The Political Situation of Iraqi Turkmen After The 1990 Period

Dr. Çağdaş DUMAN

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By
Dr. Çağdaş DUMAN

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Contents

INTRODUCTION 6

ORİGİN AND MEANİNG OF THE TURKMEN WORD 7
THE ARRIVAL OF TURKMEN TO THE REGION, STATES, AND, AND PRINCIPALITIES THEY FOUNDED 8
TURKMENS IN THE OTTOMAN ERA 8
THE EMERGE OF MODERN IRAQ 9
MAIN SETTLEMENTS OF TURKMENS 9
Kirkuk 9
Arbil 10
Salah al-Din 10
Mosul Province 10
Tal Afar 10
Baghdad 10
THE POSITION OF THE TURKMEN IN THE LEGAL STRUCTURE OF IRAQ 11
1932 Declaration of the Iraqi Republic 11
1958 Military Coup 11
Political Struggle of Iraqi Turkmens Until the First Gulf War 12

THE IMPACTS OF THE FIRST GULF WAR ON IRAQ AND TURKMEN POLITICS ..15

DEVELOPMENTS BEFORE AND DURING THE FIRST GULF WAR 15
THE IMPACT OF THE FIRST GULF WAR ON THE TURKMEN 16
SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF TURKMENS 18
RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE OF TURKMENS 19
FACTORS AFFECTING TURKMEN ORGANIZATIONS IN IRAQ 19
POLITICAL PARTIES ESTABLISHED BY TURKMEN IN IRAQ 20
Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) 20
Iraqi National Turkmen Party (INTP) 20
Turkmeneli Party 21
Nationalist Turkmen Community (NTC) 21
Turkmen Nationalist Movement (TNM) 22
Iraqi Turkmen Justice Party (ITJP) 22
Turkmen Decision Party 22
Turkmen Independents Movement (TIM) 23
Iraqi Turkmen Islamic Union (ITIU) 23
Turkmen Loyalty Movement 23
Turkmen Islamic Movement (TIM) 23
Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party (ITNP) 24
Iraqi Turkmen Unity Party (ITUP) 24
Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party (ITBP) 24
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ESTABLISHED BY IRAQI TURKMEN 25
Iraqi Turkmen Non-Governmental Organizations (ITNGO) 25
Turkmen Brotherhood Association (TBA) 25
Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood and Culture Association (ITBCA) 26
Turkmeneli Cooperation and Culture Foundation (TCCF) 26
İhsan Doğramacı Arbil Foundation 26
TURKMEN CONGRESSES 26
First Turkmen Congress (4-7 October 1997) 27
Second Turkmen Congress (20-22 November 2000) 28
Third Turkmen Congress (12-15 September 2003) 29
Fourth Turkmen Congress 30
Fifth Turkmen Congress (13-14 June 2008) 30

TURKEY'S INFLUENCE PERIOD IN NORTHERN IRAQ (1991-2003) 31
THE IMPACTS OF THE SECOND GULF WAR ON IRAQ AND TURKMEN POLITICS 32
PRE-WAR REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ATMOSPHERE 32
THE PROCESS OF RECONSTRUCTING IRAQ IN THE PERIOD AFTER THE OCCUPATION 33
IRAQI ELECTION SYSTEM 35
Country Electoral District 36
Low Election Threshold System 36
Closed List Basis 36
Election Participation Principles of Iraqis Abroad 37
BASIC DYNAMICS DETERMINING THE POST-OCCUPATION POLITICAL STRUCTURE 37
Tribalism Approach 37
The Impact of Ethnic and Religious Tendencies on Iraqi Politics 37
THE NEW POLITICAL STRUCTURE ESTABLISHED IN IRAQ 38
ELECTION ALLIANCES 38
Shiite-Religious Alliance (Al-Sistani List) 39
Government List 39
Kurdish Alliance 39
Turkmen Alliance 40
JANUARY 30, 2005, IRAQI ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICAL TABLE 40
THE PERMANENT CONSTITUTION OF IRAQ AND THE POSITION OF THE TURKMEN 41
15 DECEMBER 2005 ELECTIONS 43
31 JANUARY 2009 IRAQI LOCAL ELECTIONS 46
MARCH 7, 2010, IRAQI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 47
REASONS WHY IRAQI TURKMEN FAILED IN IRAQI POLITICS 51
SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF IRAQ AND, STRATEGIES THAT TURKMEN SHOULD APPLY 52
SCENARIOS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF IRAQ'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY 52
DIVIDED IRAQ SCENARIOS 54
POLITICAL-STRATEGIC OPTIONS ACCORDING TO POSSIBLE SITUATIONS 55
CONCLUSİON 56
BİBLİOGRAPHY 58

INTRODUCTION

In the process that started with the Seljuk period, the Turks belonging to the Oghuz tribes living in the Middle East, Anatolia, and the Caucasus were called Turkmen. The concept of Iraqi Turkmen appears as a product of the British mandate in the region in the post-World War I period. It is seen that the main factor in the emergence of this concept is to create a separate sub-identity by removing Iraqi Turks from their position in Turkey, and the Turkish World. In order to emphasize the sensitivity of this issue, it was deemed appropriate to use the definition of Iraqi Turks in the title of the thesis. However, considering the definition of Turkmen in the official names of the organizations, and political parties in the region, and the synonymous use of the words Turk, and Turkmen, the concept of Iraqi Turkmen is used in the rest of the study. Iraqi Turkmen are the third most populous ethnic group in Iraq in terms of population, after Arabs, and Kurds. The population of Turkmen varies between one, and two, and a half million in various sources. Turkmens reside in the most critical strategic regions in Iraqi geography. Besides, Turkmens constitute the most outstanding segment of the Iraqi population in socio-economic terms. Throughout history, Turkmen have faced many difficulties in preserving the unity, and identity of Iraq. Turkmen set an example for the region in terms of ensuring stability, and peace in this process.

Turkey has a historical responsibility toward the Turkmen, who are the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. Unfortunately, the manifestation of this responsibility to the academic community is not enough. Considering the actuality of the subject, and its impact on world politics, Iraqi Turkmen could not find the place, and the importance they deserve in the works written on Turkish Foreign Policy, and the Middle East. In the study, which was carried out in the form of resource research in libraries, literature review on the Internet, and examination of newspapers, and magazines related to the subject, the post-Cold War period was specially selected considering that the regional, and global dynamics were extremely active. While conducting this research, it was primarily aimed to include strategic projections that shed light on the future. One of the criteria taken into consideration was to convey the conceptual infrastructure needed by someone who did not know this subject at the beginning of the thesis, to the reader when reading the studies. Thirdly, an answer was sought to the question of the reflection of the post-Cold War political conjuncture on Iraq, and to what extent the Iraqi political system had a share of liberal values such as human rights, and the rule of law. Finally, it was desired to be an encouraging factor for a more detailed study on the subject in the future. With this study, the historical, and political accumulation of the Iraqi Turkmen were evaluated chronologically, and the reflection of the changes that took place after the Cold War in Iraqi geography was emphasized. The role played by the Turkomans in Iraqi politics, and in the construction of Iraq was evaluated in the table created as a result of the First, and Second Gulf Wars.

The beginning of the policies of annihilation towards the Turkmen was the establishment of a mandate state in the Iraqi geography under the auspices of England after the Turkmen geography left the Ottoman administration. Iraq remained under Ottoman rule until the First World War. The regions where Turkmen lived were under Ottoman control from 1534 until the First World War. The Republic of Turkey, which was established as a remnant of the Ottoman Empire after the war, determined the borders to a great extent with the Treaty of Lausanne. The newly established state struggled for a long time to solve the problems left over by the Ottoman Empire, and to prove its worth in the international arena. The Mosul issue, which could not be resolved at the Lausanne Conference, was transferred to the League of Nations and left to the Iraqi State, which was established under the British mandate with the Ankara Agreement signed on 5 June 1926. The established mandate regime ignored the Turkmen and did not accept their presence in Iraq.

The Turkmens were systematically assimilated until Iraq gained its independence, and joined the UN in 1932. Although the Turkmen were hopeful when Iraq gained its independence, and came out of the British mandate, the developments that took place afterward destroyed this hope of the

Turkmen. Although the Turkmen defended Iraq's territorial integrity and regional peace, they could not find the value they deserved in their lands. In 1979, Iraqi politics witnessed another break. The Turkmen suffered from the oppressive regime that emerged with the coming to power of the Socialist Arab Baath Party led by Saddam Hussein. The Turkmen, seen as a potential threat by the regime, became victims of the chaotic environment brought on by the Iraq-Iran War, and the First Gulf War, and many Turkmen opinion leaders paid the price with their lives. The Turkmen, who took advantage of the authority vacuum in Northern Iraq with the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, gained serious gains in political formation, and organization. After the terrorist attacks on the twin towers in the USA on September 11, 2001, the eyes of the international public were turned to Iraq as a result of President Bush's targeting of Saddam's regime. A new era began as a result of the overthrow of the Baathist regime in Iraq as a result of the military intervention of the multinational coalition forces led by the USA on 20 March 2003. Military intervention serves as an important laboratory to examine the efforts of global powers to shape the region with liberal discourses. In Iraq, designed by the occupation forces, sectarian, and ethnic divisions were fueled, and a system based on social consensus could not be developed. Iraqi Turkmen were excluded from the restructuring process of Iraq in a planned, and systematic way by the occupying forces in Iraq. The constitutional rights of the Turkmen were ignored, and they suffered a great deal from the violence that took place in Iraq.

During the restructuring of Iraq, four elections were held, three general, and one local, but the Turkmens could not achieve the desired success in these elections. The Kirkuk issue, which is a very important issue for the presence of the Turkmen in the region, remains uncertain. The influence of Turkey, which is the only ally of the Turkmen in the region, is eroding. Especially with the rejection of the March 1 resolution, the Turkish-US relations, which were interrupted, were blamed on the Turkmen in the region. The hegemonic powers in Iraq continue their assimilation, and intimidation policies against the Turkmen, with their local allies in the region increasing the dose. These days, when the geography of the Middle East is being reshaped, a very difficult process awaits Turkey and Iraqi Turkmen.

Origin and Meaning of the Turkmen Word

The Turkmen tribes, who settled in Anatolia and Iraq in the process that started with the Seljuk period and later adopted the Iraqi geography as their homeland, were called Turkmen. Although there are various opinions and thoughts about Turkmen's word, the most significant one is İbrahim Kafesoğlu's view. Kafesoğlu emphasized the possibilities of the emergence of the Turkmen idiom based on language grammar and argued that the Turkmen phrase means noble, great, and superior (Kafesoğlu, 1971:24). All historians have come to a common opinion that the Turkmen are not something separate from the Turks and only the Muslim part of the Oghuzs is called Turkmen (Hürmüzlü, 2005:72). Turkmen from Oghuz communities have been divided into various tribes since they entered Iraq. After adopting the religion of Islam, the Turkmens, who entered into a struggle with their non-Muslim cognates, migrated from the Transoxiana and Harizm regions to the homeland of the Pechenegs, who were close to the Black Sea coast (Hürmüzlü, 1994:13). Thus, the Turkmens, who spread to Islamic countries, influenced and established many states (Turan, 1965:7). It seems that the Turkmen are Oghuz Turks, who settled in Transoxiana and Horosan, adopted the religion of Islam also later migrated to Anatolia, Iraq, and the Middle East countries (Hürmüzlü, 1994:14). Although the Turkmen's word comes from a historical origin mentioned above, it has become a political identity today. As a result of the separation of Iraqi Turkmen from their homeland, the Turkmen's word was used to break the ties of Iraqi Turks with Turkey. The name "Turkmen" was used instead of the name "Turk" used in the early periods, after the 1950s to break the ties with Turkey. Until 1958, the word Turk was mentioned in official documents (Duman, 2011:8).

The arrival of Turkmen to the Region, States, and, and Principalities They Founded

The arrival of the Turkmen to the Iraqi region in major groups began in 54 Hijri. This period embarked upon when Ubeydullah Bin Ziyad conveyed two thousand Turks and, and settled them in Basra (Hürmüzlü, 1994:20). The Turks served in the Umayyad army and many were given high military ranks. Ubeydullah Bin Ziyad, who was posted abroad to Horosan by Muaviye (d. 602-d. 680), attacked Bukhara by crossing the Ceyhun river with his army of 20,000 people. Therefore, Prince Hatun of Bukhara had to make peace with the Turkish forces under her command after the battle royal. As a result, Ubeydullah Bin Ziyad, who was amazed by the skills of the Turkish soldiers, dispatched 2000 Turkish troops to Iraq and provided them to settle in Basra (Saatçi, 2003:20). However, it is difficult to say that there is a close bond between today's Iraqi Turkmen and the Turks who went to Iraq in this period. Because the activities of the Turkish army and its commanders did not allow the Turks to settle in any place intensively (Togan, 1946:170).

Turkmen accepted Iraq as their homeland and settled down in the Seljuk Empire era. With the adhere of Tuğrul Bey into Iraq in 1055, Turkish authority wielded in Iraq for 900 years until 1918 (Duman, 2007:17). Many Oghuz troops, who served in the army during the Seljuk period, invaded Iraq. The Turkish States and chieferies were established in Iraq after the collapse of the Great Seljuk State. The Great Seljuk State was divided into four parts, so the throne fights that started with the death of the Seljuk Crown Melikşah (Iraq and Khorasan Seljuks (1092-1194), Kirman Seljuks (1092-1187), Syrian Seljuks (1092-1117) and Turkey Seljuks (1092-1308). In addition, Mosul Atabeylik (1127-1233), Erbil Atabeylik (1144-1233), and Kipchak Principality (1131-1139) in Kirkuk were established by the Turkmen in this period (Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1993:16). Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu people operating in the region also come from Turkmen tribes. The Karakoyunlu State, which existed at the end of the 14th century, expanded its borders by capturing Azerbaijan and Iraq. The Karakoyunlu State was splintered as a consequence of the war with the Akkoyunlu State. The reign of the Akkoyunlus, which would continue to exist between 1468-1508, began.12 Turkmen began to settle in Iraqi lands and played a significant role in the rooting of Turkish-Islamic civilization in this territory thanks to the chiefery and states established in this period.

Turkmens in the Ottoman Era

Iraqi was one of the incompatibilities between the Ottoman and Iranian states throughout history. The most significant power struggles of these two states, which tend to be regional powers, were on Iraqi territory. This struggle peaked during the Kanuni period. The Iraq expeditions organized by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1535 caused thousands of Turkmen to settle in Iraq (Kurtulmuş, 1962:83). Then, Sultan Murat the Fourth organized a military expedition in order to take Baghdad from the Safavids in 1638. In this expedition, crowded Turkmen communities ranked among (Hürmüzlü, 1994:28). Iraqi historian Abdulrezzak al-Haseni claimed that today's Iraqi Turks were from the communities that came at that time. He mooted that they were placed there to secure the junction line connecting the southern Turkish provinces to the northern provinces (El- Hasani, 1956:26). As a consequence of the expeditions organized in this period, the region of Iraq remained under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire until 1918. Mosul was under the control of the Turkish army when the Mondros Armistice Agreement was signed on October 30, 1918. It was occupied by the British on 8 November 1918, contrary to the armistice. The solution to the problem was left to the Turkish-British bilateral negotiations because of that, the Mosul Issue could not be resolved at the Lausanne Conference in 1923. It was left to the League of Nations when no results could be obtained from these negotiations (Wikipedia, 2012). The Mosul issue resulted against Turkey with the Ankara Agreement signed on 5 June 1926. As a result of the Treaty, Mosul was released outside the Turkish territory and the Turkey-Iraq border took its current shape.

The Emerge of Modern Iraq

Modern Iraq is the result of the British replacing the Ottoman provinces of Basra, Mosul, and, and Baghdad as a new political entity. It is a formation that takes the Euphrates-Tigris Basin under its control and, and is not managed by a nearby regional state (Wikipedia, 2012). Iraq came under British occupation except for the Mosul province. However, all of Iraq was mandated by the British at the San Remo Conference (Tikriti, 1989). This region, which was named Iraq under the British mandate in the 1920s, did not form a religious, sectarian, or political unity. It was one of the wealthiest regions of the Ottoman Empire in terms of ethnicity and religion. The improvement of national consciousness in the Iraqi territory was almost impossible. The adverse effects of this situation continue today.

Since Ottoman rule was dominant in the cities in the region, the countryside was ruled by tribal federations that did not accept authority. The British had to annex the area within the Basra-Najaf and Karbala region to Iraq in order to maintain the balance of the Arab majority against the Turkish and Kurdish communities in the north. In the 1920s, England tried to strengthen the central authority in the country. The Arab tribes living in the Euphrates river region rebelled against the British authority. The uprising resulted in 10,000 deaths and 40 million sterling costs. Since the British could not afford this cost again, they sought an Arab administrator who was acceptable to all Arabs. They found Emir Faisal, son of Sharif Hussein, who was King of Hejaz (Musa, 1994). The British passed a law in 1925 and declared Iraq a constitutional kingdom (Köni, 1996:128). Shiite and Sunni courts would continue their duties according to the religious law, which took its source from the Qur'an, Hadith also Islamic scholars agreed.

The type of government that England tried to establish in Iraq caused significant reactions in the country. Especially tax, employment, and agricultural policies drew the reaction of the farmers also intellectuals. This situation became a source of support for the anti-British nationalists (Nazmi, 1982:93). Britain had to give up the mandate system in the face of rising nationalism in Iraq. Nevertheless, Iraq was recognized as full independence with the 30 June 1930 agreement when the treaties were worse than useless. The public schools established in this period played a significant role in the formation of Iraq's national identity. Britain signed a treaty with it in 1930. With this agreement, Britain promised to give independence to Iraq within two years. Thus, it was aimed that the current king would not appear as a British puppet in Iraq. According to this treaty, the British took over the training of the Iraqi army. They would also use transportation and communication channels as they wished. Iraq officially gained its independence in 1932 and became a member of the League of Nations that same year (Köni, 1996:129).

Main Settlements of Turkmens

The strip-shaped settlements of the Turkmens stretching from the northwest to the southeast are a buffer zone between the Kurds and the Arabs and are important in terms of ensuring stability in the region. According to the book titled Turkmen Presence in Iraq, the population of Iraq is around 31 million. This population consisted of 60% Arabs, 20% Kurds, 12% Turkmen, 4% Assyrians, and 4% other minorities.23 Egyptian writer Hasan Bekir Ahmet claims that the population of Iraqi Turkmen is between 2-2.5 million. Iraqi Turkmen have spread to various provinces of the Iraqi geography over time. The central provinces where Turkmens reside in the Iraqi geography are as follows (Mazin, 2003:48):

Kirkuk

Kirkuk is the most important settlement of Turkmens and their symbol. The name Kirkuk was recognized in the 7th century of the Hijra during the Karakoyunlu State, which was built by the Turkmens in Iraq. The city of Kirkuk is between the northern and central regions of Iraq. It is surrounded by Mosul and Erbil from the north, Sulaymaniyah from the east, Salahaddin from the West, and Diyala from the south. Kirkuk has wealthy oil reserves. The name of the city was changed

to Al-Tamim within the framework of the Arabization policy. The region is faced with Arabization also Kurdification policies. Reinhard Fischer stated in his master's thesis: The most crucial center of Turkmen in Iraq is Kirkuk. Kirkuk's role is not only as an important cultural center but also as the city where Turkmens are most common. This determination once again reveals how important the Kirkuk issue is.

Arbil

Erbil is another important city in Northern Iraq. It is bordered by Turkey to the north and Iran to the east. Although Turkmen were in the majority in number before, they fell to the second rank in terms of population density within the framework of Kurdification policies. The Turkmen population in Erbil is estimated to be close to 300,000 (Duman, 2011:14).

Salah al-Din

It is said that there was no Turkmen presence in the city until 1976. However, Tuzhurmatu and El-Beyyat villages from Kirkuk were included in this city in 1976 and Turkmens live in these included areas.

Mosul Province

Mosul is one of the important centers in the region. It is the second-largest city in Iraq. Mosul is an Arab and Turkmen city. The population of the center is around 800.000. Its total population, including its villages and towns, exceeds 1,500,000. Two hundred fifty thousand Iraqi Turks live in eastern Mosul (Özdağ, 2007). The line starts from the northern region of Mosul, which is 70 km away from Turkey, and the east of Talafar also south of Sinjar, is the region where Turkmen settled. There are approximately 70 villages in and around the center of Mosul. There are 50 villages where the majority of the population is Turkmen (Beyatlı 1999:40).

Tal Afar

Almost all of the population of Tal Afar consists of Turkmen. Tal Afar, where 300,000 Turkmen live, is connected to the province of Mosul. Tal Afar is important in that it is the closest Turkmen settlement to the Turkish border. A tribal structure is dominant in Talafar. Each tribe included Shiites, Sunnis, and Alawites ingredients.

Baghdad

While the number of Turkmen in Baghdad was expressed in hundreds of thousands, it is known that many of them lost their ethnic identity and became Arabs today. It is known that the Brotherhood Foundation, the first Turkmen organization in Iraq, was established in Baghdad in 1960. However, Turkmen in the region were assimilated by Saddam Hussein's Arabization policy. It is possible to talk about a Turkmen population of around 20 thousand who preserved their ethnic identity according to the number of votes received by the Turkmen candidates in Baghdad in the 2010 elections (Duman, 2011:13). A significant part of the Turkmen belongs to the Sunni sectarian. Also, the rate of those who belong to the Shiite sectarian is estimated to be around 32%. It is also known that an estimated 20 thousand people among the Turkmen belong to the Christian religion (Demirci, 2003:103).

The Position of the Turkmen in the Legal Structure of Iraq

The first constitution of the Iraqi state was adopted by the country's constituent assembly on March 21, 1925. It emphasized that Iraqis are equal before the law, regardless of nationality, religion, or language. Article 16 of this constitution bore on Iraqi Turkmen. According to this article, all ethnic groups have the right to open schools to be educated in their language. This one-year constitution only talked about the Iraqi people and their constitutional rights and emphasized the principle of equality (Hürmüzlü, 2003:128). The government published the text of its first constitution in Arabic, Turkish, and Kurdish language. According to the 17th article of the Constitution, " the official language in Iraq is Arabic, out of the exceptions by law." The exceptions were determined by the native languages law, which was published in 1931. Concerning this law, it was accepted that the reasoning should be done in Turkish in some Turkmen regions, especially in Kirkuk and Erbil. It was decided that the teaching would be entirely in Turkish in primary schools where Turkmen constitute the majority (Demirci, 2003:110).

1932 Declaration of the Iraqi Republic

The British government applied for the abolition of the mandate regime and the acceptance of the Iraqi state's membership to the League of Nations in 1931. The League of Nations respited 2 years in order to examine and decide on this request for contracting countries. Three permanent commissions were established in the League of Nations about this issue. These commissions are the Mandate Commission, the International Law Commission also the Minorities Commission. The League of Nations composed a separate commission, which included the coordinators of the three aforementioned commissions and a representative of the UK, to examine the UK's request for Iraq. This commission requested a covenant from the Iraqi Government that the laws in force will continue to be applied after the mandate regime is abolished. It focused on two main issues, the state-citizen relationship and the state's relationship with the conditions that are members of the League of Nations. The Iraqi government collected these principles in a report and presented them to the Iraqi constituent assembly. The Constituent Assembly accepted these principles. It decided to abolish the Iraqi mandate regime and enroll in the League of Nations on 3 October 1932. Thus, Iraq became the first and only Arab state in the League of Nations (Hürmüzlü, 2003:129).

Iraq introduced the principle that it will adhere to the principles of equality towards its citizens in the first five articles of the declaration. Accordingly, Iraqi citizens are equal as a matter of legal doctrine without discrimination based on language, race, or religion. It was committed that citizens would have political rights. The part of the declaration that most interests Iraqi Turks is the ninth article. It declares that the majority in Kirkuk and Kifri are from the Turkmen people and Turkish is the official language in addition to Arabic, which is the official language in this region. The civil servants employed in these regions must be of Turkish origin and have to speak the Turkish language as regards the second and third subsection of this article (Saatçi, 2003:199). Local languages law was enacted in 1934 as a spin-off of the 1932 declaration given to the League of Nations. It allowed for Turkish education in schools in Turkmen regions and the use of Turkish in courts. This implementation was abolished in 1938. Turkish education was introduced as a foreign language lesson in Turkmen regions. Afterward, it was abolished entirely in 1938, and all courses were converted to the Arabic language (Hürmüzlü, 2003:130).

1958 Military Coup

The Monarchy was overthrown and a republic was declared in Iraq with a military coup on 14 July 1958. The Revolutionary Committee Council, which was at the head of the revolutionary military junta, announced that the 1925 Constitution was annulled. They declared a temporary constitution on 27 July 1958. The 1958 Constitution made a change that had severe political consequences in the future in terms of the existence of the people living in Iraq and the protection of their political rights.

Article 3 of this constitution is as follows: "The structure and existence of Iraq are built based on solidarity among citizens. Citizens' rights and freedoms are protected. Arabs and Kurds are affiliations. The Constitution safeguards national rights within the territorial integrity of Iraq." Also, Article 9 of this constitution is as follows: "Citizens are equal before the law, no distinction can be made between citizens due to different ethnic origins, language, religion, and belief." As can be seen, Turkmen were virtually ignored in this constitution. The Iraqi State was faced with various political turmoil after 1958.

The military coup was carried out against Prime Minister Abdulkerim Kasim in 1963. As a result of this coup, Colonel Abdulselam Arif became the president of Iraq. The new regime abolished the 1958 constitution by declaring a new and temporary constitution on April 29, 1964. Article 19 of this constitution differed from the 1958 Constitution in terms of the rights granted to the Iraqi community. The 1958 constitution, clearly showed the Arabs and Kurds living in the country as the founder elements of Iraq. On the other hand, in the 1964 Constitution, it was stated that Iraqis are equal without any discrimination in their rights and obligations, without any prejudice based on gender, ethnicity, language, religion, or other reasons (Hürmüzlü, 2003:131). The Baath Party seized power in Iraq as a result of the military coup on July 17, 1968. They annulled the previous constitution on September 21, 1968, and prepared a new one. Article 21 of this constitution reads: "Iraqis are equal before the law in their rights and, and duties, there is no gender, race, language also religion discrimination among them, they cooperate to protect the homeland, including Arabs and Kurds, this constitution recognizes national rights within the principle of Iraqi territorial integrity.

The government declaration, which granted the Kurds the right to autonomy in three provinces, was declared as a result of the negotiations between the Iraqi state and Kurdish groups on 11 March 1970. The Iraqi Constitution was proclaimed as a consequence of the agreement. Article 21 (b) of the Constitution is as follows: "The Iraqi community consists of two main nationalities, Arab and Kurdish. This constitution recognizes the national rights of the Kurdish Nation and also the legitimate rights of all minorities within the framework of Iraq's territorial integrity." In the seventh article, Arabic is the official language and Kurdish has been accepted as an official language in Kurdish regions alongside Arabic. The Iraqi State decided on the Turkmen in 1970. It was decided to provide Turkish education in primary schools in Turkmen areas, to establish the Iraqi Turkmen Literary Union and, and the Turkmen Culture Directorate. However, these decisions were shelved after being implemented in practice for a short time. As a result, the constitutional rights of the Turkmen were taken away over time and the Turkish presence in Iraq was ignored.

Political Struggle of Iraqi Turkmens Until the First Gulf War

Ethnic participation was included when the first national governments were formed in Iraq. Izzet Pasha from Kirkuk, one of the Turkmen, was appointed to the Ministry of Health when the first provisional government was established under the presidency of Abdurrahman El-Geylani. He served as the Minister of Public Works in the second government established on January 29, 1922. However, he started the tension between the Turkmen and Iraqi governments by resigning in April 1922 (Hürmüzlü, 2003:43). The first planned operation against the Turkmen began with the 1924 Nestorian Massacre, due to the tension between the Turkmen and the Iraqi government also Britain's efforts to mix the region. Many Turkmen lost their lives and hundreds of Turkmen's houses and shops were destroyed in the events (Pamukçu, 1999:4).

The Sadabat Pact was signed between Turkey, Iran, Iraq also Afghanistan in order to permanently resolve the border problems and to emphasize the independence of the countries on July 8, 1937 (Wikipedia, 2013). The visit of the delegation headed by Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras to Kirkuk during this period made the Iraqi administrators disquiet (NTV, 2012). After the high-level visit, hundreds of Turkmen intellectuals were arrested by the Iraqi authorities and deported to the southern regions. After that, the delegation from Turkey wasn't allowed to visit Kirkuk (Saatçi, 2003:207). By the 1940s, the policies of extermination against the Turkmen continued increasingly. Many Turkmen workers working in the Kirkuk oil company stroke demanding that their working

conditions and living standards be improved on July 1, 1946. Later, they demonstrated in the place known as Gavurbağı Square in order to make their voices heard. On July 12, 1946, the Iraqi police retreated, leaving many dead and wounded, by firing automatic weapons on the workers who were rallying here (Kerkük Vakfı, 2012).

After the coup in 1958, a republic was established in Iraq and the Turkmen expected a country where all citizens could equally enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms. The 1958 Constitution defined Iraq as the homeland of Arabs and Kurds, but no mention of Turkmen (Özdağ, 1991:153). In 1959, many Turkmen opinion leaders were arrested and sent to detention camps. The coffeehouses where the Turkmen lived were attacked by the militants of the Kurdish and Communist Organizations in the first year of the establishment of the republican regime on July 14, 1959. Automatic weapons were fired on the Turkmen. Then, the opinion leaders of the Turkmen community were taken from their homes and, and dragged to the Kirkuk barracks. They were tried in a show trial and, and were killed by a firing squad. Ata Hayrullah, one of the greatest leaders of the Turkmen, also his brother was killed in the massacre besides shops and houses belonging to the Turkmen were looted. This event went down in history as the 1959 Kirkuk Massacre (Nakip, 2007:139).

The year 1960 was a turning point in the Political and cultural life of the Iraqi Turkmen. They realized their first education congress during this period. The First Congress of Turkmen Teachers was gathered in Kirkuk on August 28, 1960. They provided the establishment of the Turkmen Brotherhood Association to gather the Turkmen under a single roof. This fraternity center established student dormitories open to students from all Turkmen regions in order to facilitate higher education. Many students were educated in these dormitories and these students existed within the structure of Iraqi bureaucracy (Hürmüzlü, 2003:55). At the same time, the Iraqi Turks Culture and Solidarity Association was established in Istanbul. Fraternity Association started to publish a magazine in Turkish-Arabic in May 1961(Saatçi, 2003:230).

The military coup that overthrew Kasım in February 1963 became a new hope for the Turkmen. Immediately after the coup, on March 8, 1963, Turkmens organized a demonstration in Baghdad of approximately 50 thousand people. The period of relative calm began when the first Baath government was in 1963. In the period from 1963 to 1968, although the Turkmen were partially allowed to engage in cultural and artistic activities, the situation did not change in practice (Yılmaz, 2010:37). The Iraqi administration offered two options to the Turkmen living in Kirkuk. Accordingly, the non-Arab population in Kirkuk would either sign a document showing that they were Arabs or leave Kirkuk (Yılmaz, 2003:178). The fact that the power connects the existence of society within its own body to two options means directing it to a designed goal moreover it was successful. The most outstanding achievement of the Turkmen people is the adoption of the resolution text containing the rights of the Turkmen by the Revolutionary Command Council, which took over the administration after the 1968 Baath period. The Revolutionary Command Council in Iraq, with its 1970 resolution 89, stated that Turkmen citizens could exercise their cultural rights. The main of these decisions are as follows:

- Teaching the Turkmen language in primary schools
- Establishment of a directorate affiliated with the Ministry of Education and Education for the teaching of Turkmen
- Allowing Turkmen literature, poets, and writers to establish a unique union
- Helping them to print their works,
- Allowing increasing their skills in terms of language and connecting this union to the Iraqi Writers' Union,
- Establishment of a Turkmen Culture Directorate under the Ministry of Culture Promotion,
- Publishing a weekly newspaper and a monthly magazine in the Turkmen language,
- Decisions were made to increase the number of Turkmen broadcasts on Kirkuk television (Hürmüzlü, 2003:61).

A significant part of these acquisitions of the Iraqi Turks remained on paper and the pressures continued to increase in the following years. The Baath administration recognized the region between the two Zaps in Northern Iraq and the Sulaymaniyah Region as the "Kurdistan Autonomous Region" with a law enacted on March 11, 1970. Seven hundred acres of the 1000-decare land remaining in the hands of the Turks was distributed to the Kurds also the historical city of Erbil was declared the capital of the autonomous region of Kurdistan (Namaz, 2003:1). Privileges such as Turkish education in primary schools, literary publications, and the establishment of a literary association were abolished in 1971, besides the policies of intimidation and, and assimilation applied to the Turkmen in Iraq gained momentum (Kayar, 2003:315). Kirkuk Governorate issued an order and decided not to give loans to business people, farmers, and shopkeepers of Turkmen origin. University graduate Turkish youth generation began to be given job opportunities outside of Turkish regions. The administration, which wanted to reduce the Turkish population with this method, provided great convenience to the Arabs who wanted to settle in Turkish regions by recruiting Arab headmen to the intelligence agency (Demirci, 1981:33).

Saddam Hussein expressed her views on the Arabization of Kirkuk as follows in 1976: "The Kurds want Kirkuk to own the oil wells in the region. Turkey has dreams of devesting Mosul, which has a historical past, for similar reasons. Turkey uses the Turkmen card to achieve these goals. For this reason, our administration will apply forced migration to the Turkmen and Kurds without making any distinction between the inhabitants of the city or those who later migrated here to change the current population situation." (Şen, 2004:73). The name of Kirkuk, which is the symbol of the Turkmen, was changed to Al-Tamim within the framework of the Arabization policy of the Iraqi state on January 29, 1976. The only cultural center of the Turkmen, "Turkmen Brotherhood Association" and "Fraternity Magazine," were taken of Turkish origin besides given to some Baath party members in October 1976 (Pamukçu, 1999:5). Turkish names and surnames were also changed to the Arabic language. Tikrit, the birthplace of Saddam Hussein and an Arab city, was made a province, and two important critical districts of Kirkuk, Tuzhurmatu, and Kifri, were connected to this province (Kayar, 2003:316).

The pressures against the Turkmen turned into a policy of destruction when Saddam Hussein was accessioned to power in 1979. During this period, opinion leader Nejat Koçak retired General Abdullah Abdurrahman and businessman Rıza Çelik were arrested and got hanged (Radikal, 2012). Saddam Hussein said, at a press conference in Baghdad in 1980, to a question about the executed Turkmen leaders; "These are Iraqi citizens, they committed a crime, they got their punishment. They say they are Turks, so let those people take their bones, do we ever ask what you did to the Arabs in Iskenderun?" (Demirci, 1990:185). This situation caused the psychological pressure on Iraqi Turkmen to increase, and, and Iraqi Turkmen were forbidden to buy real estate from Kirkuk in 1984 (Pamukçu, 1999:5).

THE IMPACTS OF THE FIRST GULF WAR ON IRAQ AND TURKMEN POLITICS

Developments Before and During the First Gulf War

It is necessary to take a brief look at the developments in the Gulf region to learn the reasons behind the aggressive policies of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that led to disaster in the region. The most crucial development in the region was the American Embassy crisis, which was raided by left-leaning Iranian mujahideen in 1979. This event moved many stones in the region and started a process that would cause the balance in the region to change. It was held captive by American officials for over 400 days, forcing the West to take a front against Iran. On the other hand, Iran's policy of spreading Shi'ism around scared the sheikhdoms of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, which adopted the Sunni Salafist interpretation of Islam. When the need to avenge the embassy incident, combined with the fear of the Western Arabs, both sides chose Iraq as the country to be used for revenge. The most crucial factor in Iraq's election was that it was never satisfied with the Shatt-ul-Arab waterways agreement with Iran (Köni, 1996:130). In addition to this situation, America and the Shah of Iran gave Iraq a hard time by supporting the Kurdish movement in the north of Iraq (Hitchens, 1991:72). On August 5, 1980, Saddam Hussein went to Saudi Arabia besides met with King Khalid Prince, Prince Abdullah, and the Minister of Defense. According to Iran, these negotiations, the intense financial aid of the Saudis and Kuwaitis during the war, and the attitude of the Saudis towards Iran in the Gulf Cooperation Council were the reasons for the Iraq attack that started on September 22, 1980. As Regarding some environment, the Iran-Iraq War was a war in which the Saudis gave money moreover the Iraqi's blood (Bill & Springborg, 1990:387). Iran's attempt to spread the revolution was met with concern in the Arabian peninsula. The occupation of Iraq by Iran also benefited the Soviet Union due to the support of the Muslim guerrilla movement in Afghanistan Iran.

The war transformed into a war of attrition with no winners. Iran, realizing that the war was meaningless for both sides, accepted the ceasefire decision of the United Nations in 1988. Saddam's Regime suppressed the uprising of the Kurds of Northern Iraq, who helped Iran in the war, in Halabja. As a result, the bond of belonging between the Kurds in Northern Iraq and the Iraqi central government has been severed in a way that will never be united again. There was no softening in the attitude of the Iraqi administration towards the Turkmen, and, and these policies continued during the war. The Baghdad administration used the Turkmen youth on the front lines of the Iranian front besides sending the professionals to the gallows for various reasons (Şimşir, 2004:197). It was planned to build 20 thousand houses in Amara province in the southern region of Iraq and to move families of Turkish origin from Kirkuk to these places In order to change the national character of Kirkuk, with the decision numbered 1391 on October 20, 1981. However, The Arabs who migrated from the city of Basra had to settle in the houses built to drive the Turkmen away from the region when the war turned against Iraq (Demirci, 1981:37). It was the only benefit of the Iran-Iraq war for the Turkmen.

The Baghdad Regime incurred debt after the war, and the crisis deepened in the economic and, and military fields. They tried to find the money for the 160 SCUD-B missiles it sent to Iran in early 1988. As a result of the war with Iran, Iraq was dragged into a debt trap of approximately 65 billion dollars. 25 Twenty-five billion of this debt resorted to two ways to pay 5 billion dollars a year until 1992. First, Iraq wanted Kuwait and, and Saudi Arabia to defer its debt and, and open a loan for it. Iraq complained that they didn't understand well the self-sacrifice of the Arab states in the Gulf. Iraq stated that it had stopped the fundamentalist Shiism in Iran, but it could not receive the necessary support for this (Miller & Mylroe, 1990:8). Reducing oil production and increasing oil prices was another debt payment strategy of Iraq. It has not been successful in either of these strategies. The insistence of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to pay the debts continued with the pressure of the USA. As a result of this insistence, Iraq's eyes turned to Kuwait, which has plenty of money and which it has seen as its part since 1961. Tensions in the region began to rise in February 1990. The Arabs could not imagine how much Iraq's audacity could be (Köni, 1996:131).

Saddam, who was supposedly an ally of the West after he conflicted with Iran, made mistakes one after another with the self-confidence he got from here. First of all, he began to threaten Israel for the Arab leadership. However, Israel is taking preventive self-defense measures by violating International Law for its security. Israel, a daring country, bombed Iraq's Osirak nuclear power station in the past on the pretext that it could produce nuclear weapons in the future, and started a massacre against the Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila camps in 1982. It put America in a very difficult position. The fact that Saddam placed three new missile launchers on the borders of Iraq, stated that there were weapons capable of destroying Israel in half an hour, and that he revived the chemical weapons factories with the help of Germany, disturbed Israel moreover its cognates at strategic points in the West. As can be seen, the shortest way to get rid of the Saddam Regime, which had many enemies both regionally and globally, was to push the regime to Kuwait. Because a small country like Kuwait resisting Iraq without America does not match the region's realities (Hudson & Germroth, 1992:86).

The Saddam regime made a second attempt to confront the West on March 9, 1990. Saddam accused Farzad Bazof, the Iranian-born reporter of the British Observer newspaper, of espionage and sentenced him to death (Wikipedia, 2012). This situation triggered the action of the Western powers against him. In mid-April, Saddam sent a letter to Iranian President Rafsanjani and offered to Tehran the exchange of prisoners besides returning the lands captured during the war. The last meeting that drew Iraq into the Kuwait swamp, which massed troops on the Kuwaiti border and suspended its disagreements with Iran, was the meeting he held with Iraq's Ambassador to the US, April Glaspie, at the end of July (Sabah Gazetesi, 2012). The meeting was interpreted as the US would turn a blind eye to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. April Glaspie went on vacation on July 21 moreover on August 2, Iraq invaded Kuwait on the pretext that the last meeting failed.

The Impact of the First Gulf War on the Turkmen

Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Dohuk fell into the hands of the Kurdish rebels as a result of the rebellions that took place first in the south and then in the north of Iraq after the defeat of the Iraqi army in the First Gulf War. In addition, they attempted to capture Mosul. As a result of the quenched uprisings in Iraq, a large migration flow began in April 1991 to the region. Nearly 500,000 immigrants clustered on the Turkish border. Fearing the revenge of the Iraqi regime, the north of the 36th parallel was declared a "safe zone" by the USA and England in order not to repeat the migration and to protect the Kurds. Thus, the Kurds of the region were taken under official protection, and the Kurdish issue gained an international dimension (Oran, 1996:50). The Kurdish groups, which were taken under protection, gained wide maneuverability in Northern Iraq, especially in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, with the withdrawal of the central government from the region. While some of the Turkmen remained in the security zone, the majority remained under the control of the central government. On September 2, 1991, the safe zone was withdrawn from the 36th Parallel to the 34th Parallel. An option, in which the Kirkuk Turkmens were taken to the safe zone and the ways of bringing the Mosul and Kirkuk Turkmens together with the Kurdish opposition were sought was discussed at a meeting of Barzani, Talabani, and President Ozal. Nonetheless, this issue received a very harsh reaction from the Ankara bureaucracy (Özdağ, 1999:79). It is a strategic choice for Turkey to exclude Kirkuk from this zone during the construction of the safe zone in 1991. The reason behind this political preference is that Kirkuk oil feeds this region economically and hinders the progress toward an independent structure in Northern Iraq. However, as a natural consequence of this strategic choice, the inability to organize a solid Iraqi-Turkish opposition in Kirkuk, which was under the control of Saddam Hussein, prevented the Turkmen factor from coming to the forefront against the Kurds. As a result, the power of the Turkmen was limited to only Erbil and a few settlements (Mazin, 2003:177). On March 8, 1991, the Kurdish peshmerga, who dominated the city of Kirkuk, began to loot the town. They fired government agencies, especially registry and land offices (Köprülü, 2005:14).

The management vacuum emerged with the withdrawal of the central government from the region. This situation was filled with the establishment of the Kurdish Parliament through local elections in 1992. However, the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, the first political party of the Turkmen,

did not participate in the elections. The non-participation of Turkmen in the local elections, which was one of the steps in the establishment of the de facto state of the Iraqi Kurds, was progressed in order not to give legitimacy to the Kurds. But it weighed against the Turkmen in the long run. Even if the Kurds establish a state in the region, it is still possible for the Turkmen to gain political weight with Turkey's support (Mazin, 2003:178). As a result of the elections, in which approximately 1 million people participated, 11 parties, and four leaders competed, IKDP received 44.5% and IPUK 43.6%. In contrast, other small parties could not exceed the 7% election threshold. Iraq Kurdistan Democratic Party (IKDP) and Iraq Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (IPUK) were represented by 50 people in the 105-seat parliament. The Assyrian Democratic Movement took four of the five seats reserved for Christians and the Kurdistan Christian Unity Party took one (Kurubaş, 2003:39). The Kurds formed a government consisting of 17 ministers under the presidency of Fuat Masum from the IPUK on July 4, 1992 (Oran, 1996:44). They prepared the constitution draft in the parliament they formed in Erbil. Turkmen were mentioned as a minority instead of the leading ethnic group in the fourth article of the constitution draft. Erbil, where the Turkmen majority is located, was indicated as the capital city in the fifth article (Yenerer, 2004:34). Shortly after these developments, IKDP and IPUK broke the ceasefire moreover entered into conflict. Shortly after these developments, IKDP and IPUK violated the ceasefire and lashed with each other. As a result of this struggle, the IPUK under the leadership of Talabani dominated the Erbil region, where the Turkmen population was densely populated besides, the parliamentary elections were deemed invalid in May 1993 (Özdağ, 1999:124).

The Turkmen living in the safe zone could not have a severe presence among more than 4 million Kurds, as their population was around 250-300 thousand. Nevertheless, the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) disturbed the constituent that had interests in the region. It caused repression and suppression policies toward Turkmen after 1996. The Barzani administration saw the Turkish military presence in Northern Iraq and the Turkmen as obstacles to independence (Yenerer, 2004:35). IKDP wanted all political parties in the region to be under its control and command as per its primary strategy. It did not recognize the Turkmen's existence and political rights (Laçiner, 2004:317). Various Turkmen parties based in Erbil were established with the withdrawal of Northern Iraq from the control of the central government. The first Turkmen party, the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, was founded by Muzaffer Arslan in 1991. The Turkmeneli Party was founded by Rıyad Sarıkahye, and, and the Turkmen Independents Movement was founded by Ferit Çelebi. These established parties provided a basis for the Iraqi Turkmen Front to be established in 1995. Turkey's activities toward the Turkmen intensified from 1991 to 1996. These activities are limited to educational and cultural areas besides the food aid of the Red Crescent. Turkey established eleven Turkish primary schools, a secondary school, and a high school in Erbil, as well as television and radio stations broadcasting in the Turkish language (Mazin, 2003:179). IKDP closed Turkmen schools after Erbil took possession of the hands of IKDP in 1996. However, they had to let the schools open when they caused eyebrows to rise in Turkey (Özmen, 2002:185).

Separatist Kurdish groups, who saw the presence of Turkmen in the region as a threat to their ambitions, established some so-called Turkmen parties in line with their aims. On the other hand, Turkey established the Iraqi Turkmen Front due to organizing dispersed and disunited groups within the framework of Turkey's interests on April 24, 1995. In this process, which is a significant step for Turkey's Turkmen policy, Turkey's support for the Turkmen was provided with not only social and economic support but also political support. The leadership race between the two Kurdish groups IPUK and IKDP continued after the establishment of the local Kurdish parliament in the region. IKDP and Iraqi forces occupied Erbil against the IPUK, with Turkey's approval on August 31, 1996 (Seriddin, 1997:21). One of the ceasefire talks between the two parties were the Ankara talks at the end of October 1996. It revealed a change in the Northern Iraq policy that Turkey has followed since 1991. Turkey accepted the inclusion of Turkmen in the political system in the region (Özdağ, 1999:148). Turkey's Iraq policy can be summarized as ensuring stability in the region and the central administration's re-dominance in the region after 1991. Prime Minister Tansu Çiller brought the Turkmens to the forefront in Ankara meetings to resolve the problems between IKDP and IPUK in 1996. In this period, it is argued that the Turkmens were a balancing factor that should be taken into

account. It was insisted on the participation of Turkmen in the peace force that was decided to be formed to observe the ceasefire between IKDP and IPUK (Samancı, 1999:235). The project to establish a "raiding party" consisting of 350 people was initiated for the Turkmen to protect themselves. Turkmen Peace Force of 500 qualified training and, and armament was formed with the support of Turkey (Özmen, 2001:28).

Kurdish groups tried to attract the Turkmen to their side to achieve the goal in Iraq. Turkmens didn't find favorable to these promises. After the 1959 massacre, different steps were taken by the Kurds for political purposes in order to normalize the tense relations between the Turkmen and the Kurds. Mullah Mustafa Barzani met with the Turkmen's opinion leader and made attractive suggestions about the cultural and political rights of the Turkmen, especially the management of Kirkuk. Turkmen were expected to join the Kurdish movement or to support the Kurds in their dispute with the Iraqi government over Kirkuk (Samancı, 1999:194). The most important factors are the fact that the Turkmen continue to prefer to remain neutral, do not want to be subjected to further suffering, and that the ultimate goal of the Kurdish movement is independence. The defeat of the Iraqi regime in the war with Kuwait caused uprisings in the north and south of Iraq. Regime forces started to pillage the city after Kurdish forces entered Kirkuk and Turkmens seized many districts. The Iraqi government accelerated its ethnic cleansing policy during this period and tried to change the ethnic position of Turkmen regions. The Iraqi army entered Altınköprü, 45 km northwest of Kirkuk, and devolved a black mark on human history on March 27, 1991. Many Turkmen were gathered from their homes and were subjected to an organized massacre by the state. This event went down in history as the Altınköprü Massacre. The bodies of about 100 Turkmen of all ages were found by chance in a mass grave. Turkmen were prohibited from owning property, selling property to non-Arabs, and renting government-owned businesses. Turkmen's Agricultural lands were confiscated and distributed to Arab citizens. They were forbidden to speak their native language in public places and to be appointed as civil servants in government offices. A significant part of the existing Turkmen working in government offices was relegated to a post in the southern provinces where there were no Turkmen. The properties of the Turkmen who migrated out of Iraq were confiscated (Hürmüzlü, 2003:70).

Social Structure of Turkmens

The existence of Turkmen in Iraq dates back to ancient times. The emergence of a Turkmen identity in Iraqi geography begins with the establishment of the Turkish Republic, and the separation of Mosul and Kirkuk from the motherland. In this period, it is seen that the expression "Iraqi Turks" was used rather than the "Turkmen" word. It is a result of this awareness that the first organization established by Turkmen in Turkey is the Iraqi Turks Solidarity and Assistance Association. Turk means a sense of belonging to Turkey to other ethnic groups in Iraq. The Iraqi state, which was disturbed by this situation, preferred the Turkmen word instead of Turk to reduce the sense of belonging of the Turkish population in the region with Turkey. Iraqi Turks are more urbanized and have a higher literacy rate than Kurds and Arabs in the region. We can define the urbanized Turkmen as the intelligentsia of Iraq. For this reason, they did not turn to weapons like the Kurds and Arabs. The number of engineers, doctors, and soldiers among the Turkmen population is relatively high. In addition, the proportion of women with higher education is close to men (Sirkeci, 2005:14). Based on the social context of knowledge and a trained workforce, the Turkmens' sphere of influence should be broad. The marginalizing and excluding of the language of the government narrows the social horizons of the Turkmen. Despite the high rate of urbanization among Turkmen, it is possible to encounter tribal structures in rural areas. There are a lot of Turkmen tribes in rural areas such as Talafer, Tuzhurmatu, and Diyala. Family names came into prominence in city centers such as Kirkuk and Erbil. It is not possible to talk about a situation separated by clear lines in the tribal structures of the Turkmens. Some people belong to the Shiite, Sunni, and Alawite sects within each tribe. The relationship by affinity among tribes is powerful (Duman, 2011:14).

Religious Structure of Turkmens

The majority of Iraqi Turkmen are Muslims. There are also an estimated 20,000 Christian Turkmen. It is known that Christian Turkmen are Catholic and most of them live in Kirkuk. There are groups affiliated with both Shiite and Sunni sects among the Muslim Turkmen. Besides, there are Turkmen who continue the Bektashi tradition. It is mentioned in many sources that Turkmen Shiites used to be Alevis and later became Shiites (Edmonds, 2003:349). Most of the Sunni Turkmen belong to the Hanafi sect. Also, Most of the Turkmen living in Erbil belong to the Shafi'i sect. On the other hand, it can be said that sect membership is ordinary among Sunni Turkmen. Moreover, jamaat membership is prevalent among Sunni Turkmen. The Naqshbandi, Qadiri, and Rufai jamaats have a strong grassroots among the Turkmen community. There are dervish lodges of these jamaats in Kirkuk also other Turkmen regions (Ziya, 2005:6). Kakaism, a branch of Bektashism in Iraq, is also seen in Turkmen beliefs (Duman 2011:15). On the other hand, there is uncertainty about the identity of the Shabeks, one of the people in Iraq who have an identity dispute. It is seen that Shabaks were initially been Muslims then they changed by bringing together the teachings from different religions moreover developing a different understanding of religion. The Shabeks, who mostly live in and around Mosul, have their religious book. It can only be read by Shabak sheiks. It is called "Buyruk", which is a Turkish name (Ziya, 2005:7). According to some resources, Shabeks migrated from southern Turkey to Iraq (Hürmüzlü, 2005:79).

Factors Affecting Turkmen Organizations in Iraq

Iraqi Turkmen didn't have any long-term conflicts with other ethnic and religious groups living in Iraq when we look at the recent history of modern Iraq. Iraqi Turkmen remained on the defensive while going through a period in which stability and order in the Middle East were gradually deteriorating. Both the fact that they are a minority in the region in terms of population and that their social structure is an urban population compared to other peoples living in the Middle East were quite effective in the Iraqi Turkmen's position. Iraqi Turkmen have always been in favor of the territorial integrity of Iraq. They have never been disintegrators or dividers. This attitude of the Iraqi Turkmen caused them to become the target of the forces who wanted to divide Iraq. The Iraqi Turkmen, who was stuck between the Arab and Kurdish regions, faced the policies of being Kurdized and Arabized from time to time.

The most important reason that led Iraqi Turkmen to organize is the ethnic cleansing and assimilation policies they have been exposed to in the recent past. The 1924 Nestorian massacre, the 1940 Gavurbağı Massacre, the 1959 Kirkuk Massacre, the 1991 Altınköprü massacre, and numerous cultural and economic pressures, which we discussed at the beginning of our work, made the organization of the Iraqi Turkmen indispensable for their survival. The Turkmen political movement gained a base in northern Iraq were directed the targets of the attacks to political institutions after 1991. There were many attacks against Turkmen's political institutions until 2003. We can give examples of this, the attacks on the Iraqi Turkmen Front in 1996, 1998, and 2000 (Özfatura 2012).

Another reason pushing the Turkmen to the need for organization is the conservative family structure of the Turkmen. Anti-religious tendencies, which were quite common in Iraq for a while, and movements that were contrary to the cultural facilities of the Turkmen could not find a grassroots among the Turkmen community. Besides, the active role of the left groups in the tragic events experienced against the Turkmen community and, and the pressure of the Baath Party, which defends Arab socialism on the Turkmen was effective in taking a nationalist stance (Duman, 2011:21). Turkey is the most important external actor that triggers the organization of Iraqi Turkmen in the region undoubtedly. Turkey didn't show sufficient interest in the Turkish population in Syria, Iraq, and Iran in its immediate vicinity due to Turkey's principle of not interfering in the internal affairs of other states. However, it is known that the Republic of Turkey supported the Turkmen organizations both logistically and economically, especially in the post-1990 period.

Political Parties Established by Turkmen in Iraq

Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF)

The Iraqi Turkmen Front is the most prominent political organization that represents the Turkmen both inside and outside of Iraq. It was founded in 1995 by gathering parties such as the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, the Turkmeneli Party, and the Turkmen Independents Movement under one roof (Duman, 2011). The founding chairman of the Iraqi Turkmen Front is Turhan Ketene. Then, in 1996, Sinan Çelebi (former Minister of Industry and, and Trade of the regional administration in the North of Iraq), Vedat Arslan (former Minister of Industry of the regional administration in the North of Iraq), in 2000, Sanan Ahmet Kasap, 2003' te Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman, in 2005 Sadettin Ergeç (Bayraktar, 2012), since May 2011 Erşat Salihi (Avrupa Gazete, 2012). The Iraqi Turkmen Front has six foreign representations in Turkey, England, Germany, Belgium, Syria, and America. Turkey's representative is Hicran Kazancı, the UK representative is Sündüs Abbas, Germany's representative is Ganim Osman (Derzi, 2012) Belgium's Representative is Hasan Aydınlı, USA Representative is Asif Serttürkmen (Türkmenelim Özgür Görüş, 2010), and The Syria Representative is Suphi Nazım Tevfik. Moreover, The party has nearly one hundred liaison offices in Iraq, primarily in Kirkuk, Baghdad, Mosul, Salahaddin, Diyala, Wasit, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Dohuk. It has a news website called www.kerkuk.net that broadcasts in three languages, namely Turkish, Arabic, and English. Iraqi Turkmen Front Organization consists of the president, Executive Board, Turkmen Assembly, Provincial Presidencies, Administrative, and Financial Department, Public Relations Department, Health Department, Education and Culture Department, Non-Governmental Organizations Department, Information Department, Political Department, Article 24 Research Department, Legal Counseling, Security Department, Foreign Relations Department, and Elections Department (Duman, 2011:26). The Iraqi Turkmen Front proved itself in the 2003 Elections and came out more robust in the 2010 Elections. It is possible to say that Turkmens obtained 3 ministries in the 42-person cabinet established under the presidency of Nuri El-Maliki and for the first time among all governments established in Iraq after 2003, they had the opportunity to be represented in this number. On the other hand, the Iraqi Turkmen Front, which was able to elect 3 deputies in the first elections in 2005 and only 1 deputy in the second elections, made a great leap forward by having 6 deputies in the 2010 Elections (Duman, 2011:27).

Iraqi National Turkmen Party (INTP)

The Iraqi National Turkmen Party, the first political party of the Turkmen, was founded on 11 November 1988 in Ankara. It was founded by a group of Turkish nationalists led by Dr. Muzaffer Arslan. The first president of the Turkmens, Medical Doctor Dr. Muzaffer Arslan was born in Kirkuk, besides and belongs to a nationalist Turkmen family. Arslan, who was the chairman of the Iraqi National Turkmen Party until 1996, attended many meetings representing Turkmen both inside and outside Iraq. He assumed the position of undersecretary of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani responsible for Turkmens after the January 30, 2005 elections in Iraq (Duman, 2011:27). INTP, which stood out as the most active organization of the Turkmen until the establishment of the Iraqi Turkmen Front in 1995, represented the Turkmen in the Iraqi opposition meetings held in Riyadh, Beirut, Vienna, Saladin, London, and the USA (Kerkük Gazetesi, 2007). The party, which opened radio-TV, press-broadcasting, and most importantly, schools providing education in Turkish in the north of Iraq, also formed a 350-person protection unit that could be the nucleus of the armed force (Yeni Şafak, 2012). The Iraqi National Turkmen Party suggested the following options for the structural changes that may develop in Iraq (Arslan, 1996:223):

- In case the territorial integrity of Iraq is protected, it should be an inevitable condition to ensure the national rights of the Turkmen in a pluralist democratic parliamentary system that respects human rights, to provide a certain level of participation with the parliament, the

central government, and to guarantee these rights under the constitution. The Turkish state should also be a follower of these rights.

- According to the General Assembly of the Iraqi National Council in October 1992; If Iraq is governed by the System of Provinces within its territorial integrity, a Turkmen Province should be established to include the Turkmen regions.
- If Iraq is restructured with a federative system according to Ethnic and sectarian structure, a separate Turkmen Federal District should be established for Turkmen in their own regions, or a broad-based partnership with Kurds, and other groups should be established.
- If Iraq is partitioned or if Turkmen and Kurds are expected to live together by establishing a joint administration separate from Iraq, the Mosul Vilayet Project is a project worth considering after some revisions.

After the caucus that took place in 1996, Mustafa Kemal Yayçılı was elected as the party chairman. However, Yayçılı had to leave Iraq and, and continued his work in Ankara for a while as a result of the pressure of the Kurdish groups, especially the IKDP. He was martyred as a result of an assassination on the road to Kirkuk and, and Tuzhurmatu on May 15, 2004. The current chairman of INTP is Cemal Şan. The party has two slogans: "From Mendeli to Tal Afar, greetings to the Turkmen community" and "our way is the way of truth, nation and, and the land way". The party advocates the establishment of a "Federated Turkmen Region" from Tal Afar to Mendeli and the transformation of Iraq into a confederal order. Moreover, The party states that districts such as Tuzhurmatu, Telafer, and Çemçemal should be brought to the status of a province. INTP defines itself as a national, democratic, and liberal party, staying away from sectarianism.

Turkmeneli Party

The chairman of the Turkmeneli Party is Riyaz Sarikahya. The Turkmeneli Party, which was in the establishment phase of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, broke away from the Turkmen Front in 2000, besides becoming a separate political formation. The three crescents on the party emblems represent "Turkishness, Islam, and Humanity". The party has a secular and, and humanist approach (Duman, 2011:29). Turkmeneli Party has 5 foreign representative offices in France (Representative Murat Sarıkahya), Netherlands (Representative Yalçın Mutapçı), Denmark (Representative Mehmed Samad Dökmeci), Ireland (Representative Mofak Salman Kirkuklü) and Sweden (Representative Yılmaz Çaycıoğlu) (Turkmeneli Party, 2012). The Turkmeneli Party, which has a more radical line than the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, has argued that the Turkmen in Iraq should have armed conflict since its establishment. In addition to the demand for a "Federated Turkmen Region", the Turkmeneli Party also has a request for a special particular federation for Kirkuk called the "Kirkuk Regional Project". Türkmeneli Party participated in the elections together with the ITF in 2005 Elections. Riyaz Sarıkahya gained the right to become a deputy and, and became the only Turkmen representative in the Constitutional Commission during the preparation of the constitution (Duman, 2011:30). In the 2010 elections, the Turkmeneli Party, which participated in the elections with the Iraqi National alliance led by Ammar Al-Hakim, could not get a parliamentary seat.

Nationalist Turkmen Community (NTC)

The Nationalist Turkmen Community (NTC) was founded in 1971 by Halit Şengül, who was get hanged in 1981. However, it is possible to state that it appeared officially after 2003. The party emblem consists of three crescents and a star on a blue background. The blue color in its logo symbolizes the Turkmens and the three crescents represent the concepts of "religion, language, and homeland". The star represents NTC itself. While NTC defines itself as an Iraqi nationalist, it states that it is in favor of the integrity of Iraq. NTC states that today it is working to preserve the unity and solidarity of Iraq but it stated that it will demand the establishment of an autonomous region for the Turkmen in the

event of the disintegration of Iraq. The Community operates only in Kirkuk. Therefore its influence is limited. It is possible to say that the Nationalist Turkmen Community acts in parallel with the ITF and is supported by the ITF. They also supported the ITF in the 2010 elections moreover, carried out propaganda for the ITF candidates.

Turkmen Nationalist Movement (TNM)

The Nationalist Turkmen Community (NTC) was founded in 1971 by Halit Şengül, who was get hanged in 1981. However, it is possible to state that it appeared officially after 2003. The party emblem consists of three crescents and a star on a blue background. The blue color in its logo symbolizes the Turkmens and the three crescents represent the concepts of "religion, language, and homeland". The star represents NTC itself. While NTC defines itself as an Iraqi nationalist, it states that it is in favor of the integrity of Iraq. NTC states that today it is working to preserve the unity and solidarity of Iraq but it stated that it will demand the establishment of an autonomous region for the Turkmen in the event of the disintegration of Iraq. The Community operates only in Kirkuk. Therefore its influence is limited. It is possible to say that the Nationalist Turkmen Community acts in parallel with the ITF and is supported by the ITF. They also supported the ITF in the 2010 elections moreover, carried out propaganda for the ITF candidates.

Iraqi Turkmen Justice Party (ITJP)

The party is a conservative and Islamist party based in Kirkuk in 2004 (Duman, 2010). The Iraqi Turkmen Justice Party defines itself in its political program as a civil, reformist, libertarian party that will solve the problems of the Iraqi Turkmen people from an Islamic point of view (Türkmen Adalet, 2013). The party participated in the elections with the Iraqi Turkmen List together with the ITF in the elections held on January 30, 2005 (Küzeci, 2005). It joined the Iraqi Turkmen Front with the 4th Turkmen Congress held in Kirkuk on April 22, 2005, but it left the Iraqi Turkmen Front at the 5th Congress in 2008. The Iraqi Turkmen Justice Party has its headquarters in Kirkuk and has branches in Diyala, Mosul, Tal Afar, and Tuzhurmatu. In addition, the party has 2 foreign representative offices in Ankara and Sweden. The activities carried out abroad are executed mainly by way of the Iraqi Turks Justice and Solidarity Association (Irak Türkmenleri Adalet ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Resmi Sitesi, 2013). Although ITJP is a political party, it describes itself as a "service movement". There are the Women's Association, Fatih's Descendant Youth and Student Association, Middle East Benevolent Association, Iraqi Turkmen Aid and Development Association, and Benevolent Health Association within the party. ITJP rejects racism and sectarianism in its bylaws. It supports Kirkuk's special status and, and the establishment of a party council for Turkmen. In the 2010 Elections, the Iraqi Turkmen Justice Party, which participated in the elections with the Iraqi Reconciliation Front, where Sunni groups came together, could not elect deputies.

Turkmen Decision Party

The Turkmen Decision Party was founded in 2005 under the chairmanship of Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman, the former head of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. It can be summarized the aims of the party; To protect the territorial and national integrity of Iraq, to unite the Turkmen, to oppose the authoritarian style, to look at all Iraqis with the same eye, to establish a parliamentary and constitutional free state in Iraq, to ensure the participation of women in social and political life besides to preserve the natural riches of Iraq. The primary working strategy of the party is based on the fact that Kirkuk is not connected to the regional administration in the north of Iraq. It argues that Kirkuk should pass into a special status. Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman was elected as a deputy in the Iraqi Parliament by entering the elections within the ITF in the 2005 elections. In the 2010 elections, he participated in

the elections with the State of Law Coalition led by Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki, but could not get a parliamentary seat.

Turkmen Independents Movement (TIM)

It was established by neutral persons under the Presidency of Ferit Çelebi with the support of Prof. Dr. İhsan Doğramacı in Erbil on April 14, 1994. Prof. Dr. İhsan Doğramacı was born in Erbil and served as the chairman of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) for a long time. Moreover, He established Bilkent University in Turkey. TIM acts with the slogan of language, religion, homeland also fraternity, emphasizing the Iraqi land, Turkmen identity, Islam religion, and brotherhood with other peoples living in Iraq. Although TIM acts in parallel with the ITF, their relations with the regional government are. Kurdish groups in northern Iraq are different. TIM President Kenan Şakir Üzeyirağa acknowledges the existence of a regional government and states that Turkmens can be a partner in this administration.

Iraqi Turkmen Islamic Union (ITIU)

ITIU was founded in Damascus, the capital of Syria, by Abbas Beyati in 1991. Its headquarters is in Baghdad. Moreover, ITIU has representations in Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, Diyala, and Saladin. ITIU supports that Arabic must be the official language as well as Turkmen use the Arabic alphabet. This movement is seen as the branch of the Islamic Cause Party among the Turkmen and overhangs to the Shiites in Iraq. Two hands are rising from the Quran on the emblem of the party. It is stated that it expresses unity based on the Qur'an. It is aimed to establish this unity in all of Iraq. Abbas Beyati participated in the elections with the United Iraq Alliance, a Shiite alliance, in the polls on December 15, 2005. Casim Muhammed Cafer, who was the vice president, became the Minister of Youth and Sports while Abbas Beyati was elected as a deputy. In the 2010 elections, Abbas Beyati, who participated in the elections polls with the alliance of the State of Law, and Casim Muhammed Cafer, who was a candidate from Saladin, were elected as parliamentarians. Casim Muhammed continued his duty at the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Turkmen Loyalty Movement

Turkmen Loyalty Movement was founded in Iran in 1999. It is claimed to be supported by the Iraqi Islamic Supreme Council headed by Ammar al-Hakim. Its chairman is Feryad Ömer Tuzlu as well as its general secretary is Yılmaz Nacaroğlu. The map of Iraq in the middle of the party emblem symbolizes the territorial and national integrity of Iraq, while the palm branch around the map indicates nobility plus goodness and the olive branch indicates peace, fertility, and friendship. The activity area of the Turkmen Loyalty Movement is known as Kirkuk and Selahattin. Feryad Tuzlu, the head of the Turkmen Vefa Movement, which entered the elections in 2005 with the United Iraq Alliance, served as a parliamentarian for two terms. However, the Turkmen Loyalty Movement, which participated in the 2010 elections with the Iraqi National Alliance, could not get a parliamentary seat in this election (Orhan & Erkmen, 2011).

Turkmen Islamic Movement (TIM)

The Turkmen Islamic Movement (TIH) was founded by Sami Dönmez and joined the Iraqi Turkmen Front after the Iraqi Turkmen Front's convention in 2003. However, it left the roof after the Iraqi Turkmen Front declared itself as a political party in 2008. The headquarters of the party is in Kirkuk. Mustafa Ali Kamber was elected head of the party in 2009. Kamber states that although the Turkmen Islamic Movement has an Islamic character, it has a national stance. It aims to eliminate

the Shiite-Sunni differences among the Turkmen. Kamber gave an account of how the Turkmen national identity is prioritized in the Party. He remarked that their goal is to establish an autonomous region for the Turkmen and Turkmen should be accepted as the official language since the Turkmen are the third essential constituent in Iraq. The Turkmen Islamic Movement embraces its Iraqi identity by acting with the slogan of "religion, language, homeland".In the 2010 elections, the Turkmen Islamic Movement entered the elections within the "Turkmen National Mass" under the Iraqi National Alliance, but could not get a parliamentary seat (Duman, 2013).

Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party (ITNP)

The Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party (ITNP) was founded in 2002 by İrfan Kirkuklü. Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party has offices in Kirkuk, Diyala, and Hanekin. The emblem of the Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party has a crescent and an eight-pointed star on a blue background. it is stated that the color blue represents Turkishness, the crescent is Islam, as well as each corner of the eight-pointed star, represents the Turkic states and Turkmen established in Iraq. It is said that the Iraqi Turkmen National Party received support from the IPUK led by Celal Talabani (ORSAM, 2011). It emphasizes the unity and, and solidarity of the Turkmen, human rights, and the rule of law. While emphasizing its Iraqi identity, it follows a liberal and, and nationalist line. The Iraqi Turkmen Nation Party states that it can cooperate with any group that can benefit Turkmen. Chairman of the Iraqi National Turkmen Party and, and Deputy Governor of Kirkuk, Irfan Kirkuklu, said, "Turkmen are respected in the Kurdistan region in the north. They have all kinds of rights. Why not in Kirkuk like there?" (BBC Türkçe, 2011). He argues that the regions where Turkmen live, including Kirkuk, should be connected to the regional administration in Northern Iraq. İrfan Kirkuklü, one of the 6 Turkmen members of the Kirkuk administration formed by the USA in 2003, served as the Deputy Governor of Kirkuk until 2005. In the 2005 elections, the Iraqi National Turkmen Party participated in the local elections with the "Brotherhood List" known as the Kurdish Alliance. İrfan Kirkuklü was re-elected as a member of the provincial council, which has continued until today. ITNP did not participate in the 2010 Elections.

Iraqi Turkmen Unity Party (ITUP)

ITUP was declared in Erbil in 1992 after the establishment of a safe zone in northern Iraq in 1991. It is claimed that the Iraqi Turkmen Unity Party, which was one of the two political organizations of the Turkmen together with the Iraqi Turkmen National Party at that time, was founded by local Kurdish groups against the Iraqi Turkmen National Party. ITUP acts with the principles of unity, democracy, and equality. ITUP, which opposes the special status for Kirkuk, states that if Kirkuk attains a particular group, the Turkmen living in other regions will be isolated (ORSAM, 2011:215). The party supports leaving the Turkmen region to the "Kurdistan" administration in the north of Iraq. In 2002, the party signed a declaration prepared by 16 political organizations under the leadership of Barzani and Talabani. stating that in case Turkey intervenes in northern Iraq, it would be vehemently opposed. The declaration opposed Turkey's intervention in the north of Iraq (Mynet, 2010). ITUP, which participated in the Kirkuk provincial government elections formed by the USA in 2003 with the Kurdish list, could not enter the administration in this period. Sayide Demirci from the Iraqi Turkmen Union Party, who joined the 2005 elections with the Brotherhood List, also known as the Kurdish list, was entitled to become a member of the Kirkuk Provincial Assembly. The party did not participate in the 2009 and 2010 elections.

Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party (ITBP)

The Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party was founded in mid-1990 by Velid Şerike. He describes other parties that cooperate with Kurdish groups as nationalists and accuses other parties of being subordinate to Iran and Turkey. Şerike states that the Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party acts with the

slogan of brotherhood, democracy, and Liberation. The Turkmen should be more active in Iraq in the post-Saddam period. He argues that doing more Turkism than Turkey besides more Shiiteism than Iran will harm Turkmen. Shrike, who criticizes Turkey, accuses only the Iraqi Turkmen Front of supporting them and claims that Turkey brings them closer to the Kurds. He announced that he received 2900 dollars from Barzani and 1600 dollars from Talabani on a monthly basis in an interview with a newspaper (Araahurra, 2010). The Party participated in the 2005 elections with the Kurdish Alliance and was entitled to become a deputy. In the 2010 elections, it entered the election with the Brotherhood List established by Kurdish groups, but could not get a parliamentary seat.

Non-Governmental Organizations Established by Iraqi Turkmen

Iraqi Turkmen took advantage of the authority gap in the north of Iraq in the post-1990 period as well as the organization's efforts gained momentum. This organization process was not limited to political parties, but various non-governmental organizations were formed according to the needs of Iraqi Turkmen. However, these non-governmental organizations had to find a grassroots difficulty among Iraqi Turkmen. Both the economic conditions of the people and the pressure brought by the years prevented the people from being channeled to these organizations. We can list the major non-governmental organizations of Iraqi Turkmen as follows:

Iraqi Turkmen Non-Governmental Organizations (ITNGO)

Iraqi Turkmen Non-Governmental Organizations, founded in 2007, are a leading organization formed by bringing together 22 non-governmental organizations. The headquarters of all non-governmental organizations are in Kirkuk. ITNGO is known as an organization affiliated with the Iraqi Turkmen Front and all organizations within it receive support from them. This umbrella organization provides coordination between the institutions under it; it also undertakes the task of inspecting these Organizations and provides liaison with other domestic and foreign non-governmental organizations in Iraq (Duman, 2013). The institutions that make up the Iraqi Turkmen Non-Governmental Organizations are as follows: Turkmen Women's Union, Turkmen Student, and Youth Union, Turkmen Workers Union, Turkmen Association of Agricultural Engineers, Turkmen Engineers Union, Turkmen Literary Union, Turkmen Doctors Association, Turkmen Lawyers Union, Turkmen Artists Union, Turkmen Storekeeper Union, Turkmen Athletes Union, Turkmen Combatants Association, Turkmen Immigrant Affairs Association, Turkmen Teachers Union, Iraqi Turkmen Tribes and Upper House, Turkmen Health Officers Union, Turkmen Martyrs' Families, and Prisoners Association, Turkmen Quran Readers Association, Turkmen Turkalan Cultural Association and, and Turkmen Philanthropists Association.

Turkmen Brotherhood Association (TBA)

Turkmen Brotherhood Association (TBA) can be shown as the first organized union of Turkmen in Iraq. The Turkmen Brotherhood Association, founded after the Kirkuk massacre in 1959, is operating in the social and cultural field. Turkmen Brotherhood Association has branches in Erbil, Mosul, