



## 3<sup>RD</sup> INTERNATIONAL KURDISH STUDIES CONFERENCE

### **Shifting Dynamics of the Kurdistan Question in a Changing Middle East**

Middlesex University | London, UK  
25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019



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## Conference Aims and Objectives

### 3<sup>RD</sup> INTERNATIONAL KURDISH STUDIES CONFERENCE

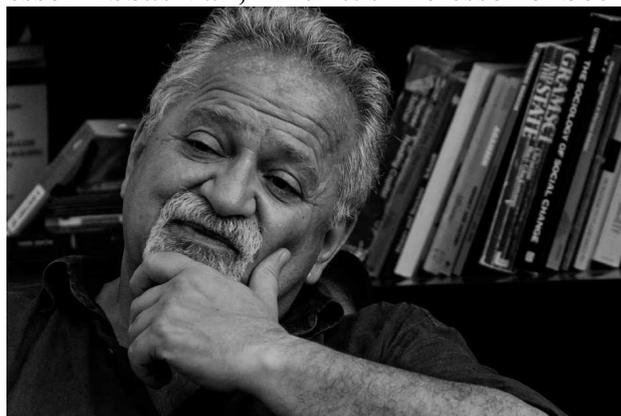
#### **Shifting Dynamics of the Kurdistan Question in a Changing Middle East**

Over 35 million Kurds live under the national jurisdictions of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria where the Kurdish identity, culture, linguistic rights, homeland and own political representation are contested and contained in most cases by the force of arms. Consequently, the combination of authoritarian state ideologies, the systematic and recurrent use of state violence in these countries has led to the rise of Kurdish opposition. In turn, the ruling states have further used the Kurdish resistance as a pretext to reinforce draconian policies of negation, assimilation and elimination of Kurdish national aspirations.

The 20th century has marked the most repressive state policies against the Kurdish quest for self-determination. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, however, various political developments suggest a shift for the Kurds. The regime change in Iraq in 2003, the ongoing civil war in Syria and the emergence of ISIS were among the watershed events that have not only changed the balance of power in the Middle East but also the perception and position of the Kurds in the global political system.

The establishment of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Kurdistan-Iraq, the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria and the rise of pro-Kurdish political parties in Kurdistan-Turkey have given rise to the political visibility of the Kurds in international politics. The old borders and boundaries that separated the Kurds are becoming increasingly ineffective. These crucial developments have deepened the sovereignty crisis of the oppressive regional states. Simultaneously with this emerging new political geography and visibility of the Kurds, the number of scholarly studies on the “Kurdish Question” and “Kurdistan Question” has rapidly increased in recent years. The “Kurdistan Question” is growing into an international political issue that needs a global response to find a peaceful settlement in the region.

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Professor Abbas Vali, Emeritus Professor of Sociology**



## **The Conference Organising Committee**

Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles, Middlesex University  
Dr Naif Bezwan, University of Innsbruck, Austria, and UCL  
Prof Joshua Castellino, Middlesex University and Minority Rights Group International  
Ibrahim Dogus, Centre for Kurdish Progress  
Ass. Prof Mehmet Ali Dikerdem, Middlesex University  
Dr Tunc Aybak, Middlesex University  
Dr Edel Huges, Middlesex University  
Prof. Dr Abdurrahman Gülbeyaz Nagasaki University  
Dr Arzu Yilmaz  
Dr Selim Temo, Associate Professor  
Dr Umut Erel, Open University  
Dr Necla Acik, University of Manchester  
Dr Kamal Soleimani, El Colegio de México (COLMEX), Mexico  
Dr Mohammed Shareef, Kurdish Research Network, UK  
Dr Sinem Arslan, University Essex  
Cristiana Rose, Middlesex University

## **Conference Organising Institutions**

This conference is organised by the Department of Politics and Law, Law School, Middlesex University, Kurdish Research Network, Minority Rights Group International and Centre for Kurdish Progress.

### **Department of Politics and Law, Middlesex University**

Our School of Law brings together a range of diverse subjects and develops multi-skilled professionals who strive for social justice. From politics to policing, criminology to sociology, and through the lens of law and development, we explore the factors that inhibit equality of opportunity and impact the human experience. We are critical in our approach, and we believe in empowering students to be agents of change in society. The intellectual and practical skills, contemporary knowledge, work experience and global perspective we offer will leave you poised to pursue a range of rewarding careers worldwide.

### **Kurdish Research Network**

Kurdish Research Network is formed in 2019 by academics from a variety of scientific disciplines to advance the education of the public by promoting critical knowledge production and facilitating academic networking amongst scholars working in/on Kurdistan. It aims to provide the basis and resources for academic exchange in cooperation with research institutes, universities and other education to undertake research, publish/disseminate the results of such research in Europe, Kurdistan and elsewhere.

### **Minority Rights Group International**

Minority Rights Group International campaigns worldwide with around 130 partners in over 60 countries to ensure that disadvantaged minorities and indigenous peoples, often the poorest of the poor, can make their voices heard. Through training and education, legal cases, publications and the media and cultural programmes we support minority and indigenous people as they strive to maintain their rights – to the land they live on, the languages they speak, to equal opportunities in education and employment, and to full participation in public life. MRG is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) with an

international governing Council that meets twice a year. We have consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and observer status with the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights.

### **Centre for Kurdish Progress**

Kurdish Progress is an independent and non-partisan organisation inaugurated June 2014

This new organisation provides expert opinions and debates, focusing on the issue of Kurdistan and Kurdish people in the UK as well as internationally. As a policy forum, Kurdish Progress organises speaker series, panel discussions and social events, in order to progress the position of Kurdish people in the UK and to offer a space for debating Kurdistan's position in the world. The collaboration with the British Parliament, local and international think tanks and academic institutions frames our core principle of action. Our mission is straightforward: We want to establish greater significance to the Kurdish question internationally, make society aware of the situation in the region and Diaspora, which has become a historical and intriguing debate. We want future Kurdish generations, to grow up in a society, where they do not neglect their heritage; learn the Kurdish language, and admit once and for all.

# The Venue of the Conference

Middlesex University, Hendon Campus, The Burroughs, London (UK), NW4 4AX, Hendon Town Hall, Committee Room 1, 2 and 3

## Welcome to Middlesex University

Middlesex University teaches 40,000 students on Middlesex courses at our campuses in London, Dubai, and Mauritius, as well as with prestigious partners across the world. We have invested £200 million developing one of London's biggest and most impressive campuses here at Hendon. Our expertise is wide ranging, from art and design, business, health and education, to law, media and performing arts and science and technology.



<b>1 Hendon Campus</b>	<b>C College Building</b> Dance Studio Employability & Careers Centre Reception Rickett Quinquaginta Student Services University Executive College House Centre for Academic Partnership Centre for Business Development Institute for Work Based Learning Library & Student Support	<b>Hatchcroft</b> Laboratories Lecture Theatres Clinical Skills Rooms <b>Williams Building</b> Business School School of Law Library @ Williams Seminar Rooms <b>Grove</b> School of Art & Design School of Media & Performing Arts	<b>F Fenella</b> Academic Registry Cash Office & Credit Control Centre for Learning & Teaching Enhancement Corporate Marketing & Communications Financial Services Human Resource Services Student Marketing & Recruitment <b>Building 9</b> Department of Education Seminar Rooms <b>M Model Farmhouse</b> Research and Knowledge Transfer Office Barn 1 & 2 <b>F Farm Side</b> Counselling <b>Portakabin 657</b>	<b>V Vine</b> Seminar Rooms <b>1 Burroughs Parade</b> Goldsmith Street Academic Office Space <b>2 Beaufort Park</b> <b>MODA</b> Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture <b>ResCen</b> The Centre for Research into Creation in the Performing Arts <b>redloop</b> The Middlesex University Design and Innovation Centre <b>Colinhurst</b> Computing & Communications Systems Service
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## Getting to Hendon Campus

Middlesex University is well served by public transport. There are a number of ways to travel to Hendon Campus.

**Accessibility**  
Hendon Central Underground station and Middlesex University Hendon campus are both fully accessible. We advise that you arrive via the main entrance. Steps, pathways and building entrances are displayed on the campus map. Alternative routes and entrances are clearly signposted on site.

### By rail

Fast and frequent rail services run via Hendon rail station to central London and destinations such as Luton and Gatwick airports and Bedford. Catch the 183 bus from Station Road directly to the main entrance.

### By bus

Buses 143, 183 and 326 provide a direct service from the main entrance to Archway, Golders Green and Barnet. These services also provide links to Brent Cross Shopping Centre, Hendon Central Underground and Hendon rail stations.

### By car

From the North: Leave the M1 at Junction 2 for the A1 south. Turn right at the 2nd set of traffic lights onto the A504 (Finchley Lane). Continue through the next set of traffic lights. From the A405 (North Circular): Westbound: Take the A1 at Henlys Corner. Turn left at the 1st set of traffic lights onto the A504 (Finchley Lane). Continue through the next set of traffic lights. Eastbound: Take the A41 (Hendon Way) north at the Brent Cross Interchange. Turn right at the 2nd set of traffic lights. Parking is provided for staff and pre-arranged.

## Welcome to Hendon Campus



## Further Information

### Useful contacts

**Transport for London Travel Information**  
Telephone: +44 (0)843 222 1234  
Textphone: +44 (0)20 7518 3015  
Online: [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)  
Hendon Reception: +44 (0)20 8411 5936  
University Security: +44 (0)20 8411 6200

### Feedback

This is a free map which will be updated regularly. If you have any comments on the map please contact: [unimap@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:unimap@mdx.ac.uk)

Hendon Campus  
Middlesex University  
The Burroughs

## 1 Hendon Campus



**Contact:** For more information, please contact Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles at [J.Keles@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:J.Keles@mdx.ac.uk) and Dr Naif Bezwan at [nbezwan@gmail.com](mailto:nbezwan@gmail.com). Alternatively at [Kurdishstudies@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:Kurdishstudies@mdx.ac.uk)

## Communication among presenters

All the presenters are encouraged to communicate via [KURDISHSTUDIES@JISMAIL.AC.UK](mailto:KURDISHSTUDIES@JISMAIL.AC.UK) before, during and after the conference. You can subscribe to the KURDISHSTUDIES list at <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?SUBED1=KURDISHSTUDIES&A=1>

# Conference Programme

**Monday - 24 June 2019**

**24 June 2019 - The Pre-conference drink reception and networking @ 6pm**

The pre-conference drink reception will be held at The Arches, 97-99 Isabella Street, South Bank, London, SE1 8DD.

**Tuesday - 25 June 2019**

**8:30-9:00 - Registration/ Coffee**

**Room 1 - 9:00 -9:30 – Welcome**

**Ms Anna Kyprianou**, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, Faculty of Professional and Social Sciences at Middlesex University

**Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles**, Middlesex University and **Dr Naif Bezwan**, University of Innsbruck, Austria, and UCL, **Prof Mehmet Dikerdem**, **Dr Tunc Aybak**, **Dr Edel Hughes** (Middlesex University), **Dr Necla Acik** (University of Manchester), **Dr Umut Erel** (Open University) - on behalf of the conference organising committee.

**H.E Karwan Jamal Tahir**, Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK

**Mr Osman Baydemir**, former Mayor of Diyarbakir and MP of HDP, Lawyer and Human Rights Defender

**Mr Ibrahim Dogus**, Mayor of Lambeth and Director of Centre for Kurdish Progress

**Room 1 - 9:45 – 10:30 – Plenary session**

Prof Abbas Vali, Emeritus Professor of Sociology

Chair: Prof Joshua Castellino, Middlesex University

**10:30 - 12:00 - Parallel sessions**

## **Room 1- Self-determination and Kurdish Statehood**

Panel chair: Naif Bezwan, University of Innsbruck, Austria, and UCL, UK

- The State We're In: Post-Colonial Sequestration and the Kurdish Quest for Independence in Comparative Perspective  
*Dr Francis Owtram, University of Exeter, UK*
- Self-Determination Claim of Kurdish Political Movement within the Context of Indigeneity  
*Aynur Unal, University of Leicester, UK*
- The impracticality of Self-determination for minorities under international law – a case study of the Kurds  
*Lare S. Ismail, Queen Mary University of London, UK*

- Self determination and Kurdish statehood  
*Dr Shilan Fuad Hussain - PhD University of Urbino*

## **Room 2 - Gender, Resistance and Liberation**

Panel chair: Necla Acik, Manchester University (Gender Panel Organiser)

- A struggle within a struggle: the history of the Kurdistan Women's Liberation Movement  
*Isabel Käser, SOAS, University of London, UK*
- From Zin to Zilan: The redefinition of gender and love in the PKK, and how the great love myth became a national heroine  
*Mustafa K. Topal, Roskilde Universitet, Denmark*
- Kurdish nationalism and gender equality: the emergence of a 'new man' in Rojava?  
*Kaveh Ghobadi, PhD in Kurdish Studies, University of Exeter, UK*

## **Room 3 - The Kurdish national movements in the Middle East**

Panel chair: Tunc Aybak, Middlesex University, UK

- The implications of the transformations in the Kurdish society on the political arena, and political forces of the Kurdish national movement  
*Michael Eppel, University of Haifa, Israel*
- From Mahabad 1946 to Afrin 2018  
*Sait Keskin, University of Exeter, UK*
- Rojava: a non-state or a 'not yet' state?  
*Jamie McCollum Doctoral researcher, Queen's University Belfast, UK*

12:00 - 13:00 - Lunch Break
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1:00 – 2:30 – Parallel sessions
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## **Room 1 – State violence and genocide**

Chair: Helen Hawthorne, Middlesex University

- The victimization of the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan: A psycho-political perspective  
*Azad Qazaz, KU Leuven / Belgium*
- The Cost of Belonging: Economic Impact of Genocide on Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Iraq  
*Farhad Al-Kake, Lebanese French University- Erbil, Kurdistan*

## **Room 2 - Intra-Kurdish migration and “borders”**

Chair: Kamran Martin, Sussex University, UK

- Re-territorialization of Kurdistan via Migration  
*Arzu Yilmaz, Turkey*
- Kurdish Inner Borders at a Crossroad: Rojava-Başur Border

*Bayar Mustafa Sevdeen, The American University of Kurdistan, Kurdistan*

### **Room 3 Challenges and Prospects of the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq**

Chair: Abdurrahman Guelbeyaz, Nagasaki University, Japan

- The (de)securitization of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq in the post-1991 political context.

*Juan Carlos Castillo Quiñones, Autonomous National University of Mexico, Mexico*

- Struggle for Constitutional Power between Baghdad and Erbil: Federal Supreme Court Perspective on Baghdad -Erbil Disputes

*Majida Ismael, University of Liverpool, UK*

- Grievance, Protest and Social Capital: Examining the Years of Deconstruction in Transition to/ from Democracy in Kurdistan Region-Iraq (2009-2018)

*Hewa Haji Khedir, University of Winchester, UK*

- Post-IS challenges and their impact on brain drain in the province of Halabja

*Silvia Nicola, the University of Halabja and the Felsberg Institute, Kurdistan/Germany*

Break 2:30 -2:45
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2:45 – 4:15 – Parallel sessions
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### **Room 1–Gendered and political struggle in Kurdistan**

Panel chair: Umut Erel, Open University

- The New Approach to Self-Determination and the Rights of Women and Minorities in the Social Contract of Rojava

*Ebad Rouhi, Assistant Professor of Public International Law Head of the Bureau of International Affairs, IAU Sanandaj Branch, Kurdistan, Iran*

- Gender in the Framework of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Kurdistan Region-Iraq

*Dashty Ismil Jamil, Bashdar Sarbaz Mawlud, Muayad Salah Mohamad, Lebanese French University, Kurdistan*

- Gendered Field of the Clashes in Kurdistan

*Melike Demir, Independent researcher, UK*

### **Room 2 - Kurdish Diaspora, the struggle for recognition and transnational political activism**

Panel chair: Stephen Syrett, Middlesex University, UK

- The Kurdish Diaspora in Canada: A Study of Political Activism and The Uses of The Kurdish Language

*Esengul Tasdemir, The School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies, University of Ottawa, Canada*

- The Kurdish diaspora in France: from invisibility to refugee status since the 1980s

*Rondeau Coline, University of Angers (TEMOS CNRS FRE 2015) | University of Liège (CEDEM), France/Belgium*

- Change and Continuity: Spatiotemporal dynamics of migrant ‘faith’ Alevism

*Hayal Hanoglu, University of Kent, UK*

- Being Kurdish in Denmark: a constant construction

*Tiago Duarte Dias, Fluminense Federal University, Brazil*

### **Room 3 – Kurdish Studies Meeting**

Break 4:15 -4:30

4:30 – 6:00 – Parallel sessions

### **Room 2 - Human Right and Justice**

Panel chair: Mehmet Ali Dikerdem, Middlesex University, UK

- The Turkish Presidential System: Exit from or Recipe for State Crisis?  
*Naif Bezwan, University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and UCL, UK*
- Three Decades of Seeking Justice for the Disappeared in Turkey  
*Melinda Negrón-Gonzales, University of New Hampshire, USA*
- Infringing the Sovereign Power of the Electorate: The European Court of Human Rights Awakens to Political Persecution and a Denial of Free Elections in Turkey  
*Darren Dinsmore, Co-Founder and Co-Director Mesopotamia Observatory of Justice, Germany*
- The Kurdish Question: The Influence of the EU Accession Process on Kurdish Rights in Turkey  
*Nawroos Shibli, University of Waterloo, Canada*

### **Room 3 - Book Launch**

1. Prof Abbas Vali's new book will be launched at the conference  
Abbas Vali, *The Forgotten Years of Kurdish Nationalism in Iran* (Palgrave, June 2019), 'Minorities in West Asia & North Africa' series coedited by Kamran Matin & Paolo Maggiolini.
2. Ephraim Nimni & Elçin Aktoprak Editors (2018): *Democratic Representation in Plurinational States - The Kurds in Turkey*, Palgrave

**Wednesday - 26 June 2019**

**9:00 - 10:30 - Parallel sessions**

**Room 1 - Theoretical Approaches to the Kurdish Question**

Panel chair: Peter Hough, Middlesex University, UK

- The Kurdish Solution: A Different Approach  
*Sardar Aziz, Senior Adviser Kurdistan Parliament/Kurdistan*
- Kurdish nationalism in Iraq: a critical realist approach  
*Thanos Trappelides Lancaster University, UK*
- Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey: a constructivist realistic perspective in the process of building a nation.  
*Irfan Güler, University of Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain*
- Global Movement for (Radical) Democracy: The PKK and the New Internationalism  
*Yasin Sunca, Bielefeld University, Germany and Ghent University, Belgium*  
*Tobias Reinhardt, Scuola Normale Superiore – Istituto di Scienze Umane e Sociali (SNS), Italy*

**Room 2 – Gender and LGBT in the Homeland and Diaspora**

Panel chair: Lisa Overton, Middlesex University, UK

- Intimate Control: Identity, Difference, and Queer Sexualities in Kurdish Turkey  
*Emrah Karakuş, School of Anthropology University of Arizona, USA*
- The Narrative of Lesbian Gays and Bisexual (LGB) in Iran and the Chronic Closet  
*Kameel Ahmady, UK/Iran*

**Room 3- The Kurds and the International Community**

Panel chair: Arzu Yilmaz, Turkey

- Analyzing the Place of the Kurds in USA Strategy After the Emergence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria.  
*Mohammad Taher Bidar, Shahid Beheshti University of Tehran, Iran*
- The United States Foreign Policy Towards the Kurdistan Region of Iraq after the September 25, 2017 Referendum  
*Ghazi Ghareeb Zorab, Sulaimani Polytechnic University, Kurdistan*

**Break - 10:30 – 10:40**

**10:40 – 12:00**

**Room 1 - Political Economy and Conflict**

Panel chair: Melvyn Evans, Middlesex University (TBC)

- Diaspora, Identity and Entrepreneurship  
*Janroj Keles and Stephen Syrett, Middlesex University, UK*

- The Impact of Political Conflict on Entrepreneurship in *Kurdistan*  
*Haval Dhia Kadhem Sorameri & Rejin Zandi, Jönköping International Business School, Sweden*
- An Outlook to Economic Geography of Kurdistan and Kurdish Question  
*Ramazan Tunç, Economic analyst, Dicle University, Turkey*
- Investigation of the Socio-Economic Dimensions of the Forced Migration (2015-2016) in the Sur (Diyarbakır) District Center  
*Sedat Benek-Mazlum Örmek, Mazlum ÖRMEK, Harran University Social Sciences Institute, Şanlıurfa, Turkey*

## **Room 2 - Nation Building, Media, Language, Literature and Architecture**

Panel chair: Hassan Ghazi, Broadcaster

- Kurdish nation-building through children textbooks  
*Ofra Bengio, Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University*
- Kurdish Place-identity: Challenge between Heritage and Globalisation  
*Avar Almukhtar, Brookes University Oxford, UK*
- Kurdish Women in Literature: A History of Violence, Displacement and Migration  
*Lolav M. Hassan Alhamid, University of Duhok and University of Kent*
- Professional Role Orientations of Journalists: Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a case study  
*Shwan Adam Aivas, Sulaimani Polytechnic University, Kurdistan*
- Peace and Language – Seek Shelter When You Hear Peace Songs!  
*Abdullah Gülbeyaz, Nagasaki University, Japan*

## **Room 3-Territorial Politics, Identity and Construction of Kurdishness**

Panel chair: *Seevan Saeed, Shaanxi Normal University, China*

- Territorial Identity, the Essence of the Kurdish Question in Iraq  
*Sherko Kirmanj, Adjunct Associate Professor, Koya University, Kurdistan*
- The Question of Kurdishness: Comprehension of Political Identity Construction  
*Seevan Saeed, Shaanxi Normal University, China*
- The Case Of Zaza Identity Construction Process In Turkey  
*Mithat Ishakoglu, University of Exeter, UK*

<b>Break: Lunch 12-1:00</b>
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<b>1:00- 2:30 - Parallel sessions</b>
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## **Room 1 - Living under Permanent Risk: Exclusion, Discrimination and Genocide of Ezidi Community**

Panel chair: Leyla Ferman, Germany

- Non-state actors and genocide: The case of Yazidis  
*Ayse Kurul, Queen Mary University of London, UK*

- The post-genocide situation of Yazidi women  
*Golala Kamangar, University of Oslo, Norway*
- The perspective on the Reconstructing the Cultural, language and Heritage in post-war in the case of Yazidi community  
*Sardar Faqe Mohammed Ghaidan, Director Office of the Vice President Kurdistan Region, Kurdistan*
- Yazidi community, Past, Now and Future (documentary film)  
*Abdulsamad Qadir Hussien Ahmed, University of Sulaimani, Kurdistan*

## **Room 2 -The Frontiers of the Ruling States over Kurdistan: The Kurdish Trade and transborder Relations**

Panel chair: Sinem Arslan and Cemal Ozkahraman (session organizers)

- Transborder Ethnic Kin and the Dynamics of Peace Processes: Insights from the Kurdish Conflict  
*Sinem Arslan, University of Essex, UK*
- Cross-border' trade: understanding the socio-economical and political context of Kurds in Syria  
*Cemal Ozkahraman, University of Cambridge, UK*
- The path to Kurdish Statehood: the impact of the Kurdish Regional Government on the possibility of a future Kurdish State.  
*Bamo Nouri, City University London, UK*
- The impact of international politics on the Kurdish question in Iraq and Syria  
*Ibraheem Ahmad Salh, Political Consultant of Kurdistan Region's Vice President, Kurdistan*

## **Room 3- Hegemony, Assimilation, Linguistic Policy and Education**

*Panel chair: Ofra Bengio, Tel Aviv University, Israel*

- Linguistic Policy, Hegemony, Assimilation and Education  
*Deborah Duman, University of Bath, UK*
- Ethnic Fractionalization, Conflict and Educational Development in Turkey  
*Cem Oyvat, University of Greenwich, UK*  
*Hasan Tekgüç, Kadir Has University, Turkey*
- Kurdish language and its place in Kurdish and Turkish political discourses  
*Ibrahim Seydo Aydogan, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco), Paris Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco), Fra*
- Between State and Community: Memurluk, the 'Middle Class', and Kurdish Civil Society in North Kurdistan  
*Patrick C. Lewis, University of Chicago, USA*

<b>2:30- 2:40 Break</b>
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<b>2:40 – 16:00 – Parallel sessions</b>
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### **Room1 - Securitization and Identity politics in Iran**

Panel chair: Muhammed Shareef, Kurdish Studies Network, UK

- Can Non-Persians Speak? The Sovereign's Narration of "Iranian Identity"  
*Kamal Soleimani, El Colegio de México (COLMEX), Mexico*
- Securitization of Environmental Activism in Iranian Kurdistan  
*Allan Hassaniyan, University of Exeter, UK*
- Widening Students' Participation in Learning in Higher Education: A Case Study of Civil Engineering BSc Programme in an Iranian University in Kurdistan  
*Kouros Kouchakpour, University of Sunderland, UK*
- The Kurds and Iranian Islamic Revolution (Recasting the 1979 Revolution(s) of Iran from a Kurdish Perspective)  
*Hemn Seyed, University of St Andrews, UK*

### **Room 2-Kurdish cultural production and Resistance**

Panel chair: Neelam Raina, Middlesex University, UK

- Art and postcolonial perspective in Kurdish space: the political aesthetic of micro-culture  
*Engin Sustam, University Paris 8/CETOBAC, EHESS, France*
- Kurdish Cinema: the unintended consequences of Kurdish Films from North and East Kurdistan  
*Mojgan Etemad, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK*
- The power of An Enemy of the people in the Kurdish Society & Theatre a cross history.  
*Rezan Saleh, University of Oslo - Norway*
- Post-Conflict Craft Heritage of Kurdistan - Iraq  
*Neelam Raina and Janroj Yilmaz Keles, Middlesex University, UK*

### **Room 3- Dynamics of Peace and Conflict and Reconciliation**

Panel chair: Francis Owtram, University of Exeter, UK

- Re-channelling the Conflict: A Study on Perceptions and Attitudes about Peace and Justice among Conflict-affected Communities in Ninawa-Iraq  
*Muslih Irwani, Public Policy Institute (PPI) Founding Director Public Policy Institute (PPI), Kurdistan*
- Levels of Population Growth between Kurds and Arabs in Kirkuk City  
*Mohammed Hussein Shwany, Salahadin University -Kurdistan*
- Democracy in the Middle East: Is it working? What model should be implemented?  
*Parwez Zabihi, Kurdistan*

<b>Break 4:00 -4:10</b>
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<b>4:10- 6:00 Parallel Sessions</b>
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### **Room 1 Turkey's Kurdish Question and Kurdish political movement in Turkey**

Panel chair: Omer Tekdemir, Leicester University, UK

- From "there is no conflict" to "there is no resolution" Unpacking the logics of Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

*Recep Onursal, University of Kent, UK*

- The Rise and Fall of the AKP government's policy of transforming the Turkish-Kurdish conflict

*Ufuk Sahin, Freie Universitaet Berlin, Germany*

- The dialectical relation between different concepts of violence exercised by the state and the PKK in Turkey

*Neslihan Yaklav, EHESS and CNRS, France*

## **Room 2- The State of the Kurdish studies and emerging Kurdish Diaspora in Japan**

Panel chair: Janroj Yilmaz Keles, UK

- **Japan- KRG diplomatic relations and Kurds in Japan**

Mr Akinobu Kinoshita, Secretary of Japan Kurdistan Parliamentary Friendship Group

Chairman of Japan Kurdistan Friendship Association, Japan

Prof. Dr Abdurrahman Gülbeyaz Nagasaki University

- Kurdish Activism Among the Kurmanji Speaking Kurds in Iran: The Case Study of Margavar Rural District in the Border of Iran, Iraq, and Turkey

*Mostafa Khalili, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and Graduate School of Global Studies, Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan*

## **Room 3 - History, Art, Conflict and Reconciliation: The case of the Jazire and Kirkuk**

Panel chair: Muslih Irwani, Public Policy Institute

- Kirkuk's Tribal Groups and The Ottoman Policy

*Dr Rasoul Muhammed Rasoul, Soran University, Kurdistan*

- The Question of Kirkuk and the Role of External Actors

*Dr Nahwi Saeed, Charmu University, Kurdistan*

## **Conference Concluding remark**

### **Seminar at the House of Commons, The British Parliament @ 7:00pm**

<b>Title</b>	<b>The Kurdish Question in the Post Daesh (ISIS) Middle East</b>
<b>Speakers</b>	Prof Abbas Vali, Emeritus Professor of Sociology Dr Arzu Yilmaz, Independent Scholar Dr Naif Bezwan, University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and UCL, UK
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles, Middlesex University Law School, UK
<b>Organised by</b>	<b>Centre for Kurdish Progress and Kurdish Research Network</b>

## Conference Contributors

<b>Name</b>	Ms Anna Kyprianou, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Professional and Social Sciences, Middlesex University, UK
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Anna Kyprianou is Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Professional and Social Sciences, which comprises the Business School, the School of Health and Education and the School of Law. Anna's areas of specialism are organisational behaviour and leading and managing people with a particular emphasis on the virtual organisation. She has worked with the strategic development of organisations and their leadership and management teams for more than 35 years. For the past six years, she has been elected the Vice President for the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's Membership and Professional Development Committee and also sits on the CIPD Board.</p>	

## The 3rd International Kurdish Studies Conference Convenors

<b>Name</b>	Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles - Senior Research Fellow in Politics
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Janroj Yilmaz Keles is an editor of the British Sociological Association's journal <i>Work, Employment and Society</i> and a Senior Lecturer at Department of Law and Politics, School of Law, Middlesex University, London, UK. He received his Ph.D from Brunel University, UK. His research interests are international relations, peace and conflict studies, political violence, ethnicity and nationalism, statelessness, diasporas and migration. He has published several co-authored and single-authored articles in peer-reviewed journals including <i>Antipode</i>, <i>Urban Studies</i>, <i>Journal for Ethnic and Migration Studies</i>, <i>The Sociological Review</i>, <i>Industrial Law Journal</i>, <i>Journal of Immigrant &amp; Refugee Studies</i> and <i>Middle East Journal of Culture &amp; Communication</i>. In addition, he has written feature articles for <i>University World News</i>, <i>Open Democracy</i> and the <i>European Union Foreign Affairs Journal</i>. He is the author of the book entitled <i>Media, Diaspora and Conflict: Nationalism and Identity amongst Turkish and Kurdish Migrants in Europe</i> and one of the co-investigators of GCRF HUB – Gender, Justice and Security. <a href="https://www.mdx.ac.uk/news/2019/01/middlesex-academics-funded-to-research-gender,-justice-and-security">https://www.mdx.ac.uk/news/2019/01/middlesex-academics-funded-to-research-gender,-justice-and-security</a></p>	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Naif Bezwan - Senior Scientist
<b>Institution</b>	University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and UCL, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Dr Naif Bezwan is currently working as Senior Scientist at University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and acting as Senior Honorary Research Fellow at the Department of Political Science, University College London. He obtained both his master's degree in Social Science and PhD in Political Science from University of Osnabrück. As a signatory to the Peace Petition, he was first suspended from his position at Mardin Artuklu University /Turkey because of a critical expert interview on the Turkish military incursion into Syria in August 2016 and then entirely dismissed from his position through an emergency decree issued in October 2016. Bezwan's research interests and teaching include the political and administrative system of Turkey, Turkey's foreign policy, Turkey's policy towards Kurds, Kurdish quest for self-rule,</p>	

and Kurdish political parties, modern history, conflict resolution, comparative politics and intercultural education.

<b>Name</b>	Prof Joshua Castellino - Executive Director of MRGI
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University and Minority Rights Group International, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Joshua Castellino is Professor of Law at Middlesex University, London. He is also Adjunct Professor of Law at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, Galway, Ireland, and Visiting Professor at the College of Europe, Natolin, Poland. He has held visiting positions in Ireland, Spain, Hungary and Italy. Joshua worked as a journalist in Mumbai, with the Indian Express Group, was awarded a Chevening Scholarship to pursue an MA in International Law &amp; Politics in 1995, and completed his PhD in International Law in 1998. He has authored and edited eight books in international law and human rights law, on self-determination, title to territory and indigenous peoples rights, besides several articles on a range of these and other legal sub-topics. He has completed the third, in a five-book series published by Oxford University Press, on issues concerning Global Minority Rights Law, the latest entitled <i>Minority Rights in the Middle East: A Comparative Legal Analysis</i> (with Kathleen Cavanaugh). Joshua was part of the EU-China Experts &amp; Diplomatic Dialogue and Lawyers for the New Millennium: Support for the Arab Law Union. He regularly engages with multilateral organizations and with Law Societies and NGOs in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, on issues of human rights advocacy and public international law. He is on the Leadership Council of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network where he co-chairs the Thematic Group on Social Inclusion, Gender and Human Rights. He was appointed Chair, by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the 8th Forum on Minority Issues, an inter-governmental dialogue with civil society under the auspices of the United Nations Human Rights Council. He was appointed Door Tenant at 25 Bedford Row, London, in June 2017.</p>	

<b>Name</b>	Ibrahim Dogus - Mayor of Lambeth and Director of Centre for Kurdish Progress
<b>Institution</b>	Centre for Kurdish Progress, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>İbrahim Doğuş is the acting Mayor of Lambeth. He is founder of the Centre for Turkey Studies and Centre for Kurdish Progress.</p>	

<b>Name</b>	Professor Mehmet Ali Dikerdem
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Dr. Mehmet Ali Dikerdem has been involved with Middlesex University for many years, teaching a wide range of courses on Third World development, social, urban and ethnic policy studies in social sciences and humanities, and was appointed 0.5 Lecturer in 1990 in social policy and ethnic studies, and was a founding member of the Race &amp; Culture honours programme (1995-2001). He was also appointed 0.5 Lecturer at Bristol University's postgraduate Development Studies programme (1991-95) where he worked with the late Professor Peter Townsend. Dr Dikerdem joined the Institute for Work Based Learning in 2002, becoming the Postgraduate Curriculum Leader for Work Based Studies (2003-8) and then Programme Leader for the Masters and Doctorate in Professional Studies (M/DProf) in 2009. Apart from the design and delivery of professional doctorates and work based learning</p>	

programmes, his academic interests include practice based research methodologies, sociology of work and professions, Gramsci studies, multiculturalism, and Turkish migration and diaspora studies. He is also a regular commentator on issues relating to Turkish-speaking communities in Britain and Turkish affairs. His BA is in Politics and Modern History from Manchester University (1992) and MA and DPhil in Sociology from Sussex University (1980).

<b>Name</b>	Dr Tunc Aybak - Programme Leader for BA International Politics Qualifications
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Tunc Aybak is a senior lecturer in politics. He is Programme Leader for BA International Politics Qualifications. He completed his PhD in International Politics, University of Hull	

<b>Name</b>	Ass. Prof Abdurrahman Gülbeyaz
<b>Institution</b>	Nagasaki University, Japan
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Abdurrahman Gülbeyaz is associate Professor at the School of Global Humanities and Social Sciences of Nagasaki University where he currently teaches media theory, sociolinguistics and theories of culture. From 2006 to 2015 he taught at the Graduate School of Language and Culture at Osaka University and from 1915 to 1917 at Salahaddin University in South Kurdistan. He received an M.S. in Linguistics from Hamburg University and a PhD in Human Sciences from Osaka University. Semiotics, linguistics and philosophy constitute the nucleus of his research fields. His recent works include: <i>Meaning in Language and Music: Sign and Slaughter</i> . Osaka, 2016, <i>Language and the Human Condition: Speech Act and Multilingualism in Conflict Societies</i> (Original Title: <i>Sprache und Conditio Humana: Sprachhandlung und Mehrsprachigkeit in Konfliktgesellschaften / 言語と人間性—コンフリクト社会に見る言語行為と多言語</i> ) Osaka, 2015.	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Arzu Yilmaz
<b>Institution</b>	Independent scholar, Turkey
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Dr. Arzu Yilmaz obtained her PhD in International Relations from Ankara University in Turkey, where she wrote her dissertation on Kurdish refugees in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Prior to this she received her MA in International Relations and an MA in Gender Studies also from Ankara University. She spent six years in KRI as a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Duhok and as the Chair of the Department of International Relations at the American University of Kurdistan. Then she moved to Berlin in 2018 as an Istanbul Policy Center (IPC) - Mercator Fellow at German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP). Dr. Yilmaz is the author of the book “Atruş’tan Maxmur’a: Kürt Mülteciler ve Kimliğin Yeniden İnşası” published in 2016 by İletişim Yayınları. Her academic areas of interest are the Middle East Politics, Migration and Gender Studies while she has published extensively on the Kurdish Question in academic journals.	

<b>Name</b>	Cristiana Rose - MDX School Executive Administrator
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Christiana Rose works as a School Executive Administrator with a strong focus on event management whilst studying Law part time. She is interested in Public Law and alternative dispute resolution.	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Edel Huges - Senior Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Dr Edel Hughes graduated from University College Cork, Ireland, in 2002 with a BCL (Law and French). She was awarded LLM and PhD degrees in International Human Rights Law from the National University of Ireland, Galway in 2003 and 2009 respectively. Prior to joining Middlesex University in September 2017, Edel was a senior lecturer in law at the University of East London (2012-2017) and a lecturer in law at the University of Limerick, Ireland (2006-2011).	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Kamal Soleimani
<b>Institution</b>	El Colegio de México (COLMEX), Mexico
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Kamal Soleimani specialises in Islamic and Middle Eastern history and politics. Soleimani received his Ph.D. (2014) in Islamic and Middle Eastern history from Columbia University, NY, and has taught in Turkish and American universities. He is the author of a number of scholarly articles, including his book <i>Islam and Competing Nationalisms in the Middle East</i> (Palgrave, 2016).	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Mohammed Shareef
<b>Institution</b>	Kurdish Research Network, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
Dr Mohammed Shareef is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society (London). He has worked for the United Nations and is a former visiting Lecturer in Politics and International Relations of the Middle East at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom and a former Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Sulaimani in Iraqi Kurdistan. Shareef completed his PhD in International Relations at the University of Durham and has an MSc in International Relations from the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom. He is a founding member and member of the Board of Directors of the Kurdish Research Network. His research interests include US foreign policy in the Middle East broadly speaking, and US policy towards Arab Iraq and Southern Kurdistan in particular. He is the author of several books, <i>“The United States, Iraq and the Kurds: Shock, Awe and Aftermath”</i> (Routledge 2014), <i>“Kurdish Islamists in Iraq, From The Muslim Brotherhood To The So-Called Islamic State: Continuity or Departure?”</i> (KFCRII, 2015) and co-editor of <i>“The Kurdish Question Revisited”</i> with Professor Gareth Stansfield (Oxford University Press & Hurst, 2017). Mohammed Shareef is a strategist, author, academic, media commentator and analyst. He has given numerous talks at top Think Tanks and world-class academic institutions globally.	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Necla Acik
<b>Institution</b>	University of Manchester, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	

Lecturer at the Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice (CCCJ), School of Law, University of Manchester. Her research interests are in counter-terrorism, youth studies, migration, ethnic inequalities and the Kurdish women's movement.

<b>Name</b>	Ass. Professor Selim Temo
<b>Institution</b>	Mardin Artuklu University (Dismissed), Turkey
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Poet, translator, and scholar.</p> <p>Selim Temo was born on 27th April 1972 in the village of Mêrîna in Batman. He completed elementary school in the village and middle school in Batman. In 1992, he began his studies in the Ethnology Department in Ankara University at the same time as he started publishing his literary work. He received his master's and PhD degrees in the Department of Turkish Literature, Bilkent University (with the thesis title, "Literatization of the Body in Cemal Süreya's Poetry" in 2003 and with the dissertation title, "The Province in Turkish Poetry: 1859-1959" in 2009). In 2009, he became an assistant professor at Mardin Artuklu University and undertook the initiative of establishing the Department of Kurdish Language and Literature. However, due to the state's refusal to grant Kurdish Language and Literature a departmental status, he resigned from his committee position. In 2011, he was a visiting professor at the Centre for Kurdish Studies at the University of Exeter, England. He worked as a columnist for <i>Radikal</i> newspaper between 2013 and 2014. His poetry and other literary works have been translated into German, Azeri, Flemish, French, English, Kurdish (Kurmanjî, Sorani, and Kirmanjkî), and Turkish.</p>	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Sinem Arslan
<b>Institution</b>	University Essex, UK
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Dr. Sinem Arslan is a Research Fellow at the Michael Nicholson Centre for Conflict and Cooperation of the University of Essex. She completed her PhD at the University of Essex and holds Master's degrees from the London School of Economics and Bogazici University. By using qualitative, quantitative, and GIS mapping techniques, she investigates the dynamics of political violence comparatively. Her research specifically focuses on the transnational dynamics of civil wars, civil war peace processes, and terrorism within the context of civil wars.</p>	

<b>Name</b>	Dr Umut Erel - Senior Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Open University
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Erel is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The Open University (UK). Umut's research employs an intersectional approach and explores how gender, migration and ethnicity inform practices of citizenship. Her current research project is 'Participatory Action Research (PAR): Participatory Theatre and Walking Methods' Potential for Co-producing knowledge', with Dr Umut Erel (PI) Open University, Prof. Tracey Reynolds, University of Greenwich and Prof. Maggie O'Neill, University of York'. She has widely published on migration, ethnicity, racism, gender and class. Most recently, she has published an article with Necla Acik on "Enacting intersectional multilayered citizenship: Kurdish women's politics". <i>Journal Gender, Place &amp; Culture</i>.</p>	

**Invited Guests -Names are listed alphabetically by first name.**

**Mr Akinobu Kinoshita**, Secretary of Japan Kurdistan Parliamentary Friendship Group  
Chairman of Japan Kurdistan Friendship Association, Japan

**Short Bio**

Akinobu Kinoshita, a Japanese political scientist, is currently acting as Secretary of Japan Kurdistan Parliamentary Friendship Group and Chairman of Japan Kurdistan Friendship Association. Kinoshita has been actively engaged in national emancipation movements and their struggle for justice and self-determination in Asia. Against this background, he has also taken an active interest in establishing and enhancing cordial relationship between Japan and Kurdistan.

**H.E Karwan Jamal Tahir**, The Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the United Kingdom

**Short Bio**

Mr Karwan Jamal Tahir took up post as the KRG High Representative to the UK in June 2015. He endeavours to further develop and maintain close ties between the KRG and the United Kingdom, as well as advocating his government's position on a range of matters including, political, security, cultural, economic, and humanitarian. Mr. Tahir was born in the city of Sulaimani on 11th January 1971. Mr Tahir followed the footsteps of his father by entering in the world of politics. He joined the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in 1991, becoming a member of His Excellency Jalal Talabani's Special Bureau. He continued to work in a number of departments within the PUK until 1998, when he travelled to the United Kingdom for his undergraduate studies. On July 2003 he completed his BSc in Computer Science and Management, at the University of Manchester Science and Technology (UMIST). Previously, Mr. Tahir served as an Adviser to the General Enterprise for Special Projects, at the Kurdistan Regional Government's Council of Ministers, from 2004 to 2007. He became a Senior Advisor to the Minister of Natural Resources for three years. He played a pivotal role in the Ministry of Natural Resources strategic plans and relations with the IOCs. In addition, he also led three Management Committees, while participating as a member in many more. During his tenure, he transferred to the Department of Foreign Relations (DFR) in 2009 and held the position of the Deputy Head of DFR. Mr. Tahir promoted the Kurdistan Region's relations with the international community on a political and cultural level, through participating in numerous conferences around the world and engaging with the diplomatic community in Erbil. Mr. Tahir lives in London with his wife and two children.

**Dr Leyla Ferman**, Bergen-Belsen Memorial, Germany

**Short Bio**

Leyla Ferman was born as a child of Ezidi Kurds so called "guestworkers" emigrating at the end of 60s from Batman in North-Kurdistan (Southeast Turkey) to Germany. Ms Ferman started to study Political Science (with Law and Economics) at the Leibniz University in Hannover 2004 and graduated with an M.A. on Ferdalism in Iraq which was published 2009. After many research field trips to Turkey, Iraq, Switzerland and Canada she finished her PhD on "Decentralization and Ethnic Conflict: The Kurdish Question and Local Level" in Turkey in 2014. With the beginning of the Yazidi Genocide in August 2014 Leyla started to work as an advisor for International Relations at Mardin Metropolitan Municipality. She was also

responsible for the Yazidi cause in Mardin and part of a regional team caring for Yazidi refugees in Turkey. She was part of the founding group of “Platform for Struggle for Women Held in Captivity” (now “Women for Justice”) which was founded in October 2015 in order to care for Yazidi women who escaped from IS (legal, physical, psychological, social care and public work). Since August 2017 Leyla Ferman is working for the Memorial Bergen Belsen as coordinator of “Partnership for Democracy”.

**Mr Hassan Ghazi, Broadcaster**

**Short Bio**

Hassan Ghazi is a Kurdish broadcaster, researcher and translator hailing from Mahabad the headquarter of Kurdistan republic in 1940s. He has been working on various Kurdish television outlets since 2000 and have produced a historical documentary film about the activities of Lutheran missionaries in Mahabad and its environs, which uncovers many unknown facts about Kurdish life in the area. Ghazi also have translated extensively from English and Swedish into Sorani Kurdish, one of his works is the translation of a collection of essays by Dutch scholar Martin van Bruinessen published by Kurdish academy.

**Mr Osman Baydemir , Former Mayor of Diyarbakir, Former MP, Lawyer, Human rights defender**

**Short Bio**

Osman Baydemir (born 1971 in Diyarbakır) is a Kurdish politician, lawyer and human rights defender. He was the mayor of his home town of Diyarbakır from 2004 to 2014. He was a member of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) until 2014 and HDP since 2014. Osman Baydemir graduated from the Law Faculty at Dicle University in Diyarbakır. In 1995 he became the chair of the Diyarbakır Branch of Human Rights Association, the oldest and most wide-spread HR Organisation in Turkey. Between 1995 and 2002 he also became vice-president of the association. In February 1999 he became one of the first lawyers who volunteered to defend Abdullah Öcalan. In 2001 he became a founding member of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT). In 2004, he was elected as the mayor of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality and after serving 5 years, he was reelected again in local elections of 2009. As a human rights activist and as a politician, Osman Baydemir has been subjected to prosecution on various levels and had received numerous threats. After the assassination of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink in January 2007 Osman Baydemir was among several people who received death threats. Between 2010-2013 he was banned to travel abroad by a court decision because of his political activities.

He served as Mayor of Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality until 2014. At the same time Baydemir was general chair of GABB (the association of municipalities of Kurdish provinces) between 2004-2014. He was also elected as vice-president of CLG-Middle East and West Asia (MEWA) section of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

In the general elections of 7 June and 1 November 2015 he was elected as an MP from Sanliurfa, another metropolitan Kurdish province. His parliamentary immunity was unilaterally lifted by the AKP Government among with 55 MPs of HDP on 20 May 2016. Many prosecutions and cases were launched against him because of his speeches; as a result

he was given an 18 months imprisonment sentence, and on 19 April 2018, his deputy seat was stripped off among with other 11 MPs of HDP.

Today tens of cases against him are still being actively pursued, he has recently been given a 1.5 year imprisonment sentence by the Sirnak Court of First Instance. Over one hundred years of imprisonment have been demanded by public prosecutors because of his speeches in which he criticised the Turkish State's Kurdish policy and serious human rights violations.

## Conference Presenters - names are listed alphabetically by first name.

### Keynote Speaker

Keynote speaker	Prof Abbas Vali - Emeritus Professor of Sociology
Title	Kurdish Questions Reconstituted? Reflections on Sovereign Domination and Kurdish Resistance in the Post-DAESH Middle East

#### Abstract

This presentation will attempt to address the central theme of the conference, the perceived shift in the dynamics of the Kurdish question in the changing Middle East. It will argue that the conceptualizations of the shift in the dynamics of the Kurdish question and its outcomes depend not so much on the analysis of the current social and political transformations in the Middle East as on the conceptions of the Kurdish question deployed in the analysis. These conceptions inform analyses of the conditions of the shift and its outcomes ranging from conservation and consolidation to change and reconstitution on new foundations. This presentation will focus on the analyses which argue for the 'reconstitution' of the Kurdish question on new foundations in the post-ISIS middle East. This argument is currently gaining ground in academic and journalistic writings on federalist and confederalist autonomy projects. Although it presupposes a constructivist conception of the Kurdish question and as such testifies to the 'constitutive' role of the modern nation state in the making of the Kurdish question, it overlooks the theorisation of the form and the conditions of the 'articulation' of sovereign power and the social and political structures of the Kurdish community. Nor does it account for the articulation of sovereign domination and Kurdish resistance in the process of its reconstitution during the crisis and transformation in the Middle East. In fact, these analyses for the most part overlook the constitutive status of sovereign power in the process of the articulation with the social and political structure of Kurdish community and treat it as two parallel processes with their own dynamics and development. The 'exteriority' of sovereign power to the social and political structures of Kurdish question, central to autonomist discourses of various kind, it will be argued, makes it difficult, if not impossible, to conceptualise the relationship of sovereign domination and Kurdish resistance in the discursive and political frameworks of the autonomous political projects. This presentation will therefore problematise the concept of reconstitution of the Kurdish question in order to show first its 'interiority' to the structure of sovereign domination and secondly, the defining role of the forms of articulation of sovereign power and Kurdish resistance play in the reconstitution of the Kurdish question in the post-ISIS Middle East. The onus of the argument is thus on the crisis of the modern state system in the Middle East. The political and military processes and practices set in motion by the developments in the region in the past three decades have revealed more than ever before the failure of the modern state to establish pluralist democratic orders capable of recognising and respecting ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural differences in their sovereign territories. In the centre of this crisis stands the Kurdish question constituted by the violence of the founding acts of modern nation states, in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The concept of founding act therefore refers to an act of

sovereign power, a violent act suppressing Kurdish identity at the moment of the foundation of these states. It follows that the constitutive violence of Kurdish question is latent in structures of sovereign domination of in these states. The reconstitution of the Kurdish question as such can take two forms: a violent rupture in the structure of sovereign domination and the subsequent juridical recognition and consolidation of Kurdish identity in the constitutional political process (Iraq and possibly Syria), or a sovereign decision in the constitutional political process to free the suppressed Kurdish identity by redefining sovereign identity in a genuine pluralist political system. The latter form presupposes a strong democratic opposition committed to democratic pluralism (possibly Turkey and Iran).

**Short Bio**

Abbas Vali held the chair of Modern Social and political thought at the Department of Sociology, Bogazici University in Istanbul (2008-2017). He previously taught Political Theory and Modern Middle Eastern Politics at the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Swansea, UK (1985-2005). He then moved to Erbil in Iraqi Kurdistan to serve as the founding rector of the University of Kurdistan Hawler (2005-2008). His writings include Pre-Capitalist Iran: A theoretical History (I.B. Tauris, 1993), Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism (Mazda 2003), Kurds and the State in Iran: The Making of Kurdish Identity (I. B. Tauris 2012), The Forgotten Years of Kurdish Nationalism in Iran, (Palgrave-Macmillan 2019). He is currently working on a new book: The Crisis of Sovereignty in the Kurdish Quest for Democratic Autonomy in Syria and Iran (Peter Lang 2020).

**Conference Presenters – Abstracts and Short Bios**

<b>Presenter</b>	Abdurrahman Gülbeyaz
<b>Institution</b>	Nagasaki University, School of Global Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>Title</b>	Peace and Language: -Seek Shelter When You Hear Peace Songs! –
<p>The last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century mark the transition from a short-lived and modest valley to a mighty – and in certain aspects qualitatively new – crest of the ever-oscillating wave of human destructiveness. Wars and far reaching violent social conflicts are mushrooming and escalating worldwide. Not only are those colonialism-damaged, poverty-stricken regions of the world but also Western countries struck by never-ending orgies of destruction.</p> <p>In this regard, the Eastern Mediterranean area – the so-called Middle East – seems to constitute something of a hub within the social space-time continuum where these orgies preferentially emerge and unfold or – even if they are based somewhere else in the world – at least communicate and interact.</p> <p>The core of this space-time segment is formed and marked by a permanent massacre. That is, by the circumstance that a language and the speakers thereof have been and are being exposed to a programmatic unremitting slaughter since, at the latest, September 24, 1925 when the so called “Reform Plan for the East (<i>Şark Islahat Planı</i>)” was brought into force by the newly established Turkish government.</p> <p>Against this background, I will discuss in my presentation the concepts of war and peace and their umbilical link to statehood on the one hand, and the status and positioning of language within and in connection with this messy complex on the other.</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Allan Hassaniyan - Teaching Associate in IAIS and Politics Department
<b>Institution</b>	Exeter University, UK
<b>Title</b>	Securitisation of Environmental Activism in Iranian Kurdistan
<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>This paper investigates how and why Kurdish environmental activists have become the target of the Iranian regime's security forces and the judicial system. Conducting interviews with Kurdish environmental activists within and outside Iranian Kurdistan is the main method of data gathering. Kurdish Iranian civil society has during the two last decades paid particular attention to protecting Kurdistan's nature and wildlife from human destruction. Kurdish environmental groups have devoted their resources aimed at protecting the forests of Kurdistan from deforestation, or/and wildfire. This trend has intensified as a reaction to the occurrence of massive wildfires and deforestation of the forests of Kurdistan (articulated by Kurdish environmentalists as 'the Forest of Zagros'). Though, human-caused wildfires and deforestation have been the hardest blow to the Kurdish natural environment. In the absence of state institutions' contribution to solving environmental issues in Kurdistan, Kurdish environmental societies have taken the matter on their own. There are several examples of Kurdish environmentalists, that by using very basic equipment like a shovel, spade and pitchfork have fought and put off wildfires. The very recent acts of Kurdish environmentalists' involvement in fighting wildfire, took place in the forests of Pile and Sisly (two villages of Mariwan) on 25 August 2018. Yet this attempt resulted in the death of two rangers and two environmental activists, while struggling to extinguish the fire. Kurdish environmental associations due to the high degree of integrity and commitment to protecting wildlife and because of their contribution with environmental solutions have been awarded different national prizes. For instance, Mariwan's Chia Green Community, was in 2014 awarded the prestigious prize of Jayezay-e Milliy-e Mohit-e Zist (the national award of Environment) by the Iranian president Hassan Rouhani.</p> <p>Nevertheless, even though Kurdish environmental societies have been established according to Iranian law and regulations, conducting environmental activity has shown to be a risky affaire, and several environmentalists have based on different accusations (i.e., espionage and/or for being 'at enmity with god') ended in Iranian prisons. Many have during different suspicious accidents died. The patterns of regime's targeting Kurdish environmental groups give reason to claim that it has adopted a securitized/militarized approach to with massive consequences for Kurdish civil society activists. With relation to the above problematic, this paper investigates the reason for this massive securitisation environmental activism and this securitisation's impact on the activity of the civil society in Kurdistan.</p>	
<p><b>Short Bio</b></p> <p>Allan Hassaniyan is Teaching Associate at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, and Politics Department, University of Exeter, UK. He received his PhD from the University of Exeter, UK. His research interests are civil society, ethnicity and nationalism, security, environmentalism, social and political movement; with Iranian Kurdistan as specialized area.</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Arzu Yilmaz
<b>Institution</b>	Independent Scholar, Turkey

<b>Title</b>	Re-territorialization of Kurdistan via Migration
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This paper is concerned primarily with the transformation of the political identity of the Kurdish refugees that fled to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) from the 1990s onwards. Conventionally, migration refers to an actual disengagement from country of origin. In the case of the Kurdish refugees in the KRI, however, this paper argues that migration has been a practice of engagement with the ancestral home country namely Kurdistan. In last decades, the KRI has arisen as a hub particularly for the Kurds who are faced with persecution, oppression and forced migration in Turkey, Iran and Syria. As of today, more than three hundred thousand Kurdish refugees are settled mostly in the refugee camps in the KRI. Regardless of such root causes, however, the Kurdish refugees' flights to the KRI after the 1990s have taken place not only as a search for safety but also as a specific political act with a variety of political targets set by the Kurdish political parties which the Kurdish refugees in the KRI are strongly associated with. The long-lasting experience of refugees in the KRI, however, has transformed the Kurdish refugees' political orientation whereas the political targets that have initially mobilised the Kurdish refugees have kept mostly firm. Taking refuge in the KRI has, then, turned into an actual effort to contribute the reconstruction of the KRI as 'country of origin' rather than a search for temporary sanctuary in a "host country". This transformation process has ultimately entered on a new phase by the emergence of the Islamic State (IS) in 2014. The military groups formed within Kurdish refugee communities mobilised to fight against ISIS in the name of "defense of Kurdistan" side by side with the local Kurdish military forces for the first time in their experience of refuge in the KRI. In this context, this paper traces the answer of the question of how the experience of refuge in the KRI has transformed the Kurdish refugees' self-understanding and their perceptions of Kurdistan, in particular. The arguments of this paper rely on the fieldwork conducted in Maxmur, Domiz and Koya refugee camps in the KRI between 2011-2017.</p>
<b>Short Bio</b>	<p>Dr. Arzu Yilmaz obtained her PhD in International Relations from Ankara University in Turkey, where she wrote her dissertation on Kurdish refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Prior to this she received her MA in International Relations and MA in Gender Studies also from Ankara University. She spent six years in KRI as a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Duhok and as the Chair of the Department of International Relations at the American University of Kurdistan. Then she moved to Berlin in 2018 as an Istanbul Policy Center (IPC) - Mercator Fellow at German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP). Dr. Yilmaz is the author of the book "Atruş'tan Maxmur'a: Kürt Mülteciler ve Kimliğin Yeniden İnşası" published in 2016 by İletişim Yayınları. Her academic areas of interest are the Middle East Politics, Migration and Gender Studies while she has published extensively on the Kurdish Question in academic journals.</p>

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Avar Almukhtar - Associate Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Urban Design & Planning Faculty of the Built Environment, Oxford Brookes University, UK
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Place-identity: Challenge between Heritage and Globalisation
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>There is a wide concern about the erosion of culture, history and place-identity in cities and urban areas facing war and conflict. Cities that face conflict and war such as Kurdish cities</p>

within Iraq and Syria are under attack, not only on the human and physical level, but also on intangible elements such as culture, traditions, historical values, and heritage sites and landmarks. As the situation stabilises and political, economic, and social changes emerge, reconstruction efforts begin as a part of the post-war recovery process. However, changes introduced by post-war urban reconstruction may result in challenges that threaten and weaken local culture and identity such as rapid urbanisation and globalisation.

This is especially relevant in emerging nations that have been beset with war, conflict and ethnic tensions as they strive for autonomy and independence, where priorities are focused on primary needs and there is a lack of governmental structure that is capable of creating comprehensive policies for urban developments and reconstruction. Iraqi Kurdistan is a clear example where place-identity is a struggle between social values, the importance of heritage and tradition, new governance structures, and global promotion of the region through a postwar urban reconstruction process.

The city of Erbil specifically is one of the cities at the forefront of these challenges as it is the preeminent capital of Iraqi-Kurdistan, which is the context of this paper. The city hosts the Erbil Citadel, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which dates back to nearly 5000 B.C. The Citadel has gone through layers of different civilizations. Erbil as a city suffered from decades of neglect and destruction of its heritage by the previous regime as an attempt to manipulate its place-identity. After periods of war ravaged the Kurdish region, in 2003, a decade of reconstruction ensued with a long period of political and economic stability resulted in rapid urbanisation. The post-war reconstruction process was a challenge between aspirations of promoting the city globally (as a capital of an emerging nation) and Erbil's historical roots represented in the Citadel and the old town. While there is high demand for a global response for the growing Kurdistan question, the global influence on the capital city of Kurdistan is questionable.

Many scholars are in a constant effort trying to preserve and promote Kurdish identity culture, history and tradition. Meanwhile, the Kurdish question in the city's urban fabric, which is the physical reflection of Kurdish identity still remains unanswered. Therefore, this research focused on how to develop strategies to enhance Kurdish place-identity through the urban reconstruction of Kurdish cities using Erbil as a case study. Focus is placed on accommodating the needs for modernisation without compromising Kurdish culture, heritage and local identity.

#### **Short Bio**

Dr. Almkhtar is Associate Lecturer at the school of the Built Environment at Oxford Brookes University. He has a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and a Master's in Urban Design. He received his PhD at Oxford Brookes University at the School of the Built Environment, with a thesis titled 'Place-identity in historic cities; embracing heritage, globalisation, and conflict in Erbil Iraq'. He is also a Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. His research interests are in conflict, post-war reconstruction, architecture, cultural heritage, place-identity in Middle East.

Dr. Almkhtar has worked as an Architect in Erbil on different architecture and urban design projects at various scales. His research has been successfully recognised internationally. He presented his research at the Harvard Graduate school of design, USA, Bartlett School of Architecture, University College of London, the University of Delft, Netherlands, School of Architecture in Valencia, Spain and the Annual UK-Ireland Planning Research Conference in Oxford, UK. His papers presented at the Harvard Graduate school of design and University

College of London were selected and published as book chapters by Routledge and Springer as well as a peer-reviewed journal article. He also won a research grant where he conducted research in Brazil and presented at the University of Federal de Pelotas. Additionally, he participated in international workshops in the UK, Europe and Latin America.

<b>Presenter</b>	Aynur Unal - Doctoral Researcher and Teaching Assistant
<b>Institution</b>	School of Media, Communication & Sociology and School of History, Politics and International Relations, University of Leicester, UK
<b>Title</b>	Self-Determination Claim of the Kurdish Political Movement within the Context of Indigeneity

**Abstract**

This interdisciplinary research looks at how indigenusness is expressed within the Kurdish political movement in Turkey. While discussions surrounding concepts of ethnicity and indigeneity remain important within academia, Trigger and Dalley’s (2007, p. 47) note that “critical definitions argue for a clear differentiation between indigeneity and either race or ethnicity, with a specific category of indigenous peoples deserving of distinctive rights and interests”. That distinction has been also recognised under international law by granting the self-determination right for indigenous peoples in the United Nations in 2007 (United Nations 2017). Indeed, the claim of self-determination is a crucial aspect of indigenous rights movement including the Kurdish political movement.

Thus, I aim to draw scholarly attention to indigeneity discourse within Kurdishness, in particular, self-determination claim that is, in the Kurdish context, has been developed in various concepts such as from ‘democratic united-independent Kurdistan to democratic autonomy/democratic confederalism’ that is considered the most debated claim not only for indigenous struggle but also for Kurdish movement. To do so, my research focuses on the Kurdish political movement in Turkey between 1978 and 2017 by looking at party programmes and rules of the pro-Kurdish political parties in this period, the party statements of the latest two parties (Peace and Democracy Party-BDP and Peoples' Democracy Party – HDP) and twenty semi-structured interviews with the deputies of HDP in 2018 by employing Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) as my methodological framework. This research, therefore, a significant contribution to the indigenusness aspect of Kurds who have been widely seen as an ethnic minority or whose existence has been denied in the Middle East.

**References**

Trigger, D.S. & Dalley, C. (2010), ‘Negotiating Indigeneity: Culture, Identity, and Politics’, *Reviews in Anthropology*, 39(1), pp.46-65.  
 United Nations Human Rights Commission 2017, Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/Pages/Declaration.aspx>. (Accessed: 26 March 2017)

**Short Bio**

Aynur Unal holds an M.A. in International Relations (specialized in international law and human rights) from Deakin University (2016). Currently, 3rd-year PhD candidate at the University of Leicester working on the topic of ‘Indigeneity Discourse within the Kurdish Political Movement in Turkey’. Her research interests include indigenous rights, Kurdish political movement, indigenous peoples of the Middle East, national identity discourse and Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). Alongside doctoral research, she works as a teaching

assistant the School of Media, Communication and Sociology and the School of History, Politics and International Relations.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ayse Kurul - Legal Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Queen Mary University of London, LLM in Human Rights Law, UK
<b>Title</b>	Non-state actors and genocide: The case of Yazidis
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>Genocide is closely linked to key institutions where state or broadly - political authorities are often the main actors. However, this provisional doctoral research project offers a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between genocide and non-state actors in the case of Yazidis. The main provisional questions that I would be addressing are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How has genocide been justified by non-state actors?</li> <li>2. What are the differences and similarities between State-oriented genocides and genocides committed by non-state actors in terms of pre-conditions, causes and methods of genocide?</li> <li>3. What is the role of States in genocides committed by non-state actors?</li> <li>4. State sovereignty has been commonly used as a main tool of circumvention from international responsibility to prevent and stop genocides by the international community. In this context, how could the silence of the international community be explained in genocides committed by non-state actors (in the absence of a State)?</li> </ol> <p>This study will mainly employ thematic analysis to classify and organise data into themes to answer the research questions. The research seeks to contribute to the literature on genocide studies by proposing that the perpetrator does not need a state framework to commit genocide as a non-state actor, with a special emphasis on the case of ongoing Yazidi genocide.</p>	
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Ayse Kurul is currently undertaking an LLM degree in Human Rights Law at Queen Mary University of London, UK. She holds an LLB degree from Department of Law, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey. She completed her lawyer internship at Ankara Bar Association, Turkey. She is currently a project assistant at Statewatch, London, UK. Her research interests are anthropology of human rights law, refugee law, state crime, surveillance studies, minority rights and genocide studies.</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Azad Qazaz - Researcher and Psychosocial Therapist
<b>Institution</b>	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium
<b>Title</b>	The victimization of the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan A psycho-political perspective
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>The Iraqi Kurds repeatedly became victims to Iraqi governments after World War I. Most notable conflict between the Iraqi Kurds and the Iraqi government are the Anfal operations and the Chemical bombing in 1988. Anfal was a genocide that killed about 182,000 Kurds. The Chemical bombing was a massacre against the Kurdish people in Halabja which killed nearly 5,000 and injured approximately 10,000 people. Existing studies by Kurdish authors on Kurdish conflict with regional governments stress only the victimisation of Kurds and the role of the perpetrators. They do not pay attention to the collective character of Kurds which plays a significant role in that victimization. More emphasis should be put on how the anxiety of becoming a victim again prevents Kurds from making appropriate political decisions. This paper aims to show that the best guarantee for success for a political process is to be conscious of one's subconscious motivation to avoid victimization. Victimology is the scientific study</p>	

of the role of victims in the background of crimes, the consequences of crimes for victims and the various forms of aid to limit these consequences.

Based on the studies on Kurdish genocide and Kurdish political history in Iraq, I will explain the origins of the Kurdish issue. Then, using studies on victimology, we will understand the various Kurdish political positions. Also, my own experience as a Kurdish intellectual who has experienced many conflicts and tragic events in Iraq, will be an essential source for explaining Kurdish political attitudes and their feelings of being a victim. This paper will focus on the political behaviour of the Kurdish parties who led the conflict with the central government in Iraq. The Anfal and Halabja chemical attacks will be the two examples of Kurdish victimisation through which we will understand the role of the victim in its own victimization. It also sheds light on how the sense of being victimised has influenced both Kurdish leaders and the Kurdish public of the Southern Kurdistan region.

**Short Bio**

Azad Qazaz was a lecturer at the Department of Philosophy at Salahaddin University in Erbil and worked as a psychosocial therapist in the Netherlands. He has published about 20 books and many articles in the fields of philosophy and religion, psychosocial therapy, theology and Kurdish politics. At the moment he is researching Islamic theology at KU Leuven in Belgium.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Bamo Nouri - Visiting Lecturer, Department of International Politics, City University London and Associate Fellow of The Higher Education Academy
<b>Institution</b>	City University London, UK
<b>Title</b>	The path to Kurdish Statehood: The Impact of the Kurdistan Regional Government on the Possibility of a Future Kurdish State

**Abstract**

One of the most significant political break-throughs on the path to Kurdish statehood was the formal establishment of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq through Iraq's 2005 Constitution. Iraq's Constitution granted the Kurdistan Region autonomy; enabling the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to govern through a parliamentary democracy. Proponents of Kurdish statehood viewed the official recognition of the Kurdistan Region as a crucial step towards Kurdish autonomy and potentially an independent Kurdish nation-state. The possibility of Kurdish autonomy evolving was dependent on the KRG establishing a constitutional, democratic and prosperous governance model that could become a blueprint to be followed in Turkey, Iran and Syria. My talk will present how relations with the Central government of Iraq, patronage politics, clientelism, partisan-institutions, and constitutional violations by a dictatorial two party-system over a period of 13 years since 2005 has thwarted the prospect of Kurdish autonomy extending into Turkey, Iran and Syria, or more importantly becoming closer to Kurdish statehood. I will argue that the repercussions of failed governance by the KRG have increased systematic and violent opposition to Kurdish autonomy in all four Kurdish populated nations. I will present that in order to re-legitimise the question for nation-statehood, the KRG must become non-partisan, efficient and protective of constitutional rights granted as per Iraq's 2005 Constitution. I will argue that the current KRG governance model is problematic and detrimental for the middle-east region. and in order for the case of Kurdish autonomy to advance again in Turkey, Iran and Syria, immediate reform is needed. The talk covers the content of a journal article that I am currently working on.

**Short Bio**

Bamo is an investigative journalist, political analyst and academic who has a PhD in International Politics. He is currently lecturing at the City University of London, and has previously taught at the University of Manchester. His research interests are; neo-liberalism, US Foreign Policy, the Middle-East, Iraq, US democracy promotion, imperialism, and elite theory. Bamo meticulously covers the events of Iraqi Kurdistan closely and has been measuring the impact of Iraq's 2005 Constitution on democracy, human rights, and equality in the region.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Bayar Mustafa Sevdeen
<b>Institution</b>	Department of International relations, The American University of Kurdistan and AHDA Fellow, The Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, USA
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Inner Borders at a Crossroad: Rojava-Başur Border

**Abstract**

The consequences of the Arab spring and the fight against the Islamic State (IS) have caused a rallying around the Kurds along their borders. For the first time in the modern history, Kurds have been united against a 'common enemy' which is IS, and the 'defense of Kurdistan' has triggered a nationalist dynamic throughout Kurdistan. It is a fact that Kurdish areas of the Middle East interact increasingly with each other day by day and developments in one-part influence easily developments in the other part as some parts of the political borders between Iraq and Syria have been vanished.

In addition to that, the recent political developments in the Middle East, as the fight against ISIS is almost over, and despite multiple regional and international challenges that face the Kurdish achievements, Kurds in the region look to be in a position to assume the role of a constitutive power both in determining their future and remaking the Middle East. And in this regard, the border between Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and Rojava Administration is a crucial dimension which will reveal to what extent that role would take place. Nevertheless, any attempt to rebuilding Iraqi and Syrian borders by regional and international actors could be considered an existential threat to the Kurdish entities in both countries.

In this regard, I will try to answer two Questions: The first one is: What does the experience of the Iraqi-Syrian border tell us about intra-Kurdish relations? And secondly, to what extent will the United States react over attempts at rebuilding the status quo regarding Rojava and KRG's current role and influence in the Middle East region?

**Short Bio**

Bayar Mustafa completed his postdoctoral research, From a Dream to a Possibility: The Opportunities of Independent Kurdistan after the Arab Spring, in 2015 at Istanbul Bilgi University. He obtained his PhD, The Kurdish Question in American Policy toward Turkey: 1991-1999, from the University of Mosul. His master's degree focused on British policy towards Turkey and its effect on Kurdistan. He has published numerous articles on American, Turkish, and Kurdish politics as well as four books. His latest books Foreign Relations and Regional Politics of KRG and Turkey, US, and the War in North Kurdistan: 1984-1999 will be available soon. Dr. Mustafa is also AHDA fellow of the at the institute if Humans Rights at Colombia University.

<b>Presenters</b>	Dr Cem Oyvat* & Dr Hasan Tekgüç**
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<b>Institution</b>	*The University of Greenwich, Department of International Business and Economics Business School, UK **Kadir Has University, Department of Economics, Turkey
<b>Title</b>	Ethnic Fractionalization, Conflict and Educational Development in Turkey
<b>Abstract</b> We examine the impact of ethnic fractionalisation and conflict on limiting the educational development in Southeastern Turkey. Our estimates show that although the armed conflict in the region did not directly hinder education investments, it reduced school enrolment rates at middle and high school levels, while increasing enrolment at the primary school level. Moreover, we show that provinces with higher percentages of Kurdish population received less education investment. These results suggest that the neglect of Kurdish areas is an important factor behind Southeastern Turkey's educational underdevelopment, while land inequality and the armed conflict had mixed effects on education in the region.	
<b>Short Bio</b> Cem Oyvat is a senior lecturer at the University of Greenwich's Department of International Business and Economics. He received his PhD in Economics from the University of Massachusetts – Amherst in 2014 with a dissertation titled “Essays on the Evolution of Inequality”. His research interests include income distribution in the developing world, agrarian structures and land inequality, urbanization, informal sector, gender economics, wage-led growth and the effects of globalization on growth and distribution. He has published articles in <i>World Development</i> , <i>Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society</i> , <i>International Journal of Educational Development</i> , and <i>Structural Change and Economic Dynamics</i> . He also taught courses at Boğaziçi University as a visiting lecturer.  Hasan Tekgüç received his PhD in Economics from the University of Massachusetts - Amherst in the United States in June 2010. He also holds a BA in Economics from Boğaziçi University. Between 2011 and 2015, he held a position at Mardin Artuklu University, and since September 2015 he is employed at Kadir Has University. His dissertation research focused on consumption behaviour of households and their vulnerability to poverty in the presence of food consumption from own production. Over years he also studied competition and price transmission in animal product markets. Additionally, he studied gender issues in labour markets in Turkey. He has published in the <i>Review of Economics of the Household</i> , <i>Agribusiness</i> , <i>The Developing Economies</i> , and <i>Journal of Labor Research</i> .	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Cemal Ozkahraman
<b>Institution</b>	University of Cambridge, UK
<b>Title</b>	Cross-border' Trade: Understanding the Socio-economical and Political Context of Kurds in Syria
<b>Abstract</b> With the end of Ottoman imperial authority in the Middle East in the aftermath of World War I, the Kurds did not only experience “border” or “borders” on their traditional territory (Kurdistan), but they also faced socio-economical and political exclusion from the states' they inhabited. However, the transnational borderlands activities, mainly informal cross-border trade, have played a crucial role, which impacted on the Kurds' socio-economical and political development pathways. This paper involves the study of the conceptualisation of the socially exclusive nature of transnational borderlands of the Kurds in Syria.	

Understanding the conditions under which social exclusion works in relation to the Kurds in Syria, and its broader context in terms of transnational borderlands, is the main aim of this paper. There are two aspects to this: it will investigate to what extent the social exclusion of the Kurds by Syrian state policy has strengthened ‘Kurdishness’ and Kurdish solidarity; it will also address the struggle of ‘excluded’ Kurds, in relation to the transnational borderlands and informal cross-national border trade networks. In addition, it will examine in what form the social exclusion policy and informal cross-border trade (mainly in the Syrian-Turkish ‘borderlands’ of Kurdistan) have impacted on the Kurds’ socio-political development pathways, and to what extent the current political arrangement constitutes a unique secular democratic model at the heart of Middle Eastern politics.

**Short Bio**

Dr Cemal Ozkahraman is currently a visiting scholar at the University of Cambridge, working on informal cross-border trade in the Syrian, Turkish and Iraqi ‘borderlands’ of Kurdistan in the Middle East. He holds a PhD from Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter, UK. He has various articles published in journals such as *Conflict, Security & Development*. He also has short pieces published in a variety of political online magazines: *Social Europe, Open Democracy* and in *The Jerusalem Post*. His research interests are international relations, hydropolitics in the Middle East, socio-economic development, security, EU-Turkish relations, Kurdish politics and dynamic of informal cross-border trades.

<b>Presenter</b>	Charlotte Watelet - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Political Science and Anthropology, EHESS / CETOBAC. France
<b>Title</b>	Kurds among Kurds: An Ethnography of a Camp Refugee.

**Abstract**

In light of the current Syrian Migratory Context, many issues link migration enclosure, citizenship and self-determination struggle as identity recognition as refugee rights. These various themes take on a special importance when we consider the Kurdish question, especially in the context of refugee camps. When we focus on the Syrians living exile in Iraqi Kurdistan – 252 772 people – we notice they are overwhelmingly Kurds – 98 %. If we look at the larger Kurdish area, it looks more like an internal displacement than an out-of-state migration. However, if we observe this phenomenon through a more local scale, the reality of identity and relationship becomes much more complex. This paper will try to show how the exile of Syrian Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan both divides and reinforces the Kurdish self-determination movement. It will first locate "micro" and "macro", beginning with the study of a refugee camp (Qushtapa) in the Erbil governorate of Iraq. The camp is a microcosm of the broader intra-Kurdish clashes which trans-nationalises the conflict through exile. This "border-space" reveals the struggle between two political ideologies, PYD and KDP ones – confederalism VS national-liberalism – and is becoming a kind of ideological border. In a time of autonomy demands in both the Kurdish parts of the Syrian-Iraqi area – Rojava and the Kurdistan Regional Government – this context of spatial enclosure of the camp refugees represents first of all an opportunity for political parties. The camp populations represent at the same time Kurdish and Syrian identities, used by both the KDP and PYD to further their interests which makes the camp's inhabitants appear like political tools. Furthermore, Qushtapa camp is almost six years old and thus is entering into an extended temporality. The "emergency" is over, raising the question of a withdrawal of humanitarian control. Thus, we must examine the link between the "camp" and the town of Qushtapa. Similar to Palestinian camps in the Middle-East, which are simultaneously part of the cities and "outside" of the

cities and a piece of Palestine at the same time. Will Qushtapa camp become a part of Iraqi Kurdistan or a part of Syria or both?

**Short Bio**

Charlotte Watelet first got a master degree in political science at Ehess (2016). Her work was about the Syrian Kurdish exiles in Iraqi Kurdistan. Now, her PhD focus is on a camp, inside this area. Her thesis, which is titled: "Start Over Through Unpredictability. Monography of Syrian Kurdish Refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan", takes an interest in controlled population spaces, resistance gestures, and moving identity. All considered through the prism of the Kurdish question. She was simultaneously a lecturer at Ehess (2017/2018) covering reflexivity and ethnography.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Darren Dinsmore - Co-Founder and Co-Director
<b>Institution</b>	Mesopotamia Observatory of Justice, Germany
<b>Title</b>	Infringing the Sovereign Power of the Electorate: The European Court of Human Rights Awakens to Political Persecution and a Denial of Free Elections in Turkey

**Abstract**

The European Court of Human Rights has recently come under intense scrutiny due to its rigid enforcement of procedural rules and deference to domestic authorities in the Turkish State of Emergency cases. The Court's weak response to what various United Nations and Council of Europe agencies and actors have denounced as serious and systematic violations has invigorated debate on the Court's role and credibility. The situation has also had inestimable effects on the levels of trust in the Court amongst local lawyers, NGOs and activists. The November 2018 judgment on the pre-trial detention of former Peoples' Democratic Party co-chair Selahattin Demirtaş presents an altogether different image of the Court, involving a remarkable shift in its response to practices of political persecution in Turkey. This paper will analyse the Council of Europe's record on political pluralism and free elections, using the Turkish case study to assess the structural force of human rights law in safeguarding core democratic principles.

In the Turkish political party ban cases, the Court responded timidly through the rights to expression and association without fully examining the broader effects of such bans. In Demirtaş, in contrast, the Court issued a broad denunciation of the use of extended pre-trial detention to silence Mr Demirtaş at a time of historic constitutional change. The Court's declaration that the Turkish Government had "infringed the sovereign power of the electorate", leading to the first violation of Article 18 (restrictions on rights) against Turkey, is a moment of (belated) awakening to political persecution. This paper will assess the state of political pluralism and the right to free elections in Turkey within historical, legal and political contexts. Drawing on regulation theory, it will identify a networked programme of Council of Europe activity that underpins the Demirtaş judgment, and which helped to mitigate the fragmentation of information and power in the Court's oversight of the ECHR. It will also reflect critically on gaps in the Court's findings and reasoning. In spite of the latter, the Demirtaş judgment is a timely reminder of the critical role and voice of individual rights against democratic backsliding.

**Short Bio**

Dr Darren Dinsmore obtained his PhD in Law from Queen's University Belfast in 2012. He has taught in the Law Schools at Queen's University Belfast (2008-2011), Keele University (2011-2012) and the University of Kent (2012-2018). He is a Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Mesopotamia Observatory of Justice, a Non-Governmental Organisation working to

promote and support the use of international law mechanisms to secure justice and accountability for international crimes and gross violations of human rights.

<b>Presenters</b>	Dr Dashty Ismil Jamil, Dr Bashdar Sarbaz Mawlud & Muayad Salah Mohamad
<b>Institution</b>	College of Administration and Economics, Lebanese French University
<b>Title</b>	Gender in the Framework of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Kurdistan Region-Iraq

**Abstract**

In 2015 the Ministry of Education attended the world education forum in Incheon, Republic of South Korea, and committed to the sustainable development goals particularly attaining SDG4 which focuses on the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education and commits all countries to ensure that all girls and boys have access to free quality primary and secondary education. The call for investing in education, particularly girl's education is being made loudly, especially in the times of crises. Despite the economic obstacles, the legal and political advances, and the strong government will and its keenness for successfully implementing the SDG agenda, and advances have been made regarding the inclusion of a gender perspective in education both in terms of access and school performance compared to the rest of Iraq.

This research will stress the importance of achieving the SDG4 of gender equality as a prerequisite to achieve all the other SDGs, for instance the relationship of girls or women's education background and other development outcomes like child health and children's performance at school and its correlation with their mother's education background in Kurdistan region of Iraq. Primary and secondary data will be used to dive into the girls representation in education and then use the scale to compare with the rest of Iraq and other neighbouring countries just to get an insight as to how much progress has been made and how this progress can be scaled on the international list, then I will attempt to draw a correlation between mother's education and their children's performances by administering two questionnaires, one for the teachers and the other one is for those women whose their children are at school, the sample size will be more than 150 and schools and communities in each governorates will be randomly selected all across Kurdistan Region.

The gender issues according to the available data in KRI started to improve in 1992 right after the regional government gained its independence, though after the same year there were some equality issues, but with continued efforts by the ministry of education things started to improve.

**Short Bio**

Dashty Ismil Jamil received his MSc in Social Statistics from the University of Southampton in 2013 in the United Kingdom. He has served as a lecturer at the Lebanese French University since 2014. He currently serves as the Head of the Health Administration Department and a member of the College of Administration and Economics senate. He has acquired expertise through 11 years of working at the Ministry of Education, he is former Director of Research and Studies at the same ministry.

<b>Presenter</b>	Deborah Duman - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	University of Bath

<b>Title</b>	Linguistic Policy, Hegemony, Assimilation and Education
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Modern Turkey is a nation which has been formed based on nationalistic policies of monolingualism. Though millions of its population are ethnically Kurds many with Kurdish as their mother tongue, the use of Kurdish language in education has struggled to gain legislative recognition. A case study of one nation's policy of monolingualism, this researcher's paper exemplifies the link between Turkey's language policy and its stance with regards to the assimilation of Kurdish speakers. It traces Turkey's language planning and policy from the formation of the constitution of the Republic of Turkey to the present day. Using Gramsci's theories of hegemony and Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and capital the paper analyses the state's language policy and how that relates to the nations' Kurdish minority and access to education in their Mother Tongue. It briefly considers if changes to language policy might go some way towards helping to resolve Turkey's 'Kurdish issue'; an issue which has dominated the Republic's national political agenda for almost a century.</p>
<b>Short Bio</b>	<p>Deborah Duman is currently working towards a Doctorate in International Education (University of Bath) whilst teaching at an International School in the Netherlands. Her research interests include educational policy and linguistic Mother Tongue language rights in the Middle East.</p>

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Professor Ebad Rouhi - Head of the Bureau of International Affairs, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, IAU Sanandaj Branch
<b>Institution</b>	Public International Law, Iran
<b>Title</b>	The New Approach to Self-Determination and the Rights of Women and Minorities in the Social Contract of Rojava
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>In the middle of the chaotic situation of Syria's civil war, emerged a direction called the Third Route. It had essential differences with the dominant bipolar political space which was folding as the unrest continued. The backbone of this alternative route was the Kurdish population which had been suffering from the different Syrian regimes. The Third Route advocated radical democracy and tolerance, striving to bring to the fore a new discourse of peaceful coexistence of various ethnic, religious and gender identities as well as a new definition of the right to self-determination in the scope of limitations which arises from the formal regulations of international law. This orientation introduced a new political entity to the region - Rojava. Based in the northern part of the country, Rojava became a political name for this democratic and secular alternative. Through political concepts such as democratic and multicultural citizenship and the plural society, democratic autonomy and so on, Rojava tried to establish a form of grassroots democracy in the region based on a new constitution called "Social Contract". The Social Contract of Rojava has a creative approach to many legal issues in domestic and international levels. It can deal, successfully, with the many gaps and inefficiency in domestic and international law regarding issues such as the right to self-determination, women and minorities' rights, etc. In order to respond to the questions about legal innovations and new approaches to Rojava's Constitution to the right of self-determination, minorities and women rights, especially considering the limitations of state-oriented international law and geopolitical impasse, via the descriptive-analytical method the social contract of Rojava has been investigated. As a conclusion of this study we can say that the social contract of Rojava as a new constitution has a progressive approach to the self-</p>

determination right and the rights of women and minorities through the critical reading of state-oriented international law and the human rights law which are atomized, homogenized and individualised by liberal thoughts in international relations and states' foreign affairs.

**Short Bio**

Dr. Ebad Rouhi is currently an academic at the Department of Law at Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj branch. He is assistant professor of public international law and heads the Bureau of International Affairs for Scientific Cooperation and also Head of the Department of International Studies in Kurdology Institute. The title of his PhD thesis was "The Contribution of Rule of Law to Protection and Promotion of Human Rights" and his MA thesis was about "The Role of the Domestic Laws and Bilateral Agreements on Prevention of Jurisdiction Exercise in the International Criminal Court". His new research project is about the "Legal System of Rojava and Law Without State". He has also published many papers in the Kurdish and Persian languages in Iran's Journals related to human rights, international law and Kurdish questions in all parts of Kurdistan. His research interests are genocide studies, water law and environmental law, rule of law and human rights, right to self-determination, state international responsibility, human security and peace studies.

<b>Presenter</b>	Emrah Karakuş, Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, USA
<b>Title</b>	Intimate Control: Identity, Difference, and Queer Sexualities in Kurdish Turkey

**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the discourses and practices of national belonging and sexuality among Kurdish lubunyas [LGBTI in queer dialect in Turkey], by looking at the complex entanglements of securitization, the recasting of security as intimately tied to social, economic, even ecological and 'natural' phenomena (Wæver 1995), and the Western sexual epistemologies (emergence of LGBTIQ categories in the local). As with many aspects of Kurdish identity politics, the ways in which Kurdish LGBTI folks are articulating, debating and living identities have been intimately and increasingly interwoven with these institutions, discourses, and practices of securitization. In recent years, Kurdish lubunyas have been under an increasingly intensive, extensive and sophisticated regime of surveillance for their involvement in Kurdish and LGBTI movements, cruising in public spaces, and sex work, all in a context of state-sponsored stoking of fears of national disintegration (read: Kurdish separatism) and moral degeneration (read: threats to the family and 'laxity' regarding sexual 'depravity'). Kurdish lubunyas have found themselves at the intersection of the two greatest 'threats' to the Turkish nation. In this paper, I ask two sets of questions; 1) What does it mean to cultivate and perform a securitized sense of self in the process of subject construction? How are Kurdish lubunyas's securitized national imaginaries and sexual boundaries re-constituted in the ambivalent domain of intimacy, difference, and alienation? 2) In the process of subjectification, how do Kurdish lubunyas refer to the knowledge of already existing norms of securitization practices and discourses that are shaped by heightened concerns over the state-sponsored fears of national disintegration and moral degeneration? What are the ways in which these normative fears, desires, and sentiments tie securitization to global travel of LGBTIQ categories, appearing in the local contexts of the struggle for autonomy and security? This ethnographic research ranges from Kurdish LGBTI organizations to apartment settings rented by Kurdish lubunya sex workers in specific neighbourhoods in Istanbul and Diyarbakir where I observe discourses and practices of national belonging and sexual selves and how these relate to the emergence of securitized LGBTIQ and Kurdish identities.

**Short Bio**

Emrah Karakus is a Ph.D. student in the department of Gender and Women's Studies whose research interests include political theory and practices of resistance, trans studies, body politics, posthumanism, queer theory, urban transformation and neoliberalization in the Middle East. He received his B.A in International Relations from Istanbul Kültür University with a minor degree in English Language and Literature. He holds an MSc in Security Studies from University College London where he studied as a Jean Monnet Scholar. Currently he is completing his MA thesis for the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Istanbul Sehir University.

