakır: Şafak Kitabevi, 1966), 141.

200 Arslan Başer Kafaoğlu, "TİP'in Köy Oyları," *Yön*, Issue 196, 30 December 1966.

201 Tarık Ziya Ekinci, "Kürt sorunu ve Aybar," in *Cumhuriyet, Mehmet Ali Aybar Özel Eki*, 21 July 1995, 14.

202 Kutlay, *Anılarım,* 102.

203 Ekinci, *Sol Siyaset Sorunları,* 300.

204 Mehmet Ali Aslan, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, January 31, 2009.

Mehdi Zana, to join the party, as well. As one can see, the majority was among the 49'ers, as were the founders of the TKDP.

Although they did not initially take part in establishing party branches and building up the TİP network, there were also other groups, especially of students like Said Kırmızıtoprak, who later founded the T'deKDP and had the greatest influence over Kurdish students of the 1970s. They became members of the TİP in or around 1962 and were politically active in the TİP until the late 1960s.[205] In addition, many students who established the DDKOs in 1969 and became leading activists in the 1970s had worked for the TİP, organizing its meetings, election campaigns, and so on. For example, İbrahim Güçlü, who later led the Ala-Rizgari faction of Rizgari: Necmettin Büyükkaya, who was a founder and influential interlocutor for the KİP and other groups of the 1970s: Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, who later led the Maoist Kava group in the 1970s: And many others were affiliated with the TİP. However, students had a significant difference from the Doğulu Group. Because they were relatively younger and not yet ready to run in elections, they risked little if they pushed the limits of the TİP's ideology and stance towards the Kurds. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the TİP had a clear policy set by the constitution, and the party regarded the Kurdish question as an issue of economic backwardness, only benignly hinting at Kurdish ethnicity. But importantly, the TİP provided Kurdish students with organizational venues and resources from which they learned politics first hand.

As competition increased for members of the TİP, specifically from the Doğulu Group, the party encountered the serious challenges discussed in the previous sections. The Doğulu Group was no exception. The matter of candidacy for running in the elections of 1965, which can be considered the first election involving the TİP in the region, became a turning point. The leading Doğulus – Musa Anter, Tarık Ziya Ekinci, and Canip Yıldırım–had a conflict over who should run.[206] Because the TKDP had been founded clandestinely, they needed instruments and channels to attract attention, which had not been the initial priority. With the entrance of the TİP, they hastened to reach

205 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, 7. Cilt*, 2121.

206 Anter, *Hatıralarım*, 213.

activists. Party branches of the TİP presented the easiest venue for the TKDP's political activities.[207] As Ekinci notes, the TKDP organized within and attempted to take control of the Diyarbakir branch.[208] In later Doğu Mitingleri (Eastern Meetings) in 1967, for example, then Party Secretary Sait Elçi and his friends were as actively involved in the organization of meetings as TİP members.

Therefore, the TİP provided organizational tools and resources, not only to the Doğulus, but also to TKDP, though to a lesser degree. However, the TİP's ability to present an inclusive platform for Kurdish activism was limited. Before moving to the TKDP and T'deKDP, I touch on two other incidents that provide a better picture of why the TİP, early on, did not incorporate all emerging Kurdish activism: First, the arrest of the 23'ers, or *23'ler Olayı* of 1963, and second, the Eastern Meetings of 1967.

### 2.6.2 *The Arrest of the 23'ers and the Doğu Mitingleri*

After the experience of the *İleri-Yurt* (Advanced Country) in 1959, the first of the journals promoting Kurdish ethnoregional demands *Dicle-Fırat*, appeared in October 1962, though many activists were not yet disenchanted with the constitution which was still being praised. Even in November 1962, a branch of the Kurdish Students Society in Europe (KSSE), which was founded in 1956 by Kurdish students and was under the influence of the KDP, was opened in Istanbul. This was followed by the publication of *Deng* (Voice) which survived only two issues in April 1963: *Roja Newe* (The New Sun) in May 1963,[209] which was published by Doğan Kılıç Şıhhesananlı, who also published Minorsky's article on the origin of Kurds and Kurdish language:[210] and *Reya Rast* (True Path), published by Ziya Şerefhanoğlu. Although the contextual analysis of

207 Ömer Ağın, *Alev, Duvar ve TKP* (Istanbul: Gendaş A.Ş, 2003), 19.

208 Ekinci, *Sol Siyaset Sorunları,* 302.

209 Transliteration from Arabic to Turkish of Minorsky, *Kürtlerin Men-şei ve Kürt Dili İncelemeleri,* (Istanbul: Dersim Yayınevi, 1963); and Doğan Kılış Şıhhesananlı, *Barzani ve Kürdistan Cumhuriyeti Kuruluşu* (Istanbul: Yörük Matbaası, 1968).

210 The book was drived from the entry in *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* See Houston, "An anti-history of a non-people," 30.

these and subsequent periodicals is presented in the following section, their repercussions need to be mentioned, as well.

The arrest of the 23'ers was a direct consequence of these publications and the opening of the KSSE branch in Istanbul. On June 4, 1963, twenty-three individuals were arrested, including one Kurdish student from Iran and six Kurdish students from Iraq who were studying in Turkey.[211] In addition, all the periodicals were closed, together with *Barış Dünyası* (World of Peace), which was published by the Turkish liberal Ahmet Hamdi Başar and for which Musa Anter wrote extensively on the "Eastern question." Among those arrested were many from among the 49'ers and members of the TİP, like Musa Anter, Yaşar Kaya, Ziya Şerefhanoğlu, Meded Serhat, and so on.

The arrest of the 23'ers was probably as important as the 49'ers incident: It drove Kurdish activists into a corner, where the new generation of '68'ers were not content to stay. Additionally, the TİP declared that even though some detainees were members of the party, it did not uphold or support activities that harmed the unity of the state and nation.[212] The event caused a predicament but paved the way for the future political activism of Kurds, including the publication of two new journals, *Yeni Akış* (New Current) in 1966 and *Doğu* (East) in 1969, as well as the transliteration of Ehmed-i Xani's classical love story *Mem û Zîn* from the Arabic by Mehmet Emin Bozarslan.

All together, these publications framed the Kurdish question as a developmentalist issue, even while acknowledging the ethnic distinctiveness of the Kurds, especially in terms of language. The politicization of Kurdish ethnicity should not be confused with Kurdish nationalism, as discussed in Chapter 1. For example, Metin Yüksel points out that Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, who wrote within the economic backwardness framework and then moved into an investigation of Kurdish language and history – most notably the transliteration of *Mem û Zîn* in 1968 – thereafter "acted as a bridge."[213] His intellectual

211 Yaşar Kaya, *Erbil Venedik Hattı* (Stockholm: Kürt Demokrasi Vakfı Yayınları, 2000), 14.

212 Turhan Salman, *TİP (Türkiye İşçi Partisi) Parlamentoda 1963–1966* (Istanbul: Tüstav, 2004), 32.

213 Martin van Bruinessen, "Mehmed Emin Bozarslan and I, "Published in Kurdish translation as "Ez û Mehmed Emîn Bozarslan," *Nûbihar*, Issue:123 (2013), Accessed September 2, 2016,

work can be situated as a broad effort to find solutions to the "Kurdish issue," not as promoting "Kurdish nationalism."[214]

In this study, Kurdish ethnicity and the question of its expression or denial is not taken for granted. In other words, when one looks at publications by Kurdish activists and sees how they framed Kurdish ethnicity and nationalism, it is true that the departure point for the Kurdish activism – and therefore for Kurdish demands – was seen by Kurds in line how their Turkish counterparts saw it.[215] Therefore, one must not forget that the expression of Kurdish ethnicity and nationalism was not fixed, but rather temporary and changing depending on who was describing it and how, just like the elephant in the room indeed.

Secondly, the Doğu Mitingleri,[216] or the Doğu Uyanış Mitingleri (Eastern Awakening Meetings), as Tarık Ziya Ekinci calls them,[217] can be regarded as the first public demonstrations by Kurds in modern Turkey. A product of the doğulu ideology and underdevelopment political frameworks, these meetings were held in Diyarbakır, Silvan, Siverek, Batman, Tunceli, Ağrı, and Ankara over the course September 1967. The ultranationalist publications, *Ötüken* and *Milli Yol,* advocates of Nihal Atsız, published articles in which Kurds were intimidated and attacked, a fact that also contributed to the organization of the meetings.[218] Later, similar meetings were organized in Suruç, Hilvan, and

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http://www.hum.uu.nl/medewerkers/m.vanbruinessen/publications/Bruinessen_Mehmed_Emin_Bozarslan_and_I.pdf

214 Metin Yüksel, "A "Revolutionary" Kurdish Mullah from Turkey: Mehmed Emin Bozarslan and His Intellectual Evolution," *The Muslim World,* 99, 2 (April 2009), 380.

215 Sait Kırmızıtoprak's articles in *Yön*, responding to Musa Anter's writing in *Barış Dünyası*, and *Deng* are striking examples. See "Doğulu Gençler Barış Dünyası"na cevap veriyor: Doğu Davamız" *Yön*, no 26, June 13, 1962; Edip Osmanoğlu, "Neden Çıkıyoruz?" *Dicle-Fırat*, Year:1, Issue 1, October 1, 1962; Dr. S. Kırmızıtoprak, "Doğuyu sosyalizm kurtarır," *Yön*, November 14, 1962: Deng, Issue 3, July 15, 1963; Sosyalizm ve Kürtler: *Yeni Akış*, Issue 3, October 1966.

216 The 5th and 6th issues of journal BÎR contain rich materials and particularly several interviews, in both Turkish and Kurdish. Also, see Azat Zana Gündoğan, and İsmail Beşikçi, *Doğu Anadolu Mitingleri'nin Analizi*, (Ankara: Yurt, 1992); and Ekinci, *Sol Siyaset Sorunları.*

217 Tarık Ziya Ekinci, *Kürtlerde Sosyal Değişim Süreçleri ve TİP'in Katkısı*, 19 September 2008. (Unpublished Paper).

218 *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları, Dava Dosyası 1* (Ankara: Komal, 1975), 30-33.

Varto.[219] Although these meetings are argued to have been protests organized by the TİP, they were actually organized by TİP and TKDP members as well as by unaffiliated students. Furthermore, the TİP saw the potential of these meetings and organized a tour of the region with the participation of the party's leading cadres.

According to Tarık Ziya Ekinci, who still praises the TİP and its role in the Kurdish activism,[220] "Aghas and comprador bourgeoisie in the East were condemned and these meetings helped raise Kurdish national consciousness."[221] However, most banners and slogans provide little support for the argument that they were also national meetings, even Mehdi Zana later wrote that people neither understand what TİP leaders were talking about, nor the socialist jargon they used.[222] In the heat of the events, student speakers, such as Mehmet Ali Aslan and Nevzat Nas recited Kurdish poems in Silvan and Batman respectively.[223] The latter recited Ehmed-i Xanî and Cigerxwin.[224] In addition to leaders of the Doğulu Group, such as Ekinci and Kutlay, Kurdish students who had earlier taken part in the election campaign of the party, perhaps learned most from these meetings. Likewise, from addressing thousands of people after the killing of Faik Bucak in 1965, Sait Elçi who was the secretary of the TKDP also realized the power of the masses. [225]

### 2.6.3 *The TKDP, DDKOs, and T'de KDP*

While some 49'ers aligned themselves with mainstream political parties, namely the AP and the CHP, or stayed away from political activities altogether,

219 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi,* Vol.7, 2129.

220 Since the 1960s, Ekinci has given the TİP experience a unique position. He was elected to the parliament in 1965 and also joined Socialist Revolution Party established by Mehmet Ali Aybar in 1975. Ekinci's book title is *Turkish Labor Party and Kurdish Enlightenment,* according to which the 1960s and TİP experience brought about Kurdish englightenment. See Ekinci, *Sol Siyaset Sorunlari*, 307.

221 Ekinci, *Kürtlerde Sosyal Değişim Süreçleri ve TİP'in Katkısı*.

222 Mehdi Zana, *Bekle Diyarbakır,* (Istanbul: Doz, 1991), 86.

223 Mehmet Ali Aslan, interview by the author.

224 Abdullah Kaya, *Hévriz Ağacı,* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2002), 138.

225 Ömer Ağın, *Kürtler, Kemalizm ve TKP* (Istanbul: VS Yayınları, 2006), 141.

the founders of the TKDP, like the members of the first TİP were. According to Şerafettin Elçi, who was one of the founders of the TKDP (Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi, or Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey) in 1965, their incentive was that there were two main lines to follow: The leftist and national (*netewî*). The founders of the TKDP believed that the Kurdish question was not a class issue, but rather a national one.[226] The party was clandestinely established by Sait Elçi, Şerafettin Elçi, Şakir Özdemir, Ömer Turan, Derviş and Akgül (Derwişê Sado). During the first meeting of the party, Sait Elçi was elected as the leader and Şerafettin Elçi as the secretary of the party. [227]

Lawyers Faik Bucak and Kemal Badıllı the latter of whom was elected to parliament through the YTP (Yeni Türkiye Partisi or New Turkey Party) and had published works on the Kurdish language, were both offered the position of the secretary of the party. Eventually, after Fehmi Bilal, who was allegedly the clerk of Sheik Said, visited Faik Bucak a few times, he was convinced to take the position, which he held until 1965 when he was killed. [228]

Bozarslan argues that the establishment of the TKDP provided the Kurdish movement in Turkey with "cross-border" features, offering a new base of legitimacy for the movement, based solely on "Kurdishness."[229] Although the first part of Bozarslan's argument is true, the second is debatable. The party, in line with the KDP, confined its solutions and activities within the borders of Turkey and did not go outside of them. The TKDP was organized under the initiative of the KDP in Iraq.[230] The party had even adopted the same political solution,[231] which was autonomy for the Kurdish area within Turkey. Mulla Mustafa Barzani's return to Iraq in 1958 alarmed the Turkish state so much

226 Şerafettin Elçi, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, May 24, 2011.

227 Şakir Epözdemir, *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi: 1968/235 Antalya Davası Savunması,* (Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2005), 81.

228 For a full account see Epözdemir, *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi.*

229 Hamit Bozarslan, "Türkiye'de Kürt Sol Hareketi," 1176.

230 *Xebat, ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan, Kürdistan-* (Kovara Navendi ya Rizgarixwazen Netewayen Kurdistane-KUK) No publication place and date indicated, Issue: 7, (1985), 52.

231 See the KDP's solution in Massoud Barzani, *Mustafa Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement* (New York: Palgrave, MacMillan, 2003), 203.

that it, too, can be counted among the reasons for the arrest of the 49'ers in 1959. Moreover, the Barzani-led Kurdish rebellion was still ongoing in the 1960s, and Kurds in Turkey became aware of the issue and sent material help to the *peshmergas,* Kurdish term for the fighters in Iraq.[232] Also, it was in the interest of the KDP to have docile Kurdish parties in other countries in the Middle East.

Şerafettin Elçi pointed out that on 11 July 1965, the founders of TKDP received a copy of the platform of the KDP in Syria, which was backed by the KDP by Jalal Talabani in particular. Since the program was in Arabic, Derviş Akgül, who read Arabic, translated it and Şerafettin Elçi, who was a lawyer, made some changes to avoid committing a capital offence, as was written in the Constitution.[233] The objective of the party was stated as the recognition of political, economic, and cultural rights for Kurds within the Turkish Republic. Furthermore, the party platform stated that "the Kurds should be represented proportionally and given autonomy over domestic politics in the region. Both Kurdish and Turkish should be taught in schools, and a University of Kurdistan should be established along with Kurdish radio and television stations."[234] Given the limited network among the activists and the Turkish state's thread of punitive measures hanging over them, the party could operate only in a limited way.

In addition to local branches of the TİP, the Eastern Meetings provided a platform for propagating the party's ideas, which eventually cost the party so much that in the following year, in 1968, all members of the central committee has been arrested, except for Şerafettin Elçi who was serving his mandatory military duty and whose name was not known at the time.[235] The TKDP nearly dissolved after their arrest, and those affiliated with the party kept quiet, except for newcomers, like Sait Kırmızıtoprak, who visited the detainees in

232 İsmail Cem, *Türkiye Üzerine Araştırmalar* (Istanbul: Cem Yayinevi, 1970), 214.

233 Şerafettin Elçi, interview by the author.

234 "Sait Elçi Savunması, TKDP, İllegal Örgüt Davası Gerekçeli Hüküm"; in *Rizgari*, (Year:3, Issue:7, November 1978), 20-21.

235 Şerafettin Elçi, interview by the author.

Antalya when he was in Isparta.[236] Before continuing to the T'deKDP, a splinter of the KDP, it is worthwhile touching upon the establishment of the DDKOs in 1969, since Kırmızıtoprak and his friends played an important role in their establishment.

Most Kurdish students who became members of the TİP prior to the establishment of the DDKOs (Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları or the Revolutionary Cultural Hearts of the East)[237] were affiliated with the Fikir Kulübleri and then the FKF. As already mentioned, the FKF was arguably under the control of the TİP until 1968, as were Kurdish students. For example, Ruşen Arslan, who was owner of the journal *Rizgari* in 1974, says he was president of the Ideas Club at the Ankara Faculty of Law, as well as a member of the TİP.[238] The DDKOs opened seven branches in all, first in May 1969 in Ankara and Istanbul, and later in Ergani, Silvan, Kozluk, Diyarbakır, and finally in Batman in January 1971.

In exactly the same way the TİP provided a political venue for competing ideas,[239] the DDKOs were an amorphous platform for a variety of opinions with leading figures being '68'ers, such as Mümtaz Kotan, Orhan Kotan, İbrahim Güçlü, Necmettin Büyükkaya, İhsan Aksoy, Fikret Şahin, Sabri Çepik, Sıraç Bilgin, Ali Beyköylü, İhsan Yavuztürk, Ferit Uzun, Faruk Aras, İsa Geçit, Hikmet Bozçalı, Ümit Fırat, and so on.[240] As seen in the next chapter, most founders and members of the DDKOs moved on in the 1970s to found other circles, groups, and parties during Phase B or the moment of maneuver of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement.

Furthermore, the DDKOs must be dealt with together with the mushrooming Hemşehri Dernekleri (Fellow Countrymen Associations). For

236 The domain containing his name contains bibliographical information as well as documents about and by Dr. Şivan. See http://www.drsivan.info/en/#, accessed December 4, 2014.

237 For a highly informative yet discordant account of the DDKOs, see *BîR*, Issue 5. Two master theses on the DDKOs, including Yeleser, "A Turning Point in the Formation of the Kurdish Left in Turkey"; Çal, "Kürt Siyasal Hareketinde Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Deneyimi. "

238 Ruşen Arslan,, interview by the author, via email, June 4, 2011.

239 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 1* (Istanbul: Deng Yayınları, 2002), 159.

240 İsmail Beşikçi, "Hapisteki DDKO (Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları)" *BÎR: Araştırma ve İnceleme Dergisi:* DDKO-I' (5) (2006): 102-103.

example, one handout that condemned the racist and scornful language of an article, published in *Ötüken* and *Milli Yol* was signed two years prior to the foundation of the DDKOS by nineteen such associations.[241] Indeed, the idea behind the establishment of the DDKOs was to bring together such scattered associations, on one hand, and to prevent Kurdish students from joining other student associations – namely the FKF, which soon after the establishment of the DDKOs in Ankara and Istanbul changed its name to Dev-Genç – on the other hand. In that respect, the idea it shared with the Doğulu Group was that the DDKOs would keep Kurdish youth under the structure of the TİP.

In short, the DDKOs' founding objective was to:

> …include university youth into a specific cultural activity, to facilitate material solidarity among students, to get rid of the racist – chauvinist, and fascist conditioning in Turkey, to take a place on the spectrum of revolutionary democratic organizations that fight for the well-being of peoples who shall live equally and fraternally.[242]

In a nutshell, the declaration included all the themes that would be debated and would constitute the main groups for the subsequent organizations of the 1970s. The DDKOs organized seminars and talks with important figures who tutored the young activists. Among others, İsmail Beşikçi, first made contact with the *Rizgari* circle to be, and Mehmet Emin Bozarslan gave seminars in big cities. Similarly, in smaller branches, such as Diyarbakır, the buildings of the DDKO branch served as a meeting venue and, of course, an open university for many activists. As will be examined in depth, this manner of

241 Şemmikanlı is wrong to call the handout one of the DDKOs. At the time the DDKOs had yet to be established. See Nezir Şemmikanlı, "Geçmiş Olmadan Gelecek Olmaz!" *BÎR*: Araştırma ve İnceleme Dergisi: DDKO-I, Issue: 5, (2006): 80-81.

242 "...Türkiye'nin metropol merkezlerindeki üniversite gençliğini belli bir kültür çalışması içine almak, aralarında maddi dayanışmayı kolaylaştırmak,Türkiye'deki ırkçı-şoven ve faşist şartlanmaları kırmak, HALKLARIN KARDEŞÇE VE EŞİTÇE YAŞAMALARINI, daha mutlu olmaları yolunda mücadele veren devrimci demokrat kuruluşlar yelpazesinde yerini almak." See Mümtaz Kotan, "Tarihin Karartılması Eylemi Üzerine: Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Somut bir örnek DDKO" *BÎR*, Issue: 6, 2006 (originally published in Mümtaz Kotan, *Yenilginin İzdüşümleri*, (Athens: Yunan Kürt Dostluk Derneği Yayınları, 2003), 374-451.

simultaneously functioning as a venue, platform, and organization profoundly influenced the activism of Phase B.

Most of the founders of the T'deKDP came from the DDKOs and TİP. For example, Necmettin Büyükkaya, who was a member of the TİP, one of the founders of Istanbul branch of the DDKO, also in charge of Istanbul DDKO between 1969 and 1970, and also was among the founders of the T'deKDP.[243] Moreover, Nazmi Balkaş was the founder of the T'deKDP and Osman Aydın a member of its central committee. Both took part in the establishment of the DDKOs.[244] The T'deKDP was founded by the following people whose code names are followed by are their real names: Dr.Şivan/Sait Kırmızıtoprak, Çeko/Hikmet Buluttekin, Brüsk/Hasan Yıkmış, Kurdo/Ömer Çetin, Muhterem Biçimli, Zendu/Abdulkerim Ceylan, Soro/H.Nazmi Balkaş, Ahmet Aras, Zerdeşt/ Necmettin Büyükkaya.[245] Sait Elçi and some other founders of the TKDP knew Sait Kırmızıtoprak personally by the time of their arrest in 1959.

There is no doubt that by the end of the 1960s, in parallel with the Turkish student activism discussed earlier, Kurdish students and the younger generation unit of the '68'ers were struggling with the legal framework and malleability, demanded by both the '58'ers and TİP leaders. Although the DDKOs were established by both pro-TİP and pro-TKDP activists (the T'deKDP was not yet founded though Dr. Şivan's clique was growing) the DDKOs were not related to the TİP in terms of their activities and political orientation. As we will see, most of their founders would be among the T'deKDP and before that, part of Dr. Şivan's clique. Kemal Burkay writes that the decision passed at the fourth congress of the TİP, in which the Kurdish nation, was a direct result of

243 For a first hand account, see Necmettin Büyükkaya, *Kaleminden Sayfalar,* comp. Şerwan Büyükkaya (Stockholm: APEC-TRYCK, 1992).

244 Şeref Yıldız, *Fırtınada Yürüyüş* (Istanbul: Sarı Defter9, 2008), 66.

245 *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar*. However, Şefiq Öncü gives a longer list of founders, which, in my opinion, is incorrect. According to Öncü the founders were: Sait Kırmızıtoprak (Dr.Şivan), Hikmet Buluttekin (Çeko), Hasan Yıkmış (Brusk), Nazmi Balkaş (Soro), Dr.Faik Savaş, Musa Anter, Hüseyin Saltık, Ziya Acar, Osman Aydın, Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, Abdulkerim Ceyhan, Yılmaz Çamlıbel, Remzi Kartal, and Hıdır Kurun. See Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın,* 44.

influence by Dr. Şivan and his friends and would lead to its later closure.[246] Therefore, even though they were not pro-Dr. Şivan, most Kurdish students involved in the TİP and DDKOs gradually drifted away from their cohorts and the older generation of 58'ers.

Some, such as Mümtaz Kotan, İbrahim Güçlü, Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, and other influential activists of the 1970s, could not make up their minds, so Dr. Şivan convinced his friends that the Kurdish nation needed to be liberated by way of "armed struggle" and "guerilla war."[247] The autonomy agreement reached between Kurds and the Iraqi government on 11 March 1970, when taken into account together with the increased radicalism of Turkish students (especially their visits to Palestinian training camps) further convinced Dr. Şivan and his friends that what the PKK would do thirteen years later was the right thing to do. In October 1969, before the official establishment of the T'deKDP, Dr. Şivan and his friends represented the TKDP of Sait Elçi, on a visit to the Kurdish part of Iraq which was under the control of the KDP.[248] While there, Dr. Şivan wrote the party program, in Kurdish and in Turkish, which would be adopted at the founding congress of the party on 28 June 1970. That is probably why TKDP members felt betrayed by Dr. Şivan,[249] exacerbating their deteriorating relations.[250]

### 2.6.4 *The Killings of Sait Elçi and Sait Kırmızıtoprak (Dr. Şivan)*

Though I have interviewed individuals who knew Dr. Şivan personally, namely Şerafettin Elçi, Şakir Epözdemir, and Hafız Togan as well as others who were acquainted with him, when it came to the killings of Sait Elçi and Sait Kırmızıtoprak, which is known as the *İki Sait Olayı,* (incident of two Saits), I

246 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Vol.I,* 281.

247 Hafız Togan, interview by the author, tape recording, Hakkari, May 26, 2011.

248 "Tertele"ye İnadın Bir Politik Dehası: Dr Şivan (Sait Kırmızıtoprak), BİR, Issue: 8,: http://www.kovarabir.com/sait-aydogmus-%E2%80%9Ctertele%E2%80%9Dye-inadin-bir-politik-dehasi-dr-sivansait-kirmizitoprak/.

249 Epözdemir Şakir, "Yakın Tarihimizde Dr. Şivan ve Sait Elçi Olayı," *War*, Issue: 7 (1999): 49-50

250 Aydoğmuş, "Tertele"ye İnadın Bir Politik Dehası."

encountered confused answers and standpoints.[251] There are books and articles, which share the same vague arguments pertaining to the incident, not to mention countless conspiracy theories.[252] However, there are also converging explanations, from which one can demystify this incident which upset many activists of both the TKDP and T'deKDP as well as all Kurdish activists of the 1970s. The legacy of Dr. Şivan was experienced in through different ways in the 1970s.[253] As will be examined later, the *Şıvancılar*, or the heirs of Şivan who founded the KİP/DDKD, as well as *Komal/Rizgari* and *Kava/Kawa* circles were highly influenced by the legacy and mystery surrounding the incident.

As discussed above, Dr. Şivan and his friends were proposing a bold course of action: An illegal armed struggle. In the second extraordinary congress held on 22 August 1970, Dr. Şivan defined what a nation is, simply copying out the definition given by Lenin and Stalin.[254] Therefore, Dr. Şivan was the first Kurdish activist to implement the Leninist and Stalinist theory of the nation and apply the right of nations to self-determination to the Kurds. Furthermore, he envisioned that the right of self-determination would be asserted by the Kurds themselves, with an independent country as the goal.[255] His standpoint was contrary to that of the TKDP and its leaders, whom he had contacted earlier

251 For an introductory narrative, see Çayan Demirel, *Dr. Şivan,* DVD Documentary, 2013.

252 The main questions still ambiguous in the early 1970s when most activists did not have answers and the ones who knew did not talk about it, were as follows: Did or did not Dr. Şivan kill or order the killing of Sait Elçi, Abdüllatif Savaş, and Mehemede Bego or not? Who killed Sait Kırmızıtoprak, Hasan Yıkmış, and Hikmet Buluttekin in return? What was the involvement of Turkish state? What was the role and involement of the KDP in Iraq and Mustafa Barzani?.

253 He was already known to many activists due to articles published in *Yön*. But most importantly, the two books he wrote were copied by his followers. Later, they were published through Komal Yayınevi in 1975 and Apec in 1997. See Dr. Şivan *Irak Kürt Halk Hareketi ve Baas Irkçılığı* (Ankara: Komal, 1975); Dr. Şivan, *Kürt Millet hareketi ve Irakta Kürdistan İhtilali*, (Stockholm: APEC yayınları, 1997).

254 Josef Stalin, *Ulusal Sorun ve Sömürgeler Sorunu,* trans. Muzaffer Ardos (Ankara: Sol, 1968), 11. For English version, see *Nationalism, Oxford Readers,* eds., Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford University Press, 1994), 18-21.

255 Available online http://drsivan.info/uploads/belgeler/max/t-kdp-ikinci-olaganustu-kongre.pdf, accessed December 4, 2014.

and tried to win over. In addition, his approach was similar to that of Dev-Genç activists who later founded clandestine, armed revolution parties and especially to that of Mahir Çayan.

In October 1969, as mentioned above, Dr. Şivan and some of his friends went to the Iraqi Kurdish area to form connections and judge the viability of armed struggle. He even taught himself Kurmanji (because he himself spoke Zazaki) in order to talk to the local people and form alliances.[256] However, he did not trust everyone: For example, when Kemal Burkay asked him to work together, he declined saying that he was going to Canada to study.[257] Before and after his visit to Zakho, a town on the border with Turkey, Dr. Şivan made contacts with new people. Hafız Togan, one of his fellows, pointed out that Dr. Şivan was hurrying to mobilize armed insurrection,[258] a fact that did not go unnoticed by Turkish intelligence.

While in Iraq, Dr. Şivan also met with Mustafa Barzani who asked, "Does the Turkish government know about your coming here?" To which Dr. Şivan replied that "he did not want to cause an adverse result to the Revolution, so he and his friend paid strict attention accordingly."[259] After sermonizing Dr. Şivan, Barzani warned that the "Turkish government shall not be agitated and instigated now."[260] Mesud Barzani claimed that the TKDP had asked their help to hold a congress in their region, to which they agreed. However, Sait Elçi did not join Elçi and his friends were killed by Dr. Şivan and his friends because they were regarded as "reactionist." Later on, the TKDP officially asked that Dr. Şivan be held accountable for the action or else the TKDP would deem the KDP of Iraq responsible There after, Dr. Şivan and his friend were judged and sentenced to death.[261]

256 İhsan Colemergi, interview by the author, tape recording, Van, May 25, 2011.

257 Interview with Kemal Burkay, by Cemil Gündoğan, Stockholm, April 30, 2001.

258 Hafız Togan, interview by the author.

259 Armed rebellion is called *Şoreş* in Kurdish. So, for example, 1961 is also called *Şoreşa İlone*, Revolution of September.

260 See Şerwan Büyükkaya, *İlk Anlatım* (Stockholm: Apec, 2004).

261 Interview with Mesut Barzani, *Kürdistan Press*, 16.10.1987, Issue: 24 (16) (1987): 449.

Although Togan believes that the Turkish intelligence was responsible for the killing of both Saits,[262] there is no evidence to support this claim.[263] What is clear is that Sait Elçi, Abdüllatif Savaş, and Mehemede Bego were killed by Sait Kırmızıtoprak, Hasan Yıkmış, and Hikmet Buluttekin, probably because Sait Elçi had a stronger hand in the KDP of Iraq and was considered the legitimate interlocutor and secretary of the party. Though Dr. Şivan did not want to involve the KDP in his project, unlike activists of the mid-1970s who wanted to unite all groups, he was deemed dangerous. This was especially the case after the autonomy agreement in Iraq, which was a slippery slope: After the KDP negotiating with the United States, as mentioned in the second section of this chapter and after receiving so much military aid from the United States and Iran, which were in the same camp with Turkey vis-à-vis communism. It is also true that Dr. Şivan was an ardent communist as much as he was a nationalist. The killing of Dr. Şivan definitely benefited both the KDP and the Turkish state ideologically and pragmatically. Indeed, prior to their execution, Dr. Şivan and his friends were arrested and kept in the KDP's prison.

One of the most well-informed still-living persons is Şakir Epözdemir, who left the TKDP and retired from politics.[264] Although İsmail Beşikçi, and many others claim that Dr.Şivan and his friends were killed by the KDP management, there is not concrete evidence to support claim that either Sait was killed by either group.[265] Bozarslan argues contrarily that Sait Kırmızıtoprak,

262 Hafız Togan, interview by the author.

263 Likewise, Selahattin Ali Arık makes the same claim. He argues that both the TKDP and T'deKDP were to be cleared away, so their leaders – both named Sait – needed to be eliminated. See Selahattin Ali Arik, *Dr. Şivan, Sait Elçi, Süleyman Muini ve Kürt Trajedisi* (İstanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2011). Also in a similar approach, Hüseyin Akar, *Saitler Komplosu: Dr. Şivan ve Barzani Kürt Liderliği* (Ankara: Pelin Ofset, 2006).

264 Şakir Epözdemir, interview by the author, via email, May 31, 2011.

265 İsmail Beşikçi, "Sait Kırmızıtoprak (Dr. Şivan) Üzerine Düşünceler," accessed February 2, 2015, http://www.kurdinfo.com/nuce_bixwine.asp?id=4867. In addition, however, Beşikçi argues in one of his latest interviews that the Turkish state played the biggest role and the KDP played a secondary role. See Selahattin Ali Arik, "İsmail Beşikci ile Söyleşi, " January 13, 2013, http://www.ismailbesikcivakfi.org/default.asp?sayfa=duyuru&id=61#.VOTf67CuduY, accessed February 2, 2015.

Hasan Yıkmış, and Hikmet Buluttekin were executed by the TKDP with the consent of the KDP, whereby the Kurdish activism took a knock.[266]

## § 2.7 Class vs. Nation: Socialist Movement and the Kurds in the 1960s

Kurdish activism of the 1960s greatly impacted their Turkish counterparts, since in the 1970s there was not a single leftist circle, group, or party that did not recognize the Kurds as a nation and as a people (*halk* and sometimes *ulus*). The only issue overshadowing this impact was the insistence how that Kurds organize on the way to "imminent revolution." It is clear that the developmentalist socialism of the 1960s offered Kurdish activists from '58'ers a temporary panacea. However, in practice, the suppressive measures of the state, the radicalized student movement of the late 1960s and indeed denial of the very existence of the Kurds gradually convinced many activists that it was not the right path to follow. They rather took the experience of the 1960s a step further and began thinking, talking, and acting in ways that their predecessors would not have dared. This time, frustrated by the response of the state, they made it clear they would not step down starting at the trials of the DDKOs.

As Marxist influence grew more discernable and socialism reached beyond the "neo-Kemalist" groups thanks to a series of publications and new actors, the Kurdish understanding of socialism and Marxism also developed. In addition to the neo-Kemalist interpretation of socialism, the illegal TKP (the Turkish Communist Party), which was limited to a circle of intellectuals throughout the 1960s, did its best to pursue the "one party" policy of the Soviet Union, which frequently lured the Turkish state into being a partner.[267]The interpretation of Marxism was not limited to the TKP after the 1950s, of course. The Kurdish question would be discussed under the names of "eastern" or

266 Hamit Bozarslan, "Türkiye'de Kürt Sol Hareketi," in *Kürdistan Sosyalist Solu: 60'lardan 2000'lere Seçme Metinler,* ed. Emir Ali Türkmen and Abdurrahman Özmen (Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları, 2013), 29.

267 Bülent Gökay, *Soviet Eastern policy and Turkey, 1920–1991: Soviet foreign policy, Turkey and communism* (London: Routledge, 2006), 11.

"national questions"[268] and the TKP changed its standpoints along with other Marxists and socialists.[269]

As Albert Hourani observed for the Middle Eastern in general, Turkish nationalism – postured as progress and developmentalism as discussed earlier – proved to be taking control vis-à-vis Marxism and Marxist ideology in Turkey.[270] Just as any attempt to weaken the central government and its consolidation of power was regarded as reactionary in Turkey,[271] Soviet policies were also poised to assist central governments and the "national bourgeois." Furthermore, it has been pointed out in the historiography of the Soviet Union that Stalin broke from internationalism favoring a more nationalist perspective.[272] Similarly, the Communist Party of Iraq was also positioning itself in line with the interests of the Soviet Union supporting its patron, the Ba'th regime. [273] Evidently, the Soviet Union did not want to involve "local communists" in fights against nationalist regimes[274] if it was not in its interests.[275] However, the spread and popularity of Marxism was not limited to Soviet policies. Maxine Molyneux and Fred Halliday pointed out that "emphasis on material causation, on class conflict as the motor force of history, and its totalizing theory of society have provided the intellectual underpinnings for a powerful

268 Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, *Uyarmak İçin Uyanmalı* (Istanbul: Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, 1970), 210.

269 TÜSTAV, "Yakup Demir'in Bilal Şen'in Grupçu ve Fraksiyoncu Faaliyeti Üzerine Raporu-26 Nisan 1965" in *TKP MK Dış Bürosu 1965 Tartışmaları* (Istanbul: Tüstav, 2004), 96.

270 Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, 192.

271 Mesut Yeğen, *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2006), 141.

272 Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55.

273 Fred Halliday, "Iraqi Communist: 'The Central Aim Must be to End the Dictatorship,'" *MERIP Reports*, No. 97, Iraq (June 1981), 20-21. The interview with the Secretary General of the Iraqi Communist Party was conducted by Fred Halliday in Europe before the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War. Aziz Mohammad is a Kurdish Iraqi, born in 1924 and was Secretary General since August 1964.

274 See Geoffrey Wheeler, "Soviet Interests in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey," *The World Today*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (May, 1968): 197-203.

275 Erica Schoenberger and Stephanie Reich, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," *MERIP Reports*, No. 39 (July, 1975): 16.

moral philosophy advocating social justice, equality, and freedom from exploitation, both national and social."[276]

Since it was perceived as a panacea across the third world,[277] it is understandable that Marxism and socialism spread like wildfire in Turkey and among Kurdish activists, in particular. Several hundred socialist and Marxist books were translated into Turkish and published in the 1960s. Among others, Karl Marx, Frederic Engels, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and most of the classic works of the literature were published. Leo Huberman's *The ABC of Socialism* published in 1966, Josef Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question* from 1967, and Vladimir Lenin's *Nations' Right to Self- Determination* from 1968 were among the best sellers.[278] In addition to Marxism-Leninism, one can clearly see the ideological influence of Maoism in Turkey, as well, after the Cultural Revolution in 1966.[279]

It was most likely after the entry of these books into Turkish-speaking socialist circles that many Kurdish and Turkish activists, first had a framework into which to fit Turkey's problematic Kurdish question. Nevertheless, the Marxism was instilled into Kurdish activism, replacing the early developmentalism, through Turkish intellectuals. As such, some crucial words were translated to better make sense in Turkish, and sometimes in legal aspects.[280] None of the classics of Marxism and socialism was translated and published in Kurdish. For example, the Communist Manifesto, a founding document, was

276 Maxine Molyneux and Fred Halliday, "Marxism, the Third World and the Middle East," *MERIP Reports*, No. 120, The Middle East after OPEC (January, 1984): 18.

277 For example, the Palestinian's case also presents a similar trend. See Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement 1949-1993* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004).

278 For a list of non-fiction leftist books translated into Turkish between 1960 and 1971, see Erkal Ünal, "Invited sojourners: a survey of the translations into Turkish of non-fiction left books between 1960 and 1971" (Master thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2006). Also, see Alaattin Bilgi, *Yine de Aydınlık,* (Istanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2007).

279 Ahmet Samim, "The Left," 156.

280 Recep Maraşlı, "İsmail Beşikçi ve Kürt Hareketi," in *İsmail Beşikçi,* eds., Barış Ünlü and Ozan Değer (Istanbul: İletişim, 2011).

translated into Turkish after almost one and half centuries, and was translated and published in Kurdish only in 2011.[281]

What socialists, and particularly the TİP, meant by the term class was all-inclusive, referring to students, workers, women, peasants, children, and so on. When used in relation to the Kurdish question, they were more clear: Class meant the oppressed masses of the East, suffering from underdevelopment and the oppressing stratum of feudal society. Therefore, as formulated in the 1960s, the TİP in general and the '58'ers in particular confined the issue to "economic backwardness," which was to solved along with the other issues of the working class.[282] As discussed earlier, Turkish counterparts took the position that Kurdish national demands would be solved after the revolution, while Kurdish activists did not wish to postpone their demands to a post-revolutionary stage, which they attempted to vindicate with the same references. More specifically, Kurdish activists were enchanted by Lenin's "distinction between the nationalism of an oppressing nation and the nationalism of a small nation."[283] The crux of the issue for the Kurds in the 1970s was to prove that they were more "international" and Marxist-Leninist than the oppressor nation, the Turkish counterparts were the latter in their opinion.[284]

The Kemalist stance was to create a "classless, integrated" society. However, as Kemal Karpat pointed out, the oxymoronic attempts to fuse Kemalism with socialism in the new "social order" – a society with no class conflicts[285]– generated even more tension and paradoxes for Turkish and Kurdish activists. Similarly, Qassemlou describes a similar phenomenon in the Iranian context, in which Komalah, which was the Kurdish branch of the Iranian Communist

281 *Manifêsta Partiya Komunist-Komünist Partisi Manifestosu* was published by Dönüşüm Yayınları in 1994. The first Kurdish translation was published by Sami Tan, *Manîfestoya Komunîst* (Istanbul: Yordam Kitap, 2011).

282 For a first hand account, see Behice Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları* (Istanbul: Gün Yayınları, 1968).

283 Horace B. Davis, *Nationalism and Socialism; Marxist and Labor Theories of Nationalism to 1917* (New York and London: Montly Review Press, 1967), 210.

284 Hamit Bozarslan, "Türkiye'de Kürt Sol Hareketi," 17.

285 Karpat, H. Kemal, "The Turkish Left," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 1, (2) Left-Wing intellectuals between the wars (1966): 186.

Party, "had a far-fetched approach, in which they postulated the existence of a working class which was opposite."[286]

This study maintains that the term class is constructed and is a matter of discourse.[287] Classes and nations were and still are intertwined and embedded in both Turkish and Kurdish activism, but as matters of priority. Turkish activists did not have a "national issue" in line with the Leninist perspective, and so was cogent for them to prioritize class over nation. On the other hand, Kurdish activists had difficulty finding a purely class-related question in front of them. But they were theoretically and practically denied their existence, and they faced harsh consequences, which, in their argumentation, stemmed from their ethnic and national oppression. In line with Gurr's analysis, one can observe an increase in the salience of Kurdish ethnicity in the 1960s among Kurdish activists, which is the result of psychological reinforcement stemming from "cultural, economic, and political differentials" between Turkish and Kurdish activists.[288]

## § 2.8 From Class to Nation: Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement from Phase A to Phase B

For not only the '58'ers but also the '68'ers, the activists were generally first politicized as *solcu*, or leftist, and then moved on to Kurdish-oriented activism.[289] Almost all interviewees with a socialist background mentioned the same pattern: Even the books they were reading and by which they were inspired were the same. Importantly, *The ABC of Socialism* was the *Elifba* or *Elibetik*[290] that introduced socialism through simple definitions. Like Necmettin Büyükkaya's argument in 1971, many Kurds began to formulate the

286 "Interview with Dr. Abdurrahman Kasımlo (İ-KDP)," in Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası*, 3rd ed. (Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1992), 528.

287 Pratt, *Class, Nation and Identity*, 15.

288 Gurr, *Minorities at Risk,* 3.

289 Sait Aydoğmuş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, May 23, 2011.

290 It is a word to refer Arabic alphabet, or generally used to refere the ABC to learning Quran.

Kurdish question as "a national question within a greater proletarian issue,"[291] copying or rephrasing the nations' right to self- determination. Finally, Dr. Şivan clearly outlined the principal points of a "refurbished" Marxist ideology for Turkey around which Kurdish activism, in his view, should position itself. The principal concepts were the nation and the national issue. He remarked that "the first immediate contradiction that needs to be offered as a solution in Turkey is the reality of the Kurdish nation."[292] As examined in previous sections, the symbiotic relationship that Kurds in Turkey had with political entities was continuing from Dr. Şivan's perspective.[293] The proposed solution was no different than Mihri Belli's demand for democratic, national rights for Kurds, which would offer a single territory on which two nations – Kurds and Turks – could live on equal terms. [294]

Clearly, the inclusion of "nation" as the defining parameter for the relationship between Turkish and Kurdish activists particularly influenced the DDKOs, while it scared the '58'ers. Although the DDKOs remained within a legal framework, the aftermath of its closure and especially the trial in Diyarbakır encouraged Kurdish activists even more. But before that, the renowned decision at the fourth congress of the TİP on 29 November 1970, which was originally called the "Halklar Tasarısı" (Proposal for Nations), was an articulation by the pro-Dr. Şivan group within the DDKOs. After the pro-Aybar group resigned from the party,[295] and at a point when the party was almost inactive, Behice Boran and her friends accepted the terms of the Kurdish students to get elected.

Despite the disagreement of '58'ers within the party, the decision was just on the paper. It clearly stated that, "Kurdish people live in the east of Turkey, and to regard this question as a question of regional development is nothing

291 Büyükkaya, *Kaleminden Sayfalar,* 44.

292 "Türkiye'de çözümü gereken birinci ve acil çelişki: Kürt millet gerçeğidir." Dr. Şivan, *Kürt Millet Hareketleri ve Irakta Kürdistan İhtilali,* (Stockholm: Apec Yayınları, 1997), 183.

293 Ibid., 186.

294 Mihri Belli: "Millet Gerçeği," *Doğu*, Istanbul, 1969.

295 See Nihat Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)* (Istanbul: Felis Yayınları, 2001), 967-973: Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler,* 279; Tarık Ekinci, *Lice'den Paris'e Anılarım*,, comp. Derviş Aydın Akkoç (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010).

but an extension of the chauvinist-nationalist views and attitudes of ruling class governments."[296] Even here, the question is defined as part of a "working-class, socialist, revolutionary struggle," though the decision mentions that "the party supports the struggle of the Kurdish people to enjoy their constitutional citizenship rights and realize their democratic aspirations and demands."[297]

Naturally, the Halklar Tasarısı later provided the example of the basic demands regarding the Kurdish question in Turkey, in which denial of Kurdish nation and their cultural rights, though not clearly the political rights, would not be considered. Therefore, while most '58'ers did not risk much by articulating the "nationness" of the Kurds, like some students around the Ocak Komünü (January Commune), a small group of students who were more articulate in this regard. All together slightly more than 100 defendants[298] concluded a summary of different perspectives about the past and prospective activism.[299] The existence of the Kurds as a distinctive people in Turkey with a different language and culture was fervently defended, either individually by

296 In full, it reads as follows :"Türkiye'nin Doğu'sunda Kürt halkının yaşamakta olduğunu; Kürt halkı üzerinde, baştan beri, hakim sınıfların faşist iktidarların, zaman zaman kanlı zulüm hareketleri niteliğine bürünen, baskı, terör ve asimilasyon politikasını uyguladıklarını; Kürt halkının yaşadığı bölgenin, Türkiye'nin öteki bölgelerine oranla, geribırakılmış olmasının temel nedenlerinden birinin, kapitalizmin eşitsiz gelişme kanununa ek olarak, bu bölgede Kürt halkının yaşadığı gerçeğini göz önüne alan hakim sınıf iktidarlarının, güttükleri ekonomik ve sosyal politikanın bir sonucu olduğunu; Bu nedenle, "Doğu sorununu" bir bölgesel kalkınma sorunu olarak ele almanın, hakim sınıf iktidarlarının şoven-milliyetçi görüşlerinin ve tutumunun bir uzantısıdan başka bir şey olmadığını; Kürt halkının Anayasal vatandaşlık haklarını kullanmak ve diğer tüm demokratik özlem ve isteklerini gerçekleştirmek yolundaki mücadelesinin, bütün anti-demokratik, faşist, baskıcı, şoven-milliyetçi akımların amansız düşmanı olan Partimiz tarafından desteklenmesinin olağan ve zorunlu bir devrimci görev olduğunu;… Partinin Kürt sorununa, işçi sınıfının sosyalist devrim mücadelesinin gerekleri açısından baktığını kabul ve ilan eder." Türkiye İşçi Partisi Genel Merkezi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi IV. Büyük Kongresi (29-31 Ekim 1970 Ankara); Alınan Kararlar ve Yapılan Seçimlerin Sonuçları,* .6-7; and Sadun Aren, *TİP Olayı (1961-1971)*, 71-72.

297 Ibid., p.72.

298 İsmail Beşikçi, "Hapisteki DDKO," 108.

299 For an overall primary account, see *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları, Dava Dosyası 1.*

Musa Anter and others, or as a group by Ocak Komünü, which consisted of Ali Beyköylü, Ali Yılmaz Balkaş, Battal Bate, Fikret Şahin, İbrahim Güçlü, Mümtaz Kotan, Mahmut Kılınç, and Yümnü Budak and from which the main activists of the *Rizgari* circle would emerge.[300] As a result of the defense they put forward, sixty-six inmates were sentenced to more than thousand years of imprisonment.

In conclusion, not only were the TİP and the DDKOs closed and their activists arrested over a period of three years from 1971 to 1974, leaders of radical socialist activism were killed: Namely Deniz Gezmiş of the THKO, Mahir Çayan of the TKHP-C, Sait Elçi of the TKDP, Dr. Şivan of the T'deKDP, and İbrahim Kaypakkaya of the TKP/ML and TİKKO. Clearly, the main concern of the March 12 Memorandum was to curtail the assent of Marxist socialism, which resembled neo-Kemalism of the early 1960s.

These developments left no room, in the minds of Kurdish activists, to make concessions, at least in theory. Therefore, the route on which they embarked went even further than what Dr. Şivan had proposed in the beginning of 1970. Only this time, the regional base was extended to the entire Middle East and the ethnic base was extended to all Kurds, most of whom they had never met. And because they could not carry out a "revolution" based on nationalism, as being nationalist was regarded as reactionary in socialist circles, they had to find a middle ground on which they amalgamated socialism and nationalism, or class and nation.

300 Interviews with the activists. Also, see İsmail Beşikçi, *International Colony Kurdistan,* (London: Taderon Press, 2004).

# 3

# From Nation to "Revolution" (1974-1984): A Historical Framework for Kurdish Activism in the 1970s

> *There is great chaos under heaven – the situation is excellent.*
>
> Mao Zedong

This chapter examines Phase B, or the moment of maneuver of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement between 1974 and 1984. It shows how Kurdish activism changed its territorial and ethnic bases, enlarging its scope and ideological repertoire. First, it provides an overview of the political atmosphere in which Kurdish activism took place. Then the chapter presents a descriptive analysis of Kurdish actors who belonged to different traditions and formed various circles, groups, and parties. The last sections of the chapter elaborate on some underlying discussions among Kurdish activists as well as between them and their counterparts, namely Turkish socialist groups. A contextual, theoretical portrait of discussions around colonialism, nationalism, and armed struggle is scrutinized, as well. Finally, the chapter touches on the September 12, 1980 coup which virtually terminated all activism in Turkey and pushed it towards the Middle East, leading to a new phase in 1984.

## § 3.1 An Overview of Turkish Politics: The Socialist Movement and the Kurds in the 1970s

As is the case with the history of Kurdish society, studies on the modern history of Turkey scarcely study the era after the 1950s.[1] Having had a population about forty million in 1975, Turkey was still a developing country with forty percent urbanization and sixty two percent literacy, which were almost halved for the Kurdish population.[2] Another striking feature of its demography was that median age was nineteen, which meant youth unemployment and overall unemployment were even higher. In their book about the relation between violence and urbanization, Ruşen Keleş and Artun Ünsal demonstrated a correlation between economic performance and the level of violence in Turkey. They argue that irregular urbanization had a significant impact on political violence, and as the economy deteriorated, the death toll from violence in Turkey increased.[3]

Parallel with other developing countries, Turkey as a whole experienced the politicization of its population beginning in the early 1950s when the DP introduced the peasantry to politics.[4] In the 1970s, the peasant aspect of the electorate was still predominated.[5] This phenomenon can be seen as the reason behind new elites entering politics, especially those coming from the periphery.[6] As is widely recognized, early Kemalist reforms barely changed society,

1 The period Zürcher calls "The Second Turkish Republic" was between 1960 and 1980. See Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History;* also See Suavi Aydın and Yüksel Taşkın, *1960'tan Günümüze Türkiye Tarihi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2014).

2 TÜİK, *İstatisk Göstergeler* (Statistical Indicators) (Ankara: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu Matbaası, 2006).

3 Ruşen Keleş and Artun Ünsal, *Kent ve Siyasal Şiddet* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınlar, 1982), 22.

4 Arif T. Payaslıoğlu, "Political Leadership and Political Parties in Turkey," in *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, eds. Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

5 Tanel Demirel, *Adalet Partisi; Ideoloji ve Politika* (Istanbul: İletisim, 2004), 81.

6 Frank Tachau and Metin Heper, "The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey," *Comparative Politics,* Vol. 16, No. 1 (October, 1983), 20

as the regime was preoccupied with consolidating its power and modernization projects, to which the vast majority in society objected in the multiparty era.[7]

As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter on Kurdish activism, the first elections after the March 12, 1971 memorandum were held in 1973. The CHP garnered the largest share of votes, but a government had not yet been formed for one hundred days afterwards. Eventually a MSP and CHP coalition was formed. Between 1974 and 1980, Turkey was governed by seven different governments, two of which were famously known as the Milliyetçi Cephe (MC, Nationalist Front, composed of the AP, CGP, MHP, and MSP). While the AP, the predecessor of the DP, earned the most votes for most of the 1960s, from 1972 onwards the 1970s would be dominated by the rise of the CHP under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit, who had already introduced the "Left of Center" ideology in 1965 and went further by making his party a member of the Socialist International in 1976.[8] In addition, non-mainstream parties such as the YTP, TİP, and NAP from the 1960s, multiplied with parties such as the MHP, MSP, and CGP being represented in parliament and holding ministerial posts in the government.[9]

The disorganized economic policy of the DP benefitted a new political elite, but deteriorating economic conditions of military personnel as well as the bureaucratic elite paved the way for the military coup of May 27, 1960.[10] Consequently, the economy was one of the key areas to be controlled, as was manifested in the first Five-Year Plan in 1963,[11] which marked the beginning of the "golden age of Import Substituting Industrialization" that lasted until 1977.[12] As Feroz Ahmad observed, the change in society as a result of this

7 Keyder, "The Political Economy of Turkish Democracy," 47.

8 *Ayın Tarihi*, December 1976.

9 For relevant election results, see Appendix E.

10 Leslie L. Jr. Roos and Noralou P. Roos, *Managers of Modernization: Organization and Elites in Turkey, (1950-1969)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 222.

11 Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 133.

12 Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century,* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 111.

policy was "almost beyond recognition."[13] The economic policies of the 1960s and 1970s impacted the discourse of politics, as well. As such, the rise of nationalism and national solidarity, as we will see later, produced the Nationalist Front in the parliament and several nationalist youth organizations.[14] The Cyprus issue, especially with the Turkish military intervention on 20 July 1974, remained on the political agenda for long time because the United States arms embargo that followed in the beginning of 1975 affected Turkey's international position.

Furthermore, the modernization of agriculture accompanied by rapid internal migration and irregular urbanization depicted the social situation in the 1970s. As was the case in other parts of the region, inflation and high costs of living along with political violence were pivotal features of the 1970s.[15] In fact, as Zürcher points out, the inflation rate skyrocketed from twenty percent at the beginning of the 1970s to ninety percent by 1979.[16] Even worse, a basic electricity could not be supplied and to overcome this, for five hours a day there was no electricity.[17] Import substitution industrialization certainly was not working in the mid-1970s, and increasing violence was closely related to this phenomenon.[18] The demands by the workers during this period of economic crisis further paralyzed the system. For example, according to data from the Ministry of Labor, about two million work days were lost due to strikes and lock-outs between 1977 and 1978.[19] To make matters worse, food prices increased more than one hundred percent.[20]

13 Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey,* 134.

14 Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey,* 226.

15 See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran, Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1982), 493.

16 Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 267.

17 Ibid., 267.

18 Ömer Turan, "Bu Sayıda: Alternatif Tahayyüller, Devingenlik, Popülizm: 1970'ler İçin Bir Çerçeve Denemesi," *Toplum ve Bilim* Issue: 127 (2013): 18.

19 *Ayın Tarihi*, 5 March 1979.

20 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey: Before and After,* (Ankara: Ongun Kardeşler Printing House, 1982), 24-27.

As many observers have pointed out, the 1970s cannot be understood without taking political violence into account.[21] In the late 1970s, Turkey had an unnamed civil war, with many unidentified, unclaimed victims.[22] As will be discussed later, the politics went through an unusual period and a state of emergency was implemented in 1977.[23] As a matter of fact, martial law was intermittently in force in several cities during the 1970s, and on 26 December 1978 martial law was reintroduced in many cities, including Istanbul, after events in the city of Kahramanmaraş that resulted in more than 100 deaths.

Despite martial law, the death toll reached more than twenty thousand.[24] Strikingly, the number of leftist activists killed was seven times higher than that of right-wing activists – 14,929 and 2,089 respectively, according to a public document.[25] Although the ultranationalist camp, namely *Ülkücüler* (the Idealists or the Grey Wolves), was involved and constituted one side of this story, the other side was comprised of socialist and communist groups, most of which, as was the case with Kurdish activists, pointed their guns at each other. To give an example, by early 1980, the clashes between the PKK and the TKDP/KUK had resulted in the lost lives of at least fifty activists from the PKK and twice that from the TKDP/KUK.[26]

Anti-communism – and thus anti-socialism – in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s needs to be underscored. Turkey had been a member of NATO since 1952, allying itself with the anti-communist camp in the Cold War. Thus, it is unsurprising to see the rise of nationalist, anti-communist associations. For example, along with other similar associations,[27] the number of TKMD

21 Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 168.

22 Nevzat Bölügiray, *Sokaktaki Asker: Bir sıkıyönetim Komutanının 12 Eylül öncesi Anıları* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1989), 30.

23 Mehmet Ali Birand, Hikmet Bila, Rıdvan Akar, *12 Eylül: Türkiye'nin Miladı* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık AŞ, Second Edition, 1999).

24 Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1983), 20.

25 Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede*, 20-21.

26 Mehmet Ali Birand, *Apo ve PKK* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1993), 96.

27 See Ayse Neviye Caglar, "The Greywolves as Metaphor," in *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, eds. Andrew Finkel and Nukhet Sirman (London and New York: Routledge, 1990).

(Türkiye Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri or Society for Struggle Against Communism) increased fifteen fold between 1963 and 1965, numbering 141 by 1968.[28] For Süleyman Demirel, the leader of the AP, there was no division between right and left, but rather between two camps, one "nationalist front of patriots and nationalists" and a "communist front."[29] The anti-communist tone reached a level that it became the raison d'être for the MHP and to a lesser extent for the AP. Perhaps that is why, when Mehmet Ali Aybar commented on the fall of the TİP, he put forward the role of United States.[30] Moreover, while socialist circles faced internal schisms, the right – mainly in the AP, MHP and MSP – was assuming high positions in coalition cabinets. Alparslan Türkeş of MHP became Deputy Prime Minister, securing four ministerial posts for his party which had only gained six percent of the votes and sixteen seats in the parliament.[31]

Before moving on the discussion on Kurdish activism, I briefly touch on the new circles and parties of socialist groups in the 1960s. The socialist ideologies, of Neo-Kemalism, Marxism-Leninism, and Maoism in the 1960s were clustered around three main political groups, in addition to certain organizations, such as the TÖB-DER. The first line of socialist ideology, the neo-Kemalist progressive discourse, was centered around the CHP, which had the support of the DİSK, the TKP, and sometimes of the TİP. The second revolt around new parties established by an older generation of socialists, such the TSİP, SDP, and VP. And finally, the third group were inheritors of the Marxism-Leninism and Maoism of the Dev-Genç tradition and produced several small circles and groups, such as Halkın Yolu, Halkın Birliği, Halkın Kurtuluşu, Devrimci Yol, and the TİKP.

28 Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, *Devlet, Ocak, Dergah: 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket,* 6th ed. (Istanbul: İletişim, 2000), 56.

29 Tanel Demirel, "1946-1980 Döneminde 'Sol' ve 'Sağ,' " in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, Cilt-9: Dönemler ve Karakteristikler,* comp. Ömer Laçiner (Istanbul: İletişim, 2009), 442.

30 Mumcu, *Aybar ile Söyleşi*, 51.

31 See Landau, "The Nationalist Action Party in Turkey," also Sayarı "The Changing Party System."

In the line with the DP's enthusiasm for the peasantry and the rise of Maoism globally, the latter tradition inherited from the Village Institutes of the 1940s, and as Asım Karaömerlioğlu points out, the manpower of the graduates of these institutions put the village and the peasantry at the center of leftist interest in Turkey.[32] Associations such as the TÖS and the TÖB-DER had many such individuals among their founders.[33] Reaching a network of around 650 branches, the TÖB-DER was also a pivotal venue in which Kurdish activists organized. Likewise, the Tüm-Der, which represented public officials, had 300 branches and around 100,000 members.[34]

As previously discussed, the TİP served as a common platform for various socialist groups in the first half of the 1960s. The TİP, which is sometimes known as the first TİP, arguably gave birth to seven political parties established by activists somehow associated with it. Chronologically, the TSİP (Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi or Socialist Workers' Party of Turkey) was established by Ahmet Kaçmaz, Turgut Koçak, and their colleagues, on 22 June 1974; the VP (Vatan Partisi or Fatherland Party) was established by Emine Kıvılcımlı and heir of Dr. Hikmet Kıvılcımlı on 21 January 1975; the TEP (Türkiye Emekçi Partisi or Laborers Party of Turkey) was established by Mihri Belli and his colleagues on 14 February 1975;[35] the [second} TİP (Türkiye İşçi Partisi or Turkish Labor Party) was established by Behice Boran and her colleagues on 30 April 1975, the SP (Sosyalist Parti or Socialist Party, later SDP or Socialist Revolution Party) was established by Mehmet Ali Aybar and his colleagues on 30 May 1975; the KİP (Köylü ve İşçiler Partisi or Peasants and Workers Party) was

32 See M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Köy Enstitüleri," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce,* Cilt II *Kemalizm*, comp. Tanıl Bora (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001).

33 Fakir Baykurt, A well-known novelist who was a teacher in Hakkari for a time, became involved in the establishment of the TÖS and later became its head in 1965, sums up the sense of devotion in that time. See Fakir Bayburt, *Bir TÖS Vardı (Özyaşam 5)* (Istanbul: Papirus, 2000).

34 Gültekin Gazioğlu, "Töb-Der ve Toplumsal Mücadeledeki Yeri," In *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi Cilt 7*, 2350-2351.

35 Igor Lipovsky, "The Legal Socialist Parties of Turkey, 1960-80," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (January 1991), 104.

established by Rıza Kuas and his colleagues on 2 November 1976;[36] and the TİKP, (Türkiye İşçi Köylü Partisi or Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey) was established by Doğu Perinçek and his colleagues on 29 January 1978.[37]

All the parties together did not garner even the three percent of the votes that the TİP managed in 1965 and 1969. They did, however, provide political venues for scattered socialists alongside the CHP, which took the lead position in this respect. Political parties such as the TİP, TSİP, and TKP publicly supported the CHP, which was regarded – even by the Soviet Union – as the legitimate representative of "progressive" groups in Turkey.[38] One of the main issues, around which leftwing political parties – ranging from the neo-Kemalist CHP to the Maoist TİKP – rallied around was endless calls for a "fight against fascism," a reference to the Nationalist Front alliance mentioned earlier.[39] As elaborated upon later, even Kurdish groups such as the TKSP/Özgürlük Yolu, and the KİP/DDKD occasionally voted for those parties and had close relations with the CHP, the TİP, and the TSİP.[40]

As with Kurdish activism, several Turkish-dominated socialist political circles and groups first appeared as publications, usually periodicals, the forming of which was utilized for political organization.[41] The TSİP, for example, was established six months after the weekly newspaper *Kitle* (the Mass), while the TİP was established following the weekly *Yürüyüş* (March). On the other hand, the heirs of Dev-Genç found themselves in a disconcerted situation after almost all its student leaders were killed. Without any experienced leaders, the Dev-Genç produced several groups, most notably the circles around *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergisi* in 1976, *Halkın Yolu* in December 1976, and *Devrimci Yol* in 1977 (the largest of the groups),[42] THKO offshoots included *Halkın Kurtuluşu* in June 1976 and *Emeğin Birliği* in November 1976, while TKP-ML offshoots

36 See, for example, Mehmet Ali Aybar's call to the CHP in *Ayın Tarihi,* February, 1976, as well as Behice Boran's similar call to the CHP to form alliance against fascism, in *Ayın Tarihi,* April, 1978.

37 The dates for its establishment vary. See Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu*, 108,

38 Harris, "The Left in Turkey," 32.

39 *Ayın Tarihi*, February, 1977.

40 *Özgürlük Yolu*, Issue, 31-32, December-January, (1978), 3.

41 Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu,* 291.

42 Ibid., 299.

commenced publishing *Halkın Gücü* and *Halkın Birliği*. The experience of Fatsa – a small town in the Ordu province where an independent candidate Fikri Sönmez known as Terzi Fikri and supported by *Devrimci Yol,* was elected as mayor – was celebrated as a the quintessential model for the coming "revolution. "

After the general political situation and socialist groups have been presented, this chapter specifically focuses on Kurdish activism and actors.

## § 3.2 Phase B or the Moment of Maneuver for the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey

In comparison with Phase A, in other words with the 1960s, Phase B or moment of maneuver of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement faced relocation of its territorial and ethnic points of reference, in many ways corroborating Benedict Anderson's analysis of nations. [43] With easier access to printing and publishing, which one can observe in the increase in Kurdish periodicals and publishing houses[44] and which sometimes relied on a mimeograph owned by a political group, "vernacular print capitalism" played a principal role in Kurdish nation formation. In other words, the territorial base, at least for the majority of actors, changed from an underdeveloped region within Turkey to a colonized interstate region, spanning four nation states – namely Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. In the eyes of activists, Kurds were not only deprived of cultural and linguistic rights, they suffered from national suppression and needed national liberation.

Once can discern three main reasons for this shift. First, the change in the discourse and context of Marxism, from developmentalism, which was introduced mainly by Kemalist cadres at the beginning of the 1960s, to a wide array of issues including most notably, the national question. Second, the international environment – most notably the impact of the Kurdish rebellion led by

43 See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 54-55.

44 For a list of pro-Kurdish publishing houses and the materials they published, see Appendix C: The Lists of Published Books by Pro-Kurdish Publishing Houses (1971-1984). The list is comprised of the period between 1971 and 1984. Before 1971, there were not such publishing houses, except some privately published periodicals.

Mulla Mustafa Barzani, that achieved an autonomy agreement with the Iraqi regime in March 1970, was reimplemented in 1974, and finally collapsed in March 1975. In addition, competition throughout the region between the United States and the Soviet Union for alliances with regional and local actors served as a promise of international support. Third, the new generational unit of the emerging '68'ers repented from the "constitutionalist framework" offered by the TİP and the '58'ers. Disheartened by the response they received from the state and by intragroup competition, they saw a "revolutionary potential" that they eagerly believed they could lead.

In addition to the chaotic situation in Turkey, Kurdish activism was largely influenced by regional and international events: Notably, the collapse of the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq after the Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran in March 1975, which resulted in the formation of the YNK (the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), and the rise of Jalal Talabani, who wanted to form alliances with Kurdish circles in Turkey. Additionally, the Iranian Revolution of 1979, after which Kurds took up arms and fought for four years against the newly founded Islamic Republic of Iran was significant. While Kurdish activism in the region underwent serious splits in terms of its armed activities and experienced serious schisms, Kurdish activism in Turkey was preparing to follow the same path, albeit with limited knowledge of what was happening in the region.

According to Hroch, national movements which results in fully-formed nations experience the following during Phase B:

> [A] new range of activists emerged, who now sought to win over as many of their ethnic group as possible to the project of creating a future nation, by patriotic agitation to "awaken" national consciousness among them—at first usually without notable success (in one sub-stage), but later (in another sub-stage) finding a growing reception.[45]

Kurdish activism is both similar and different compared to the case studies of Hroch. Most importantly, Kurdish activism of the 1970s did not position itself to "awaken" just national consciousness. The quest was to bring about a

45 Miroslav Hroch, "From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation," 10.

socialist revolution, even though it, in theory, would include all "workers and oppressed peoples and nations of the world." It seems like a paradoxical mindset, because the Kurdish ethnoregional movement and its actors were for the most part socialist in form and nationalist in content. In other words, they organized within Kurdish society and their prime point of reference was the "liberation" of the Kurdish nation, while they fit these contents within a socialist framework. For example, the T'deDKP/KİP, together with thirty-eight offshoot associations of the DDKDs and 35,000 members, was the largest grass roots actor of the late 1970s, bearing a striking resemblance to the predominantly Turkish Devrimci Yol – suffering the same fate after the September 12, 1980 coup, which is to say a sudden diminish of the group.

Regarding Phase B of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement, in line with Hroch's case studies, the reception of Kurdish activism by the masses grew in strength, the fact that it was typically confined to small circles of students notwithstanding. Although Cengiz Güneş asserts, without enough evidence, that Kurdish "discourse was disseminated to the wider Kurdish society through the magazines that they published,"[46] seventy percent of the society was illiterate, and most journals were circulated only among activists of each group or other groups. Finally, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement generally ushered in an era of both socialist and patriotic agitation, as is discernible in the large body of publications by Kurdish activists.

The Kurdish activism of the 1970s was mainly led by the generational unit of the '68'ers who were in their early thirties, the majority of the foot soldiers and, to a lesser degree, leading members were composed of the '78'ers, who were in their early twenties. As underscored throughout the following section, the formation of each circle, group, and political party, formed by Kurdish activists, presented a mix of the generational units of the '68'ers and '78'ers, while the '58'ers remained mostly absent. The '58'ers either joined newly established political parties formed by former friends – as was the case when Tarık Ziya Ekinci affiliated with the SDP of Mehmet Ali Aybar, and Naci Kutlay affiliated with the CHP. Of course, the majority of '58'ers, among them

46 Cengiz Güneş, "Explaining the PKK's Mobilization of the Kurds in Turkey: Hegemony, Myth and Violence," *Ethnopolitics: Formerly Global Review of Ethnopolitics,* 12:3, (2013), 250.

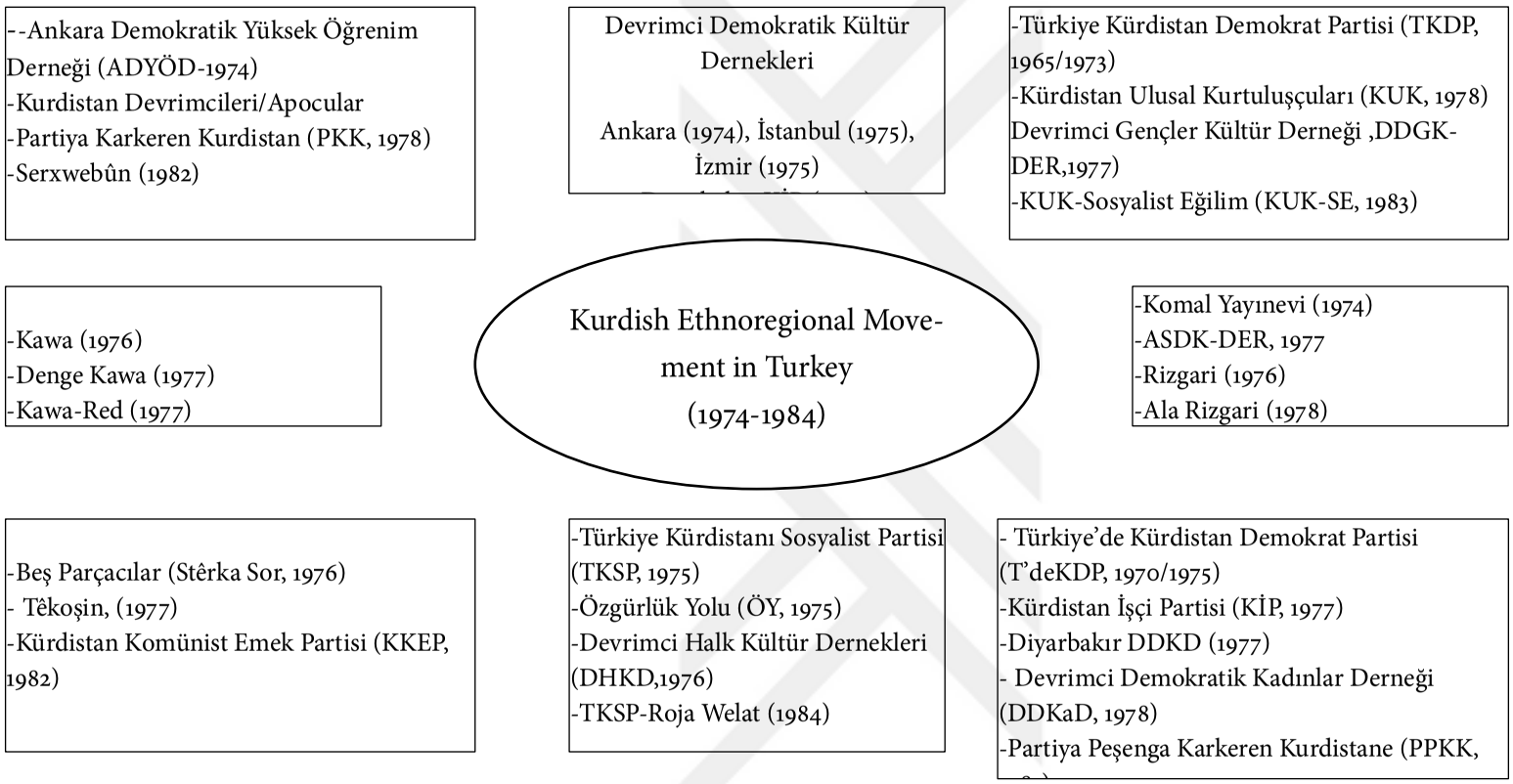
Musa Anter, simply took a back seat. The chapter now provides a descriptive account of the Kurdish actors starting with the first DDKD, which was opened in Ankara on 15 May 1974.

## § 3.3 Old and New: "Revolutionary Potential" and Different Actors of the Kurdish Activism in the 1970s

The most salient feature of Phase B or the moment of maneuver is the plethora of actors. To put each actor into the relevant categories, Figure 3 provides a comprehensive family tree of each actor, factional splits, and publications.[47] Although it might seem daunting to engage with such a disarray of actors and publications, it is important. Many students simply use the various groups, circles and parties interchangeably and thereby ignore the cacophony of voices. Differentiation based on the organizational structures of actors and then on ideological differentiation is employed to provide the classification. At the center, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement signifies the overall activism of all actors, while the rectangular boxes contain the individual elements of each actor, including associations, publications, and political parties. Each is examined separately in the following sections.

47 See Appendix A.

Figure 3.1 Actors of the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey (1974-1984)



The pattern of how different actors of the Kurdish activism organized and recruited followers is dealt with in the next chapter, so here I only touch upon the issue of the multiplicity of actors. The split and schisms experienced within Kurdish activism in the last part of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s were not idiosyncratic. As was the case with other socialist and communist groups, for example in Iran,[48] or in the predominantly Turkish socialist and communists groups[49], which experienced more than three dozen splits in the late 1970s, Kurdish activism concurrently produced several actors. In the Kurdish case, one of the main reasons can be explained by the fact that especially in the early 1970s, the political space was empty of actors. The findings of my fieldwork demonstrate that, as soon as imprisoned activists were released in 1974, everyone could see the void. The first groups and parties formed immediately thereafter, to fill the void and taking the lead over what they saw as "revolutionary potential" (*devrimci potansiyel),* as the principle "first come first served."

Also, the immediate grouping was a result of the way past events were interpreted, and how they looked at the revolutionary potential of the future or, as activists used to call it, "ideological differences." With regard to former, the killings of the two Saits was a critical point in addition to contrary perspective on legality as the only way to organize the masses. Ideology played a definite role in the alignment of different groups as discussed later, it was virtually treated as a "new religion." In short, the TKSP/ÖY and KİP/DDKD/PPKK represented the Soviet camp, while the Kava/Dengê Kawa (Red Kawa), and the ephemeral Beş Parçacılar, a splinter of the similarly Maoist Halkın Kurtuluşu represented the Maoist camp. Other groups, such as Komal/Rizgari/Ala Rizgari and the PKK abstained from such political polarization, though both regarded themselves as Marxist and Leninist – the former being labeled Trotskyist and the latter Stalinist.

Without exception, the adherents of the Soviet camp were antagonistic towards the Maoists and the pro-Barzani TKDP. Mulla Mustafa Barzani was regarded a "collaborator of imperialism" fighting against the then pro-Soviet

48 Alaolmolki, "The New Iranian Left," 219.

49 Samim, "The Left," 170.

Ba'th party of Iraq with the help of "capitalists," while the much more influential YNK was seen as a bridge for reaching the region and the Soviet camp. This factionalism around big camps, especially when one recalls that most of these activists were closely acquainted with each other and sometimes acted in concert. Moreover, new activists from all segments of Kurdish society were being recruited, and together with rapid urbanization and the increasing number of students, '68'ers saw a great potential to bring about their "revolution. " That is one of the underlying reasons behind the emergence of several circles and groups in Kurdish activism: A potential that no other circle or group wished to share with others. And of course, newcomers kept arriving, even after most strategic decisions were taken by the those who occupied the scene first, as will be explained in the next chapter in relation to intra-Kurdish factionalization.

Organizationally, Kurdish activism between 1974 and 1984 can be classified into two main categories, although they cannot be precisely separated, due to the mobility of actors as individuals and in terms of ideological adherence. First, political parties had "organizational" means – such as loose or rigid political party structure, party programs, and statutes with a hierarchical distribution of roles. For example, the TKDP (Türkiye Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi or Kurdistan Democrat Party of Turkey), the TKSP (Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi or Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey), the KİP (Kürdistan İşçi Partisi or the Workers' Party of Kurdistan), the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers' Party), and the KKEP (Kürdistan Komünist Emek Partisi or Communist Labor Party of Kurdistan) were among the first groups to form (listed here in chronological order). The second category consists of "idea" circles or groups, which lack the organizational means described above, and instead are organized around publishing houses or periodicals and have a non-hierarchical distribution of roles. For instance, Komal/Rizgari/Ala Rizgari (Liberation/the Flag of Liberation), Kava/Dengê Kawa/Red Kawa, Beş Parçacılar, and Tekoşin are the embodiment of this category.

It should be noted that there was a transition from first category to the second. The PKK, for instance, was an idea circle from 1972 until 1978 and not

an organization, as Kemal Pir stated in his defense in court in Diyarbakır.[50] And it was transformed into a political party in 1978. Similarly, the Rizgari as well as the Ala Rizgari movements can be regarded as idea circles rather than political parties or organizations. Other circles, such as Kava/Dengê Kawa-Red Kawa, Beş Parçacılar, and Tekoşin were neither organizations nor political parties.[51] Finally, as will be demonstrated in the following sections, the KUK (Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları or the National Liberators of Kurdistan), a dissentient circle within the TKDP, was neither a party of its own nor an organization, it fit more precisely into the second category of an idea circle or a group. Finally, when chronological order is followed, the PKK, in contrast with general opinion, is not a latecomer. By the time it was established as a political party, many circles such as the Rizgari, Ala Rizgari, Dengê Kawa, Red Kawa, Tekoşin, KUK, and KÖÖ had yet to become political parties. [52]

In a rare attempt to clarify the confusion about the actors of the 1970s, Joost Jongerden and Ahmet Akkaya classify them as follows:

> Looking at the backgrounds of these parties, we may classify them as follows. First, there were the political parties established under the hegemony of or inspired by the Kurdistan Democratic Party KDP (and later also the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan YNK) from Iraq, such as the TKDP and is successors KUK and KİP, and the left wing cleavages of Kawa, Rizgari and Ala Rizgari. Second, there was the Türkiye İşçi Partisi TİP (the Workers Party of Turkey), to which Kawa, Rizgari and Ala Rizgari were sympathetic. The TKSP was very close to the legal left, its leader Kemal Burkay had been a prominent member of the TİP. Third, there were Tekoşin, Stêrka Sor and the PKK, which had their roots in the (illegal) revolutionary left in Turkey.[53]

However, this classification is untenable in many ways and exemplifies the confusion mentioned above. First of all Kawa, Rizgari and KUK were not

50 Kemal Pir, "Savunma," *Serxwebun*, Issue:3, March 1982, Issue:4, April 1982.

51 Gündoğan, *Kawa Davası Savunması*, 20-21.

52 For an annotated chronology, see the chronology provided previously.

53 Jongerden and Akkaya, "Born from the Left," 228-229.

political parties,[54] and they were positioned independently of as well as against the two "hegemonic or inspirational" parties, namely the KDP and YNK. Regarding the second category, it is evident that none of the groups mentioned –Kawa, Rizgari and Ala Rizgari – were sympathetic to the TİP; on the contrary, they attacked parties like the TİP in their publications. As will be discussed, the only party that had any sympathy for the TİP in the 1970s was the TKSP, and even that was insignificant.[55] With respect to the third category, which is the main subject of their study, it is true that Beş Parçacılar, Tekoşin, and the PKK emerged from the Dev-Genç tradition, specifically from the THKP-C and THKO groups.

The ideological backdrop of Kurdish actors, as mentioned above, had three main sources – namely the TKDP, T'deKDP, TİP, and Dev-Genç,[56] and two focal points – Kurdish identity and socialist revolution.[57] Akkaya points out seven main blocks: The TKDP, TKSP, TKDP/KİP, PKK, Rizgari, Kawa, and Tekoşin.[58] He does not include the splinter group, Beş Parçacılar, but it represented another block that should be added. Furthermore, Harun Ercan, in his thesis on the Kurdish movement in the 1970s, asserts that Kurdish activism "took place on three axes; [1] those actions burgeoning from Marxist-Leninist ideology of the movement, [2] collective actions about Kurdish ethno-nationalism and [3] movement activities corresponding to the field of labor politics."[59] Blending three lines of activism into one so-called Kurdish activism is problematic, although the first two axes were intertwined, the final line is too inclusive.

In line with the discussion above, this chapter describes of the political actors of the 1970s. A general amnesty was granted by parliament on 26 April 1974 at the initiative of Bülent Ecevit and CHP. Although the amnesty did not initially include all activists, on 14 May 1974 around 100 who had been arrested

54 For example, see Ruşen Arslan, *Cim Karnında Nokta: Anılar* (Istanbul: Doz, 2006), 265.

55 Seyhmus Diken, *Amidalilar; Surgundeki Diyarbekirliler* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2007), 63.

56 Ali Kemal Özcan earlier drew the same concludion. See Özcan, *Turkey's Kurds,* 88.

57 See Appendix A,where each group and publication is indicated with their background.

58 Akkaya, "Kürt hareketinin örgütlenme süreci olarak 1970'ler," 88-120.

59 Ercan, "Dynamics of Mobilization and Radicalization," 170.

in the DDKOs and TKDP cases were released.[60] In addition, several important figures who had left Turkey and escaped imprisonment, such as Kemal Burkay and Necmettin Büyükkaya could return to Turkey.

As mentioned above, many of these activists preferred to take a back seat, and the younger generation was in search of political activism. [61] At this point, experience of prison and especially interaction among activists had already significantly changed the younger activists. For example, Abdullah Öcalan, who was released in October 1972 after seven months of imprisonment not related to the DDKO and TKDP cases, stresses the importance of the time he spent in prison.[62] Meanwhile, activists who were released after three years and had been sentenced to one thousand years of imprisonment changed even more and were convinced of the direction they would go. But there was a lack of organization. The earlier TİP and DDKOs had closed and the two political parties, whose leaders had been killed, the TKDP and T'deKDP, were dormant.

As a response to this political void, some activists met in Muş soon after their release to discuss what they ought to do The group became known as *Rizgari*.[63] Their conclusion and the new political strategy were two-fold. First, a publishing house was to be established followed by a periodical that would generate an "ideological construct" for the future. [64]

The Komal publishing house and the journal *Rizgari* were products of this strategy. However, the first initiative was the establishment of the DDKD (*Devrimci Demokratik Kültür Derneği* or the Revolutionary Democratic

60 Some of the activists were: Mümtaz Kotan, İbrahim Güçlü, Yümnü Budak, Nezir Şeminkanlı, Faruk Aras, Ferit Uzun, Canip Yıldırım, Musa Anter, Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, İhsan Aksoy, Sait Elçi, Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, Mehmet Mehdi Zana, Ruşen Arslan, Edip Karahan, Mehmet Naci Kutlay, Tarık Ziya Ekinci, and Niyazi Tatlıcı. See Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası*, 74-75.

61 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler,* Cilt 2. (Roja Nu Yayınları, 2009), 5.

62 Marcus, *Blood and Belief,* 25.

63 According to Ruşen Aslan, they were İbrahim Güçlü, Şerafettin Kaya, Mümtaz Kotan, Nezir Şemikanlı, Nusret Kılıçarslan, Battal Bate, Hüseyin Musa Sağnıç (Feqi), İsmail Beşikçi, Zülküf Şahin, Fikret Şahin, Yılmaz Balkaç, Kazım Baba, Ali Beyköylü, Mahmut Kılınç and Ruşen Aslan. See Arslan, *Cim Karnında Nokta: Anılar,* 264.

64 Ibid., 265.

Cultural Association) in Ankara on 15 May 1974. The Ankara DDKD was established by activists, who had yet to establish their own circles or groups, comprised of persons such as Ali Taşar, Mustafa Nuri Aksakal, İkram Delen, Rüştü Mütevellizade, Ahmet Göksü, Mehmet Şahin, Rifat İlhan, Bülent Şahin, Hamit Geylani, Hazım Kılıç, and Sabri Kont.[65] In a nutshell, the Ankara DDKD generated the TKSP/ÖY, Komal/Rizgari, KİP/DDKD, and Kava/Kawa groups. It is true that the DDKOs were envisioned to serve similar goals as the DDKOs, especially around the Rizgari group which dominated the Ankara DDKD, after most of the individuals broke away to catch the revolutionary potential independently. However, another important issue was the ongoing pressure of the state, which pushed activists towards different paths. The Ankara DDKD was closed by the court on 24 January 1976.[66] The closure was followed by the arrest of twelve members who would spend six months in prison.[67]

It should be stressed that the DDKDs were not federations, nor did they have any organic connection among themselves. These short-lived, early initiatives to organize "revolutionary potential" under a single organization lasted too short a time to have an effect. Furthermore, the founders and managing members were not ideologically unified.[68] The second DDKD was established by ten activists. One of the founders later affiliated with the KİP, Mahmut Çıkman argued that the Istanbul DDKD adopted the DDKOs' ideas.[69] The Istanbul DDKD was also short lived and was dissolved in February 1976. The last example of a DDKD was the outcome of renaming Doğu Yardımlaşma Kültür Derneği (Eastern Fraternal and Cultural Association) in Izmir to İz-DDKD (short for Izmir DDKD). One of the founders, Fuat Önen states that association started with around sixty members and was simply reduced to six activists, with no ideological unity.[70]

65 *Özgürlük Yolu*, Issue: 13-14, (June-July, 1976), 87.

66 *Özgürlük Yolu*, Issue:9, February, 1976, 96.

67 İkram Delen, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, February 24, 2011.

68 *Jina Nu*, Issue:2, February1979, p.58.

69 *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar* (Bromma: Jina Nu Yayınları, 2006), 57.

70 Fuat Önen, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, May 19, 2011.

The three DDKDs were all short-lived and could not bring together Kurdish activists under one roof. These associations should not be confused with the DDKDs that bourgeoned in the late 1977. The latter were offshoots of the KİP, and unlike the previous ones, specifically served that one political party. The first activists around the Ankara and Istanbul DDKDs were closely acquainted. As Nurettin Elhüseyni, one of the leading activists of the Dengê Kawa circle points out, political cleavages appeared abruptly.[71] As mentioned above, although the DDKDs of Ankara and Istanbul generated the TKSP/ÖY, Komal/Rizgari, KİP/DDKD, and the Kava/Kawa groups, they were not preferred by other Kurdish activists in search of political refuge. For example, Mazlum Doğan, who was one of the founders and one of the most important members of the PKK, argued that he also attended the organizational meeting of the DDKD in Ankara, but he did not like the other activists, considering them bourgeois nationalists.[72]

## § 3.4 The TİP Tradition: The TKSP and Özgürlük Yolu

The TKSP (Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi or Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey), is also called *Özgürlük Yolu* (Path of Freedom, in Turkish) is known by the names of its publications, Burkaycılar (Adherents of Burkay) and Riya Azadi (Path of Freedom, in Kurdish), referring to its late party publication, and was renamed the PSK (Partîya Sosyalîst a Kurdistan or Socialist Party of Kurdistan) in 1993. It was originally established on 1 January 1975 clandestinely by Kemal Burkay, Ziya Acar, Mehdi Zana, Yılmaz Çamlıbel, Veysel Çamlıbel, Faruk Aras, and İhsan Aksoy. The party was founded at the home of Ziya Acar who was among the 49'ers in 1959 and a founder of the DDKOs in 1969.[73] According to Burkay, the TKSP was his brainchild. He wrote the party program

71 Nurettin Elhüseyni, interview by the author, via internet calling and tape recording, February 15, 2012.

72 *Serxwebûn*, Issue:5, May 1982, 8.

73 Ziya Acar, interview by the author, tape recording, Paris, December 6, 2011.

and the statute that defined the TKSP as the political party of the working class and a poor peasantry.[74]

The party has been closely associated with the personality of its leader Kemal Burkay, who was born in 1937, was a lawyer by profession, was affiliated with the TİP in the 1960s, and ran in the elections of 1965 and 1969 but was not elected.[75] The TKSP is classified under the TİP tradition not only because the founders came from that tradition, but because the party postulated the same goals as those of the TİP. Furthermore, one of TKSP founder Mehdi Zana was a also founder of the Second TİP in 1975 and Kemal Burkay joined the TİP.[76] While Burkay notes that Mehdi Zana was from the TKSP and Zana's was election as mayor in Diyarbakır in 1977 was a TSKP success, he barely mention affiliation with the TİP. Burkay, however, states that "they saw the TİP as a disguise for camouflaging their activities."[77]

The TKSP was a clandestine pro-Soviet party, allying itself with pro-Soviet parties, such as the TKP, TİP, and the CHP (as discussed earlier, the latter was recognized by the Soviet Union as the only force able to stop fascism.) On the Kurdish side, it had close albeit intermittent relations with the KİP and the KUK splinter of the TKDP, both of which were also pro-Soviet. Similarly, together with the KİP and the KUK, the TKSP was sympathetic to the YNK, the splinter of the KDP formed in 1975 and led by Jalal Talabani. It frequently gave coverage to the YNK in its publications. Together with the KİP and KUK, it formed the UDG, (Ulusal Demokratik Güçbirliği or National Democratic Front) in 1980 as a platform to unify the three Kurdish actors opposed to the

74 Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 2*, 9.

75 As already noted, Kemal Burkay has published a two-volume memoir. His controversial memoir is among the most problematic sources, especially in terms of other actors. Burkay attacks almost everyone, using intemparate language for all who grew apart from him. For a selection of responses to his memoir from former fellows and founders of the TKSP, see Faruk Aras, "Anılarla Karartılan Tarih" (13.01.2010), available online http://www.kurdistana-bakur.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=3425: and İhsan Aksoy, "Kemal Burkay´a zorunlu bir yanıt," available online: http://www.serbesti.net/showentry.php?sNo=14990, accessed December 4, 2014.

76 Mehdi Zana, interview by the author, tape recording, Berlin, February 11, 2011.

77 Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler*, *Cilt 2*, 18.

PKK. Because these examples of collaboration are further discussed in the next chapter (under the subheading of Intra-Kurdish Factionalization), I shall not elaborate on the contents of the UDG here. It did not last long due to disagreements among the involved parties, and according to the TKSP, it failed despite all their efforts because of the two former parties of the front.[78]

The TKSP positioned itself within the "anti-fascist camp,"[79] which was mostly shared by the pro-Soviet camp. As already mentioned, the party identified itself as the party of the working class and the poor peasantry. In 1975, the party statute stated that it is a "Marxist and Leninist political organization, with the ultimate goal to end all kind of exploitation in Kurdistan of Turkey and thereby to construct a socialist type society."[80] Although the territorial reference point of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement changed to a larger context for some actors, the TKSP limited itself to Turkey and disavowed aims for a "Greater Kurdistan;" instead the party demanded a "national-democratic front."[81]

Kemal Burkay left Turkey in 1972 and spent two years in Europe where he was in touch with associations established by socialists from Turkey, especially the Hevra (Together, an association of revolutionary Kurds of Turkey, which paved the way for the establishment of the Komkar (Kürdistan İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu or Federation of Kurdistan Workers' Associations in 1979). In addition, he published two books under the pseudonym Hıdır Murat –titled *Türkiye Şartlarına Ters Düşen Bir Tez: Milli Demokratik Devrim* and *Türkiye Şartlarında Kürt Halkı'nın Kurtuluş Mücadelesi* – in which he formulated the "colonial status of Kurdistan," arguing that "the Kurdish nation lives in Turkey's Kurdistan [and that] Turkish bourgeois governments made Kurdistan a

78 *Riya Azadi (Organa Komita Merkezi ya Partiya Sosyalist a Kurdistana Tirkiye),* Issue:1, March 21, 1982.

79 *Özgürlük Yolu*, Issue:1, June 1975, p. 3.

80 TKSP Statute: (1975), in Burkay, 481, also *Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi, TKSP Programı*, (Stockholm: TKSP Yayınları, 1985), 15.

81 *Riya Azadi,* Issue:1, 1

colony."[82] The same work was later published in the first issue of *Özgürlük Yolu* in 1975 under the pseudonym C. Aladağ. The main disagreement that the TKSP had with most other Kurdish activists was not how it defined " national question of a colonized people," but rather its close connections to other predominantly Turkish pro-Soviet groups. As such, it was argued that "the workers and Marxists of the oppressed nation should put the interest of the working class at the forefront, especially if secession would damage the workers' movement."[83]

The TKSP, with its publications in both Turkish and Kurdish, devoted significant coverage to translated works into Kurdish. TKSP published forty-four issues of *Özgürlük Yolu* from 1 June 1975 to January 1979 that appealed to general readership. *Riya Azadi,* which was first published in 1982, also regarded as the continuation of *Özgürlük Yolu,* though it was actually the publication of the TKSP's central committee. As stated above, the party was closely associated with Kemal Burkay as were its publications. For example, Burkay states that he wrote all the articles in the first and second issues of *Özgürlük Yolu* under different names, except for the editorial note by İhsan Aksoy and a translated article by Hüseyin Sarıtaş.[84] Additionally, the TKSP published several books through its publishing house.[85]

In the context of the 1970s, the TKSP can be regarded as one of the largest actors after the KİP/DDKD. The party was secret and there was sometimes confusion about whether it existed. For many followers, the TKSP, Özgürlük Yolu, and the offshoot associations the DHKDs (Devrimci Halk Kültür Derneği or Revolutionary People's Cultural Association) were synonymous, if indeed they knew that the TKSP existed. The party's name was revealed in March 1980 up to then, no more than a few dozen people knew of its existence.

82 Hıdır Murat (Kemal Burkay), *Türkiye Şartlarında Kürt Halkı'nın Kurtuluş Mücadelesi* (Zurich: Ronahi Yayınları, 1973); *Türkiye Şartlarına Ters Düşen Bir Tez: Milli Demokratik Devrim,* (Zurich, Ronahi Yayınları, 1973).

83 *Özgürlük Yolu*, Issue:5, June 1975, p.11.

84 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 2*, 9.

85 See Appendix B for the list of books published by Özgürlük Yolu-Hevra-Ronahi-TKSP Yayınları.

The DHKDs, first founded in Ankara and Istanbul, had more than twenty branches in 1977.[86]

The DHKDs played a crucial role in gathering people, recruiting new cadres to work to circulate its publications such as *Özgürlük Yolu,* and of course spreading Kemal Burkay's and the TKSP's ideas to among the youth.[87] In addition, the TKSP was active within the TÖB-DER, TÜM-DER, and DİSK, controlling several local branches under the name *Özgürlük Grubu*.

Finally, the TKSP also published *Roja Welat* (Sun of Fatherland), a biweekly political and cultural newspaper. The newspaper was in both Turkish and Kurdish, first appeared on 17 September 1977, was published in twelve issues until the end of 1978, and was later was published by a dissident group, led by Zeki Adsız and Urfan Alpaslan. The first disagreement within the party occurred between Kemal Burkay and İhsan Aksoy, one of the founders and a member of its central committee, which led to his breaking away from the party.[88] He was followed by Mehdi Zana, as according to Cahit Mervan, more pro-Kurdish individuals left the Party. [89] However, disagreement in 1982 led to political and ideological differences and created a factional split, namely the *TKSP-Devrimci Muhalefet*, they later publish the *TKSP-Roja Welat* again, resuming it publication in 1984.[90] Because each actor will be reintroduced and later in the final sections of this chapter as well as in the next chapter and their standpoints regarding various issues will be discussed, I shall continue to another important actor: The Komal/Rizgari/Ala Rizgari group.

86 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 2*, 60.

87 Şevki Hüseyin Kızılocak, interview by the author, tape recording, Copenhagen, March 1, 2011.

88 See *BÎR*, Issue 5.

89 Cahit Mervan, interview by the author, tape recording, Brussels, December 8, 2011.

90 For Zeki Adsız' biography and publications of Roja Welat, which was published after 1982 see http://www.zekiadsiz.com/hayati.htm, accessed December 4, 2014.

## § 3.5 The DDKO Tradition: İsmail Beşikçi's Factor, Komal, Rizgari and Ala Rizgari

Without doubt, İsmail Beşikçi was the earliest Turkish defender of the Kurdish question, writing on the issue in a way that challenged the "official ideology" of the Turkish state and, and as a result he faced several years of imprisonment.[91] Beşikçi made contact with Kurdish youth before the *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni*, when he was an assistant at the Atatürk University in Erzurum from which he was later fired for his "separatist" activities. However, Beşikçi did not stop; instead, he became more interested and determined to turn the Kemalist denial of the existence of the Kurds upside down. He was fortunate to meet with circles of Kurdish writers and activists during the *Eastern Meetings* in 1967, which he observed and about which he wrote for the journal *Forum*, and later for a book. In December 1969, when he held seminars at the Ankara DKKOs, he had adequate information and experience about the real situation of the Kurds.

Beşikçi received attention from various parties including American diplomats. Under the title "Criminal Portrait: İsmail Beşikçi," dated 24 August 1972, an American diplomat noted with regard to the Kurdish question that "the important thing is that the Turkish government proves through its actions that it perceived the matter of Eastern Anatolia's ethic Kurds to be very, very serious . . . the official answer is that on the one hand it does and on the other hand it does not exist… This is not as illogical as it may seem.."[92] What the report meant was that the Turkish state knew what it was doing, which was forcing "assimilation," as discussed in Chapter 1.

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91 His doctoral dissertation on the nomadic Alikan Tribe, which was influenced by a developmentalist and neo-Kemalist perspective was published as a book in 1969, titled *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni; Sosyo-ekonomik ve Etnik Temeller*. For a comprehensive biographical work, see Barış Ünlü and Ozan Değer, eds, *İsmail Beşikçi*. Also see Martin van Bruinessen, "Ismail Beşikçi: Turkish Sociologist, Critic of Kemalism, and Kurdologist," *The Journal of Kurdish Studies*, vol. V (2003-04 [2005]); for a documantary film, see Ahmet Soner, *İsmail Beşikçi Belgeseli (36 Kitap = 13 Cezaevi),* DVD Documentary, 1997.

92 Introduced and annotated by Rifat N. Bali, *Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s – Through the Reports of American Diplomats* (Istanbul: Libra Kitapçılık, 2010), 247.

During the time, Beşikçi was in prison with the DDKOs defenders, *Ocak Komünü*, and both sides learned from each other. First, Beşikçi was a trained scholar who easily formulated his ideas on paper and wrote lengthy books, while most Kurdish activists lacked those skills and had little information about the history of Turkey and Kurds. What Beşikçi did was different than in his first book, in which he used a timid language and made only vague demands in support of the Kurdish issue.[93] He insisted that Kurdish activists plead in Kurdish, but the idea was rejected because, from the point of view of the activists, of the primacy of socialist and revolutionary principles.[94] However, their close relation continued, and İsmail Beşikçi's influence as both mentor and activist was substantial with respect to foundation of Komal Yayınevi in 1974 and the publication of the journal *Rizgari* in 1976.[95] He was initially on editorial board of *Rizgari*, but stopped to focus on his writings.[96]

Secondly, although the KİP/DDKDs are known as the "heirs of Dr. Şivan" (or the *Şivancılar)*, the influence of Dr. Şivan is as important as that of Beşikçi regarding the *Rizgari* mindset. After the split in 1978 with Ala Rizgari (Flag of Liberation) – the majority of remaining *Rizgari* writers and activists came from the DDKOs,[97] more specifically from among pro-T'deKDP members within the DDKOs. Among the founders of the Komal publishing house and *Rizgari*, Orhan Kotan, İkram Delen, Şerafettin Kaya, Feqi Hüseyin Sağnıç, Ruşen Arslan, Mahmut Kılıç, and Zülküf Şahin were all members of the T'deKDP.[98]

93 By comparision, Beşikçi used a similar tone with one of his professors, İbrahim Yasa. See Ibrahim Yasa, *Türkiye'nin Toplumsal Yapısı ve Temel Sorunları* (Ankara: Sevinc Matbaasi, Turkiye ve Orta Dogu Amme Idaresi Enstitusu Yayinlari, No;119, 1970).

94 Barış Ünlü, "İsmail Beşikçi Fenomeni: Bir Parrhesiastes'in Oluşumu," in Barış Ünlü, Ozan Değer, 25.

95 İkram Delen, interview by the author.

96 Renowned Kurdish author Mehmet Uzun also was on the editorial board together with İsmail Beşikçi. See Mehmet Uzun, *Bir Dil Yaratmak* (Istanbul: İthaki, 2008).

97 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, May 23, 2011.

98 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author. Also, see İbrahim Güçlü, "Kürdistan'da ulusal örgütlenme tarihine bakma: Rizgarî-Ala Rizgarî (III)," available online at http://www.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=28903.

At a meeting at Şerafettin Kaya's house in Muş, it was decided that the group first needed to construct "a national ideology," through a publication that would use "plain language" to define the Kurdish question,[99] in a socialist framework.[100] Having already taken a significant initiative in the establishment of the DDKD in Ankara, the group established Komal Yayınevi in late 1974, accelerating the establishment of the TKSP and the publication of *Özgürlük Yolu,* discussed in the previous section. Komal/Rizgari and Ala Rizgari fall into the circles and groups category and were not political parties.[101]

Although the PKK is usually regarded as the first and only anti-system movement, Komal publications, unlike the TKSP, uncompromisingly challenged and stood up to the Kemalist system and official ideology. Owned by Orhan Kotan and Mümtaz Kotan, who were brothers and the minds behind the foundation of the DDKOs, Komal and later Dengê Komal published more than thirty critical books during this period.[102] The first book published was the court file of the DDKO Trial in January 1975, which was followed by Dr. Şivan's *Irak Kürt Halk Hareketi ve Baas Irkçılığı* in May, and İsmail Beşikçi's court file, *Bilimsel Yöntem, Üniversite Özerkliği ve Demokratik Toplum İlkeleri Açısından İsmail Beşikçi Davası,* in June. Its list of books, including Zaki's *History of Kurdistan*, and the controversy they caused resembled the reaction to Musa Anter's Kurdish *Qimil* in *İleri Yurt* in 1959 and *Deng* in 1963, which were discussed in the previous chapter.

The first issue of *Rizgari,* a bilingual political and cultural journal, was published on 21 March 1976, a day deliberately chosen to coincide with the

99 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author.

100 Ruşen Arslan, interview by the author, via email, June 4, 2011.

101 Recep Maraşlı claims that in 1982 the group decided to establish a centra proletarian party. However, the party was not established and the remaining Rizgari activists organized the Rizgari Committee for Organization. The party was eventually established in 1987. See *Rizgari Siyasi Program: Partiya Rizgariya Kurdistan*, 1987: *Kürdistan Kurtuluş Partisi, Siyasi Program,* no publication place.

102 For a full list of published books, see Appendix C.

Kurdish New Year, Newroz.[103] The last issue appeared in 1979, and it numbered nine issues all together.[104] Not surprisingly, the first issue of *Rizgari* was confiscated by the authorities, and the editor in charge, Mehmet Uzun, was arrested. The journal dealt with the foundation of the Kemalist regime in Turkey, in line with the idea discussed in the previous chapter that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk "played the Kurds."[105] As already mentioned, *Rizgari*'s mission was to construct a national ideology based on socialist ideology. However, the national aspect was far more dominant than the socialist one, which provoked "revolutionary" Kurdish groups to call it petty bourgeois nationalism.[106]

The second and third issues of *Rizgari* came out much later, because of pressure put on it by the authorities however, this motivated the group and the publication even more. The second and third issues argued that "Kurdistan is a colony, divided among four nation-states in the Middle East. Because it is divided within the border of four separate nation-states, it is an international colony."[107] The political developments around the Kurdish rebellion, led by Mull Mustafa Barzani, had a great impact on almost all publications of the time, most notably *Rizgari*.[108]

In addition, although the association of ASDK-DERs and was denied in the court hearing in Diyarbakır,[109] the group actually found the ASKD-DER (Anti-Sömürgeci Demokratik Kültür Derneği or Anti-Colonial Democratic Cultural Association) to appeal to wider circles of students and youth.[110] In

103 Another journal, *Rizgariya Kurdistan,* which was published in Sweden between 1979 and 1980, was not related to *Rizgari* but rather a publication by the *Ala Rizgari* faction.

104 Later, fifteen issues of the journal were published between 1987 and 1988.

105 *Rizgari*, Issue: 1, 21 March 1976, 72-98.

106 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author.

107 *Rizgari*, Issue: 3, May 1977, 14.

108 İkram Delen, interview by the author. When the Rizgari circle divided into two in late 1978, one of the main reasons was the alluring offer by Jalal Talabani who needed allies against the KDP.

109 Kürdistan Kurtuluş Partisi (Rizgari), *Diyarbakır Hapishane Raporu 2.Cilt,* (Rizgari Basın/Yayın Merkezi, Temmuz 1989), 385.

110 See *Yekitiya Sosyalist*, (Greece: Dicle Yayınları, 11, 1985), 38-45.

total, nine ASDK-DERs were opened independently[111] in the course of a year – in Ergani, Diyarbakır, Siverek, Ankara, Bitlis, Tatvan, Van, Malazgirt, and Varto.[112] With the establishment of the ASDK-DERs, seven of which later took the side of *Ala Rizgari's* side, as well as with the initiatives by Necmettin Büyükkaya,[113] who had left the KİP and was on good terms with the YNK leader Jalal Talabani, the younger generational unit of *Rizgari* writers, led by İbrahim Güçlü and Hatice Yaşar split in late 1978 and gathered around the journal *Ala Rizgari*, which was published in 1979.[114] Another triggering event behind the *Rizgari-Ala Rizgari* split was the formation of the KİP a year earlier, which many *Rizgari* sympathizers joined. Instead of becoming a political party, the circle instead split into two smaller circles.[115] *Ala Rizgari* had close relations with the YNK, from which it received material aid. After the coup of September 12, 1980, *Ala Rizgari* went directly to areas controlled by the YNK.[116] Later, in 1984, the fragmented circle encountered yet another split into the YSK (Yekitiya Sosyalista Kurdistan or Socialist Union of Kurdistan) led by İbrahim Güçlü and the BK (Berbanga Kurdistan or Dawn of Kurdistan).

## § 3.6 The T'deKDP Tradition: The KİP, Pêşeng, and Diyarbakır-DDKDs

As mentioned above, the T'deKDP and Dr. Şivan had a major impact upon the *Komal/Rizgari/Ala Rizgari* group. In addition, many of the founders were earlier affiliated with the T'deKDP. Yet, *Şivancılar* (Heirs of Şivan) specifically refers to another group that reestablished the T'deKDP in 1975. As much as

111 İbrahim Güçlü and Recep Maraşlı, personal correspondence to the author.

112 In Tatvan and Bitlis, the ASDK-DER branches were not opened but renamed after existed *People's Cultural Associations.*

113 See Ruşen Arslan, *Cim Karnında Nokta: Anılar*, 271.

114 *Ala Rizgari*, Special Issue:1, June 1979, Istanbul. In addition Kürdistan Press published the same journal in Sweden by Orhan Kotan and his friends in 1986 until 1992, numbering 93 issues.

115 İkram Delen, interview by the author.

116 Interview with Hatice Yaşar-(Ala Rizgari Birlik Platformu), in *Kürt Dosyası,* 83-106.

the former emerged from the T'deKDP, the latter also emerged from the DDKOs. For example, three of the most influential founders of the T'deKDP and KİP – namely Ömer Çetin, Necmettin Büyükkaya, and Ahmet Karlı were founders and members of the DDKOs.[117] The T'deKDP remained active after the murders of Dr. Şivan, Hasan Yıkmış, and Hikmet Buluttekin in November 1971. After the amnesty, Ömer Çetin and Necmettin Büyükkaya also came back to Turkey and took part in the Ankara and Istanbul DDKDs, along with the two groups examined earlier. In April 1975, Ömer Çetin, Necmettin Büyükkaya, Ahmet Karlı, Ziya Avcı, and Sait Aydoğmuş decided to resume the activities of the T'deKDP.

According to Hafız Togan, the name of the party was subsequently changed to *Milli Demokratik Devrim Partisi* (National Democratic Revolution Party)[118] which is also noted in court file against it. The reestablished T'deKDP held its founding congress in early 1977, whereas the KİP (Kürdistan İşçi Partisi[119] or Workers' Party of Kurdistan) was founded by Osman Aydın, Ömer Çetin, Ahmet Karlı, Zerruh Vakıf Ahmetoğlu, Eyüp Alacabey, M. Ali Çılgın (Murad Ciwan), Sait Aydoğmuş, M. Şehmus Cibran, İ. Hakkı Mütevellizade, and Ziya Avcı – a combination of '68'ers and '78'ers.[120] The party's secretary was Ömer Çetin, who left the party after his father was assassinated, allegedly by the Kava circle, in 1980. Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, one of the leading activists of the Kava circle and owner of the Kava publishing house after which the circle was named, was affiliated with the reestablished T'deKDP until 1976. The party and its groups were also known as Devrimci Demokratlar (Revolutionary Democrats), and after 1980 as the TSK (Tevgera Şoreşa Kurdistane or Movement of Kurdistan Revolution), and Pêşeng (Avant-garde).

The party defined itself as "a political party of Kurdistan's working class, equipped with Marxism-Leninism, established in Kurdistan of Turkey." In the same camp as the TKSP, the KİP was pro-Soviet. Like its counterpart the TKSP,

117 See Ömer Çetin's plea in 1982. *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar*, 57.

118 Hafız Togan, interview by the author.

119 Although the Turkish translation of the name is the same, the KİP should not be confused with the PKK.

120 *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar*, 530.

KİP was also involved in other organizations such as the TÖB-DER, TÜM-DER, DİSK, and other unions.[121] Furthermore, the KİP/DDKD was for the most part affiliated with the TSİP and had close ties to the TKP. Contrary to what Balli points out, the KİP did not demand autonomy; Dr. Şivan's T'deKDP did that.[122] Thus, although the party program stated that it would implement the right of the Kurdish nation to self-determination, it also stated that it only followed peaceful and democratic means in this political struggle. Finally, "the armed struggle of people was determined in the final stage of the revolutionary purpose." The party envisioned a people's army of workers and peasantry that would launch a long-term people's war.[123]

The party first published *Pêşeng Bo Şoreş,* (Avant-garde of the Revolution), from June 1977 to 1980. It was resumed in 1982 and continued until 1988. In addition, *Jina Nu* (New Life) appeared in October 1979, was published until March 1980, and was resumed in 1984. Early on, Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu broke away followed by Necmettin Büyükkaya, Paşa Uzun, Mahmut Çıkman, and İ.Hakkı Mütevellizade. As mentioned above, Okçuoğlu was affiliated with the Kava, Paşa Uzun and Mahmut Çıkman formed Yekbun (Unity) in 1979, which was ineffective from the beginning and soon dissolved. However, the biggest chasm experienced was after an alleged difference over whether the coup was fascist. While in Syria, the '78'ers within the party, led by M.Ali Çılgın were disheartened by the older generation's direction and took over the party changing its name to the PPKK (Partiya Pêşeng a Karkeri Kurdistan or Avant-garde Workers' Party of Kurdistan) in 1983.[124] After this, the PPKK published *Pêşeng Bo Şoreş, Jina Nu*, and Armanc, the latter of which was first published in 1979 as a publication for readers in Europe. In addition, *Tîrêj* (Light), was published in 1979 supposedly in Kurdish containing articles in the Zaza dialect, too.[125]

121 Mahmut Önder, interview by the author, tape recording, Brussels, December 8, 2011.

122 Balli, *Kürt Dosyası,* 310.

123 *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar*, 76-77.

124 *Peşeng Bo Şoreş*, Issue: 13, December, 1983, is the first issue after the name change.

125 Malmisanij (Mehmet Tayfun), interview by the author, Stockholm, October 25, 2010.

As was the case with the two previous groups, the KİP also established offshoot associations. The late DDKDs were, as already mentioned, not related to the aforementioned independent DDKDs in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. As already discussed, these DDKDs were founded by different activists who later formed their own circles or parties. Mahmut Çıkman, for example, was the head of the Istanbul DDKD in 1976, while the Ankara DDKD was in the hands of *Rizgari.*[126] The first DDKD established by the KİP – on 28 September 1977 – was headquartered in Diyarbakır. Overall, there were thirty-eight branches of the DDKDs by the end of 1978. The associations were dispersed around Diyarbakır, which alone numbered eight as well as in seven other provinces, including Bitlis, Hakkari, and Şırnak.[127] Furthermore, the offices of the journal *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*[128] (Revolutionary Democratic Youth) and the publication of the DDKD, which first appeared in February 1978 in places such as Ankara, Izmir, and Konya-Cihanbeyli, played the same role as the associations.[129] Last but not least, the DDKaD (Devrimci Demokratik Kadınlar Derneği or Revolutionary Democratic Women's Association) was established as a women's organization, resembling the TKP's offshoot, the İKD (İlerici Kadınlar Derneği or Progressive Women Association), which will be discussed in the next chapter in more detail.

126 Vildan Saim Tanrıkulu, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, February 26, 2011.

127 Although in *KİP/DDKD Davası,* only twenty-six branches mentioned, according to *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik* and Vildan Saim Tanrıkulu they were thirty-eight branches in total. 1-DDKD-Diyarbakır Genel Merkezi, 2-Diyarbakır DDKD, 3-Ağrı, 4-Bağlar-Diyarbakır, 5-Başkale-Van, 6-Batman-Siirt, 7-Beşîrî-Siirt, 8-Salat-Bismil- Diyarbakır, 9-Bismil- Diyarbakır, 10-Bitlis, 11-Cizre-Mardin, 12-Çermik- Diyarbakır, 13-Çınar- Diyarbakır,14-Çunguş- Diyarbakır, 15-Derik-Mardin, 16-Dîcle- Diyarbakır, 17-Erciş-Van, 18-Ergani- Diyarbakır, 19-Eruh-Siirt, 20-Gevaş-Van 21-Hakkari, 22-Hanî-Diyarbakır, 23-Iskenderun-Hatay, 24-Kahta-Adıyaman, 25-Kızıltepe-Mardin, 26-Kozluk-Siirt, 27-Kulp/Pasur- Diyarbakır, 28-Meşkînan-Viranşehir-Şanlıurfa, 29-Sason-Siirt, 30-Siirt, 31-Silvan- Diyarbakır, 32-Siverek-Şanlıurfa, 33-Şırnak, 34-Uludere-Şırnak, 35-Urfa, 36-Van, 37-Viranşehir-Şanlıurfa, 38-Yüksekova-Hakkari.

128 *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, Issue:1, February 1978.

129 Murad Ciwan, interview by the author.

## § 3.7 The KDP Tradition: The TKDP and Xebat, TKDP-KUK and KUK-SE

As was the case with the T'deKDP, the TKDP became leaderless and inactive after the killings of Sait Elçi and Sait Kırmızıtoprak. However, in October 1973, the TKDP managed to hold its first congress wherein Derviş Akgül (Derwişê Sado) was elected secretary of the party, a post he kept until 1975. At the time of the congress, there were only four remaining founders, Derviş Akgül, Şakir Epözdemir, Şerafettin Elçi, and Ömer Turhan. In addition, Feqi Hüseyin Sağnıç, who was also affiliated with *Rizgari*, and Sıracettin Ünlü were elected to the central committee of the reestablished TKDP.[130]

A real congress of the party was gathered in 1975 when Derviş Akgül was driven out by newcomers, most notably by Mehmet Ali Dinler and Mustafa Fisli. After the ordinary general meeting held in August 1976, Mehmet Ali Dinler assumed the role of secretary of the party, and Mustafa Fisli was assigned to take charge of press relations. As a last blow to the older generation, Derviş Akgül was expelled from the party after an ordinary general meeting held in October 1977, when around fifteen young, new activists from the '78'ers joined the party. As a result the party lost its old identity after the introduction of a Marxist-Leninist statute.[131]

At the party congress held in 1977, the TKDP turned into a pro-Soviet, Marxist-Leninist party that closely resembled the TKSP and the KİP. The change was also fueled by internal splits experienced by the KDP in Iraq whereby the party criticized itself and promised to adopt a class-based Marxist ideology, under the guidance of the so-called KDP-Interim Committee.[132] In accordance with decisions made at the ordinary meeting of the party in 1976,

130 Zeynelabidîn Zinar, *Jînewariya Derwêşê Sado*, (Stockholm, Pencinar, 2010).

131 T.C. Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı Askeri Savcılığı Diyarbakır, *KUK (Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları) (Diyarbakır, Mardin, Siirt Grupları) İddianame ve Kovuşturmaya Yer Olmadığı Kararı,* 64-69.

132 *Xebat, ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan*, Issue:1, 1978, 10.

the party began to publish *Xebat* (Action) with the subtitle *Xebat bona yekbûn û rêya azadî* (Action for Unity and Path to Freedom).[133]

*Xebat* which later adopted the subtitle *Xebat ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan* (Action for the Independence of Kurdistan), first appeared in August 1978 and continued for various intervals until 1990, numbering eighteen issues in total.[134] The first issue of the new *Xebat,* lacking the basic tools for printing such as a typewriter and mimeograph, was handwritten and its circulation was insignificant.[135] The in-party group the TKDP/KUK took over the publication and strove to extend its influence, again in line with the TKSP and KİP. Although it is claimed that the group established the DDGK (*Devrimci Gençler Kültür Derneği* or the Revolutionary Youth Cultural Association) on 19 December 1977,[136] it is not evident whether the associations were actually established.

After the congress in 1977, two groups emerged within the party – both claiming the party name. In 1978, the Marxist-Leninist group, led by Mustafa Fisli and other '78'ers declared that the previous line of *Xebat* represented "reactionary bourgeois nationalists."[137] As early as 1977, the party was given a mission to "reconstruct the party based on Marxism-Leninism, to fulfill its duty to fight against fascism, imperialism, and colonialism shoulder to shoulder with the Turkish people."[138] Furthermore, the platform of the KUK,[139] which after 1981 more clearly favored pro-Soviet ideology – and its resemblance to its counterparts resulted in the formation of the UDG mentioned earlier.

Although the "formation" of the KUK (Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları or National Liberators of Kurdistan) is dated to 1977,[140] the newcomers, or the

133 See Malmisanij and Lewendi, *Rojnamegeriya Kurdi,* 245.

134 The TKDP/KUK also published *Pale (*Worker) in 1978 in Sweden. *Pale* had 9 issues until 1981.

135 Mele Arif, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, May 23, 2011.

136 T.C. Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı Askeri Savcılığı Diyarbakır, *KUK (Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları),* 64-69.

137 *Xebat*, *ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan*, Issue:1, 1978, 1.

138 Xebat, ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan, *Kürdistan-1977-79 Bildiriler* (No place and date), 5.

139 Xebat, ji bo rizgariya Kurdistan, *Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları (KUK)-iç Tüzük,* (No place and date).

140 See for example, Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası.*

TKDP/KUK, and the TKDP both acted on behalf of the party until 1981.[141] Meanwhile, activists who wanted the TKDP to maintain the same nature as before the "infiltration" of the '78'ers –namely Mehmet Ali Dinler, Ahmet Kasımoğlu, and Abdulkerim Simavi – declared that the TKDP/KUK did not represent the party. Therefore, the Marxist-Leninist group that took over the party in 1977 did not split the party but instead acted on behalf of the TKDP, with the additional name KUK. It finally split from the TKDP and was named KUK – or RNK by its Kurdish acronym.[142]

After the founding congress in 1981, the KUK, which was not a political party but rather an "organization," went through another split from a small faction with the name of KUK-SE (Sosyalist, Eğilim or Socialist Tendency) in 1983. The latter published *Reya Şoreş* (Path to Revolution).[143]

The TKDP of the 1970s, although it had a longer history and stronger connections with regional Kurdish actors and hundreds of armed activists who lived in the rural areas of Mardin, Şırnak, Hakkari, struggled desperately to stand on its own. Regionally, the KDP in Iraq was occupied with fierce fighting, and after 1975, just like the TKDP, faced serious intraparty strife. With regard to the TKDP's real political space – Turkey –bourgeoning actors were fighting over the same human resources and ideological framework. Yet, the biggest threat came from outside –from the PKK, which envisioned the same type of struggle but with more radical and with swifter timing. The conflict between the, TKDP/KUK and the PKK cost hundreds of lives, with no clear victory over one another.

## § 3.8 The Maoist Tradition: Kava, Dengê Kawa and Red Kawa

In parallel with the prestige of the Chinese leader Mao Zedong and the Communist Party of China, especially after the 1960s, the impact of Maoist ideas

141 Interview with Mustafa Fisli, in Kovara *Bir*, January 2010, available online. http://www.kovarabir.com/2010/01/di-encama-kongreya-1975an-de-me-re-li-ber-xebatek-bi-rek-u-pek-ve-kir/.

142 Ibid.

143 First issue appeard in 1983. *Reya Şoreş*, Issue:1, December 1983.

that gave a central role to the peasantry in the socialist revolution became visible in the late 1960s in Turkey, as well. As mentioned earlier, the Dev-Genç generated a few clandestine parties, one of which was the TKİİP led by Doğu Perinçek. After the death of the leaders of other parties, the TKİİP remained intact and resumed publication of *Aydınlık* (Light) in 1974.[144] However, the Maoist camp in the 1970s was not limited to the TİİKP: The reestablished TKP-ML and TİKKO, founded by İbrahim Kaypakkaya,[145] along with few newly organized groups, such as *Halkın Yolu* (Road of People) and *Halkın Kurtuluşu* (Liberation of People) – which also generated the Beş Parçacılar group in 1976, entered the scene.

Furthermore, the Kurdish movement in Iran and Iraq was also becoming fragmented over Maoist ideas, such as in the case of Komalah.[146] Maoism was present in the Kurdish political space, though it was not represented by any group until the emergence of Kava in 1976. At the outset, the Kava group was not the only Maoist Kurdish group, in contrast with general opinion.[147] As will be discussed in the next section, Beş Parçacılar was also a Maoist group, although short-lived. Furthermore, Yöntem Yayınları, a publishing house founded in 1972 and owned by Zerruh Vakıf Ahmetoğlu and Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, together with Koral Yayınları, which was owned by Ali Fuat Bucak, who was a member of the DDKO in Ankara, while they did not have any affiliations with Kurdish groups in the 1970s, published Maoist books, including Mao Zedong's own.[148]

The Maoism of Kurdish groups and especially of the group that was to be called Kava was not antagonistic to Marxism-Leninism. Instead, Maoism was added to the line of analysis. The main difference was the way the Soviet Union was viewed. In line with the international rivalry between China and the Soviet Union, China promoted its own Communist Party; therefore Maoist groups and the Kava group did not accept the mono-party hegemony of the Soviet Union They did not regard the Soviets as socialist, either. Although

144 Vehbi Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu*, 169-174.

145 Ibid., 219-223.

146 Alaolmolki, "The New Iranian Left," 231.

147 Akkaya, "Kürt hareketinin örgütlenme süreci olarak 1970'ler," 14.

148 See Appendix C.

based on personal disagreements, the split of the Kava group from the Ankara and Istanbul DDKDs was based on an argument over whether the Soviet Union was socialist or imperialist – notably between the owners of the *Yöntem* publishing house. Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu founded Kava Yayınevi in 1976 and named after the mythological Kurdish hero, Kawa, a blacksmith who symbolizes the fight against oppression.

As Cemil Gündoğan points out, the group was yet to be formed and did not have any name or tangible contrast. It was sometimes known as the DDKD-Left or as the Maoist Kurdists. Eventually Kava, a mispronunciation of Kawa in Turkish, was adopted by the emerging group.[149] The Kava group is mainly associated with an interpersonal network of individuals, including Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, Mahmut Fırat, Nurettin Elhüseyni, Yalçın Çakıcı, Mustafa Aksakal, İsmet Ateş, Reşit Delek, Ali Şahindil, and Alişer Gözgöz. It had no political party organization and was comprised of two groups – the former members of Istanbul and Ankara DDKDs.[150]

Less than a year later, the circle gathered around the Kava publishing house and held a meeting in 1977 in Siverek to discuss both organizational and ideological issues.[151] The group faced difficulties in terms of a lack of organizational means. In addition, a discussion about the "Three World Theory" (TWT), in which it is argued that the United States and Soviet Union constitute the first world, other capitalist countries in Europe the second world, and the rest of dependent countries and peoples the third world, led to the division of the group. Under the guise of ideological difference, the pro-TWT group, called Dengê Kawa (Voice of Kawa) consisted mainly of former Ankara DDKD activists led by Ferit Uzun,[152] while the anti-TWT group called the Kawa-Red (the Kawa Refusal), which consisted of the former Istanbul DDKD activists, was led by Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu.[153]

149 Gündoğan, *Kawa Davası Savunması,* 22-23.

150 İbrahim Küreken, interview by the author, via email, July 1, 2011.

151 *Denge Kawa*, Special Issue: 1, December 26, 1978.

152 *Rêya Sor* is shown as a publication of the group, it should be noted that it was a personal incentive by Yalçın Çakıcı and was not circulated.

153 Gündoğan, *Kawa Davası Savunması,* 26.

As with other splits, each group began publishing their own media. The anti-TWT group published *Kava* in 1978 and associated itself with the name of its publication, which advocated anti-Maoism and supported Enver Hoxha (*Hoca*) and the policies of his Labor Party of Albania. Racing with its split, pro-TWT or journal *Dengê Kawa*, which numbered four issues[154] also stated that "it would fight against all kinds of modern revisionism, opportunism and nationalism."[155] On the other hand, *Dengê Kawa* stood as an opponent of both the Soviet and the American camp, but not anti-China.[156] However, after the owner of *Dengê Kawa* and the leader of its circle, Ferit Uzun, was assassinated on 22 November 1978, the circle had almost no activity afterwards.[157] Furthermore, some of the leading persons in the circle affiliated with the TİKP of Doğu Perinçek,[158] so before the September 12, 1980 coup the circle had almost disappeared.[159] The final blow to the circle came when fifteen Kawa activists were killed by a special unit of Turkish soldiers on September 12, 1980 as they were preparing like many other groups contact Jalal Talabani. [160]

154 Later four more issues appeared abroad, and in total it numbered eight issues.

155 *Kava*, Issue: 1, December 1978.

156 *Denge Kawa*, Special Issue: 1, 26 December 1978.

157 Although some still argue that Ferit Uzun was assassinated by the PKK (for example İbrahim Küreken, interview by the author) the event has not yet been clarified. Initially, the PKK pointed to the Bucak tribe for the murder of Uzun, which they used as an excuse to fight against the Bucak tribe. Nurettin Elhüseyni, interview by the author.

158 İbrahim Küreken, interview by the author.

159 Although it is argued that the Kava group later continued , this is hardly true. See Raşit Kısacık, *KAWA Denge Kawa – Red Kawa – PSŞK* (Istanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2010).

160 Many activists confirmed the event during interviews. Additionally, see Hasan H. Yıldırım "Kurdo" Romanından Bir Parça: Qamışlo Katliamı Bir Aynadır!, accessed December 4, 2014, https://www.newroz.com/tr/forum/350698/kurdo-roman-ndan-bir-par-qam-lo-katliam-bir-aynad-r

## § 3.9 The Dev-Genç Tradition

When the FKF changed its name to Dev-Genç in 1969, its president was Zülküf Şahin, who later became one of the leading figures in the Rizgari group.[161] The Kurdish student activists participated two associations at the end of the 1960s: The FKF and the DDKOs. Historically, the DDKOs remained within the framework of the constitution, or at least they thought so ( but as mentioned earlier, they were eventually sentenced to more than a thousand years of imprisonment). Meanwhile, the DDKOs expelled members who were close to Dev-Genç, and later, other clandestine parties were established. For example, Zerruh Vakıfahmetoğlu, Zeki Tekeş, Ömer Ayna, Hüseyin Özkan, and Kadir Çağlı were expelled from the DDKO on the grounds of their affiliation with the THKO of Deniz Gezmiş and Hüseyin İnan.[162] Had it not been the early years of T'deKDP Dev-Genç offshoots would probably have attracted many more Kurdish activists. The influence of the Dev-Genç and its later offshoot was lessened by the existence of the DDKOs and the T'deKDP, though it was never diminished.

In addition to Kurdish activists affiliating with Dev-Genç offshoots, the killing of student leaders, Mahir Çayan, Deniz Gezmiş, and İbrahim Kaypakkaya caused anger in many Kurdish activists, including the interviewees of this research. When Avni Gökoğlu, a member of the central committee of the THKO, was later killed in 1973 in a clash with Turkish security forces in Suruç, a Kurdish dengbêj from Suruç wrote a long elegy named after him.[163] Of course, Gökoğlu was from Suruç and played a key role in the THKO crossing the borders to train in the Middle East.[164] In the same way as Abdullah Öcalan , Murat Karayılan, a founder and leading cadre of the PKK, highly praise the names and values of the Dev-Genç leaders Deniz Gezmiş, Mahir Çayan, and

161 See Maraşlı, "Rizgarî'nin Sosyalist Hareket ve Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluş Mücadelesindeki Yeri Üzerine Bir Deneme –I-," 75.

162 Ruşen Aslan, http://www.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=44043 accessed December 4, 2014.

163 See the song by Dengbej Baqi Xido, *Avni Beg*, accessed December 4, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFMqB5Ugxyg&list=PLE2C32C724527C024&index=12..

164 Reşat Akaltun, interview by the author, tape recording, Copenhagen, February 20, 2011.

so on, while approaching all other Kurdish actors of the 1970s in an opposite way.[165]

As such, Öcalan expressed it clearly by saying, "I hold Deniz, Mahir, and their friends in high esteem. They proved their cause with their lives. We are their heirs, and have the honor to represent their legacy."[166] The killing of Mahir Çayan and his friends and the later execution of Deniz Gezmiş and his friends, gave the PKK the mission of continuing their legacy, according to Öcalan.[167] However, the PKK was not the only Kurdish actor of the 1970s to embrace that legacy. I shall now discuss the other Kurdish actors, derived from the Dev-Genç tradition of the 1970s, namely the Beş Parçacılar (Pro-Five Parts), Tekoşin (Struggle), and the KKEP (Kürdistan Komünist Emek Partisi or Communist Labor Party of Kurdistan), and then, finally, I will examine the PKK.

### 3.9.1 *Beş Parçacılar*

After the killing of Avni Gökoğlu in 1973, the THKO's activities virtually stopped.[168] However, its legacy remained and with the proclamation of amnesty in 1974, the few remaining activists of THKO founded the GMK (Geçici Merkez Komitesi or Interim Central Committee) to reorganize the THKO. However, this process ended with a split between the Halkın Kurtuluşu (Liberation of People) and Emeğin Birliği (Unity of Labor) in 1976.[169] As a Maoist and pro-MDD group,[170] Halkın Kurtuluşu, along with Kurtuluş (Liberation),

165 The book is clearly pro-PKK and historically inaccurate. See Murat Karayılan, *Bir Savaşın Anatomisi: Kürdistan'da Askeri Çizgi* (Neuss: Mezopotamya Yayınları, 2011).

166 "Denizleri, Mahirleri, ki bunlar hayatlarıyla kanıtladılar, büyük saygım var onlara, biz onların tarihi mirasını sürdürüyoruz, en iyi bir şekilde temsil etme şerefine sahibiz." Abdullah Öcalan, interview in Rafet Balli, *Kürt Dosyası*, 244.

167 Abdullah Öcalan, *AİHM Savunmaları: Sümer Rahip Devletinden Demokratik Uygarlığa, Cilt 2,* (Neuss: Mezopotamya Yayınları, 2001), 246.

168 Reliable information, on Beş Parçacılar and Tekoşin is scarce. Therefore, discussion about the two groups is supported with other sources and particularly with a critical reading of PKK historiography.

169 *Kürdistan Komünist Partisi Dosyası: Savunma,* (Istanbul: Pele Sor Yayınları, 1992), 18.

170 Suavi Aydın, "Milli Demoratik Devrim'den," 81.

a splinter group of the THKP-C – fully recognized the rights of nations to self-determination. However, Kurdish splinter groups emerged from both groups.

The Beş Parçacılar (Pro-Five Parts) group, as suggested by its name, argued that the struggle was to unite the "five parts of Kurdistan, namely those in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Soviet Armenia."[171] The group is claimed to have published *Stêrka Sor* (Red Star) and was also known by the name of this publication.[172] The group consisted of a few dissidents led by Alaattin Kapan, who had connections to the local group of the TKDP in Adana as well. According to Hasan H. Yıldırım, who was then affiliated with the Kava group, Kapan thought of himself as a Maoist and as an admirer of Mulla Mustafa Barzani. [173] While the PKK, and particularly Öcalan, repeated the argument that the group was founded by Turkish intelligence, Kapan made the same claim regarding the PKK.

Muzaffer Ayata, a leading cadre of the PKK, argues that the PKK lost its first activist in Dersim, Aydın Gür was killed by Halkın Kurtuluşu. In line with the official argument of the PKK, Ayata repeats the claim that Beş Parçacılar was responsible for the killing of Haki Karer on 18 May 1977, as well. Karer, himself a Turk, was certainly the most important of activists in the group who had begun organizing in Gaziantep and its vicinity.[174] However, the Beş Parçacılar circle had been in the Antep, Adana, and Urfa provinces with the Kürdistan Devrimcileri (KD, Revolutionaries of Kurdistan), later to become the PKK, concurrently. The killing of Karer was used as a pretext, and starting with the assassination of Alaattin Kapan ephemeral Beş Parçacılar was annihilated before it had any chance to properly organize.[175]

171 Selahattin Çelik, *Ağrı Dağını Taşımak*: *Çağdaş Kürt Halk Direnişi: Siyasi, Askesi, Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Sonuçları* (Frankfurt: Zambon, 2000), 39.

172 Birand, *Apo ve PKK,* 88.

173 Hasan H.Yıldırım, *Politik Yazılar, II.Cilt, (*no publication place and date). It can be accessed on https://hhyildirim.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/bes-parcacilar1.pdf, accessed December 4, 2014.

174 Muzaffer Ayata, interview by the author, tape recording, Hamburg, February 3, 2012.

175 Abdullah Öcalan, *Mektuplar* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn 88, April 1998), 69.

### 3.9.2 *The Tekoşin*

A splinter group of *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergisi*[176] (KSD or Socialist Magazine for Liberations), which was derived from the THKP-C and from some local former KD sympathizers, formed the Tekoşin circle. The group was small in number and was led by Seyfi Cengiz, who wrote extensively for the KSD, especially on the national issue. Kemal Burkay claimed to have met Abdullah Öcalan through Seyfi Cengiz, who visited him to "confirm whether or not Kurdistan was a colony."[177] The Tekoşin circle managed to publish five issues of Tekoşin with a mimeograph from June 1978 until 1980.[178] The circle supported the "international colony Kurdistan" argument.

It appears that both *Beş Parçacılar* and *Tekoşin* had previous contact with the KD group, and in Cengiz' case, with Öcalan himself. Moreover, the three groups had similarities. First, they all strove to organize in the Gaziantep, Adana, Malatya, Elazığ, and Şanlıurfa regions. Second, they all recognized the "colonial aspect of Kurdistan." Third, they all supported armed struggle for the "revolution," as a first strategy. And finally, they all shared the demographic peculiarities stemming from the Dev-Genç tradition.[179]

According to Seyfi Güneş, the PKK lost many of its sympathizers in Gaziantep to Tekoşin after the murder of Haki Karer. As such, the KD group, as Güneş calls the PKK, went through its biggest political disagreement losing many of its followers, to which it responded by killing at least five Tekoşin activists. [180] As a result, the Tekoşin group almost disappeared after the attacks.

### 3.9.3 *The Kürdistan Özerk Örgütü, KKEP*

Although the TKP began to organize among Kurdish activists and in Kurdish cities in 1977 with the involvement of Kurdish activists such as Şeref Yıldız[181]

176 Orhan Duru, " Doğu Raporu," *Milliyet*, 13 October 1978.

177 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 2*, 63.

178 *Tekoşin*, Issue: 5, July 1980, 2. Later, *Tekoşin* resumed and numbered 8 issues in 1986.

179 *Tekoşin*, Issue:1, June 1978, 5-15.

180 Interview with Seyfi Cengiz, available on http://zazaki.webnode.com.tr/news/seyfi-cengizle-soyle%C5%9Fi/, accessed December 4, 2014.

181 Yıldız, *Fırtınada Yürüyüş*, 468.

and Ömer Ağın,[182] it had no clear perspective on the Kurdish issue, and its political space kept being filled with new actors. Another splinter group of the THKP-C in the 1970s, the THKO-MB (Mücadele Birliği or the Unity of Struggle) formed under the leadership of Teslim Töre in 1976. While the THKO-MB circle turned into a clandestine political party – the TKEP (Türkiye Komünist Emek Partisi or Communist Labor Party of Turkey) – in 1980, it incorporated the KÖÖ (Kürdistan Özerk Örgütü or Autonomous Organization of Kurdistan) as an unit within the party. The TKEP, later joined the FKBDC (Faşizme Karşı Birleşik Direniş Cephesi or Unified Resistance Front against Fascism) together with seven other groups including the PKK in Syria.

The KÖÖ consisted of a limited number of activists from primarily the province of Malatya.[183] The KÖÖ then became the KKP (Kürdistan Komünist Partisi or Communist Party of Kurdistan), after its founding congress in March 1982. To sound similar to the TKEP, the party changed its name to the KKEP (Kürdistan Komünist Emek Partisi or Communist Labor Party of Kurdistan) at its second congress in Syria in April 1982.

The party's Kurdish acronym is the PKKK (Partiya Kominstên Keda Kurdistan)[184] which, after the declaration of the PKK in 1979, demonstrates the general desire to prove that the party represents the Kurdish working class, similar to the PPKK, a splinter of the KİP examined earlier. As founder Sinan Çiftyürek points out, the party was influenced by Mahir Çayan, whose ideas were also shared by the TKEP. The KÖÖ gave itself the task to organize Kurds. However, a few months after its foundation, the military took power in the September 12, 1980 coup.[185]

182 Ömer Ağın, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, April 7, 2009.

183 *Kürdistan Komünist Partisi Dosyası: Savunma,* 18.

184 Ibid.

185 Sinan Çiftyürek, interview by the author, via email, May 15, 2013.

### 3.9.4 *The Apocu Circle, Kürdistan Devrimcileri, and the PKK*

> *The PKK has been turned upside down. The PKK is no longer the PKK. And there is not such a political party today.*[186]

It is natural for a political group or party to change over time. Perhaps, it is even more natural in the political space of the Middle East, and not just houses rent by students. The PKK emerged from small houses rent by student and right after associations around the same time when almost every other Kurdish political actor did so. However, historically speaking, detractor Selim Çürükkaya puts it, there have been many faces of the PKK since its inception. Therefore, this study focuses on the first and second phases in the development of the PKK, which took place from the beginning of the 1970s until 1984 and can be divided into two sub-phases: Its emergence from a group of students into a political group known as the Kürdistan Devrimcileri (Revolutionaries of Kurdistan) or Apocular (Adherents of Apo, which is the short form of Abdullah, literally meaning uncle).

It is often claimed that the PKK was a "late-comer," "differed" from other groups, and was almost being unique in the 1970s. However, when one recalls the chronological and historical order, the PKK was among the first groups to organize in 1973, while many subsequent groups and circles still lacked any form. In this sense, the PKK, as the Apocular or the Kürdistan Devrimcileri, was actually contemporary with the other groups. Regarding its becoming a political party in 1978 – it is evident that the Kava group, Rizgari circle, Ala Rizgari, and the KUK, which comprised at least half of the political space – were not political parties. So the idea that the PKK was a latecomer is inconsistent with the historical order of things.

As mentioned in the first chapter, there is a growing literature on the PKK, in addition to several dozen books published by Abdullah Öcalan.[187] As was

186 "Evet PKK tersyüz edilmiştir. PKK artık 'PKK' değildir. Bugün böyle bir parti de ortada yoktur." Selim Çürükkaya, *Beyrut Günlüğü, Apo'nun Ayetleri* (Basel : 14 Temmuz Yayınları, 2000), 20.

187 For example, see White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, and Özcan, *Turkey's Kurds;*.

the case with the TKSP and its secretary Kemal Burkay, it will not be mistaken to examine the PKK around with its founder and first secretary Abdullah Öcalan, Needless to say, the PKK has centered around Öcalan, especially in 1984 after its political consolidation when most of its founders were either killed or arrested and the party officially initiated armed attacks. Gurr points out that the leaders of dissident groups attract "the loyalty of followers if they exercise authority in ways familiar to those followers."[188] In the context of the 1970s, the role of its leader, Abdullah Öcalan, and the type of leadership[189] he built inside the group and party is an underlying factor in the course that the PKK took. Nevertheless, Öcalan, especially in the early 1970s, was *primus inter pares* and not "leadership," as now presented by the PKK. As Kemal Pir and Mehmet Hayri Durmuş, two founders and ideologues of the group and party, pointed out, Öcalan was "Abdullah *arkadaş* (comrade Abdullah), and therefore just one of them."[190]

As mentioned earlier, after the killing of all three leaders of the offshoots of the Dev-Genç, namely that of the THKP-C and the TKP-ML, and the TİKKO, pro-Dev-Genç students as well as newcomers found themselves at loose ends. The first attempt to overcome the resulting confusion and shock were new student associations established first in Istanbul in November 1973 and later in Ankara in April 1974. This was followed by the establishment of the DDKD in Ankara a month later. The İYÖKD (Istanbul Yüksek Öğrenim Kültür Derneği or Istanbul Democratic Higher Education Association), and the ADYÖD (Ankara Demokratik Yüksek Öğrenim Derneği or Ankara Democratic Higher Education Association) were established by socialist students with the majority of which were pro-Dev-Genç members.[191]

As would be the case with the DDKD in Ankara and Istanbul, both the İYÖD and ADYÖD later generated several other groups within themselves. Not only the subsequent PKK movement but also many other groups would emerge from these two associations, because when they were founded, their ideological and organizational differences as well as leanings had yet to be

188 Gurr, *Why Men Rebel,* 294.

189 See White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, chapter 6.

190 Kemal Pir's Plea, *Serxwebûn*, Issue:3, March 1982, Issue:4, April 1982.

191 The İYÖKD and ADYÖD are usually confused. The ADYÖD was founded in November 1973.

formed. An underlying factor of the subsequent dissolution of these associations mirrored that of the case of the DDKD. These new student associations were regarded as beehives and faced severe responses from the state. The ADYÖD not only went through internal power struggles, but was closed by martial courts after just eight months on 9 December 1974. The İYÖKD experienced similar power struggles among various groups within it but importantly received the same treatment by the state, resulting in its closure in 1975.[192]

These initial experiences accelerated the factionalism of these amorphous student groups. Later, after legal parties such as the TSİP, TİP, and TEP were founded, many students joined their youth branches, while political groups such as Kurtuluş, Halkın Kurtuluşu, and Devrimci Yol were formed by students who once joined the aforementioned associations. The Apocu circle, or more correctly the Kürdistan Devrimcileri (KD, hereafter) was also a product of the closure of the ADYÖD and the political void discussed earlier in this chapter, which they believed to fulfill the "revolutionary potential" themselves. Although Selahattin Çelik, in his informative book on the PKK,[193] purports that "Abdullah Öcalan founded the ADYÖD with a group of Turkish revolutionaries," Öcalan – his later influence and role as informal president notwithstanding – never mentioned that he was among the founders.[194]

192 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi,Cilt: 6*, 2237.

193 Selahattin Çelik, *Ağrı Dağını Taşımak*, 38.

194 For example, Abdullah Öcalan sometimes states the date of theADYÖD variously as 1973, 1974 and 1975, which demonstrates a general tendency regarding this time among PKK activists which can be traced in later works on the PKK. For instance, according to Öcalan, "the group that was formed during 1974-75-76, which came together under the ADYÖD were primary group for development." Abdullah Öcalan, *Bir Halkı Savunmak* (Çetin, 2004). Chapter four is devoted to this period. Until the group took shape in 1976 and 1977, these early years were regarded as all the same and with no historical clarity or importance, as was the case with the group's formative identity. See Abdullah Öcalan, *Partileşme Sorunları,73; AİHM Savunmaları: Sümer Rahip Devletinden Demokratik Uygarlığa, Cilt 2* (Cologne: Mezopotamya Yayınları, 2001), 246.

During the time Öcalan was affiliated with the ADYÖD, he was known to be a *cepheci* (referring to the THKP-C).[195] As quoted above, Öcalan also argued that they were driven to continue the legacy of Mahir Çayan of the THKP-C and Deniz Gezmiş of THKO. According to Öcalan, the history of the PKK before September 12, 1980 can be divided into three periods: Its ideological formation between 1973 and 1977, when Haki Karer was killed in Gaziantep: The period of organizational shortcomings between 1977 and 1979: And finally a final period when the organizational shortcomings were recognized and tackled.[196]

The first sub-period was a time when Öcalan and his growing circle of student friends, both Turkish and Kurdish, were reading and discussing Marxist-Leninists works that they wanted to "apply to the reality of the country."[197] During this time period, there is confusion about the names – some called them Apocu, some the UKO (Ulusal Kurtuluş Ordusu or National Liberation Army), and some the Kürdistan Devrimcileri, or KD. The first two names were refused by group members, especially at later trials in Diyarbakır.[198]

Starting at student houses, the discussions attracted students, mostly those with no political affiliation who wanted to understand more about Marxism. Cemil Gündoğan, who participated in the earliest discussion sessions, points out that there were long hours of discussions about almost all issues in the houses rented by students.[199] The hottest issue, as was the case among other bourgeoning Kurdish activists and circles, concerned Lenin and Stalin's perspectives on the national issue, which were introduced to Turkish-speaking Kurdish activists in the second part of the 1960s. Indifferent to what other Kurdish actors discussed and concluded previously, who began to form their circles and found their publications, the conclusion on the national issue, after

195 İbrahim Küreken, , interview by the author.

196 However, Öcalan later considers the time between 1970 and 1980 as a single period: the "ideological rebellion movement." Abdullah Öcalan, *Kürt Sorununa Demokratik Çözüm Manifestosu: Savunmalar I-II-III* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn 98, 1999), 27.

197 Abdullah Öcalan, *Seçme Yazılar, Cilt I* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn 34, 1986), 48.

198 Mazlum Doğan's Plea, *Serxwebûn*, Issue:5, May 1982: Issue: 6, June 1982, and also Mehmet Hayri Durmuş's Plea, *Serxwebûn*, Issue: 9, September 1982.

199 Cemil Gündoğan, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, October 23, 2010.

endless readings and discussions, was that "Kurdistan was a colony – an international colony –" a conclusion that was overwhelmingly shared by other Kurdish actors. The participants in these discussion meetings mostly came from the poorest segments of society,[200] though Kurdish activists of the 1970s in general shared the same impoverished background. As Muzaffer Ayata notes, most leading activists of the group, including Haki Karer, Kemal Pir, Cemil Bayık, Duran Kalkan, Hayri Durmuş, and Mazlum Doğan, came from poor families. They could not rent a house or pay the rent, and sometimes they did not have money to buy bus tickets.[201]The activists shared characteristics with other latecomers among the groups, as the Kawa, the TKDP/KUK, and Ala Rizgari, which belong to the '78'ers but with '68'ers, such as Öcalan, taking the lead.

After one pivotal meeting at Dikmen-Ankara in 1976 in particular, the group decided to explore the "application of Marxism and Leninism to Kurdistan."[202] One of the protagonists, Mazlum Doğan, who later became one of the symbols of the party, was sent to Batman, a town which had many workers compared to other Kurdish cities because the TPAO (the Turkish Petroleum Corporation) had been founded there two decades earlier. He make contact with students at local associations to get by. Şükrü Gülmüş, who was also affiliated with the group early on and then broke away, describes his meeting with Mazlum Doğan:

> Mazlum Doğan came incognito, using the nickname Muhsin. I asked him: "What are you arguing for?" Mazlum replied: "We are a new group. We're investigating the applicability of Marxism and Leninism to Kurdistan."[203]

200 Süleyman Günyeli, interview by the author, tape recording, Charleroi, December 9, 2011.

201 Muzaffer Ayata, interview by the author.

202 Ismet, G. Imset, *The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey,* 14.

203 "Mazlum Doğan Muhsin olarak Batmana geliyor.'Neyi savunuyorsun' diye sordum, Mazlum: 'Biz yeni bir grubuz, Markism ve Leninizmin Kürdistan'da uygulanabilirliği üzerine araştırma yapıyoruz." Şükrü Gülmüş, interview by the author, tape recording, Essen, February 5, 2012.

Şükrü Gülmüş states that within a month or so, they numbered around fifty-two activists, workers, and students mainly from poor backgrounds. The few activists who were sent to do research, make connections and recruit. Unlike many of the other groups, they regarded themselves as "professional revolutionaries" (*profesyonel devrimci*), devoting their entire time and energy to discussing political issues within a Marxist-Leninist framework. After all, most of the propaganda was oral. Haki Karer did the same in Gaziantep, both investigating the "applicability" of the theory and recruiting hundreds of workers and students.

As Öcalan argues, the KD circle was initially not so different from other groups or circles, lacking a concrete form and being ridiculed. After the killing of Karer they decided to become "fully professional," work on a party platform and have an organization.[204] Late 1976 and early 1977 represent the time when the group put great efforts into organizing people. Although its definition of the question was not "unique," the primacy of "armed struggle," which started about seven years later, caused tensions among other actors that were based on the same human resources and ideological foundation. As discussed earlier, along with the group that became the PKK, Beş Parçacılar, Tekoşin, Kawa, Ala Rizgari, and to some extent the KİP accepted armed struggle as the ultimate solution. The first two groups accorded this strategy primacy as explored in detail in the following section.

The group, like all other actors of the Kurdish movement, had guns "for protection." However, another strategy employed by the group is worth mentioning. The group attracted many sympathizers from groups such as *Halkın Kurtuluşu*, *TİKKO*, Kawa, *TKDP/KUK*, and the *KİP/DDKD*, which caused discontent and hostility in return. The group attacked and was attacked first by likeminded opponents, namely Beş Parçacılar and Tekoşin, which strategized the "revolution" in exactly the same way (and dissolved as a result),[205] and then by other groups who were alarmed by the loss of their activists to the PKK. However, the strategy it used against opponents of the same political background, reached a new level after the 1977 meeting in Diyarbakır, the year the

204 Abdullah Öcalan, *AİHM Savunmaları, Cilt 2,* 223.

205 The group first attacked to Halkın Kurtuluşu. See *Serxwebûn, 1976-1984 PKK Direniş Şehitleri Albümü* (no publication place or date), 17.

group's ideological formation was completed according to Öcalan. The group strove to exercise its organizational capacity.

A generally shared argument, according to Aliza Marcus, is that "while other Kurdish groups tried to prepare peoples" consciousness for the revolution by holding meetings, Öcalan's followers tried to clear the field so that they could start the revolution."[206] However, this argument is not historically correct, at least not until the Bağcılar-Diyarbakır meeting in 1977. As already demonstrated, the group was "preparing its own consciousness" by holding numerous meetings, and commonly shared assessments of the political standpoint of the KD and later the PKK, must be examined through the different sub-periods through which the movement passed. As Öcalan describes in his controversial assessment, the PKK was provided with opportunities as well as material support by the state through infiltrators such as Pilot Necati, and it was thus instigated to start armed clashes.[207]

Unlike the TKSP, Rizgari, and the KİP the group had neither its own publications nor associations before 1982 when *Serxwebun* began to be published: It relied on local contacts who were mostly students and were affiliated with local associations. However, in Şanlıurfa, and particularly in Hilvan and Siverek, the group managed to make contact with locals, mostly through the families of activists, and to fight against politically exposed and influential tribes, namely the *Süleymanlar* in Hilvan, the *Bucaklar* in Siverek, and later the *Ramanlar* in Batman. Consequently, the group and the party received much attention. Even the then Prime Minister from the AP, Süleyman Demirel said that "the state was replaced by the PKK in the East"[208] when AP representative Mehmet Celal Bucak survived an attack. After smaller opponents were forced from the political scene in the early 1980s, the PKK clashed with the TKDP-

206 Marcus, *Blood and Belief,* 40.

207 Abdullah Öcalan, *Devrimin Dili ve Eylemi* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn, 1996), 40. Öcalan explicitly explains that he was aware of "agents" within the group, and did not shy away from using the resources they provided. According to Öcalan, he was regarded as "a bird in the cage." Ibid., 114.

208 Quoted in Nevzat Bölügiray, *Sokaktaki Asker: Bir sıkıyönetim Komutanının 12 Eylül öncesi Anıları* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1989), 20.

KUK causing hundreds of deaths, including at least fifty of activists from the PKK.[209]

According to Öcalan, the organization's founding manifesto, *Kürdistan Devriminin Yolu* (Path of Kurdistan's Revolution), was a reflection of the Zeitgeist.[210] The manifesto, which was adopted as the party platform at the founding congress held in *Fis*-Diyarbakır on 26 November 1978,[211] envisioned a "national and democratic revolution" that would create an independent Kurdistan, based on Marxist-Leninists principles "under the political and organizational leadership of proletariat."[212]

The party held its first congress in July 1981 in a camp located on the border of Lebanon and Syria. Over the course of four years, the party lost almost 250 activists and many were imprisoned.[213] However, a few hundred managed to join Öcalan and his close circle, leaving Turkey before the September 12, 1980 coup. After its second congress in August 1982, the PKK decided to initiate armed attacks by establishing the HRK (Hêzên Rizgarîya Kurdistan or Kurdistan Liberation Forces). As Öcalan points out, the determining factor in the timing of the decision and the attacks of 15 August 1984 was the resistance of the inmates in Diyarbakır, which caused death of several leading activists.[214] The Draft Regulation of Armed Propaganda Units (Silahlı Propaganda Birlikleri Yönetmelik Taslağı), dated February 1983, set the framework of what the PKK would do in the decade to follow. It daringly put forth its target as the "Turkish colonial system, imperialism, and local traitors."[215]

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209 The figure is compiled from *Serxwebûn, 1976-1984 PKK Direniş Şehitleri Albümü.*

210 Abdullah Öcalan, *Prison Writings: The PKK and the Kurdish Question in the 21st Century,* trans. and ed. Klaus Happel *(*New York, Transmedia Publishing Ltd. 2011), 220.

211 Although , Selahattin Çelik mentions only twenty participants, according to Jongerden and Akkaya, there were 22 participants. See Jongerden and Akkaya, "Born from the Left,"123-142.

212 First written in September 1977, and first published in October 1978, no publication place is available, *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, PKK, Program*.

213 *Serxwebûn*, Issue: 1, January 1982,18.

214 Abdullah Öcalan, *AİHM Savunmaları*, 227.

215 *PKK MK Belgeleri* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn, 2002), 11-26.

## § 3.10 Nation vs. Revolution: Debates over Colonialism, Nationalism, and the Right of Self-Determination

As already discussed in the previous chapter, one can discern two main lines in the development of socialist ideology in Turkey. First, the developmentalist standpoint, introduced by the Yön circle, and second, that of the SKD (Sosyalist Kültür Derneği), later adopted by the TİP and the CHP, which can be called *neo-Kemalism*, owing to its reliance on early modernist Kemalist ideology. For the neo-Kemalists of the time, socialism was regarded as a panacea that would remedy all the problems of Turkey at once.[216] This line of thinking influenced the '58'ers of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement who regarded the Kurdish question overall as an issue of underdevelopment while socialism was regarded as progress and development. However, this line of scholarship was seriously challenged by the wide range of critical issues discussed from a Marxist-Leninist perspective. Especially after the mid-1960s, with the foundation of new publishing houses, such as *Sol Yayınları*, classic works of socialist and Marxist literature that had been restricted to a small circle of intellectuals were made available to the public. Not only within the new generation of Kurdish activists, but also within predominantly Turkish circles and groups, the approach to the Kurdish question changed dramatically, though it only reached maturity later in the 1970s. Thus, the discourse of both predominantly Turkish and predominantly Kurdish groups was not idée fixe.

However, the main lines, despite the slow evolution of their ideas, represented most of the time by the similar groups. The first line, the neo-Kemalist developmentalist approach, never credited discussions and demands surrounding colonialism and the right of self-determination in Turkey. The representatives of the first line of socialism increased in the 1970s. In addition to inheriting former TİP –as did the second TİP founded by Behice Boran and her circle, and the SP (later the SDP), founded by Mehmet Ali Aybar, the CHP was claiming its share of the "socialist camp" on account of its *halkçı* (populist) leader, Bülent Ecevit. Obviously, for the majority of Kurdish activists, this was

216 Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey*, 27.

not the first line of the socialist circles in the 1970s, but the second line, which consisted of like-minded, mostly competing parties.

To clarify, groups founded on the legacy of Dev-Genç, on one hand, and the TKP, TEP, and TSİP, on the other were interlocutors interacting with Kurdish activists in one way or the other. For the socialist Kurds, both groups in the second line fit into the Marxist-Leninist as well as the Maoist framework, of which the majority of the Kurdish actors were also believed to be part. On the ideological spectrum, the pro-Soviet camp, as Lipovsky pointed out, grew its base and influence in the 1970s.[217] On account of the United States arms embargo after the Cyprus intervention in 1974, pro-Soviet socialists had a stronger hand in comparison to Maoist, non-aligned, and pro-Enver Hoca groups.

The approach of the first TİP to the definition as well as the solution of the Kurdish question was discussed in the previous chapter. It remained almost unchanged in the second TİP in the 1970s. Here I shall touch upon the new representatives of the neo-Kemalist standpoint, the CHP and the SDP. The new CHP, in its election bulletin of 1973, stated that the way land was distributed in the south east of Anatolia limited the political freedom of people and hampered the development of democracy.[218] Furthermore, it stated that some people exaggerated the ethnic problems of the East and Southeast: It was actually a social and economic issue, and the local community as a whole cared very much about the unity of state and nation.[219] In line with the CHP, the SP depicted the East and Southeast Anatolia as an under-underdeveloped[220] region within an underdeveloped country. As the first TİP did, the constitution was referenced as offering a solution: "All individuals are equal before the law irrespective of language, race, sex, political opinion, philosophical views, or

217 Igor Lipovsky, "The Legal Socialist Parties of Turkey, 1960-80," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Jan., 1991), pp. 94-111.

218 For the changes within the party and its ideological perspective, see Suna Kili, *1960-1975 Döneminde Cumhuriyet Halk Partisinde Gelişmeler: Siyaset Bilimi Açısından Bir Inceleme* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi Universitesi Yayınları, 1976).

219 CHP, *Ak Günlere: CHP, 1973 Seçim Bildirgesi*, (Ankara ,1973), p.49.

220 For the use of the term as a case study See Majeed R. Jafar, *Under-Underdevelopment; A Regional Case Study of the Kurdish Area in Turkey* (Helsinki: Social Policy Association, 1976).

religion or religious sect. No privileges shall be granted to any individual, family, group, or class."[221] The SDP also argued that "they would make progress on the way to socialism unified."[222]

It is noteworthy that groups with closer connections to Kurdish actors were relatively closer to an agreement with their Kurdish counterparts.[223] With their exceptions, these groups all accepted the "nation-ness" of the Kurds, in contrast to their "class-ness," which was the predominant of by the first socialist ideological line mentioned above. Both legal political parties and clandestine political groups in this line of Marxism in Turkey agreed that there was a "national question" of the "Kurdish nation." The legal political parties such as the TEP, led by Mihri Belli, and the TSİP, led by Ahmet Kaçmaz, were confined to narrow, ambivalent descriptions constrained by the legal framework. Even the TSİP, which had close connections to the KİP/DDKD, declared that the party would pursue a policy in line with the principle of the right of nations to self-determination.[224]

Even the TKP, which had recognized the right of self-determination in theory but pitilessly attacked the early Kurdish rebellions and Khoybun [225] began to change its discourse as early as 1965, explicitly stating that the TKP would support Kurdish demands for national recognition on the condition that it would be "within Turkey's borders."[226] The same perspective was argued by Mihri Belli, who was criticized by a younger generation of students, that had earlier followed his ideas and worked on *Türk Solu* and *Aydınlık* publications. A booklet signed by Mahir Çayan, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, and Yusuf Küpeli, the founders and leaders of the THKP-C, can be regarded as the framework from which other Dev-Genç offshoots developed their perspective on the "national question," albeit with nuances. The booklet disagreed with Mihri Belli, who framed the solution to the "national question" within a *misak-ı milli* (a

221 *Constitution of Turkish Republic,* Ankara.

222 "Sosyalist Parti Programı ve Tüzüğü," quoted in *Rizgari*, Issue: 3, May 1977, 26-27.

223 Şeref Yıldız, *Fırtınada Yürüyüş*, 484.

224 "TSİP program, 1977," quoted in *Rizgari*, Issue: 3, May 1977, 14.

225 *İnkilap Yolu* Temmuz-Ağustos 1930, in Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar-II*, 185-205.

226 TÜSTAV, "Yakup Demir'in Bilal Şen'in Grupçu ve Fraksiyoncu Faaliyeti Üzerine,"96.

national pact), praising the unity of existing state borders. It stated that "in light of the right of nations to self-determination, we argue that the revolution will determine under what conditions and when secession, autonomy, federation, and other solutions set forth will be available."[227]

As was the case with the Communist Party of Iraq[228] and the Tudeh Party in Iran,[229] the Marxist movement in Turkey reached a level of officially acknowledging the nation-ness of the Kurds, though not as an the only opinion. Such was the case with Hikmet Kıvılcımlı in the early 1930s, who observed that "the issue of the East is generally a national question, and particularly a question of the Kurdish nation."[230] Around the mid-1970s, there were many books in which both Kurdish and Turkish activists heatedly discussed and tried to make sense of the issue within their cosmos. Among others, Yöntem Yayınları, founded by Kurdish activists in 1972, published books on other revolutions such as those in Angola, Eritrea, Vietnam, Ireland, South Africa, and Mozambique.[231] As explored in the previous pages, concurrent decisions by the Kurdistan Revolutionaries, to "investigate conditions for the applicability of Marxism-Leninism" should be understood in this context. The crux of the disagreement was how to bring about the revolution – together or separately?

Marxist, Leninist, and Maoist classics provided readers with what they needed. For the Kurdish actors, the primary concern was their agency and the autonomy of their organizations. Besides, Kurdish activists, who were going through the same process described above, defined the Kurdish question first as a social and economic issue and as a national issue second, the latter of which had to be recognized before the revolution, which Kurds as "true Marxist-Leninists," had the legitimate right to organize and realize.

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227 This was published as a booklet in January 1971 signed by Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Yusuf Küpeli, Münir Aktolga, and Mahir Çayan.

228 Chris Kutschera, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketi*, 237.

229 Abrahamian, *Iran, Between Two Revolutions,* 326. The Tudeh party founded in 1941, recognized the right of self-determination.

230 Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, *İhtiyat, Kuvvet: Milliyet (Şark)* (Istanbul: Yol Yayınları, 1979), 28.

231 Yöntem Yayınları published a book series of under the title "National Liberation Struggles." For the complete list of publications, see Appendix C.

Of course, the principle of self-determination, as a political remedy for collapsing state and social systems at the beginning of the twentieth century, was not limited to the socialist repertoire. Albert Hourani noted that the principle had been encouraged by Woodrow Wilson and other leaders had been cherished by Arab peoples long before.[232] However, with the arrival of a new body of Marxist classics during the second half of the 1960s, two conceptual tools enabled Kurdish activists to legitimize their organizational autonomy during the "preparation" period for the "revolution." The first was the binary explanation of nationalism offered by Lenin in his work from 1914, the nationalism of oppressors and the nationalism of the oppressed.[233]

With respect to discussions about the "colonial aspect of Kurdistan" and its "separate organization," it should be underscored that the historical order of events suggests conundrum. It is incorrect that Kurdish actors organized separately because of "colonial discussions." When one traces the events, it is obvious that the TKDP was reorganized in 1973, Komal in 1974, Kurdistan Devrimcileri in 1973-4, T'deKDP in 1975, TKSP in 1975, and Kava in 1976. All this happened before the discussions of colonialism had begun. The discussion of colonialism, and particularly its application to the Kurdish case, began only after 1975. Except for of *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergisi,*[234] which appeared in 1976, predominantly Turkish groups rejected the issue.[235] Discussions about colonialism were not welcomed by the majority of the groups, especially in and after 1977, when almost all groups were dissolved.[236]

The second conceptual tool was the right of nations to self-determination that Kurdish activists read as "*kendi kaderini tayin etmesi demek, ulusun istediği biçimde örgütlenebilmesi demektir*" ( "the right of self-determination means that a nation may arrange its life in the way it wishes").[237] Turkish activists conversely read the literature about the underlying

232 Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples,* 316.

233 Lenin, *Ulusların Kendi Kaderini Tayin Hakkı,* 72.

234 *Halkın Kurtuluşu Yolunda Gençlik*, Issue: 3, 4 April 1977.

235 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt:7,* 2308.

236 For a discussion on the subject and some examples, see *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt:7.*

237 Stalin, *Ulusal Sorun ve Sömürgeler Sorunu, 22.*

compartmentalization of the working class and about how fixating on national differentiation could hinder the unity of the proletariat. It should be noted, however, that the reception of these conceptual tools was characterized by slight variations among the Kurdish actors, as has been discussed in relation to each actor.

For example, in the 1960s, the Kurdish region was regarded by the T'deKDP and Dr. Şivan as an "exploited region" (*sömürülen bölge)*. The party, like its predecessor, the TKDP, recognized the right of nations to self-determination: However, it envisioned an autonomous solution.[238] Similarly, although Kemal Burkay and his TKSP/ÖY group defined the Kurdish case as "colonization" in his book in 1973, arguing that bourgeois Turkish governments had placed Kurdistan in a colonial status – they opted for a "united" struggle.[239] It also argued that "Kurdish people would struggle side-by-side with the proletariat of the Turkish people."[240] However, later in the 1980s, they changed their position about the timing of the "national question" in the course of revolution stating that without waiting for a general revolutionary movement in Turkey, Kurdish people should take the lead in a national liberation war primarily with its own forces.

By contrast, Rizgari, defying accusations of the journal's "chauvinism," spoke up about the issue and defined the Kurdish case as "international colonialism."[241] They even upheld this standpoint in later court proceedings in 1984,[242] and the solution they eventually formulated was "an independent, united, democratic Kurdistan."[243] The KİP made the same argument:

238 http://drsivan.info/uploads/belgeler/max/t-kdp-program-ve-tuzuk.pdf, accessed December 4, 2014.

239 Murat, *Türkiye Şartlarına Ters Düşen Bir Tez*.

240 First published in *Özgürlük Yolu,* Issue:5, September 1975, Kemal Burkay, *Kürdistan'ın Sömürgeleştirlmesi ve Kürt Ulusal Hareketleri* (Ankara: Özgürlük Yolu Yayınları, 1978) and it was later published again in 1986.

241 *Rizgari*, Issue: 3, May 1977,14.

242 Recep Maraşlı, *Diyarbekir Rizgari Davasında Siyasi Savunma* (Istanbul: Komal Yayınları, 1992), 65.

243 Interview with Ruşen Arslan (Rizgari – Kürdistan Kurtuluş Partisi), in Rifat Balli, *Kürt Dosyası,* 334-349.

Necmettin Büyükkaya wrote in 1976 that "the reality of our country being colonized constitutes the basis for our strategy."[244] However, as discussed earlier, the KİP's priority was not to initiate "revolution:" rather, it was to prepare the people and the working class for revolution.[245]

Although different interpretations of Stalin and Lenin, as mentioned above, somehow allowed the Kurds to be "national" and "struggle for "nationalism of the oppressed," Kurdish activists did not take it very fart. Rather, the nationalism of the oppressed was presented to their predominantly Turkish counterparts as part of a greater revolution, that they felt they had the right to lead. That is why, as part of the new within-party dissidence of the TKDP, the TKDP/KUK attacked its predecessors as bourgeois nationalists.[246] In recognizing their "colonial status," they paradoxically took on the task of fighting against the chauvinism of the oppressor and the nationalism of the oppressed.[247]

Kava, in its first brochure, articulated concern over the instrumental use of "colonialism discussions," stating that the approach of pro-Soviet Kurdish actors, particularly those of the TKSP/ÖY, was two-faced. The brochure pointed out that if one followed "colonialism" to its logical end, they would organize primarily in the Kurdish area: On the other hand, Kava was concerned with "collective organization and an anti-fascist front."[248] As already mentioned, the Dev-Genç tradition namely the Beş Parçacılar, Tekoşin ,and the PKK, were ideologically and organizationally similar however, the first two left the political scene without having significantly organized.

Defending their party in court in Diyarbakır, PKK activists, such as Mazlum Doğan and Mehmet Hayri Durmuş stated that they were "developing a struggle on a revolutionary basis to establish an independent Marxist-Leninist state."[249] According to Öcalan, the rights of nations to self-determination,

244 Necmettin Büyükkaya, *Kaleminden Sayfalar,* 41.

245 *KİP/DDKD Davası; Kesinleşmiş Karar*, 95.

246 *Xebat Çizgisinin Eleştirisi*, (no publication place or date, but most likely in 1977).

247 *Xebat, Ji bo Rizgariya Kurdistan*, Issue: 5, May-June 1979.

248 *Kava, Çıkarken,* (no publication place or date, most probably in 1978).

249 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey,* 249-250.

which was a trend in the 1970s and was interpreted as the right to a separate state was indeed at a stalemate once it was applied due to the way it was interpreted.[250] Consequently, Bozarslan remarks that except for decolonization, there would be no socialist revolutions in Middle East, after the Soviet Union was established.[251] Determined that the weakest link of imperialism in the Middle East was to be broken by their revolution,[252] the other actors of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement – not only the PKK, which started the armed struggle – did not constitute an exception in the Middle East. Overall, as the military took over on September 12, 1980, most of the positioning and discussions were moved in the face of the reality of a power play in the region.

## § 3.11 The 12 September 1980 Coup: The End or a New Beginning?

As Mehmet Ali Birand wrote in the aftermath of the coup, the unrest within the army became most evident under MC governments.[253] However, the two main sources of disturbance were political Islam,[254] publicly represented by the MSP and Necmettin Erbakan, and Kurdish activism. It is obvious that the every-day violence "on the streets," which had led to chaos[255] by 1978 and 1979, was to blame in the reasoning of the military.[256] As one military commander wrote, the military regarded the pre-coup years as an "undeclared civil war."[257] Of course, collective violence against Alevis in Kahramanmaraş and Çorum, in addition to the sensational assassinations of leading public figures, pushed the political system to a dead end,[258] a fact also commonly used by the army

250 Abdullah Öcalan, *Kürt Sorununa Demokratik Çözüm Manifestosu,* 12.

251 Hamit Bozarslan, *Ortadoğu: Bir Şiddet Tarihi: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Sonundan El-Kaide'ye,* trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul: İletişim, 2010), 161.

252 *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, PKK Program*, 22.

253 M. Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Saat 04.00* (Istanbul: Karacan Yayınları, 1984), 43.

254 Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 268.

255 See Birand, *12 Eylül Saat 04.00,* 216-225.

256 For the memoir of the leader of the coup, see Kenan Evren, *Kenan Evren'in Anıları 1,* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1990).

257 Nevzat Bölügiray, *Sokaktaki Asker*, 385.

258 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey*, 56.

to legitimize the junta.[259] As was the case earlier, if the situation could not be controlled, such as on the eves of May 27, 1960 and March 12, 1971,[260] then the state-elite took upon itself the mission to safeguard and protect the Turkish Republic "in accordance with its Internal Service Act."[261] Taha Parla rightly pointed out that the celebrated constitution of 1961 provided the "legal framework" for the army later.[262]

Needless to say, the military coup of September 12, 1980 changed Turkey dramatically in terms of its politics and society. It has been presented as a historical event that terminated Kurdish activism, and therefore it has been blamed for everything that followed.[263] When one considers the suppression of all kinds of political activism and the more than one hundred thousand arrests made immediately after the coup,[264] this definitely explains one part of the situation. But when pre-coup developments are considered, the omnipotent role of the coup lessens. For example, as early as 26 December 1978 martial law had been declared in thirteen provinces, including Istanbul and Ankara, although mostly in predominantly Kurdish cities. Therefore, pre-coup years were already "extraordinary" in terms of how martial law was implemented. Most Kurdish activism had already been halted due to court decisions, the arrest of activists, and the closure of groups such as the DHKD, Roja Welat, and Kava.[265] As such, as Cemil Gündoğan points out, the organized activities of Kava and particularly of the Dengê Kawa group had ceased before the coup happened.[266]

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259 See Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi.*

260 Gerassimos Karabelias, "The Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in Post-War Turkey, 1980-95," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4, Seventy-Five Years of the Turkish Republic (Oct., 1999), 133.

261 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey*, xii.

262 Taha Parla, *Türkiye'de Anayasalar* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2007), 142.

263 For a critical reading, see Tanel Demirel, "12 Eylül'e Doğru Ordu ve Demokrasi," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 56-4 (2001).

264 In the aftermath of the coup, the number reached sixty thousand, See Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi,* 135.

265 See *Milliyet*, January2, 1979.

266 Gündoğan, *Kawa Davası Savunması,* 31.

As has been demonstrated, with regard to Kurdish activism, the state carefully deliberated on its actions: Many activists were arrested before they managed to deepen their influence. As such, thanks to the Special Warfare Department, the state was already keeping a close eye on the happenings in Turkey[267] and was present in some of the groups, as well. As an example, the *Aydınlık Gazetesi* revealed almost all Kurdish groups, splits, and many individuals to the "public" in one of the article, *Belgeler ve Olaylarla Doğu'daki 15 Grup* (In the Light of Documents and Events: Fifteen Groups in the East).[268] Not only that, when one reads the bill of indictments for each group, it is evident that the state knew much about the goings-on of these groups.[269] The momentum of Kurdish activism, the common use of guns, and the emergence of new regional actors such as Jalal Talabani and Abdurrahman Qassimlo into the Kurdish political space in Turkey – and particularly the clashes between the PKK and Bucak tribe, later the TKDP/KUK – accelerated the military takeover of the state.[270]

After the September 12 coup, Kurdish activism in Turkey became, for the first time, a regional and even international issue. The majority of the leading cadres of organized groups, notably the PKK, managed to continue their activities outside of Turkey. In addition, with the exception of the Korea War and the Cyprus intervention, the Turkish army would carry out ground operations for the first time outside of Turkey – against the PKK in Iraq in 1983 – a strategy that would be repeated several times thereafter. Especially given the inhumane treatment of inmates in Diyarbakır,[271] and a regional community of

267 Gökay, *Soviet Eastern policy and Turkey*, 77.

268 *Aydınlık Gazetesi*, May 1979.

269 Written, visual, and oral documentation of the activities was later used against the activists. As an example, consider the picture of the DDKD Congress in Diyarbakır in 1979. KKK'lığı Yayınları, *Türkiye'de Yıkıcı ve Bölücü Akımlar* (Ankara: Yayın No: 1, (Restricted) 1982, Ankara), 10.

270 Bölügiray, *Sokaktaki Asker,* 20.

271 Muzaffer Ayata, *Tarihe Ateşten Bir Sayfa: Diyarbakır Zindanı. Cilt 2* (Mem Yayınları, 2001): *Serbesti*, "Diyarbakır5 No'lu Askeri Cezaevi, Issue:14, September-October 2003: Rizgari, *Hapishane Raporu*: Çayan Demirel, *5 No'lu Cezaevi,* (DVD Documentary, 2009): Bayram Bozyel, *Diyarbakır 5 No.lu* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2013).

states and political groups eager to support armed struggle, the course of Kurdish activism was changed. In spite of a "calmness" on the streets that the military claimed to have brought about as early as 1982, activists and their groups "gave priority to propaganda and conducted an intensive campaign abroad, in particular."[272] In this manner, the military brought about new opportunities for Kurdish activism, contrary to what it endeavored to achieve.

As Tedd Gurr pointed out, although regimes can halt political violence in the short run by applying severe methods, they "are likely to intensify and extend the duration of discontent" at the same time.[273] Furthermore after the military coup, the vague concept of an invisible "enemy" became notably more tangible throughout the 1970s. That is why the Faşizme Karşı Birleşik Direniş Cephesi (Unified Resistance Front Against Fascism) was formed among the PKK, Dev-Yol, Devrimci Savaş, TKHP-C Acilciler, the TEP, the TKEP, the TKP/İS, and the SVP in 1982.[274] In addition Sol-Birlik (Türkiye ve Kürdistan Sol Birliği or Unity of Left in Turkey and Kurdistan) was formed among the PPKK, TİP, TKEP, TKP, TKSP, and TSİP in 1984.[275] In other words, the junta and its policies made it easier for these actors to clarify their "discourse" and "tactics" in order to fight against "the visible enemy."

Accordingly, the September 12, coup should be regarded as a beginning or at least as a continuation of pre-coup political activism, yet with a different orientation. Indeed, most activists continued to occupy the new political space in the Middle East and to strategize according to prevailing conditions. Thousands of activists from all groups and circles relocated to the areas of Zakho and Duhok in Iraq, Urmiye and Sine in Iran, and Qamishlo in Syria for a few years after the coup. The majority left for Europe, and their political activism was becoming an international phenomenon – with new networks of diaspora and cultural activities – can together be regarded as a byproduct of the coup.

272 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey*, 255.

273 Gurr, *Why Men Rebel,* 351.

274 *Serxwebûn*, Issue: 6, June 1982. Also see Appendix A.

275 *Riya azadi,* Issue:110, 1987.

## § 3.12 From Nation to "Revolution" or the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement from Phase B to Phase C

*Tu dibêjî qey em li Diyarbekir bûn.*[276]

The internal conflicts and splits that Kurdish activism experienced from 1974 to 1980 did not end: On the contrary, except for the PKK, all other groups dwindled up until 1984. Although almost all grups agreed that an "armed resistance" was the only solution after September 12, 1980, most of them consumed their time and energy on the ideological discussions of the 1970s and could not agree about right timing. The relationships and structure of each Kurdish circle, group, or party were relocated to Europe or elsewhere in the Middle East.[277] The Kurdish ethnoregional movement, its wider political space and more complex regional relations, experienced atomization after September 12, 1980. The first reason was the discussions about the nature of the coup: Whether or not it was fascist.[278] According to the official narrative of the KİP, this led to the creation of the PPKK,[279] or Pêşeng, in 1983. Another reason was debates over the "degree of being socialist" within the TKDP, which led to the creation of the KUK – an independent Marxist-Leninist group – in 1981, and later also the KUK-SE[280] – which regarded itself as "genuine socialists" in 1983. Finally, the debate over the timing of armed struggle between the TKSP[281] and Ala Rizgari[282] generated more splinter groups: The TKSP-Roja Welat, the YSK, and the BK.

The role of other Kurdish actors in the region, particularly the KDP and YNK must be stressed. The KDP, after its defeat in 1975, produced the dissidence of the YNK, which consisted of several groups. Within the YNK, Jalal

276 "You would assume as if you were in DiyarbakırÜ" this is how political activism continued among activists in Europe. Hüseyin Kaynak, interview by the author, tape recording, Berlin, February 9, 2011.

277 Keya İzol, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, October 23, 2010.

278 Murad Ciwan, interview by the author.

279 Ibid.

280 Abdurrahman Bayram, interview by the author, via email, March 5, 2011.

281 Adnan Axacan, interview by the author, tape recording, Copenhagen, February 18, 2011.

282 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author.

Talabani had direct connections with and influence over the KİP, while Komalah, led by Nechirvan Barzani, was in contact with Ala Rizgari and Kava groups. The KDPI (Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran), led by Abdurrahman Qassimlo, opened its party headquarters to the TKSP. All groups had their own reasons for benefitting from armed struggle in Turkey.[283] Of course, the relationships were two-sided and the actors of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement in Turkey also had a strong incentives to ally with the these groups, such as access to logistical and material aid. While the Kurdish parties in Iraq had more experience and were a stronger network within and across the region, actors coming from Turkey inexperienced and oblivious to regional dynamics and inter-group conflicts of interest.

Robert Olson argued that before the 1970s, at least around 300 commandos received training in Palestinian camps.[284] This experience encouraged Dev-Genç students to initiate "guerilla warfare" in 1970 as a necessity for bringing about revolution,[285] a strategy that was later regarded by many Kurdish activists as premature. Perhaps that is why, before the PKK launched its attacks in 1984, other Kurdish groups argued against the PKK in exactly in the same way: The tactic was regarded as premature[286] or as an "absolutizing" of violence,[287] in a way confirming its commitment to the THKP-C tradition of putting armed struggle at the center of "revolution." [288]

While the PKK had a total of thirty armed followers at the time,[289] other groups, such as the KİP, had hundreds of guns in their possession, which had been provided by Jalal Talabani,[290] and sent groups to train in Palestinian camps.[291] As such, when Ala Rizgari headed to Iraq with about 150 activists

283 Ibid.
284 Olson, "Al-Fatah in Turkey," 198.
285 Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey*, 126.
286 Marcus, *Blood and Belief,* 31.
287 *Jina Nu*, Issue:3-4, January-February 1979, 51-52.
288 Laçiner,"THKP-C: Bir mecranın başlangıcı," 8.
289 Birand, *Apo ve PKK,* 292.
290 *KİP/DDKD Davası*, 66.
291 Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın,* 92.

before the September 12, 1980 coup, they mostly took their guns with them.[292] Although Beşikçi associates the attacks in Eruh-Siirt and Şemdinli-Hakkari on 15 August 1984 as the "first bullets," referencing Franz Fanon's renowned analogue that the first bullet "gives birth to a new person"[293] -hundreds of people had died between 1977 and 1984. Despite the lack of reliable sources about the human costs of the conflict, it has been calculated based on state records that at least 35 thousand people died between 1984 and 2012.[294]

Political violence as a method and expression of national questions or minority demands is generally followed by "a period of nonviolent activity that was either ignored or dealt with repressively."[295] Ted Gurr's explanation of political violence as an arrival moment also applies to the Kurdish case. Gurr states that:

> The primary causal sequence in political violence is first the development of discontent, second the politicization of that discontent, and finally its actualization in violent action against political objects and actors.'[296]

The Kurdish ethnoregional movement presents a similar case. As has been explored, Phase A, or the moment of departure corresponds to the "development of discontent:" Phase B, or the moment of maneuver corresponds to a period of "the politicization of that content:" and finally Phase C, or the moment of

292 Interview with Hatice Yaşar--(Ala Rizgari Birlik Platformu), in Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası,* 88.

293 Beşikçi, *International Colony Kurdistan*, 46-52.

294 In 1998, *Milliyet* stated that at least fourty thousand people died as a result of the conflict. See Milliyet, 14 November1998, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1998/11/14/haber/hab01.html However, in 2012, the number 35,300, was provided based on military records. Of those 21,800 were from the PKK, 6500 were civilians, 5500 were policemen or soldiers, and 1500 were village guards. See *Milliyet*, 16 August 2012, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/28-yilin-aci-bilancosu-35-bin-300-kisi-teror-kurbani-oldu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/16.08.2012/1581690/default.htm

295 Gurr, *Minorities at Risk,* 94.

296 Gurr, *Why Men Rebel,* 12-13.

arrival corresponds to the "actualization" of the politicized content.[297] As there was practically no dissent, the transition from class to nation occurred with overall agreement among Kurdish actors in the early 1970s. Nonetheless, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement reached the end of Phase B with a clear lack of consensus about what Phase C would be like, particularly about the methods that should be used. On one hand, the PKK, Ala Rizgari, and the KİP supported armed struggle, but the latter two did feel the time was not "ripe" and preferred to wait accordingly.[298] On the other hand, other actors such as the TKSP did not yet have armed struggle on their agendas. So, virtually each actor had a different perspective regarding Phase C, which partially explains subsequent developments.

Taking Figure 1.1 into account, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement reached level of a "attention by masses" without a consensus among actors over which way to continue the process. Eventually, the PKK prevailed and adopted the solution of independence, which it planned to realize through armed struggle – an decision that resembles the Fatah case that built a direct relationship between the nation and armed struggle.[299] After less than five years of clashes, the PKK did not realize its "mad dreams of independence."[300] As Öcalan puts it, "war was understood as the continuation of politics by different means and romanticized as a strategic instrument."[301]

297 Adria Lawrence and Erica Chenoweth, "Introduction," in *Rethinking Violence: States and Non-State Actors in Conflict,* eds. Erica Chenoweth and Adria Lawrence (Cambridge: the MIT Press, 2010), 3.

298 İbrahim Güçlü, interview by the author. Also see Güçlü's interview in Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası,* 119.

299 Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State,* 668.

300 The term used in Chris Kutschera, "Mad Dreams of Independence: The Kurds of Turkey and PKK," *Middle East Report,* (July-August, 1994), 12-15.

301 Abdullah Öcalan, *War and Peace in Kurdistan: Perspectives for a Political Solution of the Kurdish Question* (Cologne: International Initiative, 2012), 28.

# 4

## True Believers, Last Romantics: Framework of the "Low Politics" of the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement

*…yeni bir dünya için kardeşler*
*yeni bir dünya için bu sabır*
*bu kin*
*bu sancı*
*…*
*Ekmeğimiz yoktu*
*Mermimiz yoktu*
*Bin can ile*
*Bir umut ektiğimiz*
*Toprağımız yok*
*Dağlar gibi yıkıldı ölüler*
*Ve ayaklar altında namusumuz.*

-Orhan Kotan, *Halkların Kardeşliği Adına*, 1975[1]

1 A loose translation of the poem by Orhan Kotan reads as follows: "For a new world/ brothers/For a new world, this endurance-This resentment/This pain....Without bread/Without shells/Without a land/on which we sowed hope/with a thousand lives./The dead were wrecked like mountains/And our decency downtrodden." See Orhan Kotan, *Sancı: Şiirler, 1969-82* (Stockholm : Dengè Komal, 1984).

This chapter explores a wide range of issues focusing on the human side of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. Examining issues such as the demographic profile of the movement, the role or absence of religion and women, and the creation of the "new Kurd," the chapter provides a reading of the low politics of the 1960s and 1970s. The chapter first touches on the polarization of attitudes among Kurdish activists, which is further elaborated in a section on intra-Kurdish group factionalism and clashes on both ideological and organizational levels. After discussing the demographic profile of the movement, the chapter examines different patterns of politicization among Kurdish activists. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the role or absence of religion in the Kurdish movement, in addition to discussions about political Islam among Kurdish activists. The chapter also reviews the developments in the cultural realm by discussing the new technologies and instruments such as cassette players employed in cultural and political activities. In addition, the chapter studies the role of women and gender roles in the Kurdish movement. Finally, the chapter scrutinizes Kurdish activists with the strong and weak ties they built and how their commitment as a generation should be seen.

## § 4.1 Notes on the Polarization of Attitudes among Kurdish Activists

The title of this chapter borrows the term *True Believers* from scholar Eric Hoffer. In his book, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*,[2] he made important observations about the mindset of activists participating in mass movements that were corroborated by the findings of subsequent research in the field. Hoffer argued that a true believer has no hesitation about his cause and thinks himself the protagonist of a holy cause with "some irresistible power."[3] When one considers the commitment of various Kurdish generations, especially during the 1970s, this is true for most activists. As mentioned in the first chapter, they believed they could change the world in a few months' time. Generally in a romantic way, Kurdish activists genuinely

2 Hoffer, *The True Believer,* 57-58.

3 Ibid., 124.

believed in their cause. The second term that the title of this chapter borrows, the *Last Romantics*, belongs to Isaiah Berlin, a prominent philosopher of the twentieth century. In his *The Roots of Romanticism*, Berlin gives credit to the role of social and economic factors arguing that some sets of ideas both "liberate and enslave people during a certain time period."[4] Although the term refers to the romantics of the nineteenth century, there dedication to a cause that is "worth both living and dying" for is the same as that of Kurdish activists, as well.

In line with Hoffer's early observations, participants and activists of both rightist and leftist political ideologies share ways of political engagement and use similar methods. attributes such as "hatred of opponents, intolerance toward dissenters, and an inclination to view public affairs as the outcome of conspiracies and secret plots,"[5] can be observed in the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. However, as will be discussed in this chapter, the Kurdish case prevents a comparison of right and left-wing political affiliations, at least for the 1960s and 1970s. However, studies in other contexts demonstrate a similarity of views between the far right and the far left, especially regarding power and the psychological world. [6]

One of the first predicaments of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement, is that true believers, in general, lack a middle ground. "They prefer to take a stand on the issues rather than to remain uncommitted, even if it means being wrong."[7] That is why many Kurdish activists discussed the political and sociological issues of countries such as Eritrea, Angola, and Mozambique that they could probably not even locate on a map. Furthermore, other issues – most importantly socialism and colonialism – were discussed in a determinist and

4 Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism, Edited by Henry Hardy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 2-8.

5 Herbert McClosky and Dennis Chong "Similarities and Differences between Left-Wing and Right-Wing Radicals," *British Journal of Political Science,* Vol. 15, No. 3 (Jul., 1985): 329.

6 Ibid., 350

7 Ibid.

reductionist way – in the same way that Karl Marx has been criticized by some historians.[8]

In his informative *Class, Nation and Identity: The Anthropology of Political Movements,* Jeff Pratt points out that during periods of rapid change, which was definitely the case for Turkey in the 1970s, people interpret history in a way that their "values and experiences are central in a narrative of how society should be, and forge a political strategy to make that happen." [9] Along the same line, this explains why all the groups and actors of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement thought of themselves as *öncü-parti, öncü-yayın* (vanguard-party, vanguard-publication).[10] One of the most tiring readings for this dissertation was when "a relevant point" was investigated regarding whatever issue might be the concern. A common inclination was that in the first issue or in a separate issue of each publication, group or circle's different stance would be explained.[11]

Certainly, the entire society was being politicized, although the apolitical majority was being politicized at a much slower pace.[12] As already discussed, politicization often meant polarization. This was not limited to socialist students and other activists, but pervaded the entire society. As such, even the police were polarized around two different professional associations.[13] Indeed, attitudes were polarized to an extent that most convictions, both oral and written, paid attention to "counter evidence," whether in particular cases or just

8 See introduction of Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*. (New York: Norton, W. W. & Company, Inc., 1995).

9 Pratt, *Class, Nation and Identity,* 17.

10 See the section on the each tradition and actors in Chapter 3.

11 Among numerous examples, see " Neden Ayrı Bir Hareket?,"*Tekoşin*, Issue:2; and *Yekitiya Sosyalist, Berbange Kurdistan*.

12 Ömer Turan, "Bu Sayıda: Alternatif tahayyüller, devingenlik, popülizm," 5.

13 Sıtkı Öner, *Halkın Polisi: Pol-Der Anıları* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2003), 34. Pol-Der (shortened Police Association) was established in 1970 and was named in 1975. The Pol-Der's was called as "Halkın Polisi." (People's Police). In fact, there were few activists from the Pol-Der within some Kurdish groups.

in general.[14] Political convictions and ideology replaced "religion." Like many others, Öcalan admitted that "it was almost impossible as a young person growing up in the Middle East not to have a dogmatic mentality."[15] Furthermore, as İkram Delen puts it, "ideology was the new religion for most of us."[16]

One might think this was because different groups of individuals did not know about each one another: However, the more information they acquired about opposing groups or publications, the more polarized they become. The leftist activists generally called themselves *devrimci* (revolutionary) and called the right *faşist* (fascist). However, the number of adjectives used by socialist groups was countless. The following is a striking example of how political labels on the left in general and by Kurdish activists, in particular, made discussion of even the simplest issues almost impossible:

> *Ajan, anti-demokrat, anti-kürt, anti-marksist, anti-sol, anti-sosyalist, aşiretçi, bozguncu, burjuva, burjuva milliyetçi, çete, dar milliyetçi, dogmatist, dönek, emperyalist, faşist, feodal, goşist, gerici, gerici milliyetçi, hain, hegemonyacı, icazetli sol, ilkel milliyetçi, ilkesiz, işbirlikçi, karşı devrimci, kapitalist, kaypak, kuyrukçu, küçük burjuva, küçük burjuva milliyetçi, lümpen, maceraperest, maocu bozkurt, maocu goşist kırması, militarist, milliyetçi, modern revizyonist, opportünist, pragmatist, provakatör, reformist, sağ opportünist, sekter, serüvenci, sol lafazan, sosyal emperyalist, sosyal faşist, sosyal şövenist, sömürgeci, şovenist, terörist, teslimiyetçi, troçkist kırması, uzlaşmacı, yardakçı, yozlaşmış…*[17]

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14 Thomas Kelly, "Disagreement, Dogmatism, and Belief Polarization," *The Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. 105, No. 10, Epistemic Norms. Part Two (Oct., 2008), 618. Also, see Charles S. Taber and Milton Lodge, "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Jul., 2006).

15 Öcalan, *Prison Writings*, 129.

16 İkram Delen, interview by the author.

17 I have collected these words mainly from publications of the time and did not include swearwords. In addition, most adjectives were strung together as compound nouns. The translation, in accordance with the Turkish alphabetic order is: "agent, anti-democratic, anti-Kurdish, anti-Marxist, anti-left, anti-socialist, tribal, disruptive, bourgeois, bourgeois nationalist, mob, parochial nationalist, dogmatist, apostate, imperialist, fascist, feudal, gauche, reactionary,

Needless to say, exchanges of verbal insults and labels led to physical confrontations as well.[18] As mentioned earlier, Keleş and Ünsal observed that around seventy percent of political targets were leftwing, which in addition to right-left clashes was related to intra-left conflict.[19] According to official statistics, almost sixty percent of the crimes committed could not be identified as right or left-wing activism.[20] With respect to Kurdish actors, despite a consensus on "grand matters" – such as whether or not the Kurds were a nation or the "colonial" aspect of the Kurdish case – the label increased clashes among the activists.

## § 4.2 Intra-Kurdish Factionalization and Organizational Turf War

As Hoffer asserted, the strength of a movement, from the point of view and practices of activists, is closely related to its enemy, without which the movement would not spread. Intra-Kurdish factionalism and conflict in the Middle East was unexceptional.[21] For instance, the KDP of Iraq experienced an interparty political disagreement in 1964, led by Ibrahim Ahmed and Jalal

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reactionary nationalist, traitor, hegemonic, ratified left, primitive nationalist, unprincipled, collaborationist, counter-revolutionary, capitalist, unreliable, copycat, petty bourgeois, petty-bourgeois nationalist, lumpen, adventurous, Maoist wolf, Maoist gauche cross bred, militarist, nationalist, modern revisionist , opportunist, pragmatic, provocateur, reformist, right opportunist, sectarian, adventurer, garrulous left, social imperialist, social fascist, social chauvinist, colonialist, chauvinist, terrorist, submissive, Trotskyist cross bred, accommodationist, henchman, degenerate ..."

18 For example, TKSP/ÖY followers would "describe" Rizgari as *petty bourgeois nationalists,* Kawa as *ignorant fascist Maoist*, and the KİP/DDKD as *unlearned tribal peasants,* as they thought of themselves as superior. Of course, other groups did the same thing. Adnan Axacan, interview by the author.

19 Keleş and Ünsal, *Kent ve Siyasal Şiddet,* 57.

20 Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi*, 113.

21 The similar factionalism was ubiquitous in the region. See for example, Elie Rekhess, "Jews and Arabs in the Israeli Communist Party," in *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, eds. Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

Talabani, which took the form of the YNK in 1975.[22] Kurdish groups and parties had fragmented due to intraparty conflicts in Syria as early as 1965.[23] After the defeat of March 1975, desolate Kurdish groups kept their political feuds alive by killing one another by the hundreds.[24] Furthermore, both Komalah and the KDP of Iran continued clashing throughout 1979, the time Khomeini took power political power.[25] An even worse situation was the case among predominantly leftist groups in Turkey, especially after 1975.[26]

With respect to the Kurdish ethnoregional movement, factionalism was reasoned on three grounds. First, it is interpreted a matter of ideological differences, which in many cases is unconvincing. Second, it is believed to be related to limited resources – such as an association or a revolutionary activist in a town. Third, it was a byproduct of mutual competition among all groups for the leading position. As Hroch points out:

> Once political demands gained salience in the national programme, the movement itself inevitably became a battlefield for the pursuit of power, not only in struggle against the ruling nation, but within the leaderships of the national movement as well.[27]

As mentioned in earlier chapters, most groups and publications in Phase B openly aimed to take the lead and "prepare" the people for a revolution. However, when activists were released in 1974, there was not a single active political circle or party. Kurdish groups and circles subsequently mushroomed, numbering fourteen groups or circles.[28] The ideological aspects of intra-Kurdish factionalism have already been discussed in the previous chapter, especially in the descriptive accounts of each actor. So ideology, as a tool for the polarization of attitudes mentioned above explains the formation of different groups

22 Mesud Barzani, *Barzani ve Kürt Ulusal Özgürlük Hareketi,* 502.

23 Ziadeh, "The Kurds in Syria: Fueling Separatist Movements in the Region?," 5.

24 For a multi sited account see Rafet Ballı, *Kürt Dosyası.*

25 Bruinessen, "The Kurds between Iran and Iraq," 16.

26 See *Aydınlık* Newspaper, also, M. Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Saat 04.00, 77.*

27 Hroch, "From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation," 11.

28 As mentioned, most occured after the 12 September 1980. See Appendix A to compare with the beginning of Phase A, 1974.

to an extent. But splits that happened within groups of activists who knew each other and had worked together for years needs another explanation, framed in terms of leadership clashes, limited resources, and human relations. Nonetheless, ideology provided an almost magical pretext for intra-Kurdish conflicts, which many interviewees called *kirasê îdeolojîyê*' (ideology as a dress).

The second reason for the factionalism and polarization of attitudes within Kurdish activism concerns resources that enabled each group as well as individuals to "maneuver." Naturally, activists were the human resources of each group. Although many managed to leave Turkey, there were, according to official numbers, 3,177 individuals on trial in cases on concerning "Separatist Organizations" such as the DHKD, DDKD, Kava, PKK, and others in March 1983.[29] If the total number of Kurdish activists who were regularly involved in politics was limited to a few hundred intellectuals in the 1960s,[30] they could be estimated to number a few thousand in the 1970s.[31] Sometimes, affiliation with a single person in a city or town could provide an advantage to a group. Most of the hostilities between predominantly Kurdish and predominantly Turkish groups were also related to this issue. The phenomenon of *devrimci şiddet* (revolutionary violence) was not used in the fight for a "revolution," contrary to what the name might indicate, it was general used within so-called "revolutionary" groups.[32]

The PKK's standpoint was black and white, and it did not hesitate to use violence against opponents, as is openly admitted in party correspondences.

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29 Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi,* 149.

30 See Martin M. Van Bruinessen, "The Ethnic Identity of the Kurds," in *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey,* comp. and ed. Peter Alford Andrews (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989).

31 Of course this number indicates militants who regularly participated in political activities. For the definition, see Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties; Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. Barbara and Robert North (London: University Paperback, 1964), 110.

32 See Ahmet Alış, "Üç Devrin Tanığı Musa Anter: Modern Kürt Siyasi Tarihinin İçinden Musa Anter'i Okumak." *Birikim,* Accessed December 4, 2014. http://www.birikimdergisi.com/birikim/makale.aspx?mid=661&makale=%22%C3%9C%C3%A7+Devrin%22+Tan%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%3A+Modern+K%C3%BCrt+Siyasi+Tarihinin+%C4%B0%C3%A7inden+Musa+Anter%27i+Okumak.

However, the PKK gained many activists from other groups, as well. In the beginning, the circle around Öcalan had shrunk, on account of students leaving to later join Kawa.[33] Groups that later lost militants to the PKK included Halkın Kurtuluşu, the TİKKO, Kawa, the TKDP/KUK and the KİP/DDKD all of which hosted activists who later joined the PKK circle and were killed in clashes.[34] Likewise, attacks on the Tekoşin circle cannot be understood without taking into consideration the fact that many activists working with or for the Kürdistan Devrimcileri, joined Tekoşin after Haki Karer was killed in Gaziantep.[35]

Although most of activists from other groups gradually gave up their active political lives, the PKK attracted many of their former activists[36] in addition to an increasing number of newcomers.[37] Not only did the PKK's founding program in 1978 call for a struggle against "collaborators," the PKK document as early as 1980 stated that it aimed to "annihilate" its opponents. For example, in a letter dated in 1980, Öcalan wrote that "the KUK must be wiped out...In this regard, we must attack them exactly as we did with Beş Parçacılar."[38] The main strategy of all the groups, but which was realized more violently by the PKK, was that other groups were either friends or enemies.[39] This "approach" was not always implemented, but was pragmatic. A year after skirmishes with the TDKP/KUK, which resulted in hundreds of deaths,[40]

33 Muzaffer Ayata, interview by the author.

34 See *Serxwebûn, 1976-1984 PKK Direniş Şehitleri Albümü.*

35 Interview with Seyfi Cengiz and also Paul White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, 169.

36 The PKK-Vejin led by Mehmet Cahit Şener (Semir), later shook the party in 1991 despite its consolidation of power and pacification of dissidents. Marcus, *Blood and Belief, 94*.

37 For example, two of the highest profile members of the PKK in Europe, Zübeyir Aydar, who was affiliated with the Kawa group, and Remzi Kartal, who was affiliated with the KİP/DDKD are now with the PKK.

38 Öcalan, *Mektuplar*, 80.

39 Marcus, *Blood and Belief,* 94.

40 Birand, *Apo ve PKK,* 96.

Öcalan wrote in in 1981 that the PKK sat down to negotiate with the KUK, the TKSP/ÖY, Ala Rizgari, and the KİP/DDKD.[41]

While other Kurdish actors clashed with opposing groups to gain influence – usually letting the opponents and dissidents leave, but not before whittling and orally assaulting them – the PKK "eradicated" dissidents within the party.[42] To give another example of this "revolutionary violence," the KİP/DDKD, which claimed to be "peaceful," rarely clashed with other groups, like the PKK, Dev-Genç, the TKSP/ÖY, the TİKKO, Kawa.[43] Indeed, most clashes were motivated by gaining or protecting limited political resources. Sometimes even being influential in a school was considered a resource. Students from "enemy" groups were denied access to schools, as was the case with DDKD activists not allowing pro-PKK activists to attend classes.[44]

State institutions usually become the battlefield for political activity in the Middle East due to the distribution of national resources among competing political actors.[45] The *habitus* of the Kurdish activism during 1960s and 1970s, if I use the term parallel to Pierre Bourdieu's usage,[46] consisted of microstructural spaces. Even a microphone could be a cause of death. Talking to the public, even at the smallest events, was a great opportunity for groups to boost their role. For example, during a funeral ceremony in Diyarbakır in 1977, contention over who would talk first led to a fight on the bus whereby speakers Paşa Güven, a leading activist of the Dev-Yol, and Mahmut Çıkman, a leading activist of the KİP/DDKD argued with their friends. Subsequently, an activist named Şefik fell off the bus, hit his and died.[47] Over and above this, a dispute over who had used nail clippers led to dispute among dozens of activists sharing the same flat.[48]

41 Öcalan, *Mektuplar,* 268.

42 Öcalan, *Mektuplar*, 308.

43 *KİP/DDKD Davası,* 89.94.

44 Vildan Saim Tanrıkulu, interview by the author.

45 Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East,* 33.

46 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 77.

47 Mahmut Önder, interview by the author.

48 Cahit Mervan, interview by the author.

As discussed already, the DDKDs of Ankara and Istanbul in 1974 housed activists who later founded their own groups, publications, and political parties, namely Komal/Rizgari, the TKSP/ÖY, the KİP/DDKD, and Kawa. However, the fiercest confrontations to occur later were among local associations that usually had *halk* (people) and *kültür* (culture) in their names, branches of the TÖB-DER, and DİSK. While local branches of national associations and unions, particularly those of TÖB-DER and DİSK were often founded by activists who were already affiliated with a group or party, the remaining circles and groups tried hard to take control of those branches. For example, the local branch of the TÖB-DER in Viranşehir-Şanlıurfa was under the control of Dengê Kawa and the TİKKO group. The KİP/DDKD explained its "triumph" over them as follows:

> The counter revolutionary Maoist elements, which held the Viranşehir TÖB-DER branch in their hands for a while and abused the association for their agent provocateur intentions, got a real smack in the face by the *Devrimci-Democrats* and lost the management of the TÖB-DER after the congress held on 15 January 1978.[49]

Together with the TKSP/ÖY, the KİP/DDKD held most local associations and branches of national associations under their control.[50] Compared to other groups such as Kava, the TKDP/KUK, and the PKK, *Devrimci*-Demokratlar (short word used for the DDKD) and the Özgürlük Grubu[51] had greater opportunities in this regard because they had close relations with the TKP, TİP, and TSİP, all of which were pro-Soviet. An association usually played more roles than immediately apparent. It provided a physical venue for meetings, discussions, socialization, and politicization. In some places, a single

49 "Bir Süreden beri Viranşehir TÖB-DER şubesini ellerinde bulunduran ve Derneği demokratik muhtevasından çıkararak kendi ajan provakatör emellerine alet edinen karşı devrimci Mao'cu güçler 15.1.1978 tarihinde yapılan kongrede Devrimci Demokrat güçlerden büyük bir şımar yiyerek TÖB-DER yönetimini kaybetmişlerdir." *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, Issue:1, February 1978, 6.

50 Cahit Mervan, interview by the author.

51 Since the TKSP was not known to the public until 21 March 1980, the entire TKSP/ÖY/Roja Welat group was known as *Özgürlük Yolu.*

association was the center of almost all political activism by all kinds of groups, as was the case in Batman in 1976.[52] Like the Batman Halk Kültür Derneği (People Cultural Association), sometimes with different names such as the Kültür Sevenler Derneği (Association of Culture Lovers) in Siverek-Şanlıurfa, and the Bismil Güzelleştirme Derneği (Association of Beautification of Bismil) in Bismil-Diyarbakır[53] were battlefields for groups to win "splendid victories" over their opponents.

## § 4.3 Separate Organizations: A Practical Myth?

In addition to actual persons who shifting to and from Kurdish and Turkish groups, dual membership in at least two associations and elections create doubt about the idea of separateness of the organizations of Kurds. The idea of a separate organization, with the connotation of being almost disconnected, should be questioned. In addition to nationwide associations mentioned above, Kurdish actors worked closely with the other political groups and, as is discussed below, even formed alliances and campaigned for mainstream political parties. The phenomenon of separate organizations is partially a myth of Kurdish activism in the 1970s that confuses "various" "disconnected" organizations. As mentioned earlier, one can clearly observe in the TÖB-DER, the TÜM-DER, and the DİSK that Kurdish and Turkish socialists worked shoulder to shoulder even though they also had discrete organizations. Almost every activist was affiliated with more than one association though they swore allegiance to their primary political party or group. [54]

Consider a teacher who was a member of the TÖB-DER and the DDKD, which was commonly the case. Would he belong to the DDKD or the TÖB-DER? Likewise, consider a worker who was at the same time a member of the DHKD and the DİSK. What would define his allegiance? In addition to earlier

52 Şükrü Gülmüş, interview by the author.

53 Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın, 67.*

54 *KİP/DDKD dava dosyası* and *TKSP Dava dosyası,* among many others are good examples of how court indictments contained detailed information, albeit somewhat manufactured, about activists' connections. One observes that many activitsts were affiliated with more than one association – TÖB-DER and TÜM-DER were the most mentioned.

discussion about how Kurdish groups stemmed from predominantly Turkish groups, many Kurds also stayed. The close relations and dual memberships of Kurdish activists need to be underscored.

Because Kurdish activists could not establish legal political parties with their political agenda, they continued working within legal political parties throughout the 1970s. As mentioned, the CHP, TİP, and TSİP were occasionally supported, and each group formed different alliances, depending on the local context. Therefore, the idea of separate organizations – insofar as it denotes almost total "disconnectedness" between Turkish and Kurdish socialist movements – needs to be challenged. Furthermore, as already mentioned, at least four Kurdish socialist circles and groups evolved from predominantly Turkish groups that were already formed including the *THKP-C*, the *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergisi*, and *Halkın Kurtuluşu*.[55] In addition to this continued organic relation with predominantly Turkish groups, many demonstrations – particularly those of May Day – showed that they all belonged to the same political space.

Voting patterns in the region changed in the 1970s, albeit not dramatically. As already mentioned, up until the 1970s elections were carried out by local notables.[56] Most of the time the unchallenged candidate would align with a political party and win the election.[57] While the TİP provided a new platform for Kurdish newcomers in national elections in the 1960s, the CHP replaced the TİP.[58] The diminished role that the TİP played was in the hands of the MSP and CGP in the 1970s. However, in the 1970s, the number of actors increased, as did the level of contestation. In addition to the CHP and AP, the two largest mainstream political parties, the Islamic MSP and even the ultranationalist MHP came to the fore. The distribution of mayors in the fifteen provinces,

55 Laçiner, "THKP-C: Bir Mecranın Başlangıcı," 8-10.

56 Emin Bozarslan, *Doğunun Sorunları*, 144.

57 Beşikçi, *Doğu Anadolu'nun Düzeni,* 219.

58 Also support that the TİP received from the DİSK and the TKP in the 1960s, was given to the CHP throughout the 1970s. See Koç, *100 Soruda Türkiye İşçi*, 87.

predominantly inhabited by the Kurds, might explain the shift.[59] In the mayoral elections of 1968, the AP one seven mayors out of fifteen mayorships, the CHP six, and the CGP one. An independent candidate won in Elazığ. In the mayoral elections of 1977, on the other hand, the AP won only one mayorship, while the CHP won eight, the MHP three, the MSP one, and independent candidates won in Malatya and Diyarbakır. A similar distribution can be seen in the results of the general elections for parliamentary representatives.[60]

The local elections of 1977 are presented as a turning point in Kurdish activism. While it might be argued that "independent" Kurdish candidates ran on "Kurdist" claims[61] to get elected, the contextual reality of the 1970s suggests another explanation. Kurdish candidates – including Mehdi Zana – who became the mayor of Diyarbakır in 1977, Yahya Mehmetoğlu, who was supported by the DDKD in the same election and Urfan Alparslan, who became the mayor of Ağrı in 1979 – did not differ from other candidates in terms of their motivations and goals. Moreover, Kurdish political groups, such as the TKSP with which Mehdi Zana was affiliated and the KİP/DDKD, with which Mehmetoğlu was affiliated, simply used the elections to get elected. They sometimes voted for the TİP, sometimes for the CHP or the TSİP,[62] and sometimes offered their own independent candidates, depending on the local power game.[63]

Among all Kurdish actors, that only the Rizgari and the TKDP/KUK[64] did not participate in elections in general, as well as other common political activities with the mainstream and socialist groups, which was not always so. In line with the general polarization of attitudes, True Believers did everything perfectly on paper. For example, Rizgari wrote:

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59 Ağrı, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Erzincan, Hakkari, Kars, Malatya, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, Tunceli, Urfa, and Van.

60 For detailed information, see Appendix E.

61 Gilles Dorronsoro and Nicole F. Watts, "The Autonomization of Turkey's Kurdish Regions in the 1970s: Electoral and Social Trends," *International Journal of Middle East Studies.* 41 (2009): 1.

62 Jina Nu, Issue:1, October 1979, 23.

63 Kemal Burkay, *Anılar, Belgeler, Cilt 2,* 18.

64 Zinar Soran,, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, February 27, 2011.

> Not even a single vote should be cast for the colonialists. Independent candidates should be supported if only they are patriotic, anti-fascist, anti-colonialist, and persistently engage in the struggle against imperialism, and feudal reactionism.[65]

No doubt, the background of Mehdi Zana and his campaign enjoyed the appreciation of many rival groups, even the DDKD.[66] However, as Zana pointed out, as soon as he was elected he was given a list of sixty-five DHKD members, also followers of TKSP/ÖY, and asked to put them on the payroll.[67] Mehdi Zana argued that not only the TKSP/ÖY, but also predominantly Turkish socialist groups such as Kurtuluş and Emeğin Birliği, two splinter groups of the THKP-C, supported him during the elections. CHP candidates won in Bitlis, Tatvan, and other cities thanks to support from the TKSP/ÖY and other socialist groups.[68] A final comment on the elections the PKK did not differ from other groups. Although its discourse might seem to be "against the establishment," elections were instruments from which to benefit. For example, in Hilvan,[69] Batman,[70] and Ceylanpınar,[71] activists of the PKK circle were elected and took over municipalities, even if only for short periods of time.

65 "Kürdistan'da sömürgecilere verilecek bir tek oy bile olmamalıdır….Yurtsever nitelikli, antifaşist, anti-sömürgeci adaylar, emperyalizme, feodal gericiliğe karşı mücadele süreci içinde bulunan adaylar BAĞIMSIZ ADAY olarak girmeli, bunlar, bu konuda ısrarla uyarılmalıdır." *Rizgari*, Special Issue: 4, November 1977, 21.

66 Mahmut Önder, interview by the author.

67 Mehdi Zana, interview by the author.

68 *Özgürlük Yolu,* Issue: 31-32, December-January 1978, 6-12.

69 This is the main argument of Murat Karayılan, *Bir Savaşın Anatomisi*, 100.

70 Şükrü Gülmüş, interview by the author.

71 *Serxwebûn*, Special Issue: 10, August 1986, 38.

## § 4.4 Demographic Profiles and Different Patterns of Politicization among Kurdish Activists

> *It is true that we were 17 years old, but that is the equivalent of being 30 or 40 years old now. We got politicized early.*[72]

To better understand the polarization of attitudes among activists, which was expressed in intemperate language and in unyielding attitude the demographic profile of "actual persons" needs to be clearly explained. The average birth year of the interviewees in this study is 1952. When individuals born before the 1940s are omitted, the median value of the year of birth is 1954.[73] By the same token, the average age of DDKD members, based on court files also shows that ninety percent of the defendants were born after 1950, in 1956.[74] While the TKDP/KUK court file concerned a relatively older generation,[75] the average age for those in the PKK indicates that its activist were even younger born on average in 1958.[76] So, it is reasonable to take 1954 as the average birth year of activists at the time. Employing Mannheim's categorization, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement is a youth movement: Ordinary activists were in their early 20s, while the leaders were in their early 30s in the 1970s.[77] Other studies also show that members of leftist groups in Turkey, as well as their

72 "Erê em 17 salî bûn, wi çaxa gor 30-40 saliya anika bû, em zû politîze bûn." Reşat Akaltun, interview by the author.

73 This figure calculated based on the dates of birth stated by the interviwees.

74 Compiled from *KİP/DDKD Davası.*

75 T.C. Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı Askeri Savcılığı Diyarbakır, *KUK (Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları),* 64.

76 Most of these figures are calculated based on information given in *Serxwebûn*. Here, I get this year by the avarage year of killed activists until 1984, See *Serxwebûn*, Special Issue: 10, August 1986.

77 This value is consistent with general data covering all of Turkey. For instance, more than eighty five percent of those arrested after the 12 September were below thirty give years old, while age range of 16-25 constituted fifty five percent of the total number. See Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi,* 137.

leaders,[78] were predominantly below thirty years of age.[79] Furthermore, most activists were born in provinces such as Diyarbakır, Batman, Hakkari, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Bitlis, and Tunceli: In other words, they were from the region of their activism.

Similar to Hafez's observation about militant Islamists in Algeria and Egypt who were in their 20s and 30s and came from the lower-middle classes, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement also owed its momentum to the lower-middle class.[80] It consisted of poor students whose families had been in urban areas for less than a generation or who had moved to a city for their education while their families remained in villages. Urbanization, naturally, affected Kurds in more or less the same way as the rest of Turkey.[81] In addition to its doubled ratio in the overall population, a striking outcome of rapid urbanization in the 1970s was unemployment.[82] For example, twenty percent of the people arrested after September 12, were categorized as *boşta gezer* (non-employed), only two percent less than those classified as "students."[83]

Furthermore, most Kurdish students – primarily because they studied in metropolitan cities such as Ankara an Istanbul – lived in "relative deprivation,"[84] a situation not shared by the majority of Kurds in Turkey at the time. Given that relative deprivation concerns expectations, it raises awareness to developing a consciousness in regard to their own economic situation. This could be one of the underlying factors for Kurdish students of the '58 generation who took class issues seriously. Students, because they were exposed to different worlds and especially to the different economic realities of the country, questioned their own situation. Even though some students or activists were well-off in their own communities, the new environment created a sense

78 Keleş and Artun, *Kent ve Siyasal Şiddet,* 61.

79 TBMM İnsan Haklarını İnceleme Komisyonu, *Terör ve Şiddet Olayları Kapsamında Yaşam Hakkı İhlallerini İncelenme Raporu,* (Ankara: 24. Dönem 3. Yasam Yılı, 2013), p.39.

80 Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel,* 8-9.

81 McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 401.

82 Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey,* 153.

83 Keleş and Ünsal, *Kent ve Siyasal Şiddet,* 59.

84 Stephen G. Brush, "Dynamics of Theory Change in the Social Sciences: Relative Deprivation and Collective Violence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* Vol. 40 No. 4, (December 1996): 524.

of lacking both material and symbolic capital, to employ Pierre Bourdieu's terms.[85]

As mentioned earlier, the urban population of the fifteen provinces that approximate the region predominantly Kurdish was only twenty percent in 1970.[86] Hence, almost three quarters of the population lived in rural areas. The urbanization also increased literacy, which in turn allowed more people to become politicized.[87] Furthermore, the number of educational institutions is essential to understand overall structural changes leading to increasing political activism. The number of state universities increased from thirteen in 1967 to nineteen in 1978. The number of university students was 321,000 with an average of 40,000 new students each year, but a large number of applicants were not accepted to the universities.[88] Likewise, the number of teacher's education schools and training institutes increased together with the number of enrolled students.[89]

Needless to say, the concept of politicization cannot be limited to literacy and educational institutions. On the contrary, in the Kurdish case, the way that political activism and discourse took place was mostly in "literary circles" and particularly among university students. It is reasonable to argue that at least seventy percent of Kurdish society in the 1970s – and even more in the 1960s – were not involved in any of the discussions among various Kurdish groups. This was first and foremost due to their illiteracy. However, as discussed later in this chapter, the increasing prevalence of modern appliances and especially radios and cassette players attracted people's attention much more. Therefore, the "high politics" of these actors and activists should not be confused with the agenda of the broader society.

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85 See Ahmet Alış, "Üç Devrin Tanığı Musa Anter."

86 See Appendix E.

87 Frey, W. Frederic, "Socialization to National Identification among Turkish Peasants," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 30, No.4 (Nov., 1968): 955.

88 Gökhan Çetinsaya, *Büyüme, Kalite, Uluslararasılaşma: Türkiye Yükseköğretimi İçin Bir Yol Haritasi,* (Ankara: Yükseköğretim Kurulu Yayın No: 2014/2, 2014), 42-54.

89 http://dhgm.meb.gov.tr/yayimlar/dergiler/Milli_Egitim_Dergisi/160/esme.htm, accessed September 2, 2016.

Concurring with Hroch's argument about the composition of activists and their social characteristics, the Kurdish ethnoregional movement was comprised of different generations – '58'ers, '68'ers and '78'ers – in different phases of the movement. Moreover, the social and economic composition of activists, particularly in the 1970s, show that it was overwhelmingly made up of the intelligentsia – including students under that heading.[90] In fact, this was not exceptional to Kurds in Turkey. Kurdish activists in Iraq and Iran such as Jalal Talabani, Mahmut Osman, and Abdurrahman Qassemlo, were all university students when they first became involved in politics through the KDP.[91] Moreover, the Komalah of Iran was founded by Kurdish students.[92]Al-Fatah, which was the most important member of the PLO in 1964, was founded by students.[93] Just like Kurdish student associations a decade later, associations of Palestinian students in Cairo provided the basis for what Yezid Sayigh calls the transformation of the "Palestinian idea into an organized, mass phenomenon."[94]

Harun Ercan points out that not only the majority of lay activists but also the leaders of Kurdish groups were attached to associations of higher education.[95] Regardless of who an activist was, local people called activists *talebeler* (students), a euphemism for activists.[96] In fact, when many activists decided to become "professional revolutionaries" in the late 1970s, many were still students or dropouts and lived on quarterly stipends provided by the government. Importantly, students were not limited to those at universities: An increasing number who were involved in political activism attended teacher's

90 The term intelligentisa is used in the same line with Hroch. See Miroslav Hroch, "Social and Territorial Characteristics of the Composition of the Leading Groups of National Movements," in *Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940,* Vol.VI, ed. A. Kappaler, (Dartmouth, MA: New York University Press, 1992).

91 Interviews with Dr. Mahmut Osman and Sami Abdurrahman in Rafet Balli, *Kürt Dosyası,* 462-479.

92 Alaolmolki, "The New Iranian Left," 231.

93 Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, *Conflicts in the Middle East since 1945,* 72.

94 Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State,* 51.

95 Ercan, 166.

96 Ruşen Arslan, interview by the author.

education schools and training institutes, including vocational high schools, high schools,[97] imam-hatip high schools,[98] and even secondary schools.[99] According to Vildan Tanrıkulu, in Diyarbakır alone students at higher education institutions numbered around 4,000, the majority of whom were politically active.[100]

## § 4.5 From Strong to Ever-Weaker Ties: The Dynamics of the Expansion of Kurdish Activism

Students, as one might expect, mostly interacted with other students. If a student from a group of friends happened to have contact with a political group or publication, which many did through relatives, then most of the other students in his or her circle of friends would become involved in the same group. Almost without exception, this was the pattern by which my interviewees initially became familiar and engaged with a political group, association, or publication. For example, Zübeyir Aydar, who was then affiliated with the Kawa group and is currently a leading cadre of the PKK in Europe, said that "all our friends were close to Kava group, and that's how I made my decision."[101]

Personal contacts derived from the circles where activists spent most of their time.[102] Most activists did not even realize they were part of a political group, since the amorphous notion of "separate" Kurdish organization did not become a political reality until the late 1970s.[103] While the main venue for socialization and the exchange of political ideas until the mid-1970s was the *hemşehri dernekleri*, [104] this was later replaced by the offshoot *Kültür* associations and local branches of national unions, as well as by several associations

97 Cemil Gündoğan, interview by the author.
98 Şefik Beyaz, interview by the author, via email, 30 May 2011.
99 Fettah Karagöz, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, May 21, 2011.
100 Vildan Saim Tanrıkulu, interview by the author.
101 Zübeyir Aydar, interview by the author, tape recording, Brussels, December 9, 2011.
102 Munzur Çem, interview by the author, tape recording, Berlin, February 10, 2011.
103 Süleyman Günyeli, interview by the author.
104 Zana gündoğan, 77.

of other political groups and parties,[105] that became centers of political contention. Importantly, these associations not only provided general resources for activists, but also served as a recruitment platforms.[106] In Diyarbakır, for instance, the DYÖKD (Diyarbakır Yüksek Öğrenim Kültür Derneği or Diyarbakır Democratic Higher Education Association) was a platform where every group looking for new recruits would come to try to convince new students.[107]

Because of political polarization in general and intra-Kurdish schisms in particular, later on inter-mobility of ideas and "revolutionary potential," be it an association or an activist, lead to the deadlock within the movement discussed in the previous chapter. Two major issues need closer examination in order to understand the movement's predicament from the late 1970s onwards. The first issue concerns the role or absence of Islam: The second concerns women in the process.

In his acclaimed article, The Strength of Weak Ties, Mark S. Granovetter argues that interpersonal networks allow "that small-scale interaction becomes translated into large-scale patterns."[108] As one of main questions of this investigation is the reasons behind activists' allegiances to a certain political group or ideology in the 1970s, I therefore asked, "Why did you align yourself with the party or group of which you were a follower or sympathizer?"[109]

Due to the risk of being politically involved in those years and the fear that Kurdish people had about expressing their political unrest, most activists became involved in political activism through strong ties: Relatives, neighbors,

105 Ersan, *1970'lerde Türkiye Solu*, 275.

106 For a theoretical account, see Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism," *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 99, No. 3 (Nov., 1993).

107 Öncü, *Dozek, Dewranek, Lehengek: Wedat Aydın*, 59.

108 Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties,"1378. He adds that "most intuitive notions of the strength of an interpersonal tie should be satisfied by the following definition: the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie," ibid., 1361.

109 Interestingly, after the first dozen interviews, the responses sounded familiar: indeed, I could answer the question by just listening to the answers to the interview up to point.

classmates, and fellow townsmen. The gradual expansion of the same reasons for political affiliation characterizes the general (network) map of Kurdish activism in the 1970s.

Although there was a great deal of social mobilization by Kurds in the 1970s compared to the previous era, the movement was not a social movement per se. Most activists were carrying out their strategies for an envisioned political end in terms of a social movement terms – social networks, such as associations, clubs, and unions. Most of the active groups were more supporting top-down social and political change, which they called, in a nutshell "revolution."

In the trials of the DDKO and the TİP in 1971 and 1972, there were around hundred individuals who for the most part all knew one another: In other words, they had strong ties. In the late 1970s, especially after the military coup of September 12, 1980, this number reached into the thousands. That is to say, the ties were getting ever weaker. However, for most activists of the time, ties were not yet weak enough to cut the clusters and let the water flow across different conduits. My fieldwork shows that activists were building stronger ties when they were imprisoned and even before. Suppression and other political factors, such as clashes between right and leftwing groups and the need to survive in a volatile environment, forced activists to form stronger ties, either through face-to-face communication or through publications and party propaganda.

The PKK, however, represents a rather different case. It is true that the PKK set out as a small cluster of students who knew each other well: Already had strong ties. However, from the beginning, the PKK and its founding militants strove to establish weaker rather than stronger ties. After the coup in 1980, most political exiles fled Turkey and moved to Europe to seek asylum. Both individuals and groups sought out their "strong ties," and therefore became even more closer. The activism of groups in Europe other than the PKK involved people who mostly had stronger ties than the target groups of the PKK. In Germany, for instance, the PKK started to mobilize and collect money from workers who had arrived in Europe almost two decades earlier and did not have a strong Kurdish ethnic identity. In doing so, PKK activists began to

establish weak ties with "bridges" or "bridging individuals" – party representatives, local partisans, or just familiar faces.

As a result, starting in the early 1980s, the PKK not only collected enormous sums of donations and protection money, it established a powerful stronghold for its ideological battle: Thousands of sympathizers for the party and its leader, whom they had never met. Overall, if there are insufficient weak ties, a mobilization will not spread… it will remain within in one clique (meaning group of people with strong ties, friends, relatives, etc.). With the participation of so many people by the late 1970s, it was no longer possible to know everyone individually, so ties – as a mechanism of political membership – became weaker, yet not enough to break clusters around each groups. The role of *local bridges,* or individuals enabling others to make acquaintances, came to the forefront.

## § 4.6 A Not-Fasting Mullah: The Role or Absence of Islam in the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement

On a very hot summer day in 1979, when the majority of locals in Diyarbakir and many of his fellow mullahs were fasting, Mele Zeki or *Seyda* (master) was not. He would go to the district's mosque to perform prayers, because he was on a state salary. Once the prayers were over, he would head to the local DDKD building to discuss historical materialism and the national question.[110] As Beşikçi observed a year earlier, in 1978, the socialists were wrong to consider all religious and influential people within Kurdish society as "collaborators."[111] He himself was acquainted with Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, who was a mufti, as well as with several other mullahs who were affiliated with the TKDP. Mele Zeki was following in their footsteps, yet he missed the crucial point that the community praying at the mosque did not know his ideological leanings and would have opposed them on an ontological basis.

110 Mehmet Zeki Çılgın, interview by the author, tape recording, Copenhagen, February 21, 2011.

111 İsmail Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası'nın Tüzüğü (1927) ve Kürt Sorunu* (Istanbul: Komal, 1978), 249.

The first Kurdish newspaper, *Kurdistan,* appeared on 22 April 1898 with *Bismillahirrehmanirrehim* (Basmala).[112] Kurdish demands has been belittled as reactionary and Islamic in their articulation, but in the 1960s and 1970s the articulation of Kurdish demands was presented as anti-religion and anti-Islam, which was true to an extent. Generally, the left and particularly Marxist-Leninist groups did not favor or think about religion at all, the fact that society was overwhelmingly religious notwithstanding. One of the underlying factors behind the deliberate divergence from Islam is the symbiotic relationship that the Kurdish movement had with Kemalist and later neo-Kemalist and socialist discourse and ideologies. As Bozarslan remarks, early Kurdish intellectuals framed their demands within a "civilized" approach to show that they were as modernist as their counterparts.[113] Similarly, socialist Kurdish activists of the 1960s and 1970s worked to convince both themselves and their Turkish counterparts that they were not behind current in terms of their ideological modernism and developmentalism, though they later admitted this was limitation for the spread of leftist and Kurdish ideas.[114]

Almost all the interviewees acknowledge this conundrum. For example, Fehim Işık notes "there was always a contradiction, because we were all leftists, while our families were conservative."[115] Those with families with a more religious background, as was the case with Yavuz Delal,[116] generally preferred to take a back seat to protect their children – basically choosing self-imposed assimilation.[117] The number of *imam-hatip* students increased from less than 50,000 in 1974 to more than 200,000 by 1980.[118] Not only that, there was a

112 Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, trans., *Kurdistan: Rojnama Kurdi ya Pesin (Ilk Kurd Gazetesi,)1898-1902,* Cild I, (no publication info), 111.

113 Hamit Bozarslan, "Some Remarks on Kurdish Historiographical Discourse in Turkey," 29

114 Abdullah Öcalan, *Din Sorununa Devrimci Yaklaşım,* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebûn 48, 1991), 91.

115 Fehim Işık, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, May 19, 2011.

116 Yavuz Delal, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 24, 2011.

117 Işık İşcanlı, interview by the author, via internet calling and tape recording, Copenhagen, February 15, 2012.

118 Banu Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 125.

growing number of Kurdish students at *imam-hatip* (religious) high schools who later became activists in the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. [119]

When one mentions political Islam as an ideological reference for political action, the first actors, that come to mind among many groups and parties, is the Kurdish Hizbullah. Considering its history, the Hizbullah emerged from the 1970s, an one might ask how such different outcomes could occur, as will be seen, both cases were politicized and even grounded in a similar ideological and sometimes organizational background.[120] For the purposes of this study, the main concern is to locate the place or rather the absence of Islam within the Kurdish ethnoregional movement in Turkey.

Eric Hobsbawn argued that nationalism is a civic religion. Furthermore, he argued that "religion is a paradoxical cement for proto-nationalism."[121] Both arguments seem to hold true in the Turkish case, but present a challenge in the case of Kurdish ethnoregional movement because of their absence. As Şerif Mardin pointed out, the main focus for state builders is to find a new national identity.[122] It is evident that Islam played a determining role in the formation of a "new national identity."[123] Moreover, the Kemalist elite did not rush to neutralize the image of Islam in the public sphere,[124] even though they abolished the sultanate in 1922 and founded the Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Presidency of Religious Affairs) in 1924. Despite all efforts, Islam and most importantly the Kurdish issue, which have been the two major issues to

119 Şefik Beyaz, interview by the author.

120 For an account, Cihan Tugal's "passive revolution" might provide an answer. In the Kurdish case, it may be interpreted that there was a different approach to "revolution" that is to say, it was "active" with regard to Kurdish Hizbullah. See Cihan Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

121 Eric Hobsbawn, *The Age of Empires,* 7; and *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780,* 68.

122 Şerif A. Mardin, "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jul., 1971), 210.

123 Cagaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey*, 39.

124 Parla, *Türkiye'de Anayasalar*, 22.

dominate Turkish politics since the country's foundation, have not disappeared over time. Instead they gained ground as a result of Kemalist policies.[125]

The rise of political Islam is closely related to the Cold War policies of the Turkish state and the appearance Kurdish ethnic demands. It would later adopt the Turkish-Islamic synthesis as its official ideology.[126] While Islam was used to prevent the awareness and politicization of Kurdish ethnicity from the early 1950s onwards,[127] it was also utilized as a buffer to lessen the spread of communist and socialist ideology. The number of religious associations founded in Turkey reached 10,000 by 1968.[128] As already mentioned, the KMD (Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri*)* received support from the state and supported various Islamic and nationalist figures in the 1960s.

According to M. Hakan Yavuz, until the foundation of the MNP there was a cultural Islamic movement after that, a political Islamic movement became oriented towards state power.[129] Perhaps role of Islam as a cultural movement was what the state needed in the 1970s as well, because the utilization of Islam was always under state control. That is why, when Necmettin Erbakan founded the MNP (Milli Nizam Partisi or National Order Party) in 1970, it received the same reaction from the state as the TİP, even though it was closed in May 1971, even before the TİP.[130] Later on, the MSP (Milli Selamet Partisi or National Salvation Party) took center stage, becoming the third largest winner in the general elections of 1973 and taking part in the coalition governments until its closure after September 12, 1980. It laid the seed for its heyday in the early 1990s.[131]

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125 See Ömer Taşpınar, *Kurdish Nationalism and Political Islam in Turkey: Kemalist Identity in Transition,* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

126 Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey,* 37.

127 Kemal H. Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi; Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Temeller* (Istanbul: Istanbul Matbaası, 1967), 244.

128 Yücekök, *Türkiye'de Örgütlenmiş Dinin Sosyo-Ekonomik Tabanı*, 132.

129 M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9.

130 Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey,* 158.

131 For a historical account, see Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey.*

The ideology of the "Great East" (Büyük Doğu) of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek was named for a journal he published. It was a romanticized approach to Eastern, or Muslim society that Kısakürek called "the nation that was chosen by *Allah*" which signified the state and obedience.[132] Kısakürek gave seminars for all "national and Islamic" associations, such as for the KMD. Even Abdullah Öcalan followed these seminars in the 1960s.[133] Furthermore, some Kurdish activists, most notably Salih Mirzabeyoğlu, adopted Kısakürek's ideology remaining outside the Kurdish ethnoregional movement and presenting a challenge from the opposite side. [134]

Along the same lines was the *Nur* (Light) movement, a product of the old Kurdish medrese educational system,[135] named after its founder the passive revolutionary, Said Kurdi or Nursi, who died in 1960.[136] Its disciples were present in nationalist and Islamic circles.[137] Although the movement was limited to private houses that were rented out for religious teaching, especially to *feqihs* (novices) with predominantly poor peasant backgrounds,[138] it always aligned itself with the government –or at least did not cross the "red lines" of the government.[139]

As an early indication of future political disagreements within *Nur* and other Islamic groups, Med-Zehra became the first splinter group[140] resulting from disagreement about the origins of Said Nursi. Şükrü Aslan, one of the main dissidents, claims that as they were translating Said Nursi's "Epistles of Light" (Risale-i Nur*)* for the *Nur* community, they discovered that in the

132 Among numerous books written by him, see Necif Fazıl Kısakürek, *Hadiselerin Muhasebesi-3* (Istanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, 2009).

133 Perinçek, *Abdullah Öcalan ile Görüşme,* 18.

134 Osman Tunç, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 22, 2011.

135 Zeynelabidin Zinar, "Medrese Education in Northern Kurdistan," in *Islam de Kurdes*: *Les annales de l'autre Islam* 5, eds. Martin van Bruinessen and Joyce Blau, (1998): 43.

136 For the use of the term see Tugal, *Passive Revolution.*

137 See Fulya Atacan, "A Kurdish Islamist Group in Modern Turkey: Shifting Identities," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37:3, (2001) DOI: 10.1080/714004407, 12.

138 Şükrü Aslan, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 23, 2011.

139 Yakup Aslan, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 24, 2011.

140 Atacan, "A Kurdish Islamist Group," 112.

original Arabic, Said Kurdi alluded to his Kurdishness hundreds of times. In reference to his birthplace he used the signature Said-i Kurdi, which was earlier translated into Turkish as Said Nursi. As was the case with the socialists, the Islamic Kurdish students and particularly the *Nurcus* had read translated or transliterated works up until this incident. It led to the foundation of the Zehra publishing house which published Said Kurdi's uncensored biography in 1979.[141]

Furthermore, when the pro-MSP Akıncılar (Raiders) were founded in Ankara in 1976, as a splinter of the MTTB (Milli Türk Talebe Birliği or National Turkish Students' Association), it became a venue for conservative Kurdish students. While the MTTB consisted predominantly of conservative, pro-MSP students who would later become prominent political figures – such as Abdullah Gül and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan – Akıncılar was an offshoot of the party. [142] It was influenced by the ideological atmosphere of the time and represented a more radical approach claiming a "classless, borderless sharia state."[143] Intergroup conflicts over fulfilling "national and conservative potential" happened within the rightist camp, as well. The leader of the Akıncılar, Metin Yüksel, a Kurd from Bitlis, was shot, allegedly by the Ülkücü (Idealists) group of the MHP.[144]

After the Iranian Revolution of 1978 and 1979 became Islamic Revolution under Ruhollah Khomeini, the Islamic movement in Turkey further extended its ambitions regarding power and revolution. As already mentioned, the meeting in Konya on 6 September 1980, was regarded as the last straw by the military and set the stage for the military coup.[145]

Likewise, Kurdish students affiliated with the MTTB and Akıncılar had a new direction in which to look: To Iran. Creating separate organizations also

141 Osman Tunç, interview by the author.

142 As Çağatay Okutan points out, these organizations become more natinalist and conservative in the 1970s when many Islamic activists were member of more than one right-wing association. See M. Çağatay Okutan, *Bozkurt'tan Kur'an'a: Milli Türk Talebe Birliği (MTTB), 1916-1980* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2004).

143 The General Secretariat of the National Security Council, *12 September in Turkey*, 212.

144 Müfit Yüksel, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 21, 2011.

145 Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 268.

became an issue among Kurdish activists, who initially affiliated with the predominantly Turkish movements. Kurdish activists, notably Hüseyin Velioğlu of the MTTB branch in Batman, already had a reputation for being *Kürtçü* (Kurdist).[146] They changed the political space of their discussions: In other words, they lifted state boundaries for the Islamic revolution.[147] Similar to socialists actors, the new generation of Kurdish political Islamists, founded bookstores such as Diyarbakır Vahdet Kitabevi that served as meeting venues for small circles and their discussions.[148] After the MTTB was closed, the movement became Hizbullah, and clashed with the PKK in the early 1990s, as a result of which many died.[149]

The discourse of the MSP was more inclusive than other rightist and nationalist parties, as demonstrated in a statement of its candidate for the senate from Hakkari: "for the sake of unity and solidarity there should be a Kurdish radio that would educate citizens of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia who speak Kurdish."[150] The experience of Kurdish Islamist activists in the late 1970s and their timid political stances resembled narrative of the neo-Kemalist and Kurdish activists of the early 1960s. The Ummah (Community of Muslims) was a framework presented by Turkish counterparts, who just like Turkish socialists, had no problem incorporating Kurdish activists into their political organizations and discourse on the one crucial condition that they did not challenge the "unity" of the Ummah or the Muslim fraternity.

As many activists recognize, Kurdish activists worked harder to prove their loyalty to the unity of the Ummah – in which Turkishness was embedded,[151] – and to show that they were not Kurdist.[152] In spite of the considerable

146 Şükrü Gülmüş, interview by the author.

147 İ. Bagasi, *Kendi Dilinden Hizbullah ve Mücadele Tarihinden Önemli Kesitler* (no publication place and date), 26.

148 İsmet Siverekli, *Kürdistan'da Siyasal İslam* (Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2008). Also, Mehmet Kurt, *Türkiye'de Hizbullah* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2015), 43-61.

149 Cagaptay, 123.

150 *Ayın Tarihi*, 9 October 1979.

151 See Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye Sağının Üç Hali, Milliyetçilik, Muhafazakarlık, İslamcılık,* Istanbul: Birikim, 1998).

152 Yakup Aslan, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 24.

number of Kurdish students in the Nurcu circle, the MTTB, Akıncılar, and the MSP, Kurdish students were not allowed to speak Kurdish and were labeled separatists if they did.[153] Just as with the promise of the socialists, if a Kurdish issue was acknowledged at all, then when "the ummah is liberated, the Kurds, like other *kavims* (ethnicities) would get their share."[154] However, the difference was that, Kurdish activists within Islamic circles and communities did not seriously challenge mainstream arguments, the emergence of *Hizbullah* and some other insignificant dissidents notwithstanding: Instead, they thought of themselves as true believers as much as their Turkish counterparts. As Christopher Houston demonstrates in, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State,* in the discussions about the Ummah and Kurdist separatism, the Kurdish discourse was to defend Islam's universality, continued in the same way even into the 1990s and beyond.[155]

Meanwhile, the Turkish state continued to utilize Islam against the rise of Kurdish sentiments –specifically against the PKK – by handing out pamphlets depicting the Turkish flag in which hadiths were used to uphold Islamic unity. They said, "how if [they] do not work with security forces and inform against communist and anti-religion bandits, [they] would be considered party to the crime in the eyes of Allah."[156]

153 Yakup Aslan, interview by the author

154 Osman Tunç, interview by the author.

155 Christopher Houston, *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001), 171.

156 An example pamphlet was published on *Serxwebûn*, Special Issue: 10, (August 1986): 92.

## § 4.7 Tea is Ready: Women for the Revolution

> *Lenin said that no revolution is possible without women: Indeed, no revolution was possible without tea.* [157]

At a time when women were not present and could not attend meetings, Kurdish men were engaging in clandestine politics and therefore held most of their meetings in private homes. Yet, the primacy of the revolutionaries of course was not their private sphere. Every day as guests arrived to talk "important issues," a pot of tea would be waiting for them. And when the meetings were over, a tray of glasses would be waiting for the women to wash up. Nuran Maraşlı summarized the overall place of women in the Kurdish ethnoregional movement by saying, "Lenin said that no revolution is possible without [the participation of] women: Indeed, no revolution is possible without tea." [158]

By comparison with the role or absence of religion in the Kurdish ethnoregional movement, the case of women presents an even more significant stalemate for the movement. As a striking example, Zinarê Xamo recalls an incident where a stage play which had a female part was performed at the Viranşehir branch of DDKD. Because they could not find any women willing to act, one of the male activists dressed up like a woman and played the part.[159]

Gender, as Joan Wallach Scott points out, is a contemporary analytical category for studying the "social relationship between sexes."[160] In the same way that different generations remember the same moment in time differently, women both experienced and explained the same moment in time differently from men. In one of the few studies on this issue, Serra Ciliv studied the differing memories of female participants in the socialist movement of the

157 Nuran Maraşlı, interview by the author, via internet calling and tape recording, Copenhagen, February 16, 2012.

158 Nuran Maraşlı, interview by the author.

159 Zinare Xamo, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, February 27, 2011.

160 Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 32.

1970s.[161] This section locates women and the issue of women in the movement. Needless to say, women were involved in the Kurdish ethnoregional movement. However, their participation was limited to just few activists. Moreover, the social structure of the Kurds in the 1960s and 1970s was patriarchal and conservative: Existing gender relations and their political implications were neither questioned by men nor women. As Aydar pointed out, "in order for a woman to sit down with male activists, she needed to act like a man."[162] Hammed Shahidian uses the term "desexed revolutionaries" to explain the participation of women in the Iranian case. Similar to the Kurdish case, leftist movement in Iran was offering a new life for everyone including women. However, interrelations between male and female participants – comrades – were conditioned on the premise and treatment of women as desexed revolutionaries. This was also the case in the Kurdish context.[163]

In general, the literature on nationalism is criticized for its insufficient analyses of women in nationalist discourses and practices.[164] Emancipation of women was indeed a challenge for many emerging states in the Middle East. The new polities required new typologies of manhood and womanhood, not as separate but rather as a single discourse,[165] as was the case with socialist Kurdish activism whereby both men and women had to adapt to the ideological dictums of gender. Deniz Kandiyoti noted that nationalist movements such as those in Turkey, Iran, and Egypt presented two roles for women. The first is inclusive in that women are considered as "national actors" by the movements. The second is restrictive due to limitations on the autonomy of

161 See Serra Ciliv, "Between Belonging and Opposition: Life Story Narratives of Women from the Generation of '78" (Master thesis, Sabancı University, 2002).

162 Zübeyir Aydar, interview by the author.

163 Hammed Shahidian, "Women and Clandestine Politics in Iran, 1970-1985," *Feminist Studies,* Vol. 23, No. 1 (Spring, 1997), 9.

164 See for example, Sita Ranchod-Nilsson and Mary Ann Tetrault, eds., *Women, States, and Nationalism; At home in Nation?* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000); and Nira Yuval-Davis, "Gender and Nation," in *Women, ethnicity and nationalism: the politics of transition,* eds. Rick Wilford and Robert L. Miller (London: Routledge, 1998).

165 Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation,* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 5.

women within the movements.[166] Although there is a broad literature on the role of women in the context of Turkish modernism and Kemalist nationalism,[167] the scholarship regarding Kurdish women is lacking.

Young Kurds of the Ottoman Empire, who envisioned themselves as the modernizers of Kurdish society, notably founded the Kürd Kadınları Teâli Cemiyeti (Society for the Advancement of Kurdish Women) in Istanbul under the auspices of the Kurd Teali Cemiyeti in 1919.[168] However, the Kemalist regime took over the task in the Republican era. Kurdish opposition was obliterated as the new regime began building a nation according to its own principles. As one of the first attempts to systematically educate girls to better fit and project the Kemalist ideology, new schools were established in many parts of Turkey, specifically to train girls to be good citizens and mothers.[169] As a teacher herself, Sıdıka Avar's account of her experience with Kurdish girls at the Elazığ girls boarding school[170] is important to understand the mindset of a "modernizer." Kurdish girls who could not speak Turkish at all or at least not properly were taught Turkish hours on en. Pictures were taken of them "before" they attended the school and "after" they enrolled.[171]

This role was partially taken over by the DDKaD (Devrimci Demokratik Kadınlar Derneği or Revolutionary Democratic Women's Association), which was founded by the KİP/DDKD on 26 September 1978. As it was written in *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, the association was founded to provide women

166 Deniz Kandiyoti, "Contemporary Feminist Scholarship and Middle East Studies," in *Gendering the Middle East, Emerging Perspectives,* ed. Deniz Kandiyoti (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 9.

167 For example, see Yeşim Arat, "The Project of Modernity and Women in Turkey" in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, eds. Reşat Kasaba and Sibel Bozdoğan (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1997).

168 Emine Rezzan Karaman, "Femininity within the Context of Kurdish Nationalist Discourse in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" (Master thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2008), 124-126.

169 See Elif Ekin Akşit, *Kızların Sessizliği, Kız Enstitülerinin Uzun Tarihi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005).

170 For a critical study, see Sevim Yeşil, *Unfoldıng Republıcan Patrıarchy:The Case Of Young Kurdısh Women At The Gırls'Vocatıonal Boardıng School In Elazığ* (Master thesis, the Middle East Technical University, 2003).

171 Sıdıka Avar, *Dağ Çiçeklerim; Anılar* (Ankara: Öğretmen Dünyası Yayınları, 2004), 17.

with better opportunities to educate and prepare them for the "struggle" of the people.[172] While in Phase A in the 1960s women were neither impacted nor included in the political process, Phase B represented a step towards at least recognizing that there was a women's issue in the sense of a gender issue. Not a single Kurdish woman took part in the TİP experience in the 1960s, and there was only one female among the founders of the DDKO. [173]

In parallel with their counterparts, especially the TKP and its offshoot organization the İlerici Kadınlar Derneği or (İKD, or Revolutionary Women's Association), which was established in 1975 and had twenty-six branches with around 15,000 members,[174] the KİP/DDKD decided to establish the DDKAD, under its organization. The DDKAD was founded by Sevinç İşcanlı, Methiye Özhal, Necla Baksi, and some other women who were predominantly students close to the DDKD.[175] The DDKaD had 151 members, and six were sentenced to eight years imprisonment following the September 12, 1980 coup.[176] As İşcanlı, who was a founding member of both the DDKD and DDKaD in Diyarbakır, pointed out, the association was not taken seriously by the KİP and functioned as a branch of the party that organized women for the same purpose. [177]

There was a significant practical benefit of having an association designated for women. First of all, males were not allowed in the association, which made women more comfortable. Also, as İşcanlı noted, conservative males trusted the founders and managers of the DDKaD and therefore did not hesitate to allow their wives to take part in the association's activities.[178] As Maraşlı

172 *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, Issue: 4, 1978, 10.

173 See Ahmet Alış, "Türkiye'de Kürt Kadını ve Siyasi Tarih-siz-liği:1959–1974," in *Uluslararası Kürt Kadın Kongresi*, Hakkari University (Hakkari University Publications 2011).

174 Ayşegül Devecioğlu, "1975-80 Kadın örgütlenmesi: Kaçırılmış bir fırsat," in *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mucadeleler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt; 7*, 2260.

175 Işık İşcanlı, interview by the author.

176 *Armanc*, Issue: 67, December 1986.

177 Işık İşcanlı, interview by the author.

178 Ibid.

states, the *namus* (honor) was a determining factor for girls' and women's absence from in political associations and groups.[179]

One of the outstanding activities of the DDKaD was literacy courses for women, which also included "education in the mother tongue" i.e., Kurdish. Moreover, there was basic training in health and other issues. İşcanlı argues that just like the İKD, the DDKaD cannot be regarded as a women's movement: The main objective was to create more space for women, most of them relatives or wives of KİP/DDKD activists.[180]

However, in the exact same way that national issues and colonialism were discussed among both predominantly Kurdish and predominantly Turkish socialist groups, Ayşegül Devecioğlu remarks that the women's issue was framed by Engels' book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.*[181] The women question was regarded by socialist groups of the 1970s as an integrated issue to be solved with the revolution.[182] While the TKP organized women under the auspices of the İKD from 1975 until its closure in 1977,[183] Dev-Yol also had a base among mostly peasant women, they called *bacılar* (sisters).[184] Although women stayed in the background most of the time, they were part of the politicization of society as a whole. Though almost none were present among the organizers of political activism, hundreds of *ev hanımı* (housewives) were arrested after the coup of September 12.[185]

Kurdish women were part of the political activism through relatives and family members from the beginning –with different roles and, of course, in the context of a patriarchal political movement. Women have another memory of Kurdish activism. Politically and sociologically, women were not

179 Nuran Maraşlı, interview by the author.

180 *Armanc*, Issue: 67, December 1986.

181 Devecioğlu, "1975-80 Kadın Örgütlenmesi: Kaçırılmış Bir Fırsat," 2261.

182 See Abdullah Öcalan, *Kadın ve Aile Sorunu*, comp. Selahattin Erdem (Istanbul: Melsa Yayınları, 1992), Kemal Burkay, *Kadın Sorunu* (Stockholm: Deng Yayınları, 1996).

183 *Ayın Tarihi,* July 1977.

184 Adnan Bostancıoğlu, *Bitmeyen Yolculuk. Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu*, (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2011), 220.

185 Başbakanlık Yayınları, *Terör ve Terörle Mücadelede Durum Değerlendirmesi*, 135.

regarded as equals,[186] even within Marxists circles it was difficult for males to accept that they were equal in terms of their intellectual and political skills, as Hatice Yaşar emphasizes.[187] Behice Boran was an influential figure and leader of the TİP and Hatice Yaşar was long involved in political activism, leading the Ala Rizgari splinter group with İbrahim Güçlü in 1978. As Cemile Büyükkaya describes the roles women were given – mothers, housekeepers, and revolutionaries – were impossible for women to be all at once.[188] As the quote at the beginning of this section alludes, the social and political role exercised by the overwhelming majority of Kurdish women was to make it easier for men to be political and perform political activism.[189]

However, many Kurdish women were gradually politicized outside of their private spheres. Leyla Zana, who later became an iconic figure in pro-PKK legal activism, was not politically active until 1980. The discourse developed by the PKK after 1984 neither reflects the women's issue nor their approach in the 1970s. The group had a few women activists from the beginning: Most were matched to males within the group for marriage[190] and desexualized. As Handan Çağlayan examines, the role of Kurdish women continued to reflect the main mindset of the 1970s.[191]

Therefore, the Kurdish movement as a whole ignored women's issues and did not question the social relationships they inherited. The revolution was put forth as a solution for the gender issues of Kurdish women. Although Kurdish activism moved on from the developmentalist discussions of the 1960s, one can argue that the 1970s did not change the fact that Kurdish

186 In general, politics was regarded as a "male" occupatio. For example, the representation of women in the Turkish parliament was 0.9 percent in 1977, consisting of only four female deputies. See Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, *Milletvikili Genel Seçimleri: 1923-2007* (Ankara: TÜİK Matbaası, 2008), 5.

187 Interview with Hatice Yaşar quoted in Ayşe Yazıcıoğlu, comp. *68'in Kadınları* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2010), 93-103.

188 Cemile Büyükkaya, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, May 24, 2011.

189 Gülseren Önder, interview by the author, tape recording, Copenhagen, December 2, 2011.

190 See Hatice Yaşar's article on this subject, http://www.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=Rizgari_Niviskar&cmd=read&id=230, accessed December 4, 2014.

191 For an insightful reading, see Handan Çağlayan, *Analar, Yoldaşlar,Tanrıçalar,Kürt Hareketinde Kadınlar ve Kadın Kimliğinin Oluşumu* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007).

women suffered and were treated unequally in comparison with the male counterparts.

## § 4.8 Kurdish Nation Building: The Politicization of Kurdish Ethnicity and Culture

> *Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainty about whether the past really is past, over and concluded, or whether it continues, albeit in different forms, perhaps.*[192]

Certainly, the immersion of Kurdish activists from all groups in Kurdish history and culture is noteworthy. Although in the first stage, from 1959 to 1974, Kurdish activists were preoccupied with explaining the present, in Phase B or the stage of national agitation, the focal point was the past. As Smith argues, to have a past is an essential part of cultural identity[193] therefore, for many Kurdish activists the way the past was defined and interpreted was vitally important, not only for the present but also for the future. The outcome of what one might call Kurdish nation-building was observed in the late 1970s:

> The Kurds' sense of separate identity has not been significantly reduced... The Kurdish language has flourished, and clandestinely published Kurdish literature is surreptitiously obtainable in Kurdish areas.
> 194

192 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1993), 1.

193 Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation,* 228

194 National Foreign Assessment Center, *The Kurdish Problem in Perspective,* (August 1979), cited in Michael M Gunter, "The Kurdish Problem in Turkey," *Middle East Journal,* 42 (Summer 1988): 389.

Hroch argues that several generations were needed to "become a fully formed nation and some never reached that stage."[195] After the Young Turks' experience in the early twentieth century, the Kurdish case exemplified Hroch's argument to such a degree as the nation-building process of the 1960s and 1970s, as will be discussed in the next pages, did not complete its undertaking and was later went into the discard. Lacking institutions and expertise as well as a legal foundation, Kurdish nation-building –or[196] in other words, the Kurdish sense of being a distinct people in terms of culture, history, language, and territory – was a fragmented process that relied on individual efforts.

However, with access to printing and other technologies, such as typewriters and mimeographs,[197] anything could be published – from political pamphlets to classical Kurdish works. Although Anderson argues that print languages were a "foundation for national consciousness," that provided a standard tool for exchanging ideas,[198] oral language was powerful, as well. As will be discussed, print language constituted a predicament for the Kurds. Other channels such as cassettes more easily facilitated the politicization of Kurdish identity and evoked Kurdish self-awareness.

The Kurds' sense of distinct identity, in all aspects, did not mean that in the 1960s they considered themselves separate from Turkey. Moreover, the distinct Kurdish identity was overwhelmingly "celebrated and defended"[199] in Turkish, not in Kurdish. In parallel with the "underdevelopment paradigm," it was argued that economic development, land reform, and other

195 Miroslav Hroch, "Social and Territorial Characteristics in the Composition of the Leading Groups of National Movements," 267.

196 Bruinessen distinguishes between Kurdish ethno-nationalism and nation-building states, referring to the nationalism of nation-states, on one hand, and to Kurdish national aspirations – which are not specifically about becoming a state – on the other. See Martin van Bruinessen, *Kurdish Ethno-Nationalism Versus Nation-Building States: Collected Articles,* (Istanbul: the ISIS Press, 2000), 9.

197 Later in the 1970s, the use of household devices, like television and radios was vey common even in rural areas. See Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey,* 186.

198 See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, especially chapter 3.

199 Hroch, *In the National Interest*, 71-72.

socioeconomic reforms[200] would solve the Kurdish issue.[201] Implementation of the constitution was a minimum demand, while the ultimate demands of Kurdish intellectuals were recognition of Kurdish in schools together with Turkish and Kurdish radio broadcasting Musa Anter, alternatively known as Şehmuz Elmas or *Ape Musa*, was at the forefront of attempts to underscore the distinctiveness of the Kurds and Kurdish language in the early 1960s. Just like the Young Turks did in the Ottoman Empire, Anter framed Kurdish distinctiveness within the Turkish unity. However, he underscored the separate Kurdish ethnicity as a rule.[202] As mentioned earlier, Musa Anter's short Kurdish poem, *Qimil* was the first example of the Kurdish language in print in the Turkish Republic.[203] It was followed in 1965 by *Brina Reş* (Blackening Scab), a short play in which Kurdish economic suffering is discussed.[204] In 1967, Anter published the first Kurdish-Turkish dictionary, which he began compiling when he was imprisoned after the 49'ers in 1959.[205]

Ephemeral periodicals, such as *Dicle Kaynağı* and *Deng* challenged the official ideology of Kurdish history by mentioning early Kurdish rebellions,[206] and defining the distinctiveness of the Kurds in terms of language, culture, and norms.[207] Edip Karahan, Musa Anter, Dr. Sait Kırmızıtoprak, Sait Elçi, and other protagonists of Kurdish language and culture all wrote for *Deng* and *Dicle-Fırat*. However, because they were banned after one or two issues, later publications such as *Yeni Akış*, did not underscore Kurdish ethnicity.[208] Rather they reiterated what Dr. Sait Kırmızıtoprak, –Dr. Şivan– proposed in *Yön* in

200 Tarık Ziya Ekinci, *Doğu Dramı,* Türkiye İşçi Partisi Mecliste: 5 (Ankara: Ankara Basım ve Ciltevi, 1967), 15-16.

201 An early example can be seen in Mehmed Emin Bozarslan, *Doğunun Sorunları,* (Diyarbakır: Şafak Kitabevi, 1966).

202 *Barış Dünyası, Cilt 1*, Issue; 2, May 1962.

203 *İleri Yurd*, 16 September 1959, Musa Anter, *Kımıl,* (Istanbul: Yeni Matbaa, 1962).

204 Musa Anter, *Birina Reş-Kara Yara,* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1999).

205 Musa Anter, *Ferhenga Khurdî-Tirkî / Kürtçe-Türkçe Sözlük* (Istanbul : Yeni, 1967).

206 *Dicle-Fırat*, Issue: 1, October 1, 1962.

207 "Bilinmeyen Doğu," *Deng*. Issue: 15, July 1963.

208 See its owner's own account. Mehmet Ali Aslan, *Sabancı'ya Mektup; Kürt Sorunu, PKK Realitesi, Sosyalizmin Geleceği* (Ankara: Söğüt Ofset, 1996).

1962.[209] Although Anter was criticized by Dr. Şivan and other young Kurdish socialists in the early 1960s Dr. Şivan recognized Anter's works and contribution to Kurdish self-awareness by the end of 1960s.[210]

Because all the Kurdish classics were written using the Arabic alphabet and the new Turkish Republic had adopted the Latin alphabet in 1928, the use of Kurdish was strictly prohibited. Kurds of the 1960s and 1970s had to reintroduce the Kurdish classics. While exiled in Syria, Celadet Bedirxan continued the early attempts of *Roji Kurd*[211] to educate and build national awareness among Kurds by publishing the first Kurdish-Latin alphabet in 1932 and by continuously publishing *Hawar,* initially in both Arabic and Latin but later only in Latin, until 1943.[212] The circle around Bedirxan included important writers and intellectuals, whose influence would later "cross the borders." One of them, Osman Sebri, an influential Kurdish poet who had fled to Syria with Bedirxan, published *Alfabe ya Kurdi,* (Kurdish Alphabet) in 1956 in Beirut, which was then smuggled into Turkey and available in select circles.[213] Qedri Can, a Kurdish poet, wrote many poems in praise of socialism and particularly of Moscow.[214] Similarly, Cigerxwin wrote several *Diwans*, and his socialist Kurdish poetry[215] was embraced by Kurdish publications, first by *Dicle Fırat* and later by almost all others in the 1970s.

As mentioned above, the 1960s constituted a time when Kurds defended Kurdish in Turkish, which was also the case during the trials of the DDKO.[216] There was a certain agreement about the distinctiveness of the Kurdish

209 Dr. S. Kırmızıtoprak, "Doğuyu sosyalizm kurtarır," *Yön*, 14 November 1962.

210 See Dr. Şivan, *Kürt Millet Hareketleri ve Irakta Kürdistan İhtilali.*

211 For example, they introduced Latin alphabet in second issue, and showed how to use it. For a Latin transcription, see Wesanen WAR, Belgeyén Kurdi:1/3, *Kovara Roji Kurd/1913*, (Istanbul: War, 2002).

212 For an encyclopedic account of Kurdish periodicals, see Malmîsanıj and Lewendî, *Rojnamegeriya Kurdi.*

213 Beşir Ant, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, December 19, 2011.

214 Dilawere Zengi,comp., *Niviskare Kurd Qedri Can 1911-1972* (Istanbul: Komal, 2004).

215 See Metin Yüksel, "I Cry Out So That You Wake Up : Cegerxwîn's Poetics and Politics of Awakening," *Middle Eastern Studies,* DOI: 10.1080/00263206.2013.817992.

216 See *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları, Dava Dosyası 1*, (Ankara: Komal, 1975).

language, culture, and ethnicity that was reflected in political discussions about Kurds being a nation rather than a class within Turkey, as examined earlier. The most important contribution in terms of bridging the old and the new and bolstering the nation-ness of the Kurds came from Mehmet Emin Bozarslan who published the Kurdish alphabet in 1968[217] and transliterated Ehmed-i Xani's classic *Mem û Zîn*, originally published in 1692.[218]

Hoffman argues that "students who joined ethnic student societies improved their knowledge of language and the culture of their group, and their 'sense of belonging' was strengthened."[219] This was the case for Kurdish students and activists in Turkey. In other words, the activists neither already knew the language –at least not the print language– not did they have immense knowledge of their history and culture due to their education which indoctrinated the official ideology. There was a formative process by which activists first learned the language and history and then used them for political activism. Many Kurdish activists learned how to read and write Kurdish. For example, Beşikçi notes that while in prison, the Kurdish poet Mehmet Gemici, also known as Rojan Bernas, gave Kurdish courses to other prisoners.[220]

The list of published books in the appendices demonstrates that most Kurdish classics had been published for Kurdish audiences by the late 1970s.[221] What distinguishes the 1970s from the 1960s is that Kurdish ethnicity and language were no longer justified based on the sociological presence and contemporary distinctiveness of the Kurds, but instead on their historical roots in past. Thus, for the Kurds to be recognized as a separate and distinct group was not just a matter of the a present reality, but of historical continuity. In addition to publication of classic works in Kurdish history and culture, Phase B of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement also exhibited a dual process to Kurdish nation-building. As mentioned in previous chapters, Kurdish activism relied on Turkish translations of socialist works: In other words, their socialism and

217 Mehmet Emin Bozarslan, *Alfabe* (Istanbul: Sim Matbaacılık, 1968).

218 See Bruinessen, "Mehmed Emin Bozarslan and I," and Yüksel, "A "Revolutionary" Kurdish Mullah from Turkey."

219 Hoffmann, "The Role of Institutions of Higher and Secondary Learning," 283.

220 Beşikçi, "Hapisteki DDKO," 130.

221 See Appendix C.

Marxism was Turkish, both in terms of writing and activism. The national part of their writing and activism was eclectic, revealing an oxymoronic relationship.

Certain elements of Kurdish activism, such as the national element, necessitated the instrumentalization of the new socialist ideology and Kurdish myths as constituent elements. Dr. Şivan strongly emphasized the use of Kurdish in political activism, employing a bilingual party program in 1970. Consequently, the use of the Kurdish language in print increased, constituting almost half of the publications in the 1970s. *Newroz*, the Kurdish new year, became the most embraced symbol of the distinct Kurdish identity. Indeed, *Newroz* was almost unknown to the majority of the activists before the 1970s,[222] yet it came to symbolize Kurdish culture and history for many Kurdish activists thereafter. *Rizgari* first appeared on 21 March, for *Newroz*, and discussed the importance of *Newroz* for Kurdish self-awareness. Along with *Rizgari, Özgürlük Yolu* and later *Roja Welat* also published materials that bolstered Kurdish nation-building and particularly the importance of *Newroz*, juxtaposing it with May Day, which was publicly celebrated for the first time in 1979.[223]

In addition to a revisionist reading of the history of Turkey and the Middle East, which was ubiquitous among Kurdish activists, translation of other works into Kurdish and the publication of Kurdish classics, such as those of Melayê Cizirî, Feqiyê Teyran, and Erebê Şemo, continued to enrich Kurdish ethnicity and culture.[224] Nonetheless, the Kurdish language was far from being codified or standardized in the 1970s, a fact discernible in the first entirely Kurdish journal, *Tîrêj,*[225] published by pro-KİP/DDKD activists in 1979.[226] Not only *Tîrêj* but all other periodicals – notably *Özgürlük Yolu, Rizgari*, *Roja Welat, Pêşeng bo Şoreş*, and *Xebat* – provided a glossary of Kurdish words used in

222 See Delal Aydın, "Mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey: Newroz as a Myth" (Master thesis, the Middle East Technical University, 2005).

223 *Deng*, Issue: 20, 1992.

224 See *Özgürlük Yolu,* issues, 8, 11, 11, 13, and14.

225 *Tirej*, Issue:1, 1979.

226 Malmisanij (Mehmet Tayfun), interview by the author.

each issue. Only, as Kurdish activism moved into Phase C did it become possible to seriously think about ways to unify and codify Kurdish Kurmanji.

Kurdish activists who settled in Europe spent most of their energy on this.[227] In addition to the publication of a variety of journals, such as *Kulilk* and *Hevi*[228] for children,[229] the foundation of the APEC publishing house allowed Kurdish activists to produce cultural and literary works, laying the foundation for a unified print language in Europe.[230] The most significant efforts were made by circles in Stockholm and the Kurdish Institute in Paris,[231] on account of o its journal *Hevi* and writing committee which set the standard for Kurdish Kurmanji.[232] As Ali Çiftçi points out, the works produced in Sweden and in other European cities – with their documented, standard language – provided the foundation for the 1990s and beyond, especially for the pro-PKK Kurdish *Med TV* station in 1995.[233]

Nonetheless, the role and impact of "print language" was limited to Kurdish intellectuals and students. Furthermore, the illiteracy rate of seventy percent and the blend of socialist terminology made it harder for the Kurdish masses to be entirely receptive to Kurdish nation-building efforts. The print language was complemented by oral language, which was used for agitation and political activism as well as for musical and cultural purposes.[234] It is therefore important to explore the contribution of oral language to the process. The advantage of oral language was that, although there were decrees banning Kurdish and its use in any form even before 1980 the state had almost no control over its spread, especially in recorded form. [235] Along with printed

227 Rohat Alakom, *Kurden Swede (1965-2005)* (Stockholm: Serkland, 2006).

228 *Hevi*, Issue: 1, February 1981, Issue:8, September 1981.

229 *Kulilk*, Issue:1, 1980.

230 Ali Çiftçi, interview by the author, tape recording, Stockholm, October 23, 2010.

231 Kendal Nezan, interview by the author, tape recording, Paris, December 7, 2011.

232 *Hevi*, 1983-1990 (1-7issues) Paris, Institut Kurde.

233 Ali Çiftçi, interview by the author.

234 For a brief but an informative introduction with a usefull periodization, see Robert F. Reigle, "A brief history of Kurdish music recordings in Turkey" *Hellenic Journal of Music Education, and Culture,* Vol 4, No:1 (2013).

235 *Resmi Gazete,* Issue: 12527, Decision Number: 6/7635, 24 February 1967.

materials, there are thousands of cassette tapes that were buried underground when the military took over. Anything associated with Kurdish was regarded as "proof" of separatism.

In Iraq and Iran, Kurds were never denied their cultural and ethnic distinctiveness, a fact also expressed in their constitutions. As a result, Kurdish ethnic cultural production flourished in those countries, while in Turkey, the very existence of Kurds was denied. For example, Radio Baghdad began Kurdish broadcasting in the 1930s, becoming the center of Kurdish music and attracting musicians and artists from Turkey, as well. Mihemed Arif Cizrawi, Mihemed Şêxo, and Ayşe Şan were among those who fled to Iraq after the 1950s and continued to write and sing in Kurdish.[236] Radio Erivan in Armenia was indisputably the most well-known and influential station. It began broadcasting two hours a day in Kurdish in 1955, and it was, perhaps, the most effective tool keeping the Kurdish language and culture alive in the 1950s and 1960s. Unrecorded Dengbêj (storytellers) songs in Turkey were almost lost,[237] however, the radio station broadcast interviews with Cigerxwin, Celadet Bedirxan, and other influential writers, in addition to playing folk songs by Dengbêjs such as Karapetê Xaço.[238]

A groundbreaking, popular technological development introduced in Turkey as well as in Kurdish society was radio cassette player. In addition to listening to the radio, it allowed users to record sound and produce cassette tapes. Many Kurds who had migrated to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s as foreign workers often visited their home towns, which made it possible for cassette players to reach even remote villages. Moreover, the early work of *Radio*

236 For a reference book, see Mehmet Bayrak, *Kürt Halk Türküleri* (Ankara: Öz-Ge, 1991).

237 See Metin Yüksel, *Dengbej, Mullah, Intelligentsia: the Survival and Revival of the Kurdish-Kurmanji Language in the Middle East, 1925–1960* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2011).

238 Nihad Gültekin, "Erivan Radyosu Hafızamdır," *Özgür Gündem*, 17 Ocak 2012, available online http://www.ozgur-gundem.com/haber/29765/erivan-radyosu-hafizamizdir, last accessed on December 4, 2014.

*Erivan* and other studio recordings entered individual households through cassette recordings. [239]

Meanwhile, Kurdish culture was becoming part of pop culture in Turkey, especially its songs and film. But the crux was that they were in Turkish and presented as being from Eastern Turkey and not as being Kurdish. In other words, just as the case with the Doğulular group in the TİP, Kurdish culture and the social structure of Kurdish society was presented as Doğulu, Turkish people who had a slight accent but were good Turks. The various social themes were increasingly becoming part of pop culture in cinema and literature.[240] Indeed, Yılmaz Güney, a Kurdish socialist, challenged the Turkish cinema sector making critical movies that again framed the Kurds as Doğulu.

Local artists and musicians emerged and made use of available technologies. Just as the cassette tapes of Islamic groups, and leaders such as Necmettin Erbakan were widely distributed among their followers, local Kurdish singers and particularly Kurdish Romani musicians recorded their music, and within a short span of time their cassette tapes swept the country. To name a few, Mehmûd Qizil, Baqî Xido, Şakiro, Miradê Kinê (Mirado), Şiyar Farqînî, Hozan Dilgeş, and Rençber Aziz recorded folks songs, most of which were an oral history of the Kurdish people with a specific focus on *Şer*s (rebellions).[241] These local musicians acted as intermediaries between the print language and the people. For example, Cigerxwin's poem, [242] Ez Xortê Kurdim (I am a Kurdish boy) was sung and recorded by both Rençber Aziz and Şivan Perwer in the mid-1970s.[243] The poem summarized an emotional romanticism:

239 For example, the pro-TKDP/KUK publication *Pale* wrote in 1978 that they had recorded three cassette tapes of songs from Radio Erivan and distributed them to their readers. *Pale*, Issue:1, 1978, back front.

240 For a list of films, for example see Hilmi Maktav, "Türk Sinemasında '68'liler ve 12 Mart," *Birikim*, Issue: 132, April 2000.

241 See Şaredarîya Bajarê Mezin ya Amed, *Antolojîya Dengbêjan, 1-2* (Diyarbakır: 2011); and also *Esmer- Popüler Kürtür Dergisi*, Issue 22, October 2006 (Dengbêj Special Issue).

242 *Rizgari*, Issue: 1, March 21, 1976.

243 For the earliest recording, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otddOBL48bI, accessed December 4, 2014.

I am a Kurdish boy with great reputation.
Now, you see I took up arms
I am heading to the war to fight
If I become a martyr, do not weep
From here as far as China, I came to be known
The entire world has seen my glory and voice.[244]

Among the local musicians of the 1970s, Şivan Perwer is the most prominent today. In my interview with him, he pointed out that he first took the stage during the Doğu Geceleri (Eastern Nights) in the late 1960s.[245] One of the activities that were used against the DDKO was the organization of around twenty-five such gatherings. Kurdish songs and folk dances were performed in their original, to wit, in Kurdish.[246] Later, Şivan continued to play music, while being affiliated with the KİP/DDKD. To complete the picture of the development of Kurdish music and changes in its content, the quintessentially nationalist influence of socialism should be mentioned, as well. On his album of 1975, Şivan sang a song called Ilmê Sosyalîzmê Xebata Têkoşînê (Scientific Socialism and Struggle Activity):

Read scientific socialism
You will see only the truth
If we follow it, no one can defeat us.
Comrade Lenin rose up,
Brother Lenin got up,
With him Marx's science arose
People were brightened by it
They planted a rose on this earth

244 A loose translation of a selected part of the poem. The original is as follows: "Ez xortê Kurd im pir bi nav û deng-Va min hilgirtî bombe û tifeng-Ez dê herim şer ez de herim ceng-Ger şehit kevim, dayê tu megrî-Ji vir heta Çîn nav û dengê min-Dunya hemû dît şan û rengê min." For a comprehensive anthology of Kurdish songs, see Hesenê Alê, *Dengbêj Û Stranên Me Destan Û Folklora Me*, 2 volumes (Stockholm: Weşanen Medya, 1998).

245 Şivan Perwer, interview by the author, tape recording, Berlin, February 12, 2011.

246 *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları, Dava Dosyası 1*, 33.

We shall water it, come and water it.[247]

The blending Kurdish culture with socialism continued up to the early 1990s when the Soviet Union disintegrated. Just as with the political activism, Kurdish nation-building manifested a twofold process: Kurdish ethnicity and culture, was expressed by the dengbêjs and local musicians, but at the same time the socialist and Marxist ideology were injected by politically-active Kurdish musicians such as Şivan Perwer and Ciwan Haco. As mentioned earlier, prominent Kurdish poets and writers from other countries, especially Cigerxwin, were also socialist. Their works were used by Kurdish activists, because they provided both national and socialist content. While the majority of activists were in Europe, they continued the nation-building process the borders of the nation-state in their minds.[248] However, the last romantics among Kurdish activists faced inner conflicts and were driven far from their "dream land."[249] As the PKK took center stage in the mid-1980s, one by one, activists retreated from activism and were disheartened by the way "their time," or Phase B, had been replaced.

The very absence of the PKK from this early nation-building process and in cultural activities needs to be underscored. As the PKK became the hegemonic power in Kurdish activism in Phase C, it redefined Kurdishness from its own perspective, in defiance of the goings-on in Phase B. From their initial emergence, until they permanently took center stage by the mid-1980s, it is evident that the PKK paid almost no attention to Kurdish language, culture, and ethnicity. As such, one can find nothing non-propagandist on the pages of *Serxwebun*, let alone excerpts of Kurdish classics or works from the

247 A loose translation of a selected part of the song. The original is as follows: "ilmê marksîst bixwîn-rastîyê tê da bibîn-gava em pê rabin kes nikare me bixîn-heval lenîn rabû-ilmê marks lê ra bû-bira lenîn rabu ilmê marks lê ra bû-xwend û pêk anînda dilê gel pê şa bû- wan gul anî li bera danî-em avê bidine, gelo wer bidine." For his full discography, see http://www.sivan-perwer.com/sp.html, accessed December 4, 2014.

248 See Khalid Khayati, *From victim diaspora to transborder citizenship?: diaspora formation and transnational relations among kurds in France and Sweden,* (Linköping:LiU-Tryck, 2008).

249 Mehmet Uzun, "Welate Xeribiye...," *Hevi, Kovara Çandiya Gişti,* Issue: 8, Summer 1992, Paris, 46.

preceding period. Regarding the Kurdish language neglecting what had been created during the 1960s and 1970s, Öcalan argued that "Kurdish is a latter-most concern: Even after independence we must continue with Turkish for a long time."[250] Although the PKK has instrumentalised Kurdish symbols and myths, particularly *Newroz* – gathering around 1,000 people to celebrate in some European capitals as early as 1984 its main concern was to bring those early nation-building efforts under its hegemony.[251]

250 Perinçek, *Abdullah Öcalan ile Görüşme,* 31.

251 *PKK MK Belgeleri* (Cologne: Weşanen Serxwebun, 2002), 106.

# 5

## Conclusion; Socialist in Form, National in Content

The Kurdish activism of the 1960s and 1970s has been divided in two different phases or periods. Needless to say that this does not mean there was nothing before this time in terms of Kurdish activism. However, as has been pointed out, this dissertation focuses on and frames only the multi-party era Kurdish activism in Turkey, which was essentially socialist in form national in content. That is why it should not be understood as if the Kurdish activism began with the introduction of socialist groups, which was the case after the 1950s. In short, the dissertation used three founding events to suggest the periodization of two different phases: The arrest of the 49'ers in 1959, the general amnesty in 1974, and organized attacks by the PKK in 1984. Phase A or the departure moment falls between 1959 and 1974, a period characterized by mixed attitudes and without any clear domination by a political group. Therefore, most activists continued to both fit into the political environment around them, especially in Ankara and Istanbul where they studied or had just begun to work. They explained their situation – of Kurdish economic and ethnic discrepancy – within a Turkish agenda, or as has been argued, in a symbiotic way.

However, Phase B or the maneuver moment came at a time when several groups formed to lead the Kurdish movement. That is why the experience provided by the Ankara and Istanbul DDKD, which were envisioned to bring together all Kurdish activists, failed producing several groups and circles

competing over a single political cause, which was to prepare and mobilize the Kurdish people for socialist revolution. This reflected earlier Dev-Genç ideas.

As has been demonstrated, Kurdish political activism between 1959 and 1984 is a complex phenomenon that cannot be explained by "nationalism," by assuming that the Kurdish nation was an a priori element of Kurdish activist mobilization, or that they were involved in political activism for the sake of nationalism. One underlining finding of this dissertation is that Kurdish political activism was not and is still not separate from Turkey, despite its discourse. All the groups within the Kurdish ethnoregional movement sought answers for the rapid changes happening around them. This quest was indeed ubiquitous among all emerging political actors of the time. For instance, Bülent Ecevit formulated this quest as "fair order," Necmettin Erbakan did "just order," and the ultranationalist MHP and Alparslan Türkeş as a "national doctrine." Most of Kurdish activists, however, found the answer in "socialist order," first as offered by neo-Kemalist circles and then extended to a bigger content of the right to self-determination.

The argument that Kurdish political activism of the 1960s and 1970s was a nationalist movement, that would naturally need to organize outside of Turkish groups has been refuted by several cases and explanations given in earlier chapters. It is noteworthy that the predominant Turkish Marxist and Leninist groups adopted a political approach to the Kurdish question like that of their Kurdish counterparts. With the introduction of Marxist classics, both Turkish and Kurdish groups concluded that the neo-Kemalist style of socialism represented by Yön, TİP, DİSK, CHP, which was preoccupied with the development and modernization of Turkey and was sometimes called "Turkish-style socialism," did not address the real questions of Turkey.

Most of socialist groups, especially in the Dev-Genç tradition, accepted the national question which was framed in line with works by Stalin and Lenin. However, the divisive factor related to "revolution," which was a self-imposed obligation and arrival point. Both Kurdish and Turkish groups thought they had the legitimate right to take the lead in the "revolutionary path." Regardless of whether the Kurdish groups enlarged their theoretical political sphere to include all the Middle-Eastern nation-states where Kurds live in, the Kurdish groups emerged as part of the overall politicization of the

whole society and remained so. Even when Kurdish activists fled Turkey in the wake of September 12, 1980, Turkish activists faced the same consequences. Not only that, Kurdish groups and leftist political parties worked closely and sometimes together before and after 1980. One can easily observe that outside Turkey, the Kurdish groups often affiliated with like-minded Turkish groups.

With respect to the research questions raised in the first chapter, which are addressed in each chapter, accordingly, it is evident that the existing literature is insufficient to answer basic question regarding Kurdish political activism of the 1960s and 1970s, let alone the demographic profile of activists in each group and circle. Furthermore, the approaches of nationalism and PKK-centrism push explanations about the period to an impasse, since empirical findings contradict the most popular arguments. The reason for this shortcoming is related the methodologies used. Because written materials mostly comprise the sole sources, nationalism and PKK-centrism naturally come to the fore because of the way Kurdish activism has been recorded by the "victor" of this period.

The ideological and practical sources of Kurdish political activism present an amalgamation of oxymoronic constituent components. To begin with regional components, most notably the Kurdish movement in Iraq that was led by the KDP and YNK, were against the aspirations of Kurdish groups in Turkey, contrary to what one might assume. As examined earlier, the KDP and its tutelage of offshoots like the TKDP, had long before adopted existing nation-state borders and developed a different political orientation. Because of this orientation, Dr. Şivan's ambitious early attempt to start an armed rebellion in 1971 was crushed and did not materialize. However, when regional dynamics changed after 1975, both the KDP and the splinter YNK wanted the support and alliance of Kurdish groups in Turkey, sometimes instigating them to start armed struggle. Furthermore, the Soviet Union, despite its ideological claims, presented a rational foreign policy that competed with the United States: Therefore, international backing on "national question," became a matter of interest and rather than principle.

Internally, the sources of Kurdish political activism have been examined in different categories in earlier chapters. For example, new generations of Kurdish students and intellectuals who needed to find alternative channels to

get political power can be regarded as the foremost source. The '58'ers, who had welcomed neo-Kemalist interpretations of the "development" and "underdevelopment" of the Kurdish East, were of course more preoccupied with obtaining political power than their successors, the '68'ers. As demonstrated regarding their affiliation with the TİP, socialist ideology was initially a new alternative channel for including the '58'ers in the national political space, mainly parliament. However, that generation also paid attention to Kurdish ethnicity. For example, Musa Anter and other representatives of this generation worked within the TİP to get political representation and at the same time accentuate the assimilation policies with respect to the Kurdish people. The state response was sufficiently harsh that early attempts of most activist to strike a balance between class and nation or silence, which later resulted in the drift of the '68'ers away from the '58'ers.

The Kurdish language and its culture were the most important political resources of the new activism. The denial of the Kurds and the suppression of Kurdish identity presented an important resource that the new generation of Kurdish '68'ers politicized. They did not hesitate to challenge the official ideology in this sense. However, it would take several years for Kurdish ethnicity and culture –and especially language –to be available for political purposes. A mix of socialist and national Kurdish self-awareness was being built through print and oral languages. While the printed language focused on the socialist aspect of the new Kurds, the oral language came from below and included non-partisan actors articulating Kurdish language, culture, and music.

For the '68'ers of the Kurdish movement, the new Marxist and Leninist way of looking at both Turkey and Kurdish ethnicity provided another resource that separated them from their predecessors. Due to their social and economic backgrounds, the members of this generation, who were in their early twenties, were not much part of the political system. Therefore they created alternative, albeit risky, solutions for the political changes and politicization happening around them.

As mentioned earlier, most of Kurdish activists became acquainted with socialism through books translated into Turkish. And of course, they read the final line in Huberman's the *ABC of Socialism*: "Sosyalizm, gerçekleşemeyecek bir düş değildir. Toplumsal evrim sürecinde bir ileri adımdır. Ve gerçekleşme

zamanı gelmiştir."[1] Without doubt, Kurdish activists, like their counterparts, believed that socialism was a natural process and was just around the corner. This firm belief made them true believers who overestimated their potential and their role in the political process.

Furthermore, since the new socialist literature did not contradict national demands – on the contrary, it dignified national movements – Kurdish activists saw no reason not to be more socialist than their Turkish counterparts. The striking difference was that Marxist-Leninist readings also justified Turkish calls for a "unified movement" against "imperialism and capitalism." Thus, both groups took what they needed from Marxism and Leninism for their own political purposes in the 1970s. During that chaotic decade, everything seemed possible for young Kurdish activists. A vision that was never tested before that they called "revolution" was guiding them. It was as if they would reach their envisioned society the following morning, and the class issue as well as the national issue would be solved without further interference. However, when the military coup arrived not long after in 1980, they hit the wall of reality.

Just as print language helped vernacularize class formation among Turkish and Kurdish activists of the 1960s, it also played a major role in the imagination of Kurdish activists of the 1970s regarding the Kurdish society. That is why, in the 1960s, Kurdish activists genuinely believed that socialism would liberate the East from class oppression. When socialism addressed the national question, it complemented class discussions of the 60s. Accordingly, all periodicals published by Kurdish circles in the 1970s devoted the bulk of their publishing to the history of the Kurds and the Kurdish region, rewriting history to better suit their imagined community. This was further bolstered with early attempts to standardize Kurdish up to then lacked the capacity to be a language of political activism.

Kurdish activists believed that there was a "revolutionary potential" that needed to be organized and led. Importantly, they were aware of the political

1 Leo Huberman, *Sosyalizmin Alfabesi,* trans. Alaattin Bilgi (Ankara: Sol Yayınları, 1966), 88. It was originally quoted as "Socialism is not an impossible dream. It is the next step in the process of social evolution. Its time is now." See Leo Huberman, "The ABC of Socialism," in *Introduction to Socialism,* eds, Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1968), 81.

potential among Kurdish students that as Kurds had legitimate reasons to demand political rights, as well. But the ways the generation of '68'ers and ensuing '78'ers conceptualized this potential and its importance led to political dogmatism and a distorted reality. Political schisms and dissidence among Kurdish groups over this limited "potential," which was already being shared among mainstream political groups, Islamic groups, and other counterparts, ended in chaos by the end of the 1970s.

Perhaps the answer regarding the continuities and discontinuities after this period can be explained with this situation in mind. Reading the publications of the time, one can observe that the movement generally did not achieve its goals and objectives. Furthermore, it is evident that fraud discussions about socialism and revolution did not penetrate society and was limited to a few thousand activists who often affiliated with groups not for "ideological reasons" but because of strong ties to relatives and friends. This is why conservative and Islamist Kurds were generally absent from the Kurdish political activism, they did not have any ties to it and the movement was ideologically opposed to religion.

In a short span of time, with a change of generations and generation units, the political activism of the 1960s and 1970s seemed to disappear. One should recall that even the expansion of political activism was unexpectedly quick. After a few formative years, Phase A witnessed substantial organizational and ideological expansion after 1967 up until 1971. Similarly, during Phase B the movement spread among activists and in the region it between 1976 and 1980. This swift spread of the movement meant that many activists were unready or incapable of leading "revolutionary potential," they envisioned, including the PKK.

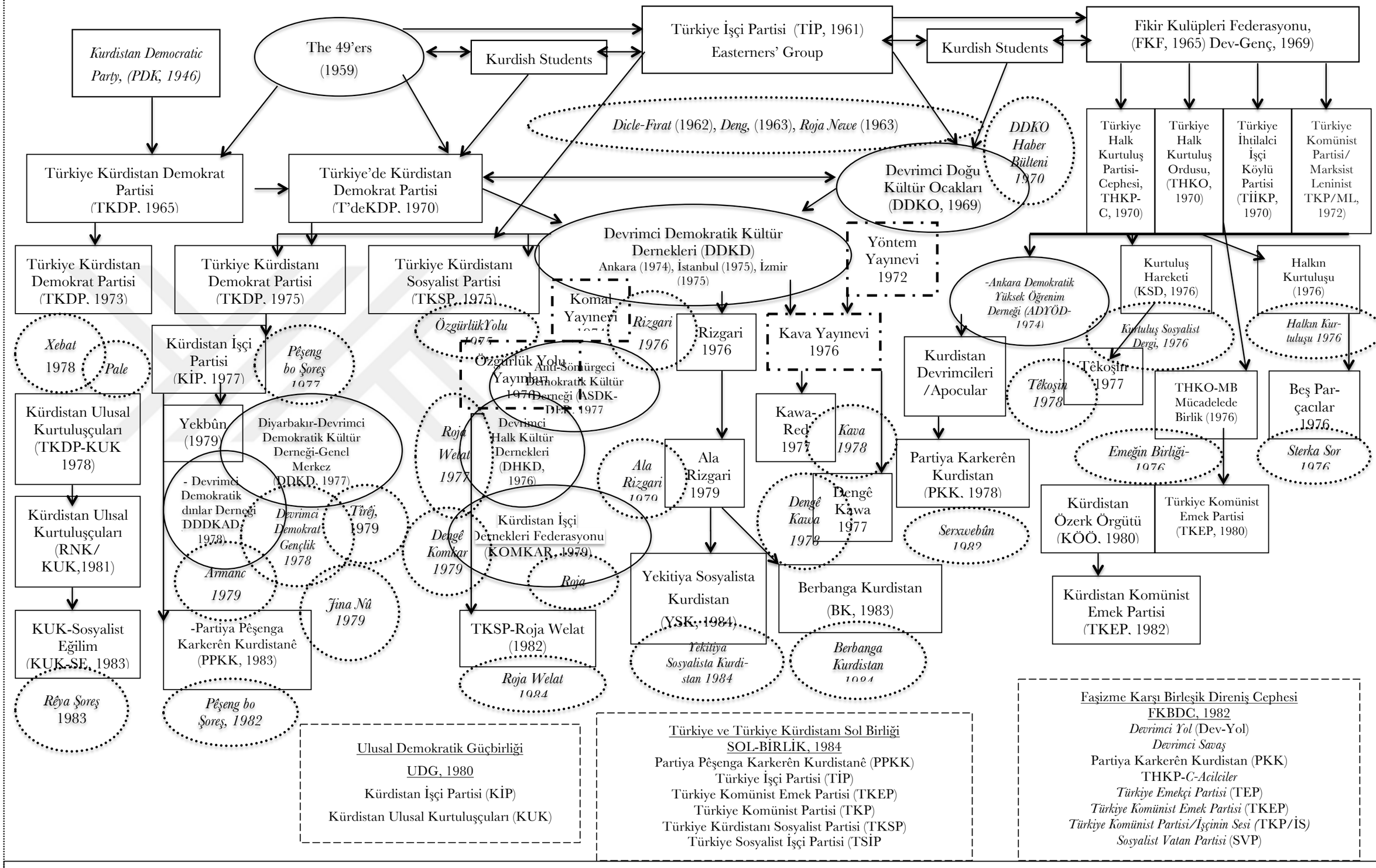
On average, activists of the 1970s are now sixty-years old. After almost four decades, their contribution to Kurdish nation-building is discernable and provided the foundation for the subsequent Phase C. Nonetheless, it is true that the political organizations and activism of the socialist-national mixture of Phase A and Phase B did not penetrate society. Nor was it bequeathed to ensuing generations, mainly those born in the 1970s and 1980s.

Unfortunately, the political activism of the 1970s became a matter of the past and of nostalgia for most activists. Of course, this was caused by gradual

sequence of events and the eventual appropriation by the PKK of even a period in which it was actually just one of the many actors. The transformation of definition of the Kurdish question from an economic, class-related issue to a national issue was completed by a consensus among new generations of both Turkish and Kurdish socialists. However, the same consensus was not reached regarding the second phase, the transition from "nation" to "revolution," over which both parties struggled to take the lead. Likewise, the arrival moment of the Kurdish ethnoregional movement showed that reality prevailed. Power relations in the region as well as the capacity of small groups in relation to power politics were not even considered at that time.

In conclusion, as was the case with earlier Kurdish political activism, Kurdish society lost its brightest generation, given that a limited number of people could study and get an education. The subsequent Phase C was strategized and carried out under the leadership of just few activists from the era, and a new generation believed and still believes that they started the political activism after 1984 from scratch. The continuum of experiences, accumulated knowledge, and activism did not come to pass, and in many cases it was as if the Kurdish political activism was reinventing the wheel in the 1980s and 1990s.

Appendix A- A Comprehensive Family Tree of the Kurdish Ethnoregional Movement in Turkey, 1959-1984




*Notes*: *Original names are used, see abbreviations for English. *A chronological order is observed downwardly. *The dates indicate the first time of a new or spliting groups or publications. *Groups and Parties are shown with straight-line rectangles, *Periodicals are shown with dashed-line circles. *Associations are shown with straight-line circles. *Publishing houses are shown with bold-dashed rectangles. *Periodicals of each group or party are superimposed, while factions or splits are indicated with arrows. *Fronts or coalitions are underlined, which are given at the bottom. *A few groups from the Turkish Left, as well as some periodicals published abroad are not included due to lack of space.

# Appendix B Lists of published books by pro-Kurdish Publishing Houses (1971-1984)

NOTES

- The list is compiled based on the catalogue of the Kurdish Library in Stockholm, Catalogue of the International Institute of Social History (IISH), the catalogue of the National Library of Turkey and private correspondences.
- More than a dozen books published illegally are not included, the list contains most of the books.
- The books that were published more than one edition are listed only once.
- The books are listed in an alphabetic order of the last names of authors, translators' names are not included, and in the case an entry does not have publication date or place, it means that the original document does not have such information.
- *Jina Nû* and *Armanc* are known as the publishing houses of *KİP-DDKD* group
- *Kava* Yayınları, owned by Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, and *Newroz* are known as the publishing houses of *Kawa* group.
- *Komal* and *Dengê Komal* are known as the publishing houses of *Rizgari* group, owned by Orhan Kotan and Mümtaz Kotan.
- *Koral Yayınları* owned by Ali Fuat Bucak who was a member of the DDKO in Ankara, did not have any affiliations for the 1970s.
- *Özgürlük Yolu*, *TKSP Yayınları* and *Ronahi Yayınları* are known as the publishing houses of *TKSP-ÖY* group, *Hevra* and Ronahi were founded by Kurds in Europe and were not directly controlled by *TKSP-ÖY* group. *Pêkanin* was founded by İhsan Aksoy, who split from TKSP in 1978.
- *Weşanên Serxwebûn* is known as the publishing house of the *PKK* and some earlier books had been stenciled before the foundation of the publishing house.
- *Yöntem Yayınları* owned by Zerruh Vakıfahmetoğlu and Ahmet Zeki Okçuoğlu, after the split between two groups Vakıfahmetoğlu who was among the founders of DDKO in Istanbul and then affiliated with KİP-DDKD group took control of the publishing house.

LIST OF BOOKS PUBLISHED BY JINA NÛ AND ARMANC YAYINLARI

1 Ahmad, K. M., And M. Arseneviē Hasretyan. *[ Bin Dokuz Yüz Yirmi Beş] 1925 Kürt Ayaklanması.* Stockholm: Jīna Nû, 1983.
2 Kasemlu, Abdulrahman. *İran Kürdistanı Ve Kürtler*. Van : Jina Nû, 1980
3 Mamoste. *Dengê Xêzikan*. Uppsala : Jīna Nû, 1984.
4 (No Author). *Seçimler Demokrasi Güçlerinin Güçbirliği Ve Zaferi Yolunda İleri Bir Adım Olmalıdır.* Van : Jina Nû, 1979.
5 (No Author). *Kürdistan Ulusal Demokratik Güçbirliği (UDG) Deklerasyonu*, Van : Jina Nû, 1980.
6 (No Author). *DDKD Ile Dayanışmayı Yükseltelim!* Spanga : Armanc, 1980.
7 (No Author). *UDG Oluşumu, Gelişimi Ve Bir Depresyon Üzerine*. Spanga : Armanc, 1980.
8 (No Author). *I-KDP Sekreteri A. Qasimlu Ile Röportaj = Hevpeyvin Bi Sekretere PDK-I A. Qasimlu Ra.* Spanga : Armanc, 1981.
9 (No Author). *Erheben Wir Unsere Solidarität Mit Jugendomganisation Kurdistan's DDKD*. Köln : Armanc, 1981.
10 (No Author). *Das Kurdische Volk Und Die Friedenskräfte*. Köln : Armanc, 1981.
11 (No Author). Kurdistan : *Svensk- Kurdiska Kultur Och Solidaritetsförening.* Stockholm : Armanc, 1981.
12 (No Author). *"Özgürlük Yolu" Mu, Oportünizmin Yolu Mu?*. Stockholm : Armanc, 1982.

LIST OF BOOKS PUBLISHED BY KAVA-NEWROZ YAYINLARI

1 Baran, Ali. *Sovyetler Birliği Kominist Partisi (Bolşevik) Merkez Komitesi Tutanakları Ayaklanma Öncesi.* Istanbul : Kava, 1976.
2 Bedirxan, K. *Zmané Kurd.* Istanbul : Kava Yayınları, 1976.
3 Jesena, Arsenio C. *Filipinler'de Halk Savaşı Ve Toprak Devrimi.* Istanbul : Kava Yayınları, 1977.
4 (No Author). *Sovyetler Birliği Komünist Partisi (Bolşevik) Merkez Komitesi Tutanakları : Ayaklanma Öncesi 1917 - 1918.* Istanbul : Kava Yayınları, 1976.
5 (No Author). "*Üç Dünya Teorisi" Devrime İhanetin Teorisidir : (Oportünist "Üç Dünya Teorisi"Nin Eleştirisi),* Istanbul : Kava Yayınları, 1978.
6 (No Author). *Kawa Yeniden Örgütlenme Konferansının Halkımıza Ve Dünya Kamuoyuna Duyurusu.* Newroz, 1980.

7 (No Author). *Aralik 1980'de 19 Kişinin Öldürüldüğü Kamişli Katliamı Basın Toplantısı.* Kawa, 1981.

LIST OF BOOKS PUBLISHED BY KOMAL- DENGÊ KOMAL YAYINEVI

KOMAL

1 Alp, Seyit. *Welat*: *İskancının Türküsü.* Ankara : Komal Yayınları, 1977.
2 Bedirxan, C.Ali. *Türkiye Reisi Cumhuru Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa Hazretlerine Açık Mektup, 1933*. Istanbul : Komal, 1978.
3 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Bilimsel Yöntem Üniversite Özerkliği Ve Demokratik Toplum Ilkeleri Açısından İsmail Beşikçi Davası*. Ankara: Komal, 1975.
4 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Bilim Yöntemi Türkiye'de Uygulama 1: Kürtlerin Mecburi İskanı,* Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1977.
5 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Bilim Yöntemi Türkiye'de Uygulama 2: Türk Tarih Tezi "Güneş - Dil Teorisi" Ve Kürt Sorunu,* Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1977.
6 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Bilim Yöntemi Türkiye'de Uygulama 3: Cumhuriyet Halk Firkasi Tüzüğü (1927) Ve Kürt Sorunu,* Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1978.
7 Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları. *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Dava Dosyası, 1,* Ankara : KOMAL Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 1975.
8 Edip Karahan *Bir Kürt Devrimcisi : Edip Karahan'ın Anısına.* Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1977.
9 Gökalp, Ziya. *Kürt Aşiretleri Hakkında Içtimai Tefkikler*. Ankara : Komal, 1975.
10 Halfin . *19. Yüzyılda Kürdistan Üzerine Mücadele*. Ankara : Komal Basım-Yayım-Dağıtım, 1976.
11 Kotan, Orhan. *Gururla Bakıyorum Dünyaya*. Ankara : Komal, 1975.
12 Ksenophon. *Onbinlerin Kürdistan'dan Geçişi*. Istanbul : Komal, 1977.
13 Maraşlı, Recep. *Kürdistan Üzerine Örgütlü Devlet Terörü Ve İsmail Beşikçi, Biyografi, Savunmalar, Mektuplar*, Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1980.
14 Minorski, Vladimir Fedoroviç. *Kürtler*. Istanbul : Komal, 1977.
15 Rambout, Lucien. *Çağdaş Kürdistan Tarihi*, Ankara: Komal Yayınları, 1978.
16 Sabri, Sinan. *Belasına Sevdalandığım Bebek*. Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1976.
17 Zeki, M. Emin. *Kürdistan Tarihi*. Istanbul : Komal Yayınları, 1977.
18 (No Author ) *Felsefe Incelemeleri*. Ankara : Komal, 1976.
19 (No Author). *Koçgiri Halk Hareketi, 1919-1921,* Ankara : Komal Yayınları, 1976.

20 (No Author ). *Bilimsel Yöntem Üniversite Özerkliği Ve Demokratik Toplum Ilkeleri Açısından İsmail Beşikçi Davası*. [Ankara] : Komal, 1975.
21 (No Author). *Koçgiri Halk Hareketi, 1919-1921*. Ankara : Komal, 1975.
22 (No Author- Sait Kırmızıtoprak ). *Irak Kürt Halk Hareketi Ve BAAS ırkçılığı*. Ankara : Komal, 1975.
23 (No Author). *Kahrolsun Sömürgecilik Yaşasın Kürt Haklının Anti-Sömürgeci Ve Ulusal-Demokratik Mücadelesi*. Komal, 1976.

DENGÈ KOMAL

1 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Unesco'ya Mektup,* Dengè Komal, 1981.
2 Beşikçi, İsmail. *Savunma,* Stockholm: Dengè Komal, 1981.
3 Bora, N. *Dogmalar, Tabular, Fanatizm Vesaire,* Stockholm: Dengè Komal, 1984.
4 Kotan, Orhan. *Sancı: Şiirler, 1969-82,* Stockholm : Dengè Komal, 1984.
5 Uzun, Mehmed. *Tu: Roman,* Stockholm : Dengè Komal, 1984.
6 (No Author ). *12 Eylül Darbesinin Anatomisi,* Duisburg : Dengè Komal, 1980.
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## Appendix C A List of Published Pro-Kurdish Periodicals (1959-1984)

* The list was compiled from Malmisanij and Mahmud Lewendi, *Li Kurdistana Bakur u li Tirkiyé Rojnamegeriya Kurdi (1908-1992)* (Ankara: Özge Yayıncılık, 1992), the catalogue of the Kurdish Library in Stockholm, Catalogue of the International Institute of Social History (IISH), the catalogue of the National Library of Turkey and private correspondence.
* A few bulletins published in small towns and by some Europe-based workers' associations are not included in the list.

*Ala Rizgari,* 1979-1980
*Azadi*, 1978-1979
*Barış Dünyası,* 1962
*Berbang*, Stockholm,1982-1985
*Berbangê Kurdistan, 1984*
*Brüsk*, 1977-1978
*Dicle-Fırat,* 1962
*Deng,* 1963
*Deng,* 1989-1992
*Dengê Kava,* 1978
*Dengê Komkar, 1979-1989*
*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik,* 1978
*DDKO Haber Bülteni,* Ankara, 1970-1971
*Doğu*, 1969
*Hevi*, Paris, 1983-1990,
*Hevra Bülten,* 1976-1979
*İleri Yurt*, 1958
*Jina Nû,* 1979-1980/ 1984
*Kava,* 1978-1979/ 1981-1986
*Kulilk,* 1980
*Niştiman,* 1983
*Özgürlük Yolu,* 1975-1979
*Pêşeng Bo Şoreş,* 1977-1980/1982-1988

*Pale*, 1978- 1981
R*êya Şoreş*, 1983-1984
*Rizgari*, 1976-1979
*Riya Azadi*, 1982-1987
*Roja Newe*, 1963
*Roja Welat*, 1977-1978/1984
*Serxwebûn*, 1979/ 1982-1988
*Têkoşin*, 1978-1980/1986
*Tîrêj*, 1979-1980/ 1981
*Yeni Akış*, 1966
*Yeni Gündem*, 1984
*Xebat*, 1976-1978-1985

## Appendix D Population of the Fifteen Provinces in 1970

| | Total Population | % Urban Population | % Rural Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| Turkey | 35.605.176 | 38.45 | 61.55 |
| Ağrı | 290.311 | 25.00 | 75.00 |
| Bingöl | 177.951 | 19.92 | 80.08 |
| Bitlis | 185.473 | 32.32 | 67.68 |
| Diyarbakır | 581.208 | 41.4 | 58.96 |
| Elazığ | 376.915 | 40.21 | 59.79 |
| Erzincan | 276.122 | 28.32 | 71.68 |
| Hakkari | 102.312 | 20.32 | 79.68 |
| Kars | 660.018 | 23.22 | 76.78 |
| Malatya | 510.979 | 35.16 | 64.84 |
| Mardin | 453.092 | 26.45 | 73.55 |
| Muş | 234.250 | 19.16 | 80.84 |
| Siirt | 320.684 | 34.68 | 65.32 |
| Tunceli | 157.293 | 18.67 | 81.33 |
| Urfa | 538.131 | 38.19 | 61.81 |
| Van | 325.763 | 27.08 | 72.92 |
| Total | 5.190.502 | 28.67 | 71.33 |

SOURCE T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics of Population, (Yayın No: 756, Ankara 1977).

## Appendix E Election Results and Data Regarding the Fifteen Provinces, 1965-1977

A. Number of Representatives by Political Party in the Fifteen Provinces

| Province-Total | 1965 | 1969 | 1973 | 1977 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ağrı-4 | *AP:1, CKMP:1, YTP:1 | *AP:1, CHP:1, GP:1 | AP:1, CHP:1, CGP:1, MSP:1 | AP:2, CHP:1 CGP:1 |
| Bingöl-2 | CHP: 1, YTP:1 | YTP:1, B:1 | CHP:1, MSP:1 | CHP:1, MSP:1 |
| Bitlis-2 | AP:1, CHP:1 | AP:1, CHP:1 | AP:1, CHP:1 | AP:1, MSP:1 |
| Diyarbakır-7 | AP:2, CHP:2, TİP:1, YTP:2 | AP:4, YTP:2, B:1 | AP:2, CHP:3, DP:1, MSP:1 | AP:2, CHP:3, MSP:1, B:1 |
| Elazığ-5 | AP:3, CHP:2, | AP:2, CHP:2, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:2, MSP:2 | AP:1, CHP:2, MHP:1, B:1 |
| Erzincan-3 | * AP:2, CHP:1, YTP:1 | AP:2, CHP:2 | AP:1, CHP:2 | AP:1, CHP:2 |
| Hakkari-1 | YTP:1 | GP:1 | CHP:1 | AP:1 |
| Kars-8 | * AP:3, CHP:3, TİP:1, YTP:2 | * AP:5, CHP:4 | AP:1, CHP:5, DP:1, MSP:1 | AP:2, CHP:5, MSP:1 |
| Malatya-6 | AP:2, CHP:3, TİP:1 | AP:1, CHP:3, BP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:4, MSP:1 | AP:1, CHP:4, MSP:1 |
| Mardin-6 | AP:1, CHP:2, CKMP:2, YTP:1 | AP:2, CHP:1, YTP:1, B:2 | AP:1, CHP:1, CGP:1, DP:1, MSP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:2, MSP:2, B:1 |
| Muş-3 | AP:1, CHP:1, CKMP:1, | CHP:1, YTP:1, B:1 | CHP:1, MSP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:1, MSP:1 |
| Siirt-4 | AP:2, CHP:1, YTP:1 | AP:1, CHP:1, GP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:1, CGP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CHP:1, MSP:1, B:1 |
| Tunceli-2 | AP:1, CHP:1 | AP:1, CHP:1 | CHP:2 | CHP:2 |
| Urfa-7 | AP:3, CHP:2, TİP:1, YTP:1 | * AP:4, CHP:2, | AP:3, CHP:2, DP:1, MSP:1 | AP:3, CHP:3, MSP:1 |
| Van-4 | AP:1, CHP:2, YTP:1 | AP:2, GP:1, B:1 | AP:1, CGP:3 | AP:1, CHP:1, CGP:1, MSP:1 |
| Total-64 | AP: 21, CHP:22, CKMP: 4, TİP:4, YTP: 12 | AP: 26, BP: 1, CHP: 19, GP: 4, YTP: 5, B.9 | AP:14, CHP:27, CGP: 6, MSP: 10, DP: 4, B:3 | AP:18, CHP: 28, CGP: 2, MSP: 11, MHP: 1, B:4 |

NOTE The number of seats for Ağrı was three in 1965. The mumber of seats for Erzincan was four in 1965. Number of seats for Kars was 9 in 1965. The number of seats for Urfa was six in 1969.

COMPILED FROM Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, Milletvikili Genel Seçimleri: 1923-2007, (Ankara: TÜİK Matbaası, 2008).

B. Political Party of Mayors in the Fifteen Provinces: 1968, 1973, and 1977

| Province | 1968 Mayoral Election | 1973 Mayoral Election | 1977 Mayoral Election |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ağrı | AP | CHP | AP |
| Bingöl | CHP | CHP | MHP |
| Bitlis | AP | Independent | CHP |
| Diyarbakır | CHP | CHP | Independent |
| Elazığ | Independent | AP | MHP |
| Erzincan | AP | AP | MHP |
| Hakkari | CGP | AP | CHP |
| Kars | CHP | AP | CHP |
| Malatya | CHP | CHP | Independent |
| Mardin | AP | Independent | CHP |
| Muş | AP | MSP | MSP |
| Siirt | CHP | AP | CHP |
| Tunceli | CHP | CHP | CHP |
| Urfa | AP | Independent | CHP |
| Van | AP | Independent | CHP |
| Total | AP: 7, CHP:6, CGP:1, Ind:1 | AP:5, CHP:5, MSP:1, Ind:4 | AP:1, CHP:8, MHP:3, MSP:1, Ind:2 |

COMPILED FROM T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Istatistik Enstitüsü, *2 Haziran 1968 Mahalli Seçimler Sonuçları,* Yayın No: 555, Ankara 1969: *9 Aralık 1973 Yerel Seçim Sonuçları,* Yayın No:716, Ankara, 1974: *11 Aralık 1977 Yerel Seçim Sonuçları,* Yayın No:859, Ankara, 1979.

C. Results of General Elections of Representatives in Turkey: 1973, 1975, 1977, and 1979

| | AP | CHP | CGP | DP | MHP | MSP | TİP | TSİP | Indp. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* |
| 1973 | 29.8 | 33.3 | 5.3 | 11.9 | 3.4 | 11.8 | - | - | 2.8 |
| | *149* | *185* | *13* | *45* | *3* | *43* | - | - | *6* |
| 1975* | *48.6* | *38.8* | - | *2.8* | *2.3* | *7.9* | - | - | *0.1* |
| | *5* | *1* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1977 | 38.9 | 41.4 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 6.4 | 8.6 | 0.1 | - | 2.5 |
| | *189* | *213* | *3* | *1* | *16* | *24* | - | - | *4* |
| 1979* | 54.0 | 29.3 | 1.7 | - | 5.4 | 7.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| | *5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

NOTE 1975 and 1979 indicate partial elections.

SOURCE Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *14 Ekim 1973 Milletvekili Seçimi Sonuçları,* Yayın No:702, Ankara, 1974: *12 Ekim 1975 Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri ve Milletvekili Ara Seçimi Sonuçları (*Yayın No:770, Ankara, 1976): *5 Haziran 1977 Milletvekili Seçimi Sonuçları* (Yayın No:836, Ankara, 1978): *14 Ekim 1979 Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri Üçte Bir Yenileme ve Milletvekili Ara Seçimi Sonuçları* (Yayın No:908, Ankara, 1980).

D. Results of General Elections of Representatives in the Fifteen Provinces: 14 October 1973

| | AP | CHP | CGP | DP | MHP | MSP | TİP | TSİP | Ind. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* | *Seats* |
| Turkey | 29.8 | 33.3 | 5.3 | 11.9 | 3.4 | 11.8 | - | - | 2.8 |
| | *149* | *185* | *13* | *45* | *3* | *43* | - | - | *6* |
| Ağrı | 15.5 | 15.1 | 18.3 | 8.7 | 6.2 | 14.8 | - | - | 21.1 |
| | *1* | *1* | *1* | - | - | *1* | - | - | - |
| Bingöl | 20.6 | 23.3 | 0.5 | 10.5 | 0.3 | 25.5 | - | - | 18.9 |
| | - | *1* | - | - | - | *1* | - | - | - |
| Bitlis | 40.6 | 15.5 | 2.3 | 1.1 | - | 11.3 | - | - | 21.1 |
| | *1* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | *1* |
| Diyarbakır | 19.9 | 30.4 | 5.6 | 12.2 | 3.0 | 18.5 | - | - | 10.4 |
| | *2* | *3* | - | *1* | - | *1* | - | - | - |
| Elazığ | 25.5 | 29.5 | 2.3 | 7.7 | 4.2 | 27.8 | - | - | 2.0 |
| | *1* | *2* | - | - | - | *2* | - | - | - |
| Erzincan | 25.6 | 45.3 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 16.1 | - | - | - |
| | *1* | *2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hakkari | 33.0 | 35.4 | 3.8 | 25.7 | - | 2.1 | - | - | - |
| | - | *1* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kars | 15.0 | 45.5 | 5.2 | 13.4 | 2.5 | 7.7 | - | - | 9.6 |
| | *1* | *5* | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Malatya | 13.8 | 44.1 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 1.8 | 19.9 | - | - | 9.1 |
| | *1* | *4* | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Mardin | 18.8 | 17.7 | 10.3 | 17.6 | 0.5 | 12.1 | - | - | 23.1 |
| | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | - | *1* | - | - | *1* |
| Muş | 9.4 | 17.3 | 6.4 | 6.0 | 0.5 | 14.7 | - | - | 45.3 |
| | - | *1* | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | *1* |
| Siirt | 16.4 | 14.2 | 23.8 | 11.0 | 0.6 | 9.5 | - | - | 24.5 |
| | *1* | *1* | *1* | - | - | - | - | - | *1* |
| Tunceli | 14.3 | 70.0 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 2.6 | - | - | 10.6 |
| | - | *2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Urfa | 33.5 | 29.0 | 1.9 | 17.1 | 0.9 | 17.6 | - | - | 0.1 |
| | *3* | *2* | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Van | 22.4 | 10.3 | 52.3 | 1.4 | 0.7 | 7.0 | - | - | 6.0 |
| | *1* | - | *3* | - | - | - | - | - | - |

SOURCE Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *14 Ekim 1973 Milletvekili Seçimi Sonuçları,* Yayın No:702, Ankara, 1974

D. (cont.) Results of General Elections of Representatives in the Fifteen Provinces, 5 Haziran 1977

| | AP<br>%/<br>*Seats* | CHP<br>%<br>*Seats* | CGP<br>%<br>*Seats* | DP<br>%<br>*Seats* | MHP<br>%<br>*Seats* | MSP<br>%<br>*Seats* | TİP<br>%<br>*Seats* | TSİP<br>%<br>*Seats* | Ind.<br>%<br>*Seats* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Turkey | 38.9<br>*189* | 41.4<br>*213* | 1.9<br>*3* | 1.9<br>*1* | 6.4<br>*16* | 8.6<br>*24* | 0.1<br>- | -<br>- | 2.5<br>4 |
| Ağrı | 21.0<br>*2* | 12.3<br>*1* | 10.2<br>*1* | 1.6<br>- | 6.5<br>- | 6.3<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- | 42.1<br>- |
| Bingöl | 29.6<br>*1* | 25.4<br>*1* | 2.0<br>- | 0.5<br>- | 1.1<br>- | 25.4<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- | 16.0<br>- |
| Bitlis | 34.3<br>*1* | 17.1<br>- | 0.7<br>- | 0.4<br>- | 0.3 | 27.3<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 19.9<br>- |
| Diyarbakır | 26.1<br>*2* | 34.8<br>*3* | 0.8<br>- | 1.1<br>- | 1.1<br>- | 17.9<br>1 | 1.5<br>- | -<br>- | 17.1<br>*1* |
| Elazığ | 20.1<br>*1* | 28.8<br>*2* | 0.6<br>- | 0.1<br>- | 18.7<br>*1* | 14.0<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- | 16.8<br>*1* |
| Erzincan | 27.9<br>*1* | 45.4<br>*2* | 1.0<br>- | 0.7<br>- | 18.8<br>- | 5.9<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- |
| Hakkari | 43.4<br>*1* | 36.5<br>- | 0.6<br>- | 0.9<br>- | -<br>- | 18.5<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- | 0.1<br>- |
| Kars | 18.6<br>*2* | 52.9<br>*5* | 1.2<br>- | 3.7<br>- | 8.3<br>- | 10.0<br>*1* | 0.4<br>- | -<br>- | 4.9<br>- |
| Malatya | 17.0<br>*1* | 52.3<br>*4* | -<br>- | 1.1<br>- | 9.2<br>- | 20.4<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | -<br>- |
| Mardin | 18.5<br>*1* | 21.2<br>*2* | 7.4<br>- | 0.6<br>- | 0.1<br>- | 23.2<br>*2* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 31.0<br>*1* |
| Muş | 18.0<br>*1* | 16.4<br>*1* | 0.3<br>- | 0.7<br>- | 0.2<br>- | 17.9<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 48.5<br>- |
| Siirt | 17.2<br>*1* | 15.9<br>*1* | 0.5<br>- | 0.4<br>- | 0.6<br>- | 22.0<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 43.4<br>*1* |
| Tunceli | 8.2<br>- | 66.3<br>*2* | 0.5<br>- | 0.4<br>- | 4.7<br>- | 1.0<br>- | 0.4<br>- | -<br>- | 17.7<br>- |
| Urfa | 32.9<br>*3* | 33.5<br>*3* | 1.1<br>- | 1.7<br>- | 6.0<br>- | 19.5<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 5.3<br>- |
| Van | 15.4<br>*1* | 19.4<br>*1* | 11.8<br>*1* | 1.2<br>- | 2.8<br>- | 20.5<br>*1* | -<br>- | -<br>- | 28.9<br>- |

SOURCE Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *5 Haziran 1977 Milletvekili Seçimi Sonuçları,* (Yayın No:836, Ankara, 1978).

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