Presenter	Assoc. Professor Engin Sustam
Institution	University Paris 8 / CETOBAC, EHESS and InCite, France/ University of Geneva, Switzerland
Title	Art and Postcolonial Perspective in Kurdish Space: The Political Aesthetic of Micro-culture

**Abstract**

Our presentation proposes to question the Kurdish cultural and artistic production since the 2000s (cinema, contemporary art, theatre, music, etc.). The first aspect is that the cultural visibility of the Kurdish space carries a postcolonial and subaltern perspective, adapting a micropolitical position in front of the dominant culture, oppression, to the mechanisms of social pathology. The cultural fabrication of a stateless society is marked by a political awareness that goes hand in hand with the rise of a cross-border dynamic (from the local territory to the global scale: diaspora and exile) based on a post-traumatic language, subculture and irony. In this regard, the Kurdish diasporas of Europe, Istanbul, Tehran and the Kurdish cities: Diyarbakir, Mardin, Van, Dersim, Duhok, Erbil, Sulaimani, Kermanshah, Mahabad, or at present Rojava (Qamişlo) present themselves as spaces where productive activities and cultural works intensify after the 2000s, characterized by conflicting countercultural approaches. Our presentation takes a look at the transnational visibility of Kurdish spaces, emphasizing its transgressive visibility as a molecular revolution of micro-space in the era of globalization. Beyond the aesthetic paradigm, one of our interventions questions the role of the new Kurdish subjectivity that is beyond borders and politics through art and cultural production. The anticolonial and micro-identity language of this space means the memory of a stateless people trying to breathe in the midst of colon hegemony, trauma and depressive state at the heart of conflict and violence. Contemporary artistic practice does not consist in saying the "truth" or the "right", but in questioning the truth itself, what he had evoked, Nicolas Bourriaud ('the work of art as social interstice ', 2001), the aesthetics of a new relationship regime. To thus sketch the micro-sociology of this Kurdish air, it seems that the works of the actors of this space arise at the same time between the violence and the resistance on the criticism of the political transformation of the current society with a subaltern culture approach on all the socio-political phenomena of the world (ecology, economic crisis, war, conflict, trauma, post-migration and exile, etc.).

**Short Bio**

Engin Sustam completed his undergraduate studies in Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in Sociology (2000) and his master's degree at the same faculty (2002). He then gained another master's degree (DEA, 2005) and his PhD (2012) degree from EHESS. He then worked as a full-time philosophy and sociology lecturer in Turkey before being dismissed for taking part to the petition of Academicians for Peace. He is an associate researcher at IFEA-Istanbul, Cetobac EHESS- Paris, InCite University of Geneva and was invited as a visiting scholar at the University of Geneva (2016-2018), EHESS (2016 et 2017), ENS (2017), among others.

He is also a member of the SAR (Scholars at Risk) program of the New York University. He is currently a visiting lecturer in University Paris 8 St. Denis. He is the author of the book "Kurdish Art and Subalternity: The Emergence of a Subjective and Creative Production Space Between Violence and Resistance in Turkey" published by Harmattan on September, 2016. He is a curator and an art critic for contemporary art exhibitions on micro-politics, culture, gender and memory. He is currently working on a book project in Turkish entitled "The New Form of Insurrection and Revolt Movements in the Global era" to be translated and published in French.

<b>Presenter</b>	Esengul Tasdemir, MA
<b>Institution</b>	School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, Canada,
<b>Title</b>	The Kurdish Diaspora in Canada: A Study of Political Activism and The Uses of The Kurdish Language

**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the Kurdish people of Turkey, who have struggled and advocated for a separate nation-state of their own. The Turkish state's denial of Kurdish identity and its heavy assimilation and oppression of the Kurdish people have turned some Kurds into political activists, both in Turkey and in the diaspora. In addition, the historical ban and current stigmatization of the Kurdish language have crystallized the importance and centrality of the language, particularly for both Kurdish identity and the Kurdish movement. This paper explores the forms of political activism in Canada of the Kurds originating in Turkey and the role of the Kurdish language in their activism. Using a qualitative research design, interviews with activists and participant observations were conducted in the cities of Toronto and Montreal. The findings draw attention to the significance of community centres as umbrella institutions for political activism, and as sites for the enactment of different forms of collective resistance. The study also illustrates that the role of the Kurdish language in activism is more salient at a representational level. That is, the Kurdish language is represented as the main identity marker fueling activism, implying that speaking Kurdish is an act of resistance and thus political. In daily life, however, the usage of Kurdish is far more attenuated and nuanced.

**Short Bio**

Esengul Tasdemir has received her MA in Sociology from University of Ottawa. She is currently working for the Canadian government, while also attempting to participate in Kurdish academic studies. Her research interests include but not limited to diaspora, immigration, activism, and language activism.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Farhad Al-Kake, Head of Accounting & Finance Department College of Administration & Economics
<b>Institution</b>	Lebanese French University - Erbil- Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	The Cost of Belonging: Economic Impact of Genocide on Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Iraq

**Abstract**

Until 2003, the Kurds have suffered different genocides: the abduction and killing of eight thousand male members belonging to the Barzani family, the Anfal campaign, the chemical attack on Halabja, to quote the most known ones. At the same time, together with persecution for ethnic reasons, each religious minority including Christians, Yezidis, Kaka'is, Sabbeans Mandean, Shabbaks and others, have been targeted by the Muslim majority. Despite all

minorities have found relative shelter and protection in the Kurdish region, their situation, especially after ISIS, is still very precarious. In addition, the economic crisis that hit the region after 2014 has further diminished the resources of the region and with them its power to intervene in a continuative and credible reconciliation project. What is the cost of reconstruction, reconciliation, education and transitional justice? What is the impact that the inevitable loss of human lives has on the possibility of reverting the direction from violent confrontation to a peaceful co-existence?

The aim of this paper is to apply fundamental concepts of economics to the field of mass atrocities and genocide prevention in Iraq between 2014 and 2018 as a sample of the Christian community in the Ninewa area. How much has been lost in terms of properties and businesses, but also in terms of individual skills and future inversion? How much has been spent in the reconstruction projects which could have been used for the economic and social development of the area? How does this analysis help to prevent these events?

Relying on primary and secondary sources the purpose of this paper is to analyse the costs of the genocide committed in Iraq and to assess the challenges that they pose to its future economic, social and cultural development. Secondary sources available include, for example, the most recent work edited by Charles H. Anderton and Jurgen Brauer, Economic aspects of genocides, other mass atrocities, and their prevention (Wiley, 2017). Sources include testimonies, documents and official statistics available on the different components affected by genocide and mass atrocities in the last twenty years.

**Short Bio**

Al-Kake is currently employed by the Lebanese - French University (LFU) in Erbil as the Head of the Accounting and Finance Department. He is the founder and an active member of the Center for Genocide Studies at the International University of Erbil. As a member of a family who lead the Kakai religious minority and as member of Kakai community, Al-Kake focuses on the issues facing minorities in the region. He has been working as a volunteer helping vulnerable people and refugees. As a volunteer he was involved in the following. In 2010 to 2012 in Kirkuk Yarsan cultural center established for helping Kakai people. Closely dealing with displacement issues after ISIS by listening to their suffering despite providing their possible needs. In 2016 he founded Chraw organization for documentation and became its director. As a member of the Chraw team we tried to document what Kakai's people faced by ISIS and other terrorist groups in Kirkuk and Naynawa (Mosul).

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Francis Owtram - Honorary Research Fellow
<b>Institution</b>	Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter, UK
<b>Title</b>	The State We're In: Post-Colonial Sequestration and the Kurdish Quest for Independence in Comparative Perspective

**Abstract**

Surveying their experience of assimilation and repression in the successor states to the Ottoman Empire or as a member of the diaspora many Kurds have frequently had occasion to question 'the state we're in'. This underlying sense of malaise finds conceptual framing in the 'syndrome of post-colonial sequestration', a term coined by the late Professor Fred Halliday in a succinct OpenDemocracy (see Halliday 2011) in which he briefly mentioned the Kurds as a pertinent case. The syndrome of post-colonial sequestration denotes the phenomenon 'where countries or peoples have - at a decisive moment of international change, amid the retreat of imperial or hegemonic powers - failed (through bad timing, and/ or bad leadership) to establish their independence' (Halliday 2011: 238).

My ongoing project involves expanding his initial thought into a more detailed analysis with a focus on the Kurds in comparative perspective to investigate the utility of this concept. Further, although much useful work has analysed the contemporary issue of the Kurdish Question from multiple angles (e.g. Stansfield and Shareef 2017, Bengio 2018) a holistic and comparative approach to the study of Kurdish question has until now been relatively understudied.

This paper is part of the author's book-length project in progress on the Kurds utilising the concept of post-colonial sequestration as conceptual approach. Having developed this at chapter length (Owtram 2018), this conference paper will focus on the experience of the Kurds in comparison with other peoples who have found themselves in a similar situation: notably the Palestinian, Berber, and Basque people who appear to have found themselves seemingly constrained in the process of state formation. Building on the author's publications (2014, 2017a, 2017b, 2018, 2019) on the Kurdish experience of state formation, federalism, self-determination, recognition and secession this paper will utilize the existing comparative literature (eg. Gürbey et al 2018, Bengio and Maddy-Weitzman 2013) to elucidate and illuminate the similarities and differences of the Kurds with the cognate cases of the Palestinian, Berber and Basque peoples – experiences of assimilation, resistance, diaspora and negotiation, as well as consider issues of conflict management and resolution (Wolff and Yakinthou 2012).

**Short Bio**

Francis Owtram is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Exeter and previously lectured in the Department of Politics and IR at the University of Kurdistan Hewler. He co-edited (with Annemarie Profanter) *Citizenship in Transition: New Perspectives on Transnational Migration from the Middle East to Europe* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013). Recent publications include, ‘The Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the Federal Constitution: A Perimeter Plinth of State Territorial Integrity or a Stepping Stone to Secession?’, in G. Stansfield and M. Shareef (eds), *The Kurdish Question Revisited* (Hurst, 2017); ‘The State We’re In: Postcolonial sequestration and the Kurdish Quest for Independence Since the First World War’ in M. Gunter (ed) *The Routledge Handbook on the Kurds* (Routledge 2018); and ‘From Shotgun Marriage to Amicable Divorce? The Kurdistan Region of Iraq – Self-determination, Secession and Recognition in Comparative Perspective’, in A. Danilovich (ed) *Federalism, Secession and International Recognition Regime: Iraqi Kurdistan* (Routledge 2019).

<b>Presenter</b>	Ghazi Ghareeb Zorab - Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Sulaimani Polytechnic University (SPU), Kurdistan Region-Iraq, Dialogue Platform Organization (DPO) for Democracy and Peaceful Coexistence, Kurdistan Region-Iraq (Head of the Organization)
<b>Title</b>	The United States Foreign Policy Towards the Kurdistan Region of Iraq after the September 25, 2017 Referendum
<b>Abstract</b>	The aim of this research is to study US foreign policy towards the Kurdistan Region of Iraq after the independence referendum of September 25, 2017. It argues that after the referendum some considerable changes were made in US foreign policy towards the KRI. The research also focuses on the importance of the KRI in US foreign policy, specifically in its stand against ISIS. Another aspect of this research is about the US special envoy in the anti-ISIS

campaign Brett McGurk, which left no room for doubt that Washington opposed Kurdistan's bid for independence in a referendum. The dramatic change observed in US foreign policy was mostly embodied in the refusal to provide any support to the Kurds when Iraqi forces and Popular Mobilization Forces attacked Kirkuk as a disputed city between the KRI and Baghdad. Since 2003, the US supported the Kurds and practised a flexible policy. However, due to the former president of KRI's refusal to obey Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's last-minute proposal to cancel the referendum, the US dramatically changed its policy towards the KRI, for which their pending issues have not been solved by the former governments in Baghdad according to the Iraqi constitution. The other part of this research argues the Russian oil game in the KRI. For Kurdistan, Russia's developing influence represents a sharp geopolitical reversal. Therefore, this oil game led to the US foreign policy reversal towards the KRI, which indicates a new political doctrine to exercise power in the Middle East. This research is written to study and respond to the key reasons behind the aforementioned factors specifically in regard to the dramatic change of the US foreign policy towards the KRI after the referendum.

**Short Bio:**

Ghazi Ghareeb Zorab received his B.A. in Diplomacy and Public Relations, B.A. in English Language, and M.A. in English Literature. He was a Lecturer in English Literature at Halabja University. Ghazi is currently a lecturer at Sulaimani Polytechnic University (SPU) in the Kurdistan region. He is working at SPU presidency since November 15, 2017; He has been teaching Introduction to Translation and Theories of Translation at the Translation Techniques Department. Ghazi is the founder of Dialogue Platform Organization (DPO) for Democracy and Peaceful Coexistence founded in July 13, 2017. He has been the head of the organization since March 02, 2019. He has published various articles in Kurdish and English on political circumstances in the Kurdistan region.

<b>Presenter</b>	Golala Kamangar - Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	The Middle East and North African studies, University of Oslo, Norway
<b>Title</b>	The Post-genocide Situation of Yezidi Women

**Abstract**

This paper investigates the post-genocide situation of Yezidi women who were captured by ISIS in 2014 to address the process of reintegration and challenges of their current life in Kurdistan Region and Germany. More precisely the consequences of transferring survivors to Germany are evaluated. To achieve this objective, the social identity theory and the concept of belonging have been used as the theoretical framework and analytical lenses through which the research questions have been addressed. The method which has been used in this research is qualitative approach by conducting 16 interviews among survivors and other related key persons. During conducting the interviews, I found out while a country like Germany had offered to help in many ways such as giving them refugee status and many opportunities to live a good healthy and happy life, some of these women were homesick and have faced several challenges due to their new situation and separation from their community. For Yezidis and specially for those women who have survived, both living in unhealthy contemporary camps in the Kurdistan Region and living alone in a foreign country like Germany means facing difficulties. Given the traditional structure of such a religious community, the victims may face new challenges by transferring to other countries, due to factors such as separation from the relatives and the origin community.

**Short Bio**

Golala Kamangar obtained her MA degree in Middle east studies from Oslo university (2016-2018). She also received an MA in Farsi literature from Allameh Tabatabaie university in Iran (2006-2009). Her research interests are religion, religious minorities and Identity Studies. She is the author of several articles in magazines, newspapers and sites including her book “*Quran between myth and magic*” which has been published in Kurdish in 2012.

<b>Presenters</b>	Haval Dhia Kadhem Sorameri & Rejin Zandi
<b>Institution</b>	Jönköping International Business School, Sweden
<b>Title</b>	The Impact of Political Conflict on Entrepreneurship in Kurdistan

**Abstract**

The multi-disciplinary field of entrepreneurship and development is important for policymakers and practitioners alike. Various frameworks and policy recommendations arise from international development agencies promoting entrepreneurship as a way of promoting peace and sustainable development. A literature review on the field of entrepreneurship and development and peace, identified a gap in the knowledge and lack of empirical studies on the relationship between violent conflict and entrepreneurship, particularly entrepreneurial intentions. However, when assessing entrepreneurship, it can be difficult to generalize the role it plays and its impacts as the results observed cannot be generalised from one region to another; this is due to the differences in: (1) the formal institutions and their set up; (2) the regulations imposed by governments; (3) the informal institutions comprised of cultural values and norms. The paper focuses on the interplay between violent and political conflict, entrepreneurship, and economic development; The paper explores the prevailing entrepreneurial framework condition and the role of return migrants as protagonists for youth entrepreneurship. The Kurdistan region in Iraq is used as a case context, with the empirical data collected from fieldwork prior to the Kurdistan regions' independence referendum.

An assessment framework was developed based on the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor's conceptual model. The study was conducted as a qualitative research enquiry to collect data from semi-structured interviews with 24 expert informants and three focus groups with student entrepreneurs in Kurdistan. The study found that successive political conflict, wars, and violent conflict in the region, had led to the lack of governmental support and the institutions needed for a healthy entrepreneurship ecosystem. The diaspora and return migrants are playing an important role as norm entrepreneurs creating social impact, cultural impact, as well as economic and political justification for youth entrepreneurship.

The paper provides policy recommendations for the creation of a single agency charged with the promotion and development of entrepreneurship policy and programmes for the Kurdistan region of Iraq. This agency needs to work across a number of ministries; thereby ensuring grass root support is provided by university linked accelerators, and enriching the ecosystem with lateral support across the various important sectors and economies in the region.

**Short Bio**

Haval is an independent researcher in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship focussing on economic growth in conflict impacted regions. is an independent researcher. He holds a Masters of Science in Engineering Management from Jonkoping International Business School, Sweden, where he completed a joint thesis on the impact of political conflict on the entrepreneurship in the Kurdistan region - Iraq. Hava also holds a bachelors in Engineering

and has led numerous innovation and research and development projects in the aerospace sector in the UK and Sweden.

<b>Presenter</b>	Hayal Hanoglu - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	SSPSSR/University of Kent, UK
<b>Title</b>	Change and Continuity: Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Migrant ‘faith’ Alevism

**Abstract**

This research provides an understanding of how a migrant faith responds to challenges of diaspora conditions to ensure its continuity by using the case study of Alevism in the diaspora. The study mainly focuses on spatial and temporal dynamics of Alevis in both diaspora and homeland contexts looking at how religious spaces have been produced and practised in diaspora and its influence on the religious landscape of the homeland.

Through a multi-sited ethnography and interviews in the UK and Turkey, the study examines the interaction between religious place-making and identity to understand contemporary religious settings reproduced in the Western context.

Alevis those have been facing discrimination and exclusion in Turkey, enjoy democracy and freedom of religion in the diaspora. The UK Alevi diaspora as an economically most active Alevi diaspora recently built a huge centre with donations and sponsorships of the community members. The story of the building complex shows how religious places form a reconstruction of identity and community for diaspora Alevis as well as for visibility and recognition in relation to the oppressed character of Alevi identity in Turkey.

Politically and economically more active the UK Alevi diaspora also influences its homeland's religious and political spheres. Recently, cem houses began to spread into rural areas with the remittances of migrant Alevis. The spread of Cem Houses in the countryside is not only emphasising how diaspora shapes religious place-making in the homeland, but also the influence of rising transnational engagements on traditional ritual practices.

**Short Bio**

PhD Candidate - School of Social Policy, Sociology, Social Research / University of Kent  
 Hayal Hanoglu holds an MA in Psychosocial Studies - Culture, Diaspora, Ethnicity from Birkbeck/ University of London. Her dissertation focused on genocide and collective memory, titled *‘Formation of genocide consciousness in Dersim society’*. She also holds a PG Certificate in Methods of Social research from the University of Kent.

Currently, she is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Kent. Her research interests include transformation and transmission of religious identity, placemaking, community-building and collective memory. Focusing on the case of British Alevis, she conducted a multi-sited ethnography and interviews in the UK and Turkey.

<b>Presenter</b>	Hemn Seyedi
<b>Institution</b>	School of History - University of St Andrews, Scotland
<b>Title</b>	The Kurds and Iranian Islamic Revolution (Recasting the 1979 Revolution(s) of Iran From a Kurdish Perspective)

**Abstract**

Four decades after the Iran Revolution there are still many contradictory arguments about the factors behind this huge upheaval, ranging from conspiracy theory (the event had been

planned in advance by Western powers) to Marxist reductionism (it happened purely as a consequence of economic change), and faith-based readings (a religious resurgence across the world). However, there is little doubt amongst the scholarship that it was a cross-national universal revolution led by Khomeini. The role therein of the Kurdish community is profoundly affected by considerations regarding post-revolutionary developments, such as the belief that Kurds were seeking to use/abuse the vacuum of power to pursue ethnic demands. In their view, the Kurds played a counterrevolutionary role which had been suppressed by 'revolutionaries' a few years later.

I argue in this paper that what happened in 1979 were two different revolutions, and not just a single comprehensive and unified event: a small revolution (geographically speaking) which was a secular democratic revolution in Kurdistan, compared to another one which was an Islamic revolution, in the rest of Iran. The political backgrounds of the two revolutions were completely different and their leading revolutionary powers, their organisers, and their political demands differed as well. Their overlapping timing was to a certain extent coincidental. These two revolutions were, I argue, rooted in two different political societies in which they were themselves built by two different reactions to a failed modernisation in Kurdistan of Iran and in the rest of Iran.

**Short Bio**

Seyedi was born in Mahabad to a family with a strong political background and was involved in political activities at an early age. He was arrested three times in 1990s during studying architecture in Hamedan. Hemn was forced to leave Iran in 2001 and lived in Iraqi Kurdistan (Bashur) for seven years working in the academia as a lecturer at the University of Salahaddin and Koya University and also being involved politically as a member of the Central Committee of KDP - Iran. He moved to the UK in 2008 starting new courses of study in the field of political science: HEC International Studies 2013, BA Global Politics and IR 2016, MSc Middle East in Global Politics 2017, at the Birkbeck University of London and now doing a PhD in Iranian Studies at the University of St Andrews. I also work with the media as a Middle East expert contributing with MANOTO TV (a Persian TV based in London), VOA Kurdish in Washington, Radio Farda in Prague and Kurdistan 24 in Erbil.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Hewa Haji Khedir - Research Fellow
<b>Institution</b>	Center for Religion, Reconciliation and Peace, University of Winchester, UK
<b>Title</b>	Grievance, Protest and Social Capital: Examining the Years of Deconstruction in Transition to/ from Democracy in Kurdistan Region-Iraq (2009-2018)

**Abstract**

The state of governance, in terms of widespread corruption, nepotism, lack of basic services and rising unemployment levels, become a central issue in the years following the Iraqi war 2003. The emergence of Goran Movement in 2009 coupled with a proliferation of "free media"/ "shadow media" gave an unprecedented avenue for the expression of long bottled up feelings of grievance and dissatisfaction in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Explaining the February 2011 protests in Sulaimani city, Watts (2013) foresees the occurrence of a second wave of Kurdish political identity in which questions of governance and satisfaction with the performance of Kurdistan Region Government (KRG), as opposed to traditional nationalist aspirations (first wave of Kurdish Political identity), occupy a critical position. This paper offers a critical reflection on the following questions:

- In which ways can we call the years 2009-2018 as deconstruction years in KRI's path to/from democracy?
- Why have the decades-old grievances in KRI not transformed into organized protest? Can the theory of social capital (especially in light of Putnamise approach) provide an answer?
- Amid significant disappointment in the political opposition, particularly after parliamentary elections of 2013, can civil society take the burden of transition to democracy and better governance in KRI?

Methodologically, the paper will utilize the results of a survey conducted by the author in 2010-2011 in the two cities of Erbil and Sulaimani, KRI (N 467), a desk review for published material and first-hand observation of the events occurred in that period of time.

#### **Short Bio**

Dr. Hewa Haji Khedir is research fellow at Center for Religion, Reconciliation and Peace, University of Winchester. Dr. Khedir gained his Ph.D from University of Kurdistan Hewler and wrote his dissertation on "Social Capital and Transition to Democracy in Kurdistan Region of Iraq". His main research interest revolves around transition to democracy, social capital and urbanization and peace-building.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ibraheem Ahmad Salih
<b>Institution</b>	Senior Political Advisor to the Vice President of Kurdistan Region, - Iraq.
<b>Title</b>	The Impact of International Politics on the Kurdish Question in Iraq and Syria

#### **Abstract**

This study explores the impact of international politics on the Kurdish question in Iraq and Syria from the perspective of two major theories of International Relations (IR): Realism and Liberalism. Bearing in mind the main assumptions of these two theories, this study looks at the ways in which various global powers have practically approached and dealt with the Kurdish concerns and ambitions in both Iraq and Syria. The study asserts that a single theory of (IR) is incapable of explaining the policies of global actors towards the Kurdish issue in the two countries and that a thorough understanding of the impact of the Kurdish question in Iraq and Syria requires employing both realism and liberalism.

The research will situate the Kurdish question in Iraq and Syria within the political, geostrategic, and economic dynamics of international relations. It compares and contrasts the Kurdish question in both Middle Eastern countries and demonstrates similarities and differences in the ways in which security, economic, and geostrategic interests shape various global powers' policies towards the Kurdish ambitions in Iraq and Syria. The analysis provides in-depth understandings of the factors and considerations (great power struggle for control in the Middle East, economic gains, and geostrategic considerations, and ideational factors) that have driven global powers' stances on the Kurds in Iraq and Syria.

The research will employ a mixed methodology and will draw from both primary and secondary data in supporting its arguments. These include books, journal articles, and monographs written on the Kurdish question in Iraq and Syria. The research will re-interpret the existing literature and use it in order to advance its argument. The study will also utilize a wide range of primary data including government archives and speeches of representatives of the Kurdish communities in both Iraq and Syria as well as of foreign leaders whose countries have played a role in shaping the Kurdish politics in the Middle East.

**Short Bio**

Salih is a researcher in the field of politics, international politics, democracy in developed countries, also, examining the political models in in Iraqi and Syrian Kurdistan. Furthermore, his research interests include peace and peace building, the role of United Nations UN in this area. He also holds the position of Senior Advisor to the Vice President of the Kurdistan Region, and official director of the Political Bureau of PUK. He also works as a freelance researcher for various research centers, including the Center for Research Strategy of Kurdistan and Digital Cultural Heritage (DCH) in Sulaimani. He also works as volunteer advisor for Pari - Human Development Organization Kurdistan P-HDOK (NGO).

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Ibrahim Seydo Aydogan
<b>Institution</b>	Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco), France
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish language and its place in Kurdish and Turkish political discourses

**Abstract**

Ever since Ehmêdê Xanî and even before him, both Kurds and their rulers and neighbours have tried to dominate them and their language. It seems that there appeared two different approaches towards this subject of the domination: that of reclaiming the Kurdish language and that of denying it. We understand from Ehmêdê Xanî that the intellectuals of the 16th and 17th centuries held a condescending regard towards the Kurdish language which explains why in his works Nûbihar and afterwards Mem û Zîn, he wrote: “safî şemirand vexwarî durdî/ Manendî durê lisanî kurdî” (He renounced to the true one and was nourished with waste to process the Kurdish language like a diamond.)

This position was adopted later on by the intellectuals of the 19th and beginning of 20th centuries. As such, many Kurdish newspapers were published during this period however there were serious discussions over the language of the publications.

In 2012, the spokesperson of the Turkish government Bülent Arınç said: “As Kurdish is not a language of civilization, it cannot be a language of education”. Turkish President Erdogan said along the same lines: “If you want to learn your language, then pay for it and learn it”. He was talking about private schools and courses for the education of the Kurdish language. On the other hand, the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party) placed the subject of education in Kurdish at the center of political discussion.

Can language become a political symbol or could the place of a language and the denomination of its speakers reflect a mentality and its political agenda? What is a language of civilization? Does the mentality of the colonial era still persist or Real politic necessitates such position? Through the Turkish Constitution and laws of Turkey, we shall try to demonstrate the place of Kurdish language and its denomination and compare it with the Kurdish discourse in order to understand if a consolidation on the issue is possible or not.

**Short Bio**

Ibrahim Seydo is the director of Kurdish Studies at INALCO (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations) in Paris. He has published various research on Kurdish linguistics and literature which was later on published as a book in two volumes, Guman 1 Zimane Kurdî and Guman 3 Wêjeya Kurdî. He graduated from Dicle University in 1997 with a Bachelor’s degree of Turkish language and literature after which, he taught Turkish

literature at Sultanahmet High School for three years. He resigned from his position in 2001 and settled in France in order to obtain a Master's degree of French literature at Sorbonne University. His Master's thesis' subject was Victor Hugo and historical novels. In 2006, he obtained his PhD degree with high honours with his thesis on temporality and complex sentences in Kurdish. He is a novelist, poet and reviewer in Kurdish language, and translated works of world literature into Kurdish. He has more than ten published books.

<b>Presenter</b>	Irfan Güler - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	University of Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey: A Constructivist Realistic Perspective in the Process of Building a Nation

**Abstract**

In a general sense, the scope of my thesis is the Kurdish problem in Turkey. But when we think about the Kurdish problem immediately the next question arises What is the Kurdish problem? In fact, the answer is so difficult that it can have many explanations, so it is very difficult to give a single definition. Therefore we will not define it but what we will do is another question. The question is "How should Kurdish problem be considered in Turkey?" To give an explanation to the Kurdish issue, a new perspective, a new model, a strategy of new concepts is needed. In our view, this new look, this new model, this strategy of new concepts is the theory of constructivism. To this end, we will use in our investigation the theory of constructivism, though not through a radical or postmodernist constructivism but very differently, with a realistic constructivist epistemology, developed largely by Professor Ramon Máiz, almost unknown in Turkey, to introduce the debate in this society. Temporarily talking, we will cover the period of the Kurdish nationalist movement that started in 1950 till these days.

This investigation, primarily related to Kurdish nationalism, will be based on qualitative analysis of primary sources caused by the Kurdish nationalist movement (s) -party programs, statutes, statements etc)- on -scientific and historical- researches conducted on the Kurdish question, literature, books, newspapers and magazines, on memories of some actors and on some individual interviews with some of the actors.

To study Kurdish nationalism, we will work on its four dimensions. Two of them are social (ethnic preconditions, socio-economic preconditions) while the other two (a favourable political opportunity structure and an effective political mobilization) are political. We will focus on the political dimensions of the nation creation process rather than on the social dimensions.

**Short Bio**

Güler was born in Varto -Muş in Kurdistan Turkey. He graduated from Istanbul Law Faculty. He currently works as a lawyer in the same city. He studied his master's degree in the Faculty of Political Sciences of Santiago de Compostela. He continues working in the same University to finish his Doctoral Thesis on "Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey". He divides his time between his legal profession and his work as a translator. Güler knows Kurdish (Kurmanji), as well as Turkish, Spanish, English and Galician language. He has several works translated from these languages. Among them are; Kurdistan: Trip to the forbidden country (Manuel Martorell - from Spanish to Turkish), Love in a Torn Land: Joanna of Kurdistan: The real story of a freedom warrior who escaped from the cruelty of Iraq (Jean Sasson-from English to Turkish), Made in Galiza (Sechu Sende- from Galician to Turkish

and Kurdish), Hasretinden Prangalar Eskittim (Ahmed Arif- from Turkish to Spanish and Galician language, with Pepa Baamonde) and Bugünlerde Bahar İndi (Yaşar Kemal - from Turkish to Spanish, with Pepa Baamonde).

<b>Presenter</b>	Isabel Käser - Postdoctoral Research Associate
<b>Institution</b>	Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, UK
<b>Title</b>	A Struggle Within a Struggle: The history of the Kurdistan Women's Liberation Movement 1978-2019

**Abstract**

The Kurdish Women's Movement that emerged alongside the PKK has a four-decade long history of simultaneously fighting for women's rights and national liberation. Founded in Eastern Turkey (Bakur) in 1978, the party initially only paid lip service to the 'women's question' but was later forced to adapt its ideology and organisational structures to reflect women's importance in the struggle, due to the large number of women who were fighting and dying for the party. As a result, Abdullah Öcalan promised a separate women's army in 1993, the first women's congress was held in 1995, the women's liberation ideology was published in 1998, and PJKK (Kurdistan Women's Workers' Party), the first women's party within the PKK was founded during the party congress in 1998/1999. PJKK however, was harshly criticised and sabotaged by the male leadership, as it coincided with Öcalan's arrest and was seen as an attempt to weaken the party. In the following years, the women's movement faced a strong male-backlash and it was only with the announcement of *Democratic Confederalism* in 2005, that women's centrality in the larger struggle was formalised. This paper adopts a historical lens to zoom into some of the lesser-known internal contentions, such as the formation of PJKK, and highlights the 'double struggle' women were leading in order to be taken seriously by their comrades as revolutionaries, while pursuing a political agenda based on gender equality. It engages with debates around nationalism and feminism and demonstrates that the two '-isms' both enable and hinder each other, and that we need to ask what kind of feminism and nationalism are being practiced in each context to evaluate to what extent women can change national liberation movements form within (Al-Ali & Pratt 2011, O'Keefe 2013). Based on ethnographic data collected with both current and former PKK party cadres who experienced the 1990s and 2000s, this paper argues that the women are one of the main driving forces behind the Kurdish Liberation Movement as a whole, and discusses some of the tensions that emerge from the promise of women's liberation, versus the new gender norms and relations in the making.

**Short Bio**

Isabel Käser holds a PhD from the Centre for Gender Studies at SOAS in London. Her thesis with the title 'Militant Femininity: The Kurdistan Women's Liberation Movement Between Violence and Resistance' analyses patterns and processes of female mobilisation, organisation, and education in the activist, political and armed spheres of the PKK. Her work contributes to debates around gender and war, feminism and nationalism, as well as militarism, conflict and body politics. Isabel Käser is also the co-director of *Culture Project* and a senior advisor at the *Iraqi Centre for Policy Analysis and Research*.

<b>Presenter</b>	Jamie McCollum - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Social Anthropology, Queen's University Belfast , UK
<b>Title</b>	Rojava: A Non-state or a 'Not Yet' State?
<b>Abstract</b>	

This paper will explore some of the challenges faced by Kurds promoting the project of democratic autonomy/confederalism, by considering in particular their rejection of the state. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Berlin at the time of the independence referendum held by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in September 2017, the paper will discuss how the symbolic importance of an independent Kurdistan continues to dominate the political imaginary of the Kurds despite the ‘popularity’ of the non-state solution represented by Rojava. There are Kurds who claim that the rejection of the state is a dangerous development as the Kurdish people need an independent state to ensure their future security, arguing that achieving independence is about recognition and justice, and about rectifying a historic wrong. Whilst others take a more pragmatic view, arguing that the Kurds need a state to be able to participate fully in the global state system. The paper will also explore how activists who support democratic confederalism seek to counter these well-established narratives within the Kurdish movement, e.g. by focusing on the persecution the Kurds have faced at the hands of the four oppressive states that occupy/govern the historic Kurdish homeland. Moreover, despite the framing of democratic confederalism as a ‘non-state solution’ to the Kurdish question, some activists involved with the movement argue that the two goals - democratic autonomy and independence - are not incompatible by conceptualising Rojava as a ‘not-yet’ state, and thus considering it as a transitional phase on the path to Kurdish statehood. It is hoped that these apparent contradictions can tell us more about the project of democratic confederalism, how new political narratives are incorporated by the movement, and how the rejection of the state is understood by Kurds living in the diaspora.

**Short Bio** Jamie obtained an MA in Anthropology at Queen’s University Belfast, and was awarded the John Blacking Prize for his dissertation *‘The ‘What?’, the ‘Where?’, and the ‘When?’ of ‘Home’: An Ethnographic Engagement with the ‘Community of Displacement’ in Belfast’*. Jamie is the holder of a PhD Studentship funded by the Department for the Economy (DFE), and is registered as a Doctoral researcher at the School Of History, Anthropology, Philosophy And Politics, at QUB. He conducted ethnographic fieldwork with the Kurdish diaspora in Berlin between 2017-2018, and is currently writing up his thesis which is provisionally entitled *‘Beyond nationalism and the nation-state? An anthropological analysis of the Kurdish diaspora & democratic confederalism’*. His general research interests include: political anthropology; nationalism; ‘new’ social movements, transnational activism; alternative futures; democratic confederalism; Kurdish nationalism.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Professor Juan Carlos Castillo Quiñones
<b>Institution</b>	Political and Social Sciences at the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM), Mexico
<b>Title</b>	The (de)securitization of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq in the post-1991 political context

**Abstract**

Research on the security interdependencies between Turkey, Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) tend to conclude that the Kurdish issue in Iraq has been gradually desecuritized since 1991. This process is linked to the formation of a de facto State in Iraqi Kurdistan, and the strengthening of economic ties with Turkey. Using a revisionist version of the Copenhagen School's model of securitization advanced by Austin and Beaulieu-Brossard (2018), this paper empirically examines (de)securitizing strategies as applied by Iraq and Turkey to Iraqi Kurdistan. The discursive evidence shows that, since 1991, Iraq and Turkey have normalized substantial dimensions of their security interactions with the KRG. However, other dimensions of the Kurdish issue, portions of the Kurdish population and

leadership, remain securitized by both Iraq and Turkey. Therefore, instead of being desecuritized, security interactions among these actors have taken place as a simultaneous enaction of securitizing and de-securitizing moves, i.e., (de)securitization process. We recur to the figure of splitting speech acts to demonstrate that there is no a general desecuritization discourse of the Kurdish issue in Iraq but rather selective securitizing and de-securitizing discourses/practices of both the Iraqi and Turkish government that artificially divide the Kurdish territory, its leadership and population. The empirical evidence of this study, therefore, calls into question the positive outcomes that normative stands in securitization theory have attributed to desecuritization processes. We further discuss how (de)securitization, as a selective process, has introduced more violence into Iraqi Kurdish politics, straining the interactions between the actors and what are the normative implications of these findings.

**Short Bio**

Juan Carlos Castillo is PhD Candidate in Political and Social Sciences at the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM). Associate professor of African and Middle East History at the Department of International Relations, UNAM. His work-in-progress concerns the construction of security discourses and the role of non-State actors in the Middle East. He currently participates in the research project “Sectarianism and Social Justice in the 21st century Middle East” analysing the Kurdish case.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Kamal Soleimani
<b>Institution</b>	The College of Mexico, Mexico
<b>Title</b>	Can Non-Persians Speak? The Sovereign’s Narration of “Iranian Identity”

**Abstract**

Since the late nineteenth century, despite the multi-cultural and multilingual composition of the Iranian population, Persian nationalism has functioned as the ideology of the state. Persian intelligentsia has formulated a set of historical and cultural referents that enabled them to present the Persian language and identity as primordial and all-inclusive of all Iranians. By the advent of the modern nation-state, during Pahlavi dynasty, the non – Persian identities were brutally repressed in favor of the policy "One Country, One Nation, and One Language." Through the adoption of such a policy and with the help of Persian intellectual and literate classes, the state was able to impose Persian identity as the singular "Iranian identity" and systematically marginalize and criminalize the non-Persian identities, treating them as "manufactured ethnic identities." Being declared as "manufactured", non-Persian identities are consequently perceived as constant threats to the territorial integrity and ideological monologue of the sovereign. This paper, therefore aims to critically reassess ‘Iranian identity’ and its production of "internal colonized Other." It argues that through such an "internal othering" that Persian nationalism, backed by the combined force of a military and ‘privileged epistemology’ has generated and sustained "the process of internal colonization."

<b>Presenter</b>	Kameel Ahmady - Researcher/Social Anthropologist
<b>Institution</b>	IRIN & Society for Protecting the Rights of Children (IRSPRC), Iran/ UK
<b>Title</b>	The Narrative of Lesbian Gays and Bisexual in Iran and the Chronic Closet

**Abstract**

By using the snowballing and Grounded Theory approach, research was conducted during the course of one year to narrate the continuous struggle of Lesbian, Gays, and Bisexuals in Iran to come out of the closet. This is the first study conducted inside Iran exploring the presence of LGB in Iran along with their agonies and pain. The present research study *Forbidden Tale; A Comprehensive Study on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) in Iran* (2018) contributes a unique dimension to the literature on LGB by focusing specifically on Iran. This article presents one aspect of a comprehensive study that demonstrates the prevalence of LGB in Iran. The research study presents an overview and exploration of the dynamics of LGBT individuals in Iran that employs fieldwork as a base. This intense research centred on in-depth interviews with over 300 individuals (60% male and 40% female) in 3 major Iranian cities: Tehran, Mashhad, and Isfahan. This research study reveals to the readers that Iran is not an exception when it comes to the prevalence of LGB and whilst homosexuality has gained greater social acceptance in many Western societies, it remains highly stigmatized, in most cases forbidden and potentially lethal in Islamic countries. This article negates the famous statement of the Iranian Ex-President Mahmood Ahmadinejad in which he claims that “In Iran, we don't have homosexuals”. The article also shed light on the fact that Iranian LGB is still in the closet due to the lack of family support and the cultural/religious barriers. This research is under printing with I.B. Tauris with title of: *The Forbidden Tale of LGB in Iran “ A Comprehensive Research Study On LGB”*

**Short Bio**

Kameel Ahmady is a Social Anthropologist and scholar who is the recipient of the 2017 Truth Honour Award by the London Law University and the IKWR Women’s Rights Organisation. He also is the recipient of 2018 first place winner award of Literary Category by Global P.E.A.C.E. Foundation at the George Washington University in D.C. Kameel has worked mainly on international and social development on gender and minority related issues. His previous pioneering research books have garnered International attention and are published in English, Farsi, Turkish and Kurdish languages. "Another look at east and south east of Turkey" (Truism with the touch of Anthropology) published by Etkim, Istanbul-Turkey 2009 and research of "In the Name of Tradition" (A Country Size Comprehensive Study on Female Genital Mutilation FGM/C in Iran), published by Uncut Voices Press-Oxford- 2015 also "An Echo of Silence" (A Comprehensive Study on Early Child Marriage ECM in Iran) published by Nova Science Publisher, Inc., New York 2017. His recent books "Forbidden Tale" (A Comprehensive Study on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) in Iran I.B. Tauris 2019 and “A House on Water” (A Comprehensive Study on temporary Marriage in Iran) tehran, Shiraze 2019 also "A House under shadow" (A Comprehensive Study on temporary Marriage in Iran) are under printing.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Kaveh Ghobadi
<b>Institution</b>	Independent researcher, UK
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Nationalism and Gender Equality: The Emergence of a ‘New Man’ in Rojava?

**Abstract**

This paper explores the intimate connection between masculinity and Kurdish nationalism. The past two decades have witnessed a growing interest in analysing Kurdish nationalism through a gender lens. Albeit Kurdish nationalist movements have primarily been the male preserve up until the 1980s, the overwhelming majority of these gender oriented works focus exclusively on women. As it is widely accepted that nation is a gendered institution, merely to focus on women in the examination of gender in nationalist ideologies, misses the ways in which, for example, notions of manliness are used to construct nations. Therefore, this paper

explores the forms of masculinity (and femininity) exalted by the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its armed wings People's Protection Units (YPG) and Women's Protection Units (YPJ) in Rojava who advocate women's rights and have recruited a sizable number of female members. I am especially interested in the reconfiguration of hegemonic masculinity in the PYD and its armed wings: whether it is defined as opposed to and superior to femininity, or rather it is constructed in dialogue with femininities and other forms of masculinities, opting to dismantle gender polarization and to build relations of equality.

This paper conducts a close textual analysis to trace and decode the gendered nature of Kurdish nationalism and to reveal the power dynamics at work in particular representations of men (and women) and their implications for masculine subjectivities and gender relations. To that end, it examines a variety of texts, written and audio-visual, such as patriotic poems and the media outlets of the PYD. Incorporating a feminist perspective, it opts to deconstruct cultural and political narratives about femininity and masculinity. The paper aims to find answers to the following questions: Has the strong presence of female activists and fighters in Rojava changed the gendering dynamics in Kurdish nationalism in this part of Kurdistan? In what ways has their presence provoked a reimagining of what Kurdish land and nation mean? In what ways have idealized Kurdish masculinities been affected by the large number of female activists and fighters in Rojava?

**Short Bio**

Kaveh Ghobadi received his PhD in Kurdish Studies in 2016 from the University of Exeter. He is currently an independent researcher based in the UK.

<b>Presenter</b>	Kourosch Kouchakpour - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	University of Sunderland, UK
<b>Title</b>	Widening Students' Participation in Learning in Higher Education: A Case Study of Civil Engineering BSc Programme in an Iranian University in Kurdistan

**Abstract**

After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, higher education institutions and particularly Civil Engineering BSc programmes were affected by political, social and cultural changes such as Islamisation, Gender Segregation, Cultural Revolution and Liberalisation (Moghadam 1991). This research was carried out to examine how such changes shape students' experiences of participation in learning in such programmes in Kurdistan with a particular focus on the influence of institutional policies and practices alongside socio-cultural, socio-political, and socio-economic dynamics. Given the contextual complexities, the researcher required to develop a nuanced ethical and methodological approach stemming from his theoretical and experiential embedded stance. The research adopted a qualitative case study approach and performed documentary analysis, observations, and semi-structured interviews with purposively selected students (n= 12) and their lecturers (n= 4). The data were analysed via Thematic Analysis method, and a blend of theoretical tools including social constructivism, and Bronfenbrenner's notion of proximal processes, informed by intersectionality and Foucauldian discourse analysis respectively through the lenses of performativity (Butler 1999; 2011) and Foucault's dialectic of power-resistance were applied. Adopting a multidimensional framework enabled this research to capture the nuances, and to explain the 'hows' and the 'whys' of the conjunctions and disjunctions within the scope of the participants' interactions inside and outside the classroom. The findings support that 'while intersectionality purports to describe multiple marginalisations and multiple privileges, it neglects to describe the ways in which privilege and [disadvantage] intersect' (Nash 2008: 11-12). The findings further show that a) privilege and disadvantage are co-constituted on

the subjective level: an important aspect that has remained ‘unexplored by intersectional theorists’ (Nash 2008: 11), and b) participation in learning is a social construct shaped by the interactions between individual agents and institutional structures that may contingently privilege or disadvantage the student involved, depending on ‘which category [they] happen to be sorted into by other [participants] and how they treat [them] as a result’ (Johnson 2001: 36). Therefore, its widening requires an in-depth understanding of the interrelations between the two, as well as ‘the processes and mechanisms by which subjects mobilise (or choose not to mobilise) particular aspects of their identities in particular circumstances’ (Nash 2008: 11). The paper recommends that Kurdish students require training on necessary social skills and strategies that help them to contingently apply and negotiate aspects of their identity that may facilitate their participation and thereby successfully progress with their study.

<b>Presenter</b>	Lare S. Ismail, Legal Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Queen Mary University of London, UK
<b>Title</b>	The impracticality of Self-determination for minorities under international law – a case study of the Kurds

**Abstract**

Self-determination of "peoples" is an international law principle enshrined in the UN Charter, developed further by UNGA 2625 to provide guidance on its application. However, this principle has been restricted by States in only applying to colonial entities in gaining secession from the mother state and internal self-determination for indigenous populations. Recently, this principle has been used for claims of independence and freedom by the vast majority of minority groups such as the Kurds (referendum 2017). Therefore, it has brought about discussion amongst the international community and legal scholars regarding its meaning, application and practicality. This paper will firstly focus on addressing the need for a working definition and clarifying the ambiguous term of "peoples" in order to shed light on the impracticality faced by minorities. This research paper intends to further the current literature by demonstrating a gap in international law where self-determination in practice is outdated and inadequate with current times in preventing minorities from gaining autonomy; thereby failing to provide a remedy for human rights violations. This will be proven through an analysis of the impracticality of the self-determination principle under the UN Charter, taking into consideration the theories by main scholars. Research conducted shows that a human rights-based approach can be an alternative means compensating for the UN inadequacy.

**Short Bio**

Lare S. Ismail holds an LLB with International Law degree from Kingston University. She is currently undertaking an LLM degree in Human Rights Law at Queen Mary University of London. Her research interests include but not limited to Minorities & Indigenous Rights, Human Rights Law, Refugees, International Criminal Law and Kurdish independence. She is currently examining the impracticality of Self-determination adopted by the UN in relation to ethnic minorities.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr. Lolav M. Hassan Alhamid
<b>Institution</b>	University of Duhok and University of Kent, UK
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Women in Literature: A History of Violence, Displacement and Migration

**Abstract**

The division of Kurdistan among several countries simultaneously divided and separated Kurdish women's experience, which developed differently and separately in the different states in which they live. Research on their political, cultural and literary experiences in Iraq, for example, is restricted by a number of factors including their limited access to education and political participation, the scarcity of academic feminist studies and the lack of a gender component in the available literature. This study argues that, since its first emergence in the late 1980s, Kurdish novelistic discourse in Bahdinan has attempted to address this visible demand through representing the multidimensional impact of armed conflicts, displacement, migration and their aftermaths on the lives and experiences of Kurdish women through analyzing each and all of the forms and layers of violence imposed on them.

The study adopts an approach in the form of a three-moment periodizing model that divides the representation of women and the violence they experience in relation to modern Kurdish history according to three chronological interrelated phases: women and war-related violence, women and post-conflict violence, and women and terrorism-related violence. To achieve an extensive picture of female representation, three pairs of Kurdish novels by authors of Bahdini origins are selected to explore the ways by which Kurdish women are represented in the contexts of three successive periods of Iraq's recent history (1986-1991, 1992-2008, and 2009-2014). These years in Iraq are characterized by threatening shifts in political power and the outbreak of unpredictable armed conflicts and socio-economic tribulations.

The importance of this methodical approach to the study of the life and experiences of Kurdish women in Iraq, as well as the violence exerted against them, is that it not only identifies the different existing forms of violence but also the various modes and contexts in which it is executed. The study concludes by asserting that through paying attention to the multiple apparatuses and settings in which gender-based violence is exercised, it becomes less challenging to develop mechanisms to combat, prevent and eliminate it.

**Short Bio**

Lolav Alhamid specializes in Kurdish Gender Studies and Kurdish novelistic discourse in Bahdinan/Iraq. Alhamid received her Ph.D. (2017) in English from the University of Kent/UK and has taught in more than one university both inside and outside Kurdistan/Iraq.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Majida Sanaan Ismael
<b>Institution</b>	University of Liverpool, UK
<b>Title</b>	Struggle for Constitutional Power between Baghdad and Erbil: Federal Supreme Court Perspective on Baghdad -Erbil Disputes

**Abstract**

The relationships between the federal government and Kurdistan regional government (KRG) is of paramount importance to stability and territorial integrity of Iraq. The constitution of Iraq of 2005 is said to have been deliberately left ambiguous. In particular, it was almost impossible for constitutional drafters to agree on how powers should be shared and distributed between the federal government and Kurdistan Region, the only existing federal region in Iraq. In practice resolving the ongoing disputes between Baghdad and Erbil on many aspects of the constitution including the most contentious issues of Hydrocarbons Law, disputed territories, Kurdish Army (peshmerga )and federal budget share has proved to be extremely difficult.

Recently the federal Supreme Court of Iraq ruled on a longstanding constitutional dispute between Baghdad and Erbil over KRG sale of oil. Prior to this decision, in a number of occasions the court has often declined to become involved in disputes between the two governments, claiming the issue lay outside its jurisdiction and avoiding to rule on matters that would further draw the court into political disputes.

This paper argues that although the federal Supreme Court interpretation of the constitution is final and binding. It seems highly unlikely that the constitutional disputes involving KRG can be resolved through the FSC interpretation of relevant ambiguous constitutional provisions. However, this study argues that a recent court's ruling which is the first of its kind in post-Kurdish referendum era explicitly invites the two governments to solve their disputes.

**Short Bio**

Majida Sanaan Ismael received her PhD in constitutional law from University of Liverpool/UK (2017). Her PhD thesis is on constitutional judicialisation and the rule of law in transitional democracies. Majida holds Master degree in constitutional law and federal systems from University of Dohuk (2009). She has published article in King's Law Journal on Judging Elections: the Constitutional Judiciary in Iraq. She is a member of the Society of Legal Scholars (UK). Her research interests include constitutional courts, democratisation , the rule of law , Iraq constitutional law and minority rights . Majida's current research is on intergovernmental relations in federal states with focus on Baghdad -Erbil relation. She worked as a lecturer at University of Dohuk /school of law and political science .

<b>Presenter</b>	Mazlum Örmek & Dr Sedat Benek
<b>Institution</b>	Faculty of Arts and Sciences Department of Geography, Harran University, Turkey
<b>Title</b>	Investigation of The Socio-Economic Dimensions of the Forced Migration (2015-2016) in the Sur (Diyarbakir) District Center

**Abstract**

The subject of the study is the conflicts that occurred in Suriçi (Sur / Diyarbakır) district center after the Solution Process (2013-2015) and the migrations occurred due to the curfews applied in the aftermath. The purpose of this study is to reveal changes in socio-economic structures, spatial changes, expectations and hopes of Suriçi residents about future who were living within the borders of Sur district of Diyarbakır city and had to change their habitat suddenly in 2015-2016 after short displacements.

During the period in question, three hundred and eight people were interviewed with the face-to-face interview method in a pre-structured questionnaire with those who were exposed to immigration in fifteen neighbourhoods in Suriçi. In the evaluation and analysis of the data obtained by the questionnaire, SPSS (22.0) statistical package program and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) ArcMap 10.3 package program were used to show the spatial distribution of migratory families and to create thematic maps. In addition to the quantitative data obtained in the study, focus group interviews were conducted to obtain qualitative information.

As a result of the research, it had been determined that people having to migrate from Suriçi where they live had serious problems in the migration process, there have been serious deteriorations in socio-economic structures before and after migration, Most of them migrate

to other districts and neighbourhoods in Diyarbakir city center. Some people's expectations are partly met and most of them lost their hopes.

<b>Presenter</b>	Melike Demir
<b>Institution</b>	Independent Researcher - UK
<b>Title</b>	Gendered Field of the Clashes in North Kurdistan

**Abstract**

The Kurdish question has sometimes been the reason and sometimes the result of social crises which are manifested as violence, human rights violations, displacement etc. This spiral of violence which lasts for years; is mentioned as a statistics; and costs the lives of human that are reduced to numbers, was brought to urban centers by evolving to a different direction after the ear of 2015. Violence videos have reached in waves to households from social media accounts. These videos and photos have reflected the examples of death pornography and displayed the sexist aspect of violence.

While the aforementioned videos and the photos were focusing on the dead bodies of murdered armed women at the beginning of the war, murdered men were also started to be unclothed and displayed like women towards the end of the clashes. These photos also gave a clue about the offenders of the crime who were inside as well as outside the screenshots. The uniformed soldier boots waiting right next to murdered bodies have shown that the people who took the photos and the people who disclosed them are the same people.

Within this framework, I will try to explain the exposure of naked woman bodies with the conception of the "right" of the power over life and killing and the violence symbol of Foucault about the power's activity towards creating obedient bodies on one side; and on the other side, I will also try to explain the opportunities and the possibilities for a peaceful society which is alleged by the emancipatory, ecological and woman-centered paradigm which emerged as an alternative against the legitimacy created by the violence.

In war, the symbolic significance of the woman body and the violence against women sharpens. In this context, the exposure of woman bodies and the usage of violence symbols regarding women during the clashes between PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) and Turkish Armed Forces are closely related with the relationship between militarism and sexism. I think that there is a parallelism in a sense between sharing photos in which woman dead bodies which were waited on streets for days; women's underwear which were littered around; and the naked bodies of "terrorist" women who were murdered in clashes have been exposing and the example set in Foucault's *The Birth of the Prison* (2013) book about that transformation of punishing the body of the assumed criminal in front of people's eyes by tearing it up alive into an enormous spectacle.

**Short Bio**

Melike G. Demir received her master in Sociology from the University of Maltepe. Her research and writing have focused on gender, and Kurdish issue. Her published thesis entitled "From the 1990's to 2000: The construction of the Political Kurdish Women's Movement". Currently, she is doing a research project with Prof. Emine Onaran Incirlioglu in Munich, entitled: "Adaptation Ways of People from Turkey Live in München: "Narratives on discrimination and exclusion of people from Turkey live in München during educational process".

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Prof Melinda Negrón-Gonzales
<b>Institution</b>	University of New Hampshire, USA

<b>Title</b>	Three Decades of Seeking Justice for the Disappeared in Turkey
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>On a Saturday in September 2018, Turkish police once again grabbed international headlines, this time for using excessive force against a peaceful demonstration by the Saturday Mothers (Cumartesi Anneleri), who gather every Saturday to hold vigil and demand justice for loved ones who disappeared, mostly in the 1990s during the war between the Kurdistan Workers' Party and the Turkish state. The group, founded in 1995 to hold the state accountable for abductions and extrajudicial killings, is the public face of the broader social movement addressing human rights violations in the Kurdish regions of Turkey. This movement includes human rights organizations in Turkey (such as Hakikat Adalet Hafıza Merkezi/Truth Justice Memory Center) and also Europe which have used a wide range of strategies and tactics to raise awareness and attempt to whittle away the culture of impunity that has prevented justice for decades. This paper chronicles the movement for the disappeared in Turkey from its creation in the early 1990s to the present. It analyzes the strategies and tactics employed by the different groups, including Kurdish diaspora organizations, that constitute the broader transnational movement working on this issue. I utilize analytical insights from the literature on social movements and transnational advocacy networks to explain the mechanisms by which activists seek justice/reform and the conditions under which some strategies were successful, and others were not. This includes examining the internal dynamics of the transnational network working on the issue and analyzing the competing narratives used by victims and the state at key sites of contestation, particularly domestic courts and the European Court of Human Rights. I also discuss how lessons from past movement successes and failures could be applied today. This study is based on field research on human rights activism in Turkey, including interviews with activists, lawyers and parliamentarians in 2018 (and several other trips to Turkey since 2005).</p>
<b>Short Bio</b>	<p>Melinda Negrón-Gonzales, Associate Professor, teaches international relations and comparative politics at the University of New Hampshire. Her research focuses on international human rights norms, counter-terrorism norms, social movements and democratization, and her work has been featured in Middle Eastern Studies, Turkish Studies, Global Governance and more. She holds a PhD in political science from the University of Florida and was a Fulbright Scholar to Turkey (2006-7).</p>

<b>Presenter</b>	Prof (emeritus) Michael Eppel
<b>Institution</b>	University of Haifa, Israel
<b>Title</b>	The implications of the transformations in the Kurdish society on the political arena, and political forces of the Kurdish national movement
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Every national movement constitutes a political arena. The conditions in national arenas are affected by the balances of power and political conduct of the nationalist forces, by the social and economic conditions of the political arena and by external challenges. The following presentation will focus on the implications of the transformations in the Kurdish society on the political arena of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq and on the Kurdish national forces. The Kurdish leadership have to face very complicate complex of challenges: continuous building of Kurdish nation, state in state building of the Kurdistan Region in the framework of Iraq, building of modern society, creation of social and economic conditions that will be attractive for the modern educated middle class, and developing of diversified economy that will meet the needs of the changing society and especially will create job opportunities for the young. These challenges demand agreed rules of the political game among the forces in the</p>

Kurdistani political arena. Coping with these challenges is essential for the successful building of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq and for the continuous struggle for autonomy in Turkey, Iran and Syria. The adjustment of the Kurdish national forces to the ongoing social transformations will have an important impact on the strength and success of Kurdish national movement in the future. The successful policy of the Kurdish national movement depends on the realistic reading of the regional and international conditions, on the political conduct versus other forces and on a strong social basis of the Kurdish political forces. Building of modern dynamic society, and shaping of the agreed rules of the Kurdish political arena and meeting the needs of the Kurdish middle class and the young urbanized population in general are essential for the sustainability of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq, for strong backbone of political maneuvers versus other forces in Iraq and in the regional arena and for the successful Kurdish nation-building project.

**Short Bio**

Michael Eppel is Professor emeritus in the University of Haifa and Oranim College of Education in Israel. He received his Phd. in Tel Aviv University. His fields of research and interest are: Kurdish history and current affairs, Kurdish nation building, history and current affairs of Iraq and Syria, the social conditions of the political arenas of the Arab states, the middle class and the *effendiyya* in the Arab world, the Israeli-Arab conflict, international relations in the Middle East, the Russian and Chinese policies and involvement in the Middle East. He has published articles in IJMES, MES, Journal of Contemporary History, Current History, Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, The Middle East Quarterly. He is the author of the books: A People Without a State The Kurds from the Rise of Islam to the Dawn of Nationalism; Iraq from Monarchy to Tyranny From Hashimites to the Rise of Saddam; The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq 1928-1948.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Mithat Ishakoglu
<b>Institution</b>	University of Exeter, UK
<b>Title</b>	The Case Of Zaza Identity Construction Process In Turkey

**Abstract**

The idea of nationalism started to spread among Muslim communities of the Middle East towards the end of the 19th century as a follow-up to the one in Europe. The most known nationalist ideas of the Middle East since the end of the 19th century have been Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic and Persian. However, it could also be argued that with the effects of the post-modern era and globalism, a more apparent local cultural nationalism has emerged towards the last quarter of the 20th century. Motivated by this recent trend, Zazas have started their cultural nationalism what is regarded as Zaza nationalism in southeastern and eastern Turkey. The Zaza nationalism is still considerably a new tendency in the region as it dates back to 1980s. Zazaness as a separate group was initially introduced by some Zaza personalities who moved to Europe and their publications, which were arguing for Zaza nationalism. Although those who were publishing these pro-Zaza and Zazaki materials were different groups and individuals, those publications had common ideas such as "Zazaistan", "Zazalik" (Zazaness) and "Zazaki" (Zaza language).

It is possible to say the Zaza group of people still do not have a constructed common Zaza nationalism as an ideology. Nevertheless, there is a new tendency of local nationalism among the Zaza youth as a result of modern era's publications and trending urban life. Moreover, the new developments such as; the democratic reforms that took place in Turkey following the 2000s, the Turkish State's affords of minimizing the Kurdish political movement, and the

increasing use of the internet and social media have helped the Zaza oriented nationalism more visible in 2000s compared to 1980 and 90s.

As a result of all above mentioned, this paper argues that the process of 'Zazaness' has started with reference of linguistic difference or what Eric Hobsbawm refers as "philological nationalism" division is a phenomenon which is accepted one the main identity elements. More interestingly, it is important to point out that the Zaza nationalism has emerged as a counter argument of Kurdish nationalism rather than the Turkish nationalism. This paper will aim to lay out the reasons behind the emerged Zaza nationalism and its political, social, cultural and intellectual reflections. Furthermore, it will aim to shed a light on the complex Zaza nationalism within or opposing the Kurdish nationalism in Turkey.

**Short Bio**

Mithat Ishakoglu is an independent researcher. He received his MA and PhD from the Centre for Kurdish Studies at the University of Exeter recently, where he is still affiliated. His PhD thesis is titled "The Battle Over Kird/Zaza Identity in Çewlig/Bingöl (1980-2015). His research area is mainly in political anthropology, and also benefits from political sciences, oral history, and sociology disciplines. It aims to give an insight of the ethnic map of Northern Kurdistan or East and South-eastern regions of Turkey.

<b>Presenter</b>	Mohammad Taher Bidar
<b>Institution</b>	University of Exeter, UK
<b>Title</b>	Analyzing the Place of the Kurds in USA Strategy After the Emergence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria

**Abstract**

The Middle East is encountering substantial changes since the Sykes-Picot agreement was signed just over one hundred years ago. The rise of ISIS has exacerbated an already volatile situation emergent after the Arab Spring of 2011. This has made global powers reassess their strategies. One of the changes is the important role non-state actors are starting to play in strategies of global powers especially those of US strategy. One of the significant non-state actors is the Kurds that do not have a sovereign state of their own in the Middle East. With the ISIS onslaught, the US felt its interests were threatened in both Iraq and Syria. For the US, seeking to maintain its interests, opted to embrace the Kurds in both Iraq and Syria, as they were the most reliable and effective group. This paper assesses the strategies of the US towards the Kurds.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Mohammed Hussein Shwany
<b>Institution</b>	Faculty of Arts: Department of Sociology, Salahadin University, Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	Levels of Population Growth between Kurds and Arabs in Kirkuk City

**Abstract**

Kirkuk is at the heart of the "disputed territories" between the KRG and the Iraqi government. Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution, which provides a road map for the ultimate status of disputed territories, will primarily depend on the population size of ethnic communities and their vote over the future of their city. Population growth is influenced by a wide array of social and cultural variables, but many of these customs are different between Arabs and Kurds. The research tries to answer the following questions: What are the differences between Kurds and Arabs in terms of natural growth of their population? Using Italian

thinker Corrado Gini's (1884-1965) theory, how does the population decline when it moves from the countryside to the city?

**Short Bio**

Dr. Mohammed Hussein Shwany, is Assistant Professor , currently working as a Lecturer at the Department of Sociology at Salahadin University/Erbil, Kurdistan Region - Iraq. He received his master's degree in Social Anthropology from Mosul University and obtained his PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Baghdad University, Iraq. He has published a number of books in Arabic and Kurdish language, e.g. ethnic and religious diversity in Kirkuk, population Anthropology, Kurdish society as a sample, Introduction to Design Scientific Research, Principles of General Anthropology, Class Sociology, An Introduction to the Analysis of Kurdish Society. His research and teaching interests include Population Cultural Diversity, Peaceful Coexistence, Social Classification and the Kurdish National Issue. He has published extensively and participated in scientific conferences in Erbil, Baghdad, Cairo and Doha.

<b>Presenter</b>	Mojgan Etemad, Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Royal Holloway, University of London
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Cinema: The Unintended Consequences of Kurdish Films from North and East Kurdistan

**Abstract**

This paper examines the concept of 'Kurdish cinema' as a discursive subject relating to Kurdish films from North and East Kurdistan. The existence of Kurdish cinema is often disputed, due to its stateless nature. However, despite the disintegration of the Kurdish people as a result of state boundaries (Christensen, 2007) and the fragmentation of the Kurdish identity formation by different nation-building practices (Vali, 1998), Kurdish films possess a distinct identity and contribute to the Kurdish issue. My aim is to examine the similarities as well as differences between Kurdish films from different parts of Kurdistan. Despite striking thematic and aesthetic similarities, Kurdish films are nevertheless affected by the specificity of the states in which the Kurdish community inhabit. Indeed, in both the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, Kurdish films have benefited from certain cultural rights and government initiatives in the aftermath of President Khatami's 'reformist' government and the AKP's 'Open Policy' in 2009. Historically, the Turkish Yeşilçam cinema presented the Kurds as poor and illiterate Turks. Similarly, the Iranian cinema stereotyped the Kurdish characters. However, Kurdish films narrate stories of displacement, war, socio-economic, cultural disparities, and genocide against the Kurds. More specifically, in Turkey, Kurdish films are concerned with the Turkish state's atrocities against the Kurds. In the Islamic Republic, Kurdish films focus on socio-economic grievances and the Iraqi state-sponsored genocides against the Kurdish community. This paper will explore films made by Kurdish filmmakers in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey; which were banned, censored and/or benefited from occasional screenings. These films include Yilmaz Güney's Yol (1982), Bahman Ghobadi's Marooned in Iraq (2002), Salem Salavati's The Last Winter (2013), Kazem Öz's The Land (1999) and Zer (2017), Orhan Eskiköy and Zeynel Doğan's Voice of my Father (2012), and Haşhim Aydemir's 14 July (2017). My aim is to identify how Kurdish films create a Kurdish cinema culture and construct ideas of Kurdish identity in relation to the specific socio-historical circumstances in which they were made and more general issues relating to the Kurdish issue.

<b>Presenter</b>	Mostafa Khalili - JSPS Research Fellow & Ph.D. Candidate
<b>Institution</b>	Graduate School of Global Studies, Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan

<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Activism Among the Kurmanji Speaking Kurds in Iran: The Case Study of Margavar Rural District in the Border of Iran, Iraq, and Turkey
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**Abstract**

The political salience of the Kurmanji speaking Kurds of Iran has been almost diminished after Ismail Agha Simko's movement when the demographic composition of the region changed by relocating all Armenians and Assyrians. The Harki tribe, who used to move between three borders, in the power vacuum of Ismaeel Agha Shikak's tribe, resettled in Margavar district. Later, many other families from different northern tribes migrated to the region along with some "Sadaat" families, the descendants of "Sheykh Obeydollah Nahri." After the failed process of land reform in Kurdistan of Iran (1963) the relationships between landowners (Aghas) and their farmers (Raiyyat) grew conflictual. Following the Islamic revolution in 1979, the reappearance of the old dispute over the land distribution along with the ideological division between Aghas, Sheykh, and people divided the society again. Four months of fieldwork in the region, using in-depth interviews and collecting ordinary talks as primary tools for data collection, indicates that there might be different reasons behind the emergence of Kurmanji Kurdish activism in Iran growing semi-independent from the Sorani dominant discourse. In general, Kurmanji speaking Kurds assume that they are being looked down and neglected by the Soranis in the social and political fields. On the other hand, the active presence of PKK in Iran- Turkey's border and their Kurmanji dominant media made their ideology more attractive for the Kurmanjis of Iran than the alternative Sorani based parties.

In Margavar region, in particular, there are more factors to be considered. The conflictual relationship between members of the Harki tribe and other migrants has brought the motivation for all groups to seek other forms of identity distinction rather than focusing only on the tribal one. On the other hand, the presence of Barzanis in the district for many years as refugee seekers together with the attempts of Sadaats to establish modern educational institutions in the villages has been improved the cultural and educational level of the district comparatively.

Furthermore, increasing the informal trade and family ties between three borders and the profitable horticulture in fertile plains of Margavar has been resulted in shaping an emerging middle-class. Having distinct cultural and linguistic demands, they are trying to put more emphasis on their Kurmanji identity, specifically by distinguishing their cultural production field from the Soranis.

**Short Bio**

Mostafa Khalili received his Master's in Society and Culture from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), Japan, in March 2017. His thesis was on the ethnic identity construction of Iranian Azerbaijanis in Tabriz city. He is currently a PhD student in Global Studies at the Graduate School of Global Studies, Doshisha University, under the supervision of Professor Anne Gonon. His research focus is on the process of formation of Kurdishness among the Kurmanji speaking Kurds of the northwest of Iran in Urumiyeh county. The study aims to shed light on the factors that could explain the differences in perceiving the concept of "Kurdishness" among various Kurdish sub-groups, influenced by their neighboring ethnic/tribal groups. He has been awarded JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists, the most competitive research fellowship in Japan since April 2018.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Muslih Irwani - Founding Director Public Policy Institute (PPI)
<b>Institution</b>	Public Policy Institute

<b>Title</b>	Re-channeling the Conflict: A Study on Perceptions and Attitudes about Peace and Justice among Conflict-affected Communities in Ninawa-Iraq
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**Abstract**

This research is part of a peace and justice baseline study taken place within the context of a complex and difficult recovery and development effort following the defeat of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Ninawa governorate, in northern Iraq. It aims to examine how the conflict tends to be continued and re-channelled representing the existing sectarianism in Iraqi society. It explores the effects and legacy of the past on the state of social cohesion among various socio-ethnic groups. The research adopts a mixed method, starting from a large scale quantitative survey, using structured individual interviews with 6000 people among residents of Mosul and displaced Ninawa people resided in the camps and out of camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This is supplemented by semi-structured interviews with key informants and community leaders. Mosul is populated with majority Sunni Arab Muslims. However, it is known to be a smaller sample representing the mosaic structure of Iraqi communities. The research found that the Sunny community has zero trusts in other groups which prevents them from considering a return to home. The Sunny mistrust of Shia and Yezidi, Yezidi mistrust of Sunny Arabs, and Christian mistrust of everyone have made the Ninawa communities' reintegration almost impossible. Christians are wiped out of all Ninawa. Ultimately, they have either left the country or prefer to stay in the Kurdistan Region. Yezidis have lost the trust that they will be safe by returning to Shingal. Kurds have made their mind that they will never return to Mosul.

**Short Bio**

Muslih Irwani obtained his BA and MA in Sociology at Salahaddin University in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and PhD in Social Policy and Administration at University of Nottingham - UK. He has 12 years of teaching experience in various universities in the Kurdistan Region and the UK. Apart from training and teaching, he is intensively engaged in research and analysis on KRG's social policies. His research interest covers areas such as socio-economic development, political diversities and minorities, migration, social cohesion, peace and justice. He worked for the American University of Kurdistan (AUK) in Duhok between July 2014 and December 2018, and chaired the "Center for Peace and Human Security". He recently founded a research organisation, "Public Policy Institute" in Erbil.

<b>Presenter</b>	Mustafa K. Topal - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Institut for Mennesker og Teknologi Roskilde Universitet, Denmark
<b>Title</b>	From Zin to Zilan: The Redefinition of Gender and Love in the PKK, and how the Great Love Myth became a National Heroine

**Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to explore how gender and love are constituted in the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). PKK's view on gender roles have since the 1990s created a social movement within the patriarchal and Muslim Kurdish society, were traditional opinion on femininity and masculinity has been substantial in everyday society. The female fighters from PKK are not only fighting a national struggle but also a gender struggle too. These women while fighting in these struggles break the feudalistic identities and at the same time build new identities that are completely independent, and demonstrate the androcentric bias. However, at the same time, PKK draws inspiration from the history of feudal societies when this new human type and its love are rebuilt. While Kawa the Blacksmith in the year 612 became a model for male fighters of PKK, became the female figure Zin from the classic Kurdish love myth "Mem and Zin" in the year 1692 symbol of the pure love of the people

and the nation. In his works, the leader of PKK Abdullah Öcalan has compared Zin with PKK's first suicide Zilan (Death 1996), who are considered to be the PKK's most successful female fighters. In my presentation, based on interviews with PKK members and Öcalan's works, I will analyze how an old love story is interpreted politically and used as a foundation for the creation of a new human type in a national struggle, where love towards the opposite sex is transformed into love for the native land. In this analysis, it will be interesting to examine how categories like history, nature, geography, myth and nostalgia are used, in the construction of identity and love. Answers to these questions will be found with the use of Gilles Deleuze and post-humanism perspectives on gender, love and subjectivity.

**Short Bio**

Mustafa Topal is a PhD student at the Department of People and Technology at Roskilde University (RUC), Denmark. The title of his project is *Female Fighters Within National Movements*. He has a Master's degree in the subject's psychology and international development studies (cand.mag) from RUC. He has worked in different municipalities with socially vulnerable groups, but extensively with forced marriages and migrant marriages. He has also an active profile in the public debate in Denmark, where he has written several articles about radicalization among young people, integration problems, feminism and the role of women in the emerging movements.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Nahwi Saeed
<b>Institution</b>	Independent Researcher, UK
<b>Title</b>	The Question of Kirkuk and the Role of External Actors

**Abstract**

This paper explores the role of external actors in the problem of Kirkuk. As a microcosm of Iraq, Kirkuk has invariably refracted the overall climate of the country. Three elements constitute the problem of Kirkuk, namely: oil, future administrative status and future governance that if solved, could positively affect the political stability in the city and the whole country as well. To solve this problem, this paper suggests that authentic and sustainable stability in Kirkuk is highly unlikely without the active involvement of the external actors such as UNAMI. The reason is that the problem of Kirkuk is a multi-level and a multidimensional dispute. It has not only local and national dimensions but also regional and international ones. Locally, the three main communities (Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen) have failed to reach a settlement. Nationally, Baghdad and Erbil are still in dispute over the status of the city. The last 16 years could suggest that maintaining stability and building a lasting peace in the city cannot be achieved only by focusing on Baghdad-Erbil agreement or initiatives by local stakeholders. In other words, international support and cooperation is crucially important in addressing the question of Kirkuk. Such cooperation could include bottom-up initiatives such as grassroots-level confidence-building measures promoting intercommunal dialogue and support for a top-down elite-level solution. The UNAMI, for example, seems to be well positioned to play this facilitator role in any future agreement as it has already been involved in trying to find a solution for the problem of Kirkuk. This conclusion is based on the existing literature on Kirkuk and a close look at the local and international initiatives over the status of the city in the past 16 years.

**Short Bio**

Nahwi Saeed received his PhD in politics at Newcastle University/UK in 2016. His PhD thesis entitled 'Governance in Post-2003 Kirkuk: Power-Sharing in a Divided Society and Prospects for Consociational Democracy'. Saeed obtained his MA in IR at Swansea University/UK (2009). His research interests include democracy and stability in divided societies, coexistence between ethnic groups in post-conflict situations, power-sharing and

the prevention of ethnic conflict in post-conflict societies with the focus on Iraq and the Kurdistan region. He has written articles for Kurdish, English and Arabic media outlets. Saeed is currently a contributor to Al-Monitor’s Iraq Pulse.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Naif Bezwan
<b>Institution</b>	University of Innsbruck, Austria, and UCL, UK
<b>Title</b>	The Turkish Presidential System: Exit from Disorder or Recipe for a Permanent State Crisis?

**Abstract**

Turkey is now governed by a presidential system depicted by its own creators as a *sui generis* Turkish regime. Under truly exceptional and repressive circumstances provided by the state of emergency, a referendum on extensive constitutional amendments was held on 26 April 2017 to establish a presidential system of governance that was approved by a razor-thin margin.

The main objective of this paper is thus to examine the features, policy behaviours, and workings of the Turkish presidential system. Drawing on a growing body of literature on the hybrid regimes, such as “illiberal democracy”, “neopatrimonial democracy”, “electoral authoritarianism”, “competitive authoritarianism”, “deep state”, and “dual state”, this paper will focus following questions:

How and why the authoritarian turns could happen in a country that is otherwise considered a “model country” in terms of its economic and political performance? What are the dynamics behind the shift away from the path of political reforms, economic growth, external and domestic stability, and prosperity and peace, to authoritarian policies within a fairly short space of time? How does the current regime deal with the Kurdish self-determination conflict? Whether, and to what extent, does it provide a remedy for the country's structural *dualities* (such as civil versus military, or state versus government), *dilemmas* (the West versus the Middle East), and finally, *dichotomies* (such as Muslim versus secular, Muslim versus non-Muslim, Turkish versus non-Turkish peoples and minorities).

The examination of the Turkish presidential regime through its key external and internal policies will generate new insights into the causal mechanism of the (ongoing) crisis in Turkey, and thus strengthening the case for the prospect of democratic transformations.

**Short Bio**

Dr Naif Bezwan is currently working as Senior Scientist at University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and acting as Senior Honorary Research Fellow at the Department of Political Science, University College London. He obtained both his master's degree in Social Science and PhD in Political Science from University of Osnabrück, Germany. As a signatory to the Peace Petition, he was first suspended from his position at Mardin Artuklu University /Turkey - because of a critical expert interview on the Turkish military incursion into Syria in August 2016 - and then entirely dismissed from his position through an emergency decree issued in October 2016.

<b>Presenter</b>	Nawroos Shibli
<b>Institution</b>	Global Governance Balsillie School of International Affairs, University of Waterloo, Canada

<b>Title</b>	The Kurdish Question: The Influence of the EU Accession Process on Kurdish Rights in Turkey
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**Abstract**

This paper examines the changing nature of Kurdish economic, political and social rights in Turkey, primarily the influence of Turkey's EU accession process on its minority policies towards the significant Kurdish minority in the country. Has the European Union, as a democratizing force and institution, influenced Turkey's minority rights regime through the EU accession process and with regards to Turkey's significant Kurdish minority? More specifically, how has the Turkish government's position on minority rights changed over time? Has Turkey met Europe's requirements and minority rights norms standards? Have lasting and significant reforms been made with regards to the treatment of Kurds in the country? These are some of the questions that this paper will address.

As the largest stateless nation in the world and the largest minority group in Turkey (which comprises roughly 18-25% of Turkey's total population, or about 14-20 million), Kurds represent the most effective case study of how Turkey's policies have changed over time vis-à-vis the influence of Europe's minority rights regime. Included in this analysis are other factors leading to Turkey's gradual (but stalled) rapprochement with its historically oppressed Kurdish minority, including regional changes, economic opportunities with regards to oil and gas deals, and the protracted ethnic conflict and military clashes between Turkish forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The gradual opening in Turkish policies towards its significant Kurdish ethnic minority is due largely to shifts in Turkey's economic and political interests. Prior to Turkey's bid for EU membership, the Turkish government's relationship with its large Kurdish minority was strained by a long history of human and minority rights abuses and a denial of the Kurdish identity. Only after and since its candidacy for EU membership have some changes been made. As such, the future of Turkey's minority rights policies and recognition of the Kurdish identity is contingent partly on Europe's emphasis on minority rights standards as part of the EU accession process, and partly on economic and political regional factors which have the ability to impact Turkey's desire to change its position on its "Kurdish Problem."

**Short Bio**

Nawroos Shibli is a Ph.D. candidate in Global Governance at the Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA) at the University of Waterloo where her research focuses on institutional responses to Islamophobia in Europe. She is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Canadian Arab Institute and serves as an Editorial Assistant for *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*.

<b>Presenters</b>	Ass. Professor Neelam Raina Ad Dr Janroj Keles
<b>Institution</b>	Associate Professor of Design and Development and Challenge Leader for Protracted Conflict, Security, Refugees and Displacement at UKRI
<b>Title</b>	Post-Conflict Craft Heritage of Kurdistan – Iraq

**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the impact of the long-standing conflict in Kurdistan - Iraq from the perspective of the Kurdish craftspeople. It looks at socio-economic changes in Kurdistan - Iraq's craft tradition, with a special focus on the craftswomen of Erbil in Kurdistan. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 30 Kurdish craft people, museum directors, craft factory directors and local authorities, this paper explores the potential that material practices have, as a means of sustainable income generation, that in turn could contribute towards socio-economic reconstruction and post-conflict development.

**Short Bio**

Neelam Raina is an Associate Professor of Design and Development at Middlesex University, London and a Challenge Leader for Protracted Conflict, Security, Refugees and Displacement at UKRI. Her research interests include conflict, material cultures, gender, and livelihood generation. Neelam has been working in the region of Kashmir (both Indian and Pakistani) since the early 2000s, and has conducted participatory action research including design and enterprise training for women in the region focussing on material cultures, identity and representation of the people of Kashmir. She has worked with NGOs, educational charities, and academic departments in India and Pakistan. Her recent work focusses on Iraqi heritage and material culture. Raina is also a Principal Investigator on the Post Textile Crafts of Iraq. Neelam has a Ph.D in Design and Development, and a Masters in Design and Manufacture from De Montfort University, Leicester. She also has a post graduate degree in Textile Design at NIFT in New Delhi. Raina did an undergraduate degree in History (Hons) at Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi University. She has been a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics at the Centre for Women, Peace and Security. She is an editor for the International Journal of Traditional Arts, and her new work 'Creative Economies of Culture in South Asia – Performers and Craftspeople' comes out in 2019. See for Keles' short bio on p.17

<b>Presenter</b>	Neslihan Yaklav - Research Fellow
<b>Institution</b>	Social Justice in Armed Social Movements Project, with EHESS and CNRS, France
<b>Title</b>	The dialectical relation between different concepts of violence exercised by the state and the PKK in Turkey

**Abstract**

The concept of violence in its multiple forms, including both physical and non-physical practices of violence exercised by the state and non-state actors, has been the most complex and paramount socio-political phenomenon within the historical context of Bakur (Northern Kurdistan, Turkey). Despite the visible continuity of the practices of physical violence and relatively less visible forms of structural violence, it would be erroneous to approach the phenomenon of violence in Kurdistan as a static process of use of coercive force regardless of the actor who puts it into practice. From the most primitive forms of banditry practices (eşkiyalık), to feudal power relations, and the most systematic form of the expression of collective violence, the forms of violence have been in a constant transformation process. This paper will focus on the dynamic feature of the phenomenon of collective violence exercised by the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan) from the 1980s to its most radical manifestations in the 1990s and 2000s. Based on data obtained from in-depth interviews conducted with more than 50 actors from different generations who used to or are currently involved in the armed struggle in Bakur and Başur, I demonstrate that the PKK's readiness to use violent practices is a response to the state's monopoly of using both physical and symbolic violence. I will discuss the dialectical violence exercised by the state in Turkey and exercised by the PKK and argue that the former plays a reproductive role in sociological terms on the emergence and development of the latter. In this sense, and taking into consideration the latest developments in both South and West Kurdistan, shifts observed throughout the course of long-lasting state-PKK armed confrontation in Turkey also determine the direction of Kurdistan question as a whole.

**Short Bio**

Neslihan Yaklav is independent researcher in Kurdistan, Turkey and Iraq. She worked as a researcher and field organizer as well as translator in different projects She is currently

working as a researcher for project with EHESS and CNRS, Paris. Her research interests include peace and conflict studies.

<b>Presenter</b>	Prof Ofra Bengio - Head of Kurdish Studies Program at the Moshe Dayan Center
<b>Institution</b>	Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish nation-building through children textbooks

**Abstract**

On 19 July 2012, the Kurds of Syria (Rojava) initiated a twofold revolution on the social and political levels. Of the two, the social one is deeper since it carries a far-reaching significance touching as it does on the education system of the young generation. In 1963 Talab Hilal an Arab Syrian officer published a policy document in which he called on the Syrian government to Arabize the Kurdish region and even worse, to instill ignorance (tajhil) in the Kurds by closing their schools even though they were teaching in Arabic. This Arabization policy went on intermittently until the upheavals in Syria which started in early 2011 and which put an end to the government's sway on the Kurdish region.

The Kurdish revolution of 2012 managed within a short time not only to put an end to Arabization policies but also to carve for itself an autonomy which enabled it to develop a new educational system divorced from that of the central government in Damascus. This paper analyzes textbooks for Kurdish children in Rojava in the lower classes of primary school. Its aim is to examine the ways in which these textbooks attempt to build a Kurdish identity which is completely different from the Arab-Syrian one. What are the symbols these books use? What are the messages they transmit to young children at the age of six to eight? And how the nation-building process figures in these textbooks? Another aspect of this study is to draw a comparison between the textbooks in Kurdistan of Syria and that of Iraq and see what are the similarities and differences in their messages to the young generation. An initial conclusion is that Kurdish nationalism has a strong presence in the textbooks which contrasts with the image of PYD- the leading party in Rojava of deemphasizing Kurdish identity.

**Short Bio**

Professor Ofra Bengio is Senior Research Fellow at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University and Head of Kurdish Studies Program at the Moshe Dayan Center. She is Lecturer at Shalem College, Jerusalem. Her Fields of specialization are: contemporary Middle Eastern history, modern and contemporary politics of Iraq, Turkey and the Kurds. She is also interested in Culture and literature of Middle Eastern societies. Bengio has translated poetry and prose from Arabic and Turkish into Hebrew. She was a visiting fellow at Emory, Beijing and Bogazici universities as well as The Washington Institute. Bengio participated in many conferences all over the world and is a commentator in Israeli and world media.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Professor Ozlem Goner
<b>Institution</b>	Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Staten Island City University of New York
<b>Title</b>	Gendered State Violence and Women's Empowerment in Kurdistan: From Victims to Agents of Political Change
<b>Abstract</b>	

This interdisciplinary project studies gendered state violence and its representations in the Kurdish transnation, shaped by different political orientations, movements, and intra-ethnic cultural diversity. Following the analysis of a long-term collaborative research process, the objective is to understand the dynamics of state violence, gender, and gender empowerment comparatively. It attempts to understand the effects of violence and its collective representations on gender discourse and politics. I first look at two historical massacres of the Kurds in Dersim 1938 and Anfal 1987/1988 and analyze the representation of gendered violence by political movements, commemorative events, and the media. I interrogate new forms of silences and discourses that reproduce women as the traumatized objects of national politics. Then I look into the most recent struggles of Kurdish women in Rojava Kurdistan (Northern Syria) and their active participation in the self-defense against the Islamic State (IS) militia with the question of whether women's participation in self-defense can shift the political discourses on gender and gender empowerment among Kurdish societies. Rojava has become known to many people in the world during the brutal attacks of IS against the city of Kobane in northern Syria on September 15th, 2014. Can women taking up arms against an extremist and patriarchal force in the Middle East create a new political discourse where women are not just objects of national consciousness, but agents of political change? What is the role of violence in the political discourse of Rojovan revolutionary politics that centralizes women's participation and empowerment? What are the contradictions of this particular form of empowerment that is based on the use of violence, which has historically constructed and strengthened patriarchy? Is there a difference between violence that has historically inflicted upon Kurdish societies and violence in the form of "self-defense" as defined by the Rojava revolutionaries? As the pictures of the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) holding machine guns fighting against the IS became popularized in the Western media, this research attempts to reveal the possibility and contradictions of women's empowerment through participation in a political movement that uses violence as a political tool.

**Short Bio**

Ozlem Goner is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the College of Staten Island, CUNY. She earned degrees in Political Science and Sociology from Bogazici University, Turkey and her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Her work on memory and historicity; political economy and environment; gender and political representation; and outsider identities has been published in academic journals and edited volumes. Her book entitled, Turkish National Identity and its Outsiders: Memories of State Violence in Dersim, was published by Routledge in June 2017.

<b>Presenter</b>	Parwez Zabihi
<b>Institution</b>	Independent researcher/ Lecturer
<b>Title</b>	Independence of Kurdistan in relation to the New World Order: an Alternative Approach to Peace in the Middle East

**Abstract**

The model of Democracy as we know it in the West will not work in the Middle East. We will need to have a much more pragmatic approach in achieving peace in the Middle East. The growth of fundamentalism, both Sunni or Shia, will need to be tackled head-on. Citizens of the Middle East themselves are partly to blame in allowing such thinking to grow within them; we in the West will also be looking at ourselves, and the way in which we have handled the past 100 years.

A completely new direction will be required, coordinating between a new generation of Middle Easterners that have grown up in the West, who have received Western education and have been brought up in an atmosphere of democracy and tolerance, and the home-grown democrats of Middle Eastern society.

The West has paid a high price for the facilitation of democracy: the US civil war, and in Europe, the major European wars were high costs for democracy, but lessons were learned by all sides. Peace and peacetime have gained a higher estimation. The Middle East needs to learn the value of peacetime, without first going through a civil or religious war.

He further argues that there is another vision for the Middle East when it comes to Kurdistan Independence, but the status quo will need to be questioned. Western policy towards the Kurds until now has been a total disaster in the region.

A new approach will advocate:

- 1) The democratisation of the countries which currently occupy Kurdistan.
- 2) The formation of a collaborative, deomcratic body within the Middle East (Middle Eastern Union).
- 3) The recognition of Kurdistan as an independent state by the Middle Eastern Union.

### Short Bio

Parwez Zabihi, Kurdish national, has lived and worked in the UK since 1986, studied Fine Arts at Central St. Martin School of Arts and later finished his postgraduate studies at Central School of Speech and Drama, with particular emphasis on European philosophy (the question of Identity). He lives in Arbil, capital of Kurdistan, where he is researching the development of the Kurdistan region since 2006. His research focuses on processes of national and regional changes both in society and in landscapes, paying particular attention both geographically and historically since the collapse of the Iraqi regime. He has documented changes photographically, and has contributed text and images to *Kurdistan: A Nation Emerges* and *The Horses of Kurdistan*. In this lecture he will also be sharing some of his images of this ancient land.

<b>Presenter</b>	Patrick C. Lewis - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago
<b>Title</b>	Between State and Community: Memurluk, the 'Middle Class', and Kurdish Civil Society in North Kurdistan

### Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between Kurdish memurs and Turkish state institutions in Kurdistan, drawing attention to the centrality of memurs in Kurdish civil society and the significance of memurluk as one of the few opportunities for social mobility and secure employment in Kurdish regions. It argues that expanded access to higher education and new investments in the public sector, together with the political consolidation of the Kurdish movement in North Kurdistan over the past two decades, has resulted in the emergence of a new, indigenous class of Kurdish state memurs, who although nominally employees of the Turkish state maintain significant intuitional relations with the Kurdish movement. Specifically, I highlight the prominent role that Kurdish memurs have come to play in newly emergent urban publics in Kurdish towns and cities over the past two decades, in particular through their work on Kurdish-language education and activism; and I emphasize the increasing importance that public teachers' unions in Turkey's Kurdish regions came to assume during this period as an institutional counterbalance to centrally controlled state institutions and value projects they organize. Drawing on 18-months of fieldwork in Mardin

and at the Institute for Living Languages at Artuklu University between 2015-2018, this paper draws attention to the centrality of Turkey’s memurluk system in its colonial projects in Kurdistan, highlighting how conditions of economic dependency on state institutions shape the political and moral economy of language and education and likewise structure the relations of value and power binding Kurdish communities to Turkish state institutions. Looking specifically at the first cohort of Kurdish-language teachers appointed to Turkish state schools, I argue that role of Kurdish teachers as the primary agents of the Turkish state’s pedagogic projects in Kurdistan is complicated by the fact that both 1) many only half-heartedly attempt and partially succeed in socializing their students into the value systems of the Turkish nation-state, with its preferred forms of socio-political identification and linguistic practice ; and 2) that the economic value they derive from their work in state schools is in fact mobilized as part of competing social value projects such as Kurdish-language publishing, cinema and education.

**Short Bio**

Patrick Lewis is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and an MA student in the Department of Kurdish Languages at Artuklu University. His research bridges linguistic and social-cultural anthropology and looks at language politics, higher education and youth in Turkey and North Kurdistan. His research has been supported by a Fulbright-Hays DDRA Fellowship and a National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Ramazan Tunç
<b>Institution</b>	Independent Scholar
<b>Title</b>	An Outlook to Economic Geography of Kurdistan and Kurdish Questions

**Abstract**

This paper concerns primarily with the economic dimension of the Kurdish Question. In line with the changing dynamics of the Kurdish Question, Kurdistan has emerged as an economic territory itself while increasing trade flows through national boundaries reconnect the Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan. In this regard, this paper traces first the transformation of the traditional trade patterns with a particular focus on borderlines, and then it discusses the new determinant factors of the economic structure that constructs the economic territoriality of Kurdistan.

The longest border of Turkey is surrounded by Kurdish Population and 17 of 26 custom gates of Turkey are trade doors for intra-Kurdistan. Both sides of borders of Turkey with Iraq Iran and Syria are also the economic impact area of Kurds. But despite having an internal economic impact and trade area, it is not easy for Kurds to develop their economic and trade around the borders. There are two dimensions of trade within Kurdistan beyond borders, the official border trade and unofficial border trade. Both official and unofficial (smuggling) border trade among Kurds suffer from the conflicts and aggression of nation-states that have hegemony over Kurds and Kurdistan. In the 28 December 2011, 34 Kurds from the Kurdish village of Roboski were killed by Turkish F-16 fighter jets as they crossed the border from South Kurdistan into North Kurdistan. Nineteen of those killed were children, the youngest just twelve. A drone initially spotted the villagers as they returned with donkeys packed with goods mainly cigarettes and petrol. Not only around the borders but also conflicts in the Kurdish cities has significant impacts on the economy of Kurdistan and affects trade relations. The conflicts in Kurdish cities-districts Sur, Cizre, Nusaybin, Yüksekova deteriorated economy, trade structure and trade patterns. Declaring curfews and security

zones not only deteriorated the image of Kurdish cities-districts but also escalated negative impacts on capital mobility and investments in Kurdish cities. The institutional capacity for growth and development of Kurdistan has also been deteriorated due to the cycle of conflicts.

To this end, this paper will mainly focus on the course of developments between 2008 and 2018 whereas the Kurdish Question tapped back in war after a short-lived peace process in Turkey. The study will also have a quick look at the close economy history of Kurdistan and trade relations of nation-states that have hegemony on Kurdistan land and will analyse the impacts of conflicts on the economy of Kurdistan with the special approach of international trade theory of Gravity Model as well economic geography theory.

**Short Bio**

Ramazan Tunc is an independent scholar and PhD Student in economics in Dicle University of Diyarbakır. He obtained his Master Degree from Dokuz Eylul University. Worked as scholar, research and teaching assistant and took place in many research projects. He worked as development expert in one of Development Agencies in Turkey and conducted field studies in various areas. He served as Deputy Chair in Democratic Regions Party(DBP) between 2016-2018, the regional political party of Kurdish Political Movement. He is taking part in a few NGOs in Diyarbakır. He is also one of the signers of Academics for Peace Petition. He currently runs his independent business and economic analysis company in Diyarbakır.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Rasoul Muhammed Rasoul, Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Soran University
<b>Title</b>	Kirkuk’s Tribal Groups and the Ottoman Policy

**Abstract**

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire dealt with the Kurdish tribes in the Southern Kurdistan indirectly through the Bābān and the Sorān Kurdish Emirates. However, since the second half of the nineteenth century and after the dissolution of the Kurdish Emirates, they had to directly deal with the Kurdish tribes and face their wrath, rebellion and aggression.

**The Kurdish Tribal Challenges during the Ottoman Empire**

Ottoman administrators viewed nomadic tribes as wild, uncivilized, and unlawful. According to them, the settled Bedouin was a good Bedouin. This line of thinking was widespread in the whole of Iraq. Even during the British occupation, this point of view towards nomadic tribes continued, Sir Percy Cox mentioned that Iraqi officials – who were mainly educated inhabitants of major towns – “look upon tribesmen as savage, and desire the break up the tribal organization and to deprive the tribal leaders of power.”

The main problems that were caused by the Kurdish tribes are:

- Inter-tribal enmity, conflicts and resultant break down of security.
- Non-payment of tax (revenue) to the Ottoman Empire.
- Taking advantages of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire.
- Kurdish Support of Sheikh 'Ubeidullāh’s Revolution (1879-1882).
- Reduction of livestock.
- Banditry and looting.

**Ottoman Policies towards the Kurdish Tribes**

- Started reconciliation efforts between rival tribes and imposed a tax as penalty for the mistakes made by the tribes.
- Involving the tribes in Ottoman wars with Iran and Russia.

- The expulsion and deportation policy.
- Migration of people from Kirkuk to other areas because of the Ottoman oppression.
- Supporting a tribe in order to weaken another tribe.
- The construction of several military castles, forts, and installing telegraph line.
- Extending Conscription.

<b>Presenter</b>	Recep Onursal
<b>Institution</b>	University of Kent, UK
<b>Title</b>	From “there is no conflict” to “there is no resolution” Unpacking the logics of Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

**Abstract**

The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey has a deep and violent history going back to mid-nineteenth century. This violent history has been extended by cycle upon cycle of conflict. The latest armed conflict between Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK) and Turkish Republic has been ongoing since mid-1970s. However, despite of the many years of armed conflict, conflicted parties only recently started to work on ways of settling the conflict and reaching a stable peace. Particularly, the last attempt called “Resolution Process” (2012-2015) was widely considered as the best chance for lasting the conflict that had become a Gordian knot. Nonetheless, while this process represented the culmination of the slowly shifting hope for a peaceful resolution, it was ended in July 2015 and the deadly conflict had escalated again. In this paper, I argue that there is a strong theoretical and empirical added value of focusing on hegemonic discursive struggles between conflicted parties in Kurdish Conflict to understand the way in which non-resolution of this political conflict has been maintained and how it can be transformed. As it was manifested during the Resolution Process, the clash of discourses is at the hearth of the Kurdish Conflict. In this conflict, the war of words plays as significant role as war of weapons. The warring parties compete with each other in the form of hegemonic projects to prevail their political discourse on the conflict and struggle to determine how meaning should be assigned to the conflict and peace. By conceptualizing this discursive space as another battle ground or frontier on which conflicted parties fight for hegemony over the meaning of Kurdish Conflict, I suggest that if both resistance towards the peace and possibilities for the transformation of this political conflict are to be understood, there is a need for critical understanding of discursive struggles between conflicted parties. Therefore, by taking the Kurdish Conflict and the latest resolution attempt as a theoretical and empirical object of investigation, this article conducts a discourse-theoretical inquiry into the conditions that make the Kurdish Conflict and its non-resolution possible. Drawing on post-foundational discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Laclau 2005, Lacan 1977) and the Logics of Critical Explanation - LCE (Glynos and Howarth 2007), the paper aims to critically examine the political discourses of the conflicted parties on Kurdish Conflict from Dec 2013 to July 2015. This paper accordingly not only aims to map the different understanding of the Kurdish Conflict and its resolution but also to examines the social, political and fantasmatic logics underpinning constructions of the relationship between conflicted parties.

**Short Bio**

Recep Onursal is currently a PhD Candidate in International Conflict Analysis at the University of Kent and he holds an MSc in Conflict Resolution and an MSc in Finance and Management from the University of Essex. During his BA in Business Administration at Middle East Technical University (Turkey), he also spent an exchange semester at the Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Germany. His research lies at the intersection of post-foundational theories of discourse and subjectivity and theories of conflict resolution and analysis.

<b>Presenter</b>	Rezan Saleh, Guest researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Center for Ibsen studies/ University of Oslo, Norway
<b>Title</b>	The power of An Enemy of the people in the Kurdish Society & Theatre a cross history.

**Abstract**

An Enemy of the People was staged five times by four directors between 1956 and 2007 in Iraq and Kurdistan. The first two performances by the same Director took place in Baghdad in the years 1956 and later a greatly expanded version in 1967. Later, the Piece was played three times in Kurdistan in Sulaimani city, in the years 1986, 1995 and 2007. It is important to include Iraq here because the plays and works of Ibsen came to the Kurdish populations through Baghdad.

My presentation starts with the role of the theatre in the Kurdish society in the new Iraq (1922) and explains the role of Cultural work, especially theatre, and analyzes why An Enemy of the People has been perceived as the most important of Ibsen's works to play at Iraqi / Kurdish theatre.

In order to analyse these five productions, I take political history related to the Kurds in Iraq as my point of departure. The analysis is based on a series of interviews I did with the directors of these productions and on literature sources. This data is analysed in a political and social perspective.

In my study, I find that the productions were presented without major changes in relation to the original of Ibsen's text, but shortened and with different emphasis in each case. The main emphasis is on what period, which context, and what kind of political and social positioning comes up each time the text was played. This greatly affected the content and reception. The presentation describes the theatrical productions separately, emphasising the perspective and discussing the importance of the play in the periods in question and the current Kurdish context. The conclusion is that the work of individualistic, rational Ibsen can function well in a collectivist, romantic-embossed system if only one has put the work into a suitable conceptual appropriate adaptation.

**Short Bio**

20 years post-graduate professional career as a Theatre director, Stage actor, Researcher and Teacher in a multi-cultural environment. Co-founder of AIDA, an international cultural association (NGO). Experienced in European and other inter-cultural projects, events, seminars and workshops co-funded by EU and National funding bodies.

Promoting intercultural and intellectual dialogue between “East” and “West”. She works also as an organizational administrator. Research Interests in comparing cultural index, differences and similarity, search for the results in a historical/political cultural and philosophical context. Holds BA and MA degrees from Baghdad and Oslo Universities. Guest Researcher at the university of Oslo to work on her PhD.

<b>Presenter</b>	Rondeau Coline, Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	University of Angers (France), University of Liège (Belgium)
<b>Title</b>	The Kurdish diaspora in France: from invisibility to refugee status since the 1980s

**Abstract**

The proposed study mobilises written sources from the French State (general information, prefectures). These have so far identified 302 Kurds from Turkey and 2,449 Turks who have passed through, settled or been born in western France since the 1970s. These sources make it possible to understand the specific characteristics of Kurdish migration from Turkey, their settlement in a territory qualified as a "low immigration area". Their journeys and migration patterns showed growing correlation and links with those of former economic migrants from Turkey in the 1970s, whether Turks or Turkey-based Kurds. This observation then triggers further questioning and investigations related to the relations between these first generations of migrants and the more recent Kurd refugees (for instance, where did they come from and where did they live in France?). The proposed study examined the various migration strategies and networks (political, family...) developed by Kurdish asylum seekers. In addition, there are the power games and tools available to the Kurds to assert their identity in order to obtain "refugee" status and no longer be "invisible". This question of invisibility raises questions about how and why some Kurds tended to express or hide their identity during their administrative procedures.

**Short Bio**

She is currently in her third year of PhD in contemporary history (University of Angers) and political and social sciences (University of Liège). She obtained a MA's degree in history and her second year dissertation was published in the *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*. Her thesis subject deals, among other things, with the migration of Kurdish refugees from Turkey to France and Belgium (1980-2003). This topic focuses on asylum seekers but also on the networks they have used (rejected asylum seekers, migrant workers, naturalised Kurds, Turks, etc.) during their migrations and administrative journey. These ones raise questions about how Kurds define themselves and how states receive, deal with these individual stories.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Sabir Hasan Rasul
<b>Institution</b>	Department of English, University of Human Development, Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	A shift from Arabic to English: A new trend in using loanwords in Kurdish media translation

**Abstract**

Language is a living phenomenon; languages change, evolve and develop over time. One of the ways of changing a language is through the influence of foreign languages, which is mainly reflected in loanwords. This paper addresses a new trend in Kurdish translation which is a shift from using Arabic loanwords (which used to be a common practice) to the use of English loanwords in translations carried out in the Kurdish media. In the absence of a language policy, Kurdish has become receptive of foreign words. In the past, Sorani Kurdish, spoken predominantly in Iraqi Kurdistan, was largely influenced by Arabic. This is manifested in Kurdish writings produced in the 20th century. Since the late 20th century and with the turn of the new millennium, Kurdish seems to have experienced a new sociolinguistic shift. The new shift or trend is that the use of Arabic loanwords in Kurdish has declined, in turn, English loanwords have gained currency. Through a research questionnaire, this paper aims to attest whether the new observed trend is a factual phenomenon or a mere perception. The questionnaire aims at journalist-translators working between English and Kurdish. They are required to translate 45 fairly short English sentences into Kurdish, each sentence containing one or more unmarked words that are thought to represent the aforementioned trend when translated into Kurdish. Based on the results from the questionnaire, it will be easy to attest the validity of the argument that Arabic loanwords have yielded in favor of English ones.

**Short Bio**

Sabir Hasan Rasul received his PhD in Translation Studies from the Centre for Translation Studies, University of Leeds (2015). He also holds MA in TESOL (University of Liverpool) and BA in English Language and Literature (University of Sulaimani). He is the Head of English Department at the University of Human Development in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where he is also Lecturer in Translation between English and Kurdish. Dr Rasul is co-author of *An Introduction to English-Kurdish Translation* (2018) and author of *Journalistic Translation: Procedures and Strategies in English-Kurdish Translation of Media Texts* (forthcoming).

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Sait Keskin
<b>Institution</b>	University of Exeter
<b>Title</b>	From Mahabad 1946 to Afrin 2018

**Abstract**

On 20th January 2018, on the eve of the 72nd anniversary of the declaration of the Kurdistan Republic in Mahabad city, Rojhilat Kurdistan, Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) with Al-Qaida oriented jihadists' militias launched a military offensive against Afrin Canton in Rojava Kurdistan. The Turkish state's military offensive claimed that Rojava Kurdistan had become a 'terror corridor'; with Afrin Canton being ruled by the PKK and YPG, YPJ and PYD, and that these were just different names for the PKK. Therefore they were causing an existential threat to Turkey's national security". Afrin Canton's political administration pleaded to the UN, EU, US and Russia to stop the Turkish offensive against the will of the people of Afrin. The responses were that the UN and EU stayed silent, the US's declared that Afrin was a matter to be dealt with by Russia, while Iran and Iraq also remained silent, leaving Syria in alliance with Russia. Afrin Canton's Armed Forces the YPG and YPJ resisted for 58 days and eventually, Afrin was occupied on 18th of March 2018.

Mahabad was occupied in December 1946 by Iran's Armed Forces and President of Kurdistan Republic was imprisoned and later executed in the centre of Mahabad. Afrin was occupied by TAF and Kawa the Blacksmith's monument was destroyed. Why has Turkey so aggressively attacked and occupied Afrin? And why was it starting its occupation on the same date of Kurdistan Republic's declaration? When we recall the history of Turkish state and Kurdish resistance we see similar events; for example the PKK leader was handed over on 15th of February 1999 to Turkey when the Sheikh Said Rebellion started on 15th of February 1925; the PKK leader sentenced to death on 29th of June 1999 when Sheikh Said was executed in Amed on 29th June 1925 and when the so-called peace process collapsed, the Turkish state attacked the PKK positions inside and outside of Bakur Kurdistan on 24th July 2015, when the Lausanne Treaty partitioned Kurdistan into four parts on 24th July 1923. What do these two events in two centuries explain Kurdish and Kurdistan Question to Kurdish political parties and the people of Kurdistan?

**Short Bio**

Sait Keskin obtained his BA in International Relations and Politics from Oxford Brookes University, MA in Kurdish Studies from the University of Exeter and his PhD from the same university at the Centre for Kurdish Studies. Title of his thesis: *The Kurdistan National Liberation Movement: Paradigm Change and Transformation from National liberation to Democratic Liberation.*

<b>Presenter</b>	Sangar Rasul, Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Catholic University -Erbil /STANDARD Media and Research Institute
<b>Title</b>	Kirkuk from the Conflict zone to thriving one
<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>Kirkuk, for nearly a century, became a conflict point between the Iraqi Kurds and the Iraqi central governments from the early days of establishing this state. Even the falling of Saddam has not stopped the disputes on this city, and the issues have been continuing further. The new Iraqi constitution, however, proposed a pervasive solution under Article 140 to deal with it, but still, this article did not implement completely. Unfortunately, this unsolved status of the future of Kirkuk became a real dangerous threat on the coexistence-life among the people of this colourful city of Kurds, Arabs, Turkmens and Christians.</p> <p>That is why this paper sees that all efforts should be made to draw a very peaceful way to solve the Kirkuk's problem which is deeply affected the disputes between Kurds and Turkmens on the one hand and between the Central and regional government on the other hand. Due to its sensitivity, this paper would suggest that there should be a negotiation holding on Kirkuk's future by these three following perspectives: 1) the income and the oil fields, and 2) the elections and administration of this governorate, and 3) the land issues.</p> <p>This paper is trying to suggest a new way of working on this disputed city by separating the unsolved issues into three main categories as mentioned above; and what is new is depriving the economic issue especially the oil from other issues. By doing this, I suggested that the oil of Kirkuk should remain as a disputed field and it would be shared between both central and regional government and other neighbouring governorates as well. Despite giving a new way of dealing with the Oil fields, this paper also draws a line to give every main component of Kirkuk a guarantee through keeping their rights by installing a veto system before making any decisions in the governorate, and they will also be given a permanent position in various government platforms. This policy-oriented paper focuses on the potential solution and reconciliation approaches for the long-lasting Kirkuk question</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Sardar Aziz - Senior Adviser at Kurdistan Parliament, Kurdistan
<b>Institution</b>	Kurdistan Parliament, Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	The Kurdish Solution: A Different Approach
<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>The border system that crosses Kurdistan created new people and was expected to eliminate the old ones. The Kurds, because of their fragmentation and lack of national consciousness, were expected, through modernity, to become part of history (Macmillan, 2003). Against all the odds, the Kurds survived. These borders not only created the Kurdish issue in the Middle East but, more crucially, they prevented any real solution to the issue. Perversely, as a result of local, regional and global circumstances, the relationship among different parts of Kurdistan is only getting stronger.</p> <p>The modern fairy tale goes like this: the border creates a state, the state contains societies, but this state fails in remaking the people and severs their relationship with their roots. The experience to date is that all outside interventions have had unintended consequences. The issue of spill over national boundaries so far has contributed negatively to the Kurdish cause. No single country can solve the Kurdish issue without reaction, objection or intervention</p>	

from other countries. Moreover, Kurds have been supported against each other by these countries.

Against this background, drawing upon the current cross border issues, information and data I gathered through my working experience, I argue the Kurdish issue goes across border issues and only can be solved by overcoming the borders. This is neither a call for a pan-Kurdish unity nor a call for splitting the countries that divide Kurdistan. It is a call to soften the borders and make Kurds at the heart of the three civilizations to become a point of unity. From these cross-border associations based on shared culture, language, and geography, various links emerge that tie these countries without fragmenting them.

This will end the threat of sovereignties and secessions taking advantage of the Kurdish issue against each other. The (e)merged zone will develop a strong economy that vitalizes the economies of these countries and end the military and war cost.

**Short Bio**

Sardar Aziz is a senior adviser in Kurdistan Parliament Iraq. He obtained his PhD from the Department of Government / UCC Ireland. Consultant, scholar and writer. He has worked extensively with a number of European countries: Germany, Sweden, and European External Action Service (EEAS) and various blocks in the EU parliament. He also worked with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in Sweden and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Germany. His areas of expertise are political economy, civil-military relationship, and governing. His publications are in English (with Palgrave and Routledge) and in Kurdish, occasionally also in Arabic. He contributed research papers to the Atlantic Council, Washington Institute for Near East Study, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies and the Middle East Research Institute.

<b>Presenter</b>	Sardar Faqe Mohammed Ghaidan - Director of the Office of the Vice President of the Kurdistan Region
<b>Institution</b>	Office of the Vice President Kurdistan Region
<b>Title</b>	Perspectives on Reconstructing the Cultural, Language and Heritage in Post-war in the Case of Yazidi Community

**Abstract**

The paper will concentrate on the Yazidi community, which are one of the largest minority groups in Iraqi-Kurdistan, their perceptions, understanding and their expectations on the conflicts, wars and their future pacifying and reconciliation following the fundamentalist Islamist Military attack (ISIS) in 2014. This article will explore the cultural heritage of Yazidis, the damage and exposure to annihilation due to the attacks of ISIS and war conflicts in this area. Furthermore, the project will concentrate on the vital question of what future pacifying means to the Yazidi community and how they will rebuild their damaged shrines by the war in Iraqi-Kurdistan. The research will discuss reconstructing the destroyed shrines and heritage in the case of the Yazidi community and the changes that happened to this community after the ISIS attacks.

The research project employs an ethnographic account (Ann Gray, 2002) and draws on the use of in-depth interviews and non-participatory observations in the refugee camps in order to provide data in supporting our arguments within this article. The research will use the grounded theory (Kathy Charmaz, 2006) to analysis the data collected in the field, especially the Yazidi peoples story regarding the change that happens to their culture, heritage and community after wars. The interviews for this project was conducted with Yazidi people in

the refugee camps and Yazidi activists in the Kurdish community. Also, the researcher conducted the non-participatory observation in the destroyed place of worship, refugees' camps and Lalish shrine.

Through this paper, the researcher will provide an in-depth understanding surrounding the Yazidi community, culture, heritage and identity in the Kurdish community. Also, the paper will employ these to analyse the Yazidi people's situation after the war in Iraq-Kurdistan and how they try to tackle their miserable situation in the camps. The researcher reveals information about Yazidis internal and external conflicts within their community and their future perspective to find a solution for their situation.

**Short Bio**

Ghaidan is the Director of the Office of the Vice President of Kurdistan, he also works as a freelance researcher for various research centers such as digital cultural heritage (DCH) in Sulaimani. He also worked as a researcher at the Islamic University in Lebanon, surrounding educational administration and digital Cultural.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Professor Seevan Saeed
<b>Institution</b>	School of History and Culture, Shaanxi Normal University, China
<b>Title</b>	The Question of Kurdishness: Comprehension of Political Identity Construction

**Abstract**

The modern understanding of the political identity, characterised by analysing the elements and leverages of the distinctiveness for a group of people that have common values, interests, history, culture, memory and feelings to the same community, (Gellner 1969, Smith 1971 and 2001, Anderson 2005). Moreover, for a group to be united and distinct; it must have a boundary that can sovereignly differentiate its political borders from others, (Hutchinson 1987).

Coming from this viewpoint, according to the modern understanding of political identity, the notion of Kurdishness cannot be approached through mainstream comprehension. Since the Kurdish identity has often been oppressed by powerful states in the areas that Kurds live, the question of identity and the process of constructing Kurdish identity have been faced with various obstacles. The paper is an attempt to re-conceptualise the notion of Kurdishness through classifying the Kurds into two different political identities rather than a united one. Each of the two has already built its own history, politics, social and cultural frames, economic and diplomatic relations.

Arguably, the process of building identity by both blocks has not met totality and satisfaction by Kurds and external entities. Moreover, the perspective of the Kurds towards both identities has been seemingly decided in two different images. The labels of the Good Kurds vis the Bad Kurds, Old Kurds vis New Kurds, Submissive Kurds vis Strugglers Kurds, Collaborator Kurds vis Terrorist Kurds and finally the Kurds with Honour vis the Kurds without Honour; all have been parts of the "New divided Political Identity" of the Kurds from their own perspectives and descriptions of themselves. This paper is part of a long project that can inclusively show these two different trends of the claims of Kurdishness.

**Short Bio**

Seevan Saeed BA, MA, PhD (Exon) is an Associate Professor in Middle East Politics, School of History and Civilisation, Shaanxi Normal University- Xian, China. He received BA and MA degrees in Sociology at the University of Wolverhampton. Dr Saeed received his PhD

in Middle East Politics at the University of Exeter in 2014. He has delivered lectures at various universities internationally. He worked as a Human Rights activist and managed projects within NGOs in the Middle East. Dr Saeed has published articles in five languages and participated in national and international conferences about the Kurdish question and Middle East affairs.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ass. Professor Sherko Kirmanj
<b>Institution</b>	Department of International Relations, University of Sharjah, UAE
<b>Title</b>	Territorial Identity: The Essence of the Kurdish Question in Iraq

**Abstract**

Historically, Iraqi Arabs have only recognised and/or accepted Kurdish ethnic political, cultural and linguistic rights, to an extent. The Kurdish national territorial claims and rights have not been acknowledged and accepted. Likewise, the question of emotional attachment to the homeland is dismissed by some observers who view the Kurdish question as a mere administrative disagreement between Iraqi provinces rather than a question of territorial identity between two (sometimes three) competing nationalisms: Kurdish, Arabic and Iraqi. In view of the above, the paper intends to trace back the significance of territorial identity in the narrative of Kurdish political and intellectual elites. In addition, the paper investigates the historical dispute between the Iraqi Arab and the Kurdish political elites since the creation of the Iraqi state. The paper shows that territorial identity, in other words, the demarcation of the Kurdistan region, has been the major point of contention between the Kurds and Arab Iraqis which resulted in the breakdown of all the Kurdish-Iraqi negotiations of 1963–1966, 1970–1974, 1984–1985, 1991, and 2003–present. In other words, territorial identity is the root cause of the ethnic (Kurds-Arabs) conflict in Iraq.

The historical documents and data examined in this paper show that the dispute has been complicated by two major issues: the discovery of oil in the Kurdish populated areas and the policy and strategy of Arabization and ethnic cleansing by Iraqi governments.

The paper, therefore, suggests that the genesis of the Kurdish question in Iraq is the question of territorial identity. Hence it argues that redrawing the frontiers of Kurdistan region is a key to settling this century-old dispute. Any solution that regards the Kurdish question as merely an administrative or oil issue would overlook and cut short the symbolic and emotional attachment of homeland. Theoretically, the paper argues that territorialization of identity turns an ethnic group into a national group.

**Short Bio**

Sherko Kirmanj earned his PhD in International Studies at the University of South Australia. He is the author of: *Identity and Nation in Iraq* (the book is translated into Arabic by Al-Saqi Press and Aras Press); *Politicisation of Islam* (in Kurdish); and *Iraqi Identity: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflicts* (in Kurdish). Kirmanj has published eleven articles and five book chapters in international refereed journals and academic volumes in English. At the same time, Kirmanj has published numerous newspaper and website articles in Kurdish. He lectured at the College of Law and Politics at Salahaddin University - Kurdistan Region, Iraq. Kirmanj was Postdoctoral Fellow at University of South Australia and a Senior Lecturer at the University Utara Malaysia. He is currently Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, University of Sharjah in UAE, concurrently is Adjunct Professor at Koya University in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Shilan Fuad Hussain - PhD University of Urbino (2014)
<b>Institution</b>	Sectarianism, Self-determination, and the Kurdish quest for statehood
<b>Title</b>	Self determination and Kurdish statehood
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>Introduction: The aim of my research is to contribute to the study of Iraq, with a specific focus on the role of sectarianism, identity and ethnic based factors, since they are among the most prominent issues in the discussion about Iraq's history, society and politics. The research will analyse one of major causes of violent conflict between Kurds and Arabs in Iraq, by examining the role of sectarianism, identity, ethnicity, and will try to answer to very specific questions, such as: how do Iraqis identify themselves? How powerful are the concepts of Iraqi nationalism and ethnicity? The imposition of a Western system of administration created considerable difficulties between the different identities, and how the diverse communities interacted with the central state. The majority of the population did not aim to be absorbed into the Iraqi state; indeed, in past and in present times, the most serious problems in Iraq have been: the absence of a “national identity and a common consciousness”, the “diversity of Iraqi's people and society” and the sectarian division. In the future, the stability of Iraq will rely upon the task of balancing the demands of the Iraqi communal groups, as put forth by Gareth Stansfield, while disregarding the “pathological homogenization” of state conducted by the previous dictatorship.</p>	
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Dr Shilan Fuad Hussain's research focuses on on Nationalism, Statelessness, Diaspora, Comparative Migration Studies, Conflict and Identity Studies. Dr Shilan Fuad Hussain received her Ph.D in European Intercultural Studies from the University of Urbino in 2014, her M. Phil. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Bologna in 2011. She is an independent scholar, as well as an interpreter and translator.</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Shwan Adam Aivas - Senior Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Technical Media Department, Sulaimani Polytechnic University, Kurdistan Region of Iraq
<b>Title</b>	Professional Role Orientations of Journalists: Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a case study
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>By examining the professional role orientations of journalists in the case study of Iraqi Kurdish society, this paper will be inquiring into the “role perceptions” of media workers in one of the post-conflict regions in the Middle East. In post-conflict and developing societies, some phenomena have emerged as an outcome of the political and media transitions to democracy, including professional hegemony versus partisan hegemony and vice versa. While journalism can be realised as a profession which has a particular tradition, technique, sense of fellowship, and it is seen as a profession which has resisted, absorbed, or negotiated the assaults of commercialisation, there needs to be a further discussion here about what 'professionalism' means to Iraqi Kurdish journalists.</p> <p>From previous perspectives and debates investigating various meanings of the concept of 'professionalism in journalism', it can be understood that whenever professionalism is suggested for journalists as a discourse rather than a packed collection of attributes or values and claims - since professionalism in journalism is commonly ‘in decline’, such notions can be perceived as controversial. Meanwhile, directions to an obvious decline in professionalism and contemporary direction to the journalistic professionalisation may not be as different as they originally seem. In other words, discourses of professionalism and classical traditions of occupational identity have ceased to exert any power. This paper will be built on Hanitzsch</p>	

(2011) work to examine Kurdish journalism cultures of Populist Disseminator, Detached Watchdog, Critical Change Agent, and also Opportunist Facilitator. Those cultures of journalism will be explored based on 142 survey questionnaires with media workers in order to understand new-Gramscian conceptions of hegemony via adopting the Priority Model of journalists' professional activities toward their acquisition and revelation of information.

**Short Bio**

Dr Shwan Adam Aivas is a senior lecturer at the Technical Media Department, Sulaimani Polytechnic University, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He also acts as the Founder and Chairman of Kurdish Media Watchdog Organisation (KMWO) since October 2017. He completed his doctoral thesis at Nottingham Trent University, UK. His thesis title is: "Kurdish Journalism Cultures: Shifting Boundaries of Privacy Understandings and Professional Role Orientations Amongst Journalists". He also has written three books about ethics in Kurdish journalism, the right to privacy between law and ethics of journalism, and communication developments in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

<b>Presenter</b>	Silvia Nicola - Research Associate
<b>Institution</b>	The Felsberg Institute & University of Halabja, Germany/Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	Post-IS challenges and their impact on brain drain in the province of Halabja

**Abstract**

The fight against ISIS has put the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan in Iraq under a lot of pressure. High military expenditures, the massive influx of refugees and internally displaced persons, low oil revenues and budget cuts by the central government, have all contributed to a deep economic crisis across the region. While the region had gained a foothold in the disputed territories, as well as, some degree of international recognition, as a reliable partner in the fight against extremism, these gains have been only short-lived, following the unsuccessful referendum on independence held unilaterally by the Kurdistan Regional Government in 2017. This action has strained the regions' relationship with its neighbours and deepened internal political rivalries. These political dynamics did not remain without an impact on the already economically burdened population, which is struggling with the direct and indirect impact of over three decades of war and conflicts.

An especially challenging area is the Halabja region. After the massive destruction and loss of lives following the chemical attacks and the Anfal military operations from 1988, the city of Halabja is slowly becoming lively again, and the province is taking administrative and governmental tasks into its own hands. Nevertheless, there is still an intense feeling of discontent among the population, who feels that their needs are insufficiently addressed. Many are driven out by the lack of perspectives and the economically unviable possibility of earning oneself a basis of existence. This form of brain-drain is depriving the Halabja region of indispensable human capital.

Our project aims at researching how Iraqi-Kurdistan's' current challenges are impacting the young population of the Halabja province, asking: What are the main reasons of young people (under 35) to leave the region? What kind of responsibilities do they bear for the family members, who stay behind? What are the significant dissatisfactions, which would motivate them to leave the region? What are the most important factors, which keep the inhabitants in the region? These questions will be addressed through standardized questionnaires and in-

depth semi-structured interviews, which are being currently conducted among university students in the region.

**Short Bio**

Silvia Nicola works as a Research Associate at the Felsberg Institute (Germany), while being currently dispatched to the University of Halabja in KRI. At the same time, she is pursuing a PhD degree in Political Science from the Free University of Berlin, with a special focus on “unrecognized states”. Silvia earned her B.A. in Political Science also from the Free University of Berlin and the University of Granada, and her MA in Military Studies from the University of Potsdam. Her research interests lay geographically within the wider Middle East, the Southern Caucasus, and the Balkans. Thematically, she focuses on peace and conflict studies, conflict transformation, political violence, identity, migration and diaspora. She conducted several studies on the Afghan diaspora on behalf of GIZ, IOM and the German Foreign Office and co-edited the book “Conflict Veterans Discourses and Living Contexts of an Emerging Social Group”.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Sinem Arslan
<b>Institution</b>	University Essex
<b>Title</b>	Transborder Ethnic Kin and the Dynamics of Peace Processes: Insights from the Kurdish Conflict

**Abstract**

Why do some armed groups end up becoming negotiating partners in civil wars while others do not? Why do only some civil wars end with a peace process while others do not? Previous literature on conflict resolution has approached these questions primarily by looking at country-specific indicators or processes that take place within the countries that experience civil wars. Accordingly, civil wars end with peace processes when rebel groups can manage to inflict enormous costs on their opponent governments. However, the notion of the cost of war is often associated with internal factors such as the balance of military capabilities, battle-related casualties, and duration of the conflict. While consisting of a highly useful starting point, this closed polity approach that confines civil war peace processes within the borders of nation-states stands in sharp contrasts with many contemporary civil wars that display a transnational character. As such it remains highly inadequate to explain many civil war peace processes like the Kurdish Peace Process in Turkey where the actors, resources, aims, and events span national boundaries. This paper by studying the 2012 Kurdish Peace Process conducted between the Government of Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, hereafter PKK), aims at tracing the influence of the rebel groups' connections with their transborder ethnic kin groups on the government's willingness to open a peace process. The paper first shows how the factors suggested by the literature as the indicator of opening a peace process in civil wars remained relatively constant over time. Then, it suggests that the decision to open up the peace process with the PKK was partly due to PKK's linkages with its increasingly strong transborder ethnic kin group in Syria and the cost that this cooperation has created for the government. Building on the pillars of the bargaining theory of war, the paper offers a theoretical causal mechanism that consists of five interrelated stages and that explains how this transborder ethnic kin cooperation has affected the start and the fate of peace process in Turkey. Paper then traces the existence of the proposed causal mechanism by relying on theory testing process tracing method and by using the peace process meeting minutes, interviews (with experts, former fighters, politicians), and systematic investigations of 1357 newspaper articles published prior and during the peace process. Paper has both theoretical and empirical contributions. Theoretically, it shows that

civil war actors' incentives and opportunities for violence and peace can be largely shaped by factors outside the civil war states and that the rebel groups' transnational linkages with their ethnic kin groups indeed affect civil war outcomes. Empirically, it relies on the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative empirical data. Paper aims to speak to academic debates in the conflict resolution, transnationalism civil wars and the Kurdish studies literature.

**Short Bio**

Dr Sinem Arslan is a Research Fellow at the Michael Nicholson Centre for Conflict and Cooperation of the University of Essex. She completed her PhD at the University of Essex and holds Masters degrees from the London School of Economics and Bogazici University. By using qualitative, quantitative, and GIS mapping techniques, she investigates the dynamics of political violence comparatively. Her research specifically focuses on the transnational dynamics of civil wars, civil war peace processes, and terrorism within the context of civil wars.

<b>Presenter</b>	Sohrab Ahmadian - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba,
<b>Title</b>	Identity Formation and Political Mobilisation Amongst Kurdish Diaspora

**Abstract**

Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the Middle East without a nation-state of their own. Kurdish migration to other countries occurred mainly in response to political crises and events, such as the state's repression of ethnic minorities. Part of the Kurds migrated to from their homeland because of the four-decade-long Turkish-Kurdish conflict. Since then their dispersal was because of homeland conflict, hence they have been closely following the homeland conflict and trying to play a role in it. Then, immigration policies and the bond of the Kurdish ethnic group with their collective identity, culture and political views, and also the interconnectedness in their economic needs, has led them into living in the nearby and keeping the relationship together. In this converging society, presence of elites has led to bringing the collective activities and political mobilization in the community. The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of this Kurdish community organisations in preserving identity among the Kurdish diaspora also exploring the mechanisms of political mobilisation among them. This study is grounded in qualitative research design within a case study approach. In-depth semi-structured interviews were employed for data collection. The findings of this study indicated that Kurdish community organisations are places for socialisation, peace and friendship settings, an exercise in ethnic identity awareness and counselling.

**Short Bio**

Sohrab Ahmadian is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Tsukuba, Japan, in the field of Political Sociology. He obtained both his bachelor's degree in Japanese language and literature and a master's degree in Japanese Studies from University of Tehran, Iran. Before studying abroad, 12 years ago for a week he traveled to Japan for the first time as a guide-interpreter during a cultural and educational exchange workshop for world peace at the Kyoto Museum for World Peace. This was an opportunity where he could share his new ideas and stories. His research focuses specifically on the Kurdish Diaspora patterns in Japan and their impact on the growth of political issues. He is also a poet and photographer.

<b>Presenter</b>	Prof Stephen Syrett and Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles
<b>Institution</b>	Middlesex University
<b>Title</b>	Diasporas, agency and enterprise in settlement and homeland contexts: Politicised entrepreneurship in the Kurdish diaspora
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>Through its focus on state-diaspora relations, existing research has given limited consideration to the role of non-state entrepreneurial actors in understanding diaspora politicisation. This paper addresses this research gap by examining the contextually embedded relationship between diaspora politicisation and entrepreneurial activity within diaspora settlement and homeland spaces. Findings are presented of original qualitative research with Kurdish diaspora entrepreneurs based in Europe operating in the media and publishing industries. Results demonstrate how the intersection between diaspora identity, opportunity frameworks and available resources generates forms of politicised diaspora entrepreneurship, and how these venture activities contribute to the transnational (re)production of diaspora identity and the mobilisation of locally rooted diaspora populations. The implications of these findings are discussed in relation to enhancing current understanding of diaspora entrepreneurship and the significance of non-state actors within the diaspora politicisation process, and their relevance to policy thinking across homeland and settlement contexts.</p>	
<b>Short Bio</b>	
<p>Stephen is Professor of Local Economic Development and Director of Research of Middlesex University Business School. He specialises in issues of local and regional economic development, small business development and governance and policy, and small business research with particular reference to ethnic business, home-based business, social enterprise and the role of enterprise in regenerating deprived areas. He has published widely on these topics including a number of books and many journal articles and reports. He has worked extensively with a wide range of national, regional and local government bodies in the UK and Europe, including BIS, DCLG, DWP and the European Commission, as well as with a wide range of voluntary and community sector and private sector organisations. Stephen was a member of the Department of Communities and Local Government Neighbourhoods, Cities and Regions Analysis Expert Panel and is currently a member of the leadership team for the Microbusiness Research Portal (<a href="http://microbusiness.ac.uk">http://microbusiness.ac.uk</a>) and the Editorial Board of the journal Local Economy.</p> <p>Keles' short bio on p.16</p>	

<b>Presenter</b>	Thanos Trappelides - Doctoral Researcher & Project Coordinator
<b>Institution</b>	International Relations (Lancaster University) Project Coordinator (Richardson Institute) Teaching Associate (Lancaster University PPR Department)
<b>Title</b>	Kurdish Nationalism in Iraq: A Critical Realist Approach
<b>Abstract</b>	
<p>Theories of Nationalism and International Relations have not paid significant attention to the development of Kurdish nationalism, despite the fact that the Kurds represent a unique case in the contemporary study of the phenomenon. The Kurds constitute a 'nation without a state,' i.e. a territorial community characterised by a unique identity and a desire for self-determination situated within the boundaries of one or more states. Most of the studies adopt an essentialist approach focusing on the primordial character and overlooking the modern social reconstruction of Kurdish identity and its features. However, the emergence of the Kurdish national identity did not occur under an industrialised context according to most</p>	

modernisation theories whilst no Kurdish state existed to facilitate the establishment of a national identity. Thus, the idea that nations possess primordial elements which precede all social and political interactions, seems strong in the Kurdish case. This paper situates Kurdish nationalism in Iraq within the nationalism debate claiming that the feeling of identity of Iraqi Kurds is based on: (a) their own common perception of the existence of a community which possesses a unique core facilitating the emergence of a unique identity (b) the effects of social, political and economic factors accounting for the context of nationalistic development or nationalistic resistance (c) a growing sense of a post-2003 unique sense of belonging classified as civic nationalism. The nationalistic development is understood as a morphogenetic process; a critical realist approach is employed which depicts a dialectical relation to the structure-agency problem.

**Short Bio**

Thanos is an International Relations PhD candidate at the Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religious Studies of the Lancaster University. His research focuses on the development of nationalism in the Middle East, using the post-2003 development of Kurdish nationalism in Iraq as a case study. It employs a critical realist approach to depict a dialectical relation to the structure-agency problem and reconceptualise nationalism as a phenomenon and as a political ideology. He is also employed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, leading seminars for the ‘Politics and International Relations’ course whilst also being a Project Coordinator for the Richardson Institute.

<b>Presenter</b>	Tiago Duarte Dias - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Fluminense Federal University, Brazil
<b>Title</b>	Being Kurdish in Denmark: A Constant Construction

**Abstract**

This article discusses, based on fieldwork undertaken in 2014 and 2015, topics related to "being Kurdish" in Denmark through political and cultural organisations, built by Kurdish individuals who are either immigrants or descendants - second and third generation. Within this framework, there will be an analysis on how the constant political and cultural demonstrations in public places serve both to establish a dialogue with the Danish society while at the same time, it also serves as a way to reaffirm and to continue with the constant construction vis-à-vis other individuals of what is understood by themselves as "being Kurdish".

Thus, such demonstrations serve as a way of individuals who see themselves as Kurds to realise their sociability in articulation with this ethnic identity, as in a way in which old acquaintances can meet each other, and tell old stories about the guerrillas in the mountains in the Turkish area of Kurdistan, and for them to talk about the situation of their relatives throughout Kurdistan, Denmark or in other countries. Whilst those demonstrations also serve as a way of socialisation for children and teenagers on what it means "to be Kurdish", even as they are in the context of diaspora. At the same time, those demonstrations work as a marker of ethnicity within a broad Danish context, in which they seek to reaffirm their uniqueness, whilst at the same time, portraying themselves as a relevant part of Danish society, and one which aims to extend their influence on Danish politics.

<b>Presenter</b>	Ufuk Sahin - Doctoral Researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Department of Political and Social Sciences, Freie Universitaet Berlin
<b>Title</b>	The Rise and Fall of the AKP government’s policy of transforming the Turkish-Kurdish conflict

**Abstract**

Why did the AKP government change its policy of transforming the Turkish-Kurdish conflict? Based on fieldwork and interviews conducted in Turkey with civil society, NGOs and representatives of the AKP as well as the HDP, this paper seeks to explain the failure of both the peace negotiations and the AKP's reconciliation policy. Drawing on political opportunity theory and on theories of authoritarian rule this paper argues that due to Iraqi Kurdistan's strong pull effect and the increasing institutionalization of the Kurdish national movement in the Middle East, the PKK reached out for its own state at an opportune moment, which caused the AKP to turn away from a policy of reconciliation. Furthermore, due to its changed position on the domestic front, the AKP government has not anymore entered into dialogue for conflict resolution.

In view of the fact that Kurds in West Asia have been subject to social and political exclusion for about a century, the paper suggests that after a long time it was conceivable for the Kurdish national movement in Turkey and in Syria to have its own state. Due to military successes of the Kurdish national movement in Syria against ISIS and the appreciation it received from Western powers for its military strength, the PKK no longer wanted to be a 'suppliant' in Turkey's difficult peace process, but to use its growing power. As a result of the military successes in Syria and a growing Pan-Kurdism in the region, the Kurdish movement in Anatolia and Rojava was offered an opportunity to seek irredentism to unify Northern and Western Kurdistan, which embodied an attempt at secession for both nationalist circles in Turkey and the AKP government having regime survival as its very priority. The formation of the only viable 'ruling coalition' with generals and other ultranationalist forces - from the AKP's perspective - reinforced the dominance of nationalist thinking as well as the strategy of obtaining a military solution to the Turkish-Kurdish question.

The paper aims first, to contribute to a better understanding of the interrelation between AKP's (non-)governance of diversity, the peace process and dynamics of national identities in Turkey under conditions of political and social transformations in the Middle East. Second, the paper seeks to offer some insights into the reasons why states abandon political solutions to ethnic conflicts under changing conditions on both the national and regional level.

**Short Bio**

Ufuk Sahin is a PhD candidate in Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin and was a visiting graduate researcher at Sabancı University. He is interested in the relations between constellations of power on a regional and global level, domestic political processes, ethnic conflicts, and contested and constructed identities within (trans-)national contexts. Prior to starting his PhD degree, he was a research assistant at the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. He holds a MA in European Studies from the University of Salzburg.

<b>Presenter</b>	Vakkas Colak - Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan University Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia
<b>Title</b>	Representation of Kurdish Asylum Seekers in Japanese Media

**Abstract**

This research targets to explore the representation of Kurdish asylum seekers in Japanese media for the period between 2000-2019. The research aims to analyse the fluctuations and changes in the representations of Kurdish asylum seekers in Japanese media within the last 20 year period. How and to what extent do Japanese policies and partnerships between Japanese and Kurds have an influence on the changes in the representation of Kurdish asylum seekers in Japanese media is also questioned through the research. As Kurdish migration to Japan is a recent phenomenon, there are not many studies focusing on the Kurdish asylum

seekers in Japan. However, research targets to utilise the literature based on Kurdish asylum seekers in other countries especially in Europe. Utilising the Kurdish diaspora studies in other countries, our research aims to be one of the primary sources about Kurdish asylum seekers in Japan and how they are represented in general.

<b>Presenter</b>	Dr Yadgar Abdulah Ali - Lecturer
<b>Institution</b>	Department of Political Geography at Koya University, Kurdistan
<b>Title</b>	The Geopolitical and Geostrategic Significance of Oil in KRG-Turkish Relations and Future of Kurdistan Region in Iraq

**Abstract**

Since its establishment in 1992 as a political and geographical entity, the Kurdistan Region in Iraq (KRI) has gained geo-strategic significance for Turkey because of the significance of the Kurdish question for Turkey, as well as because of the geo-economic significance of the KRI as it contains significant oil and gas reserves with the potential to become a major exporter of energy to Europe and the international market via Turkey. It is estimated that the KRI's oil reserves are around 57 billion barrels in total. This makes the KRI the seventh in world ranking within OPEC and eighth globally. Based on the findings of this study, the KRI supplies 46% of Turkish oil needs currently. This has made Turkey heavily reliant on the KRI's oil for domestic consumption. In addition, Turkish investment in the KRI oil sector is about 24% of total international investment - making Turkey the largest regional and international investor in the KRI. In light of this, this paper examines the significance of KRI's oil and gas and its impact on the KRG-Turkish relation. The paper also highlights the role of oil in placing KRI as an international and regional political and economic player. The paper is a chronological assessment of the discovery, production and exportation of oil and gas in KRI. It is a historical analysis of the geopolitical role of KRI's oil in shaping Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) foreign policy and its impact on its relationship with the regional and international players, in particular, Turkey. The study demonstrates that competition and engagement in KRI oil sector plays a critical role in the ascendancy of the KRG's political position regionally and internationally. The paper argues that KRI's oil is one of the main pillars of the KRG-Turkey relationship. This study, therefore, concludes that the future of KRI relies heavily on the oil production and its capability and ability to export oil and gas on the one hand, and the use of the oil revenue for political and strategic objectives on the other.

**Short Bio**

Yadgar Abdullah Ali earned his BA degree in geography from the University of Sulaimani in 2001, his MA was in political geography from Koya University in 2008, and his joint PhD degree in political geography was awarded by Koya University and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) in 2019. His main research interests are in the realm of political geography and geography of the Kurdistan Region. He has taught geography courses at the undergraduate levels in Raparin University for two years from 2011 to 2013 as a part-time lecturer. Currently, he is a full-time lecturer of geography at the Geography Department of the Faculty of Education at Koya University.

<b>Presenters</b>	Yasin Sunca & Tobias Reinhardt - Doctoral Researchers
<b>Institution</b>	RTG World Politics, Bielefeld University, Germany and MENARG, Ghent University, Belgium Istituto di Scienze Umane e Sociali (SNS), Italy

<b>Title</b>	Global Movement for (Radical) Democracy: The PKK and the New Internationalism
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This paper aspires to explicate why and how the PKK aims at mobilising a global movement for (radical) democracy. Initiated as a Marxist-Leninist national liberation movement in the revolutionary period of the 60s and 70s in Turkey, the PKK has transformed itself into a proclaimed radical democratic movement from early 2000 on, as a response to the insurmountable structural dynamics in upper Mesopotamia and their analysis from a perspective heavily informed by the post-Marxian revolutionary literature. Building on the PKK's historical internationalist praxis, this attempt goes beyond the relatively simplistic intellectual and analytical binary positioning of particularism versus universalism. The PKK is establishing relations with different (revolutionary) parties, movements and individuals globally and gradually developing a dynamic network of activists based on the idea of radical democracy and its realisation in Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan). We argue that such an attempt can be explained ideologically, through the impossibility of the realisation of democratic confederalism under Western Asian conditions without a globally mobilised solidarity. We develop the argument in the following way: first, we show that the new internationalism becomes a way to articulate global resistance against the neoliberal globalisation's delocalised 'threat' that is everywhere and anywhere. And second, we analyse the transformation of the PKK itself, and its transformed understanding of the 'solution to the Kurdish question', which makes sense only if revolutionary agency is defined beyond historically embedded spatial (West versus East or North versus South), temporal (regressive versus progressive), and social (bourgeoisie versus proletariat) binaries.</p>
<b>Short Bio</b>	<p>I work at the "World Politics" research group of Bielefeld University, Germany, and am affiliated with the Middle East and North Africa Research Group (MENARG) of Ghent University, Belgium (cotutelle). Before my current research, I was working for the Peoples' Democratic Party's representation in Europe. I am a researcher at the DEMOS - Research Centre for Peace, Democracy and Alternative Politics, based in Ankara, where we focus on peace research. I do consultancy work for various peace organisations on an ad-hoc basis. My main academic interests are radical political theory, international historical sociology of West Asian modernities, democratic confederalism and the peaceful transformation of conflicts.</p>

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relations, discourse analysis, populism, identity, religion, conflict, and peace, within the Middle Eastern, Turkish, and Kurdish area studies. He also is an Associate Editor of the *New Middle Eastern Studies*.

## **Book Launches**

- 1. *The Forgotten Years of Kurdish Nationalism in Iran*, Abbas Vali (Palgrave, June 2019), 'Minorities in West Asia & North Africa' series coedited by Kamran Matin & Paolo Maggiolini.**

This book investigates the forgotten years of Kurdish nationalism in Iran, from the fall of the Kurdish republic to the advent of the Iranian revolution. An original and path-breaking investigation of the period, it sheds light not only on the historical specificity of the phenomenon of nationalism in exile, but also on the political processes and practices defining the development of Kurdish nationalism in the post-revolutionary era. Although nationalist landmarks such as the Kurdish republic in 1946 and the resurgence of the movement in the revolutionary conjuncture of 1978-79 have attracted the attention of historians and social scientists in recent years, little is known about the three decades of Kurdish nationalism in exile between these two events. This analysis draws on contemporary poststructuralist theory to question the concept of the minority in democratic and constitutional theory, arguing that it is an effect of the discursive linkage between sovereign power and the dominant ethnic-linguistic identity in the nation-state. This text will appeal to a wide academic audience ranging from the fields of Kurdish, Iranian and Middle East Studies to ethnicity, nationalism, government, and political science (Prof Vali's short bio on p.24)

- 2. *Democratic Representation in Plurinational States - The Kurds in Turkey*, Ephraim Nimni & Elçin Aktoprak Editors (2018) Palgrave**

This book examines in theory, in relevant case studies and through the work of legal practitioners, the challenges, and possible solutions offered by different models for the effective participation of minorities in public life, in accordance with the Lund Recommendations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE (Nimni 2010) with a specific reference to Turkey and the Kurdish issue, and, drawing on the experience on other recent attempts of minority accommodation in other developing parts of the world. We begin with this book an ongoing dialogue and investigation to examine critically various models of minority accommodation, focussing mainly on the Kurds and on other minorities that constitute 30% of nearly more than the population of the Republic of Turkey. This book is the result of the fruitful exchange of ideas from the participants of the workshop and constitutes a stepping-stone towards the development of workable modalities for the integration and participation of cultural and national minorities in the political architecture of contemporary states.

### **Short bios of editors of the book**

**Dr. Ephraim Nimni** taught at the Universities of Keele, New South Wales in Sydney, and Queen's University Belfast. Published widely on minority rights, models of national self-determination that do not require separate nation states, multiculturalism and the applicability of the national cultural autonomy model to contemporary multinational states and on the Israeli Palestinian conflict. He is a member of the board of the journals *Ethnopolitics* and *Politikon*. He was a lecturer at the Social Dialogue Partners seminar in Sarajevo, BiH and the M.A. in Comparative Ethnic Conflict, University of the Basque Country, Bilbao. His work has been cited in a presentation to the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 22 March 2010.

**Dr. Elçin Aktoprak** was an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Ankara University till she was dismissed as per an emergency decree in February 2017. She is the author of *States and Their Nations: Nationalism and Minority Issues in Western Europe* (2010) and co- editors of *Nationalism in the Twenty First Century: Theory and Practice* (2016), and *Minority Self-Government in Europe and in the Middle East* due to be published in 2019. Her research interests are theories of nationalism, minority issues in Europe, the Kurdish question, conflict resolution and peace studies. She published books and articles on these issues in leading national and international journals.

## Seminar at the House of Commons, The British Parliament

<b>Speakers</b>	Prof Abbas Vali, Emeritus Professor of Sociology Dr Arzu Yilmaz, Independent Scholar Dr Naif Bezwan, University of Klagenfurt, Austria, and UCL
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Janroj Yilmaz Keles, Middlesex University Law School
<b>Venue/Time</b>	<b>Committee room, House of Commons, The British Parliament @ 7:00pm</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>The Kurdish Question in the Post Daesh (ISIS) Middle East</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Kurds are the largest stateless people/nation in the contemporary world. The greater Kurdistan, the historical habitat of the Kurds, has been divided into four parts, and the fragments are ruled by the sovereign states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria sanctioned by the geo-political arrangements put in place by Britain and France after the WW1. The sovereign states ruling Kurdish territories have pursued policies of authoritarian modernization geared to political and administrative centralism on the one hand and the construction of uniform national identities on the other. They thus constructed conceptions of unitary nation by linking the dominant/majority ethnicities (Persian, Arab and Turkish) with political power in their respective constitutions to the exclusion of the others. The processes and practices of the construction of the homogenising nation-state and imaginary national identity as such resulted in the suppression, denial and exclusion of subordinate/minority identities, including and specially Kurdish identity, from the legal, political and cultural processes. Kurds have since resisted policies of exclusion and assimilation and struggled for the recognition of their identity and their civil and democratic rights as equal citizens in the four sovereign states. The Kurds' resistance against sovereign state suppression, exclusion and assimilation and their struggle for legal-political recognition and the right to lead an autonomous life in their historical habitat have defined the formation and development of the "Kurdish question" in the modern Middle East.</p> <p>The Kurdish quest for regional autonomy within the existing borders of the four states ruling Kurdish territories has been perceived by them as a "threat to their national security" and a "foreign plot" undermine their political unity and territorial integrity. For these sovereign states the Kurdish question is inextricably linked with their national security, and this ominous linkage has been used to justify their recourse to "military solution" to the Kurdish question resulting in protracted wars, scourged earth campaigns, forced displacement, ethnic cleansing and at times mass extermination and genocide.</p> <p>The Gulf war and the fall of the Ba'th regime in Iraq in 2003 broke this mould. The crisis which followed the disintegration of the state enabled the Kurdish political forces to assert their authority over a large part of their territory. This arrangement was subsequently legally sanctioned by a bi-national democratic constitution recognizing the Kurdish autonomous region as an integral part of the federal state of Iraq. The KRG, for all its internal shortcomings and deficiencies, has been a source of unity and strength in the otherwise precarious structure of political power in federal Iraq. It has offered a model, a living example, for constructive and mutually beneficial coexistence of Kurdish regional autonomy and national/territorial state Sovereignty within a democratic political structure in the Middle East. But the lesson offered by the KRG has been systematically ignored by Iran, Turkey and Syria whose Kurdish communities are demanding the same rights and liberties. The current crises and conflicts in the post-Daesh Middle East including the crisis of sovereignty in Syria and Iraq, economic crisis and falling legitimacy of the Islamist government in Turkey, and the intensification of the Iran-US confrontation and the systemic crisis in the Islamic republic, have changed the terms and condition of the representation and resolution of Kurdish question, albeit differently in different parts of Kurdistan.</p> <p>Although the present critical conditions and the prospect of long term national and regional instability go against the viability of military solution to the Kurdish question, the states ruling over Kurdistan) have done little to</p>

change the official perception of the Kurdish autonomy as an imminent threat to the national security, political unity and territorial integrity of the nation-state in the Middle East. This ominous perception continues to persist in their official discourse on national security and regional stability informing the processes and practices of policy and decision making regarding the Kurdish question in these states. A positive change in the orthodox sovereign perceptions of Kurdish question would presuppose, first, a radical redefinition of ideologically informed national security conceptions and, second, transformations of decidedly authoritarian state structures. This, however can only be achieved by the democratization of the political and legal processes grounded in genuine democratic pluralism, civic and secular conceptions of citizenship and political participation in these countries.

**Organised by Centre for Kurdish Progress and Kurdish Research Network**

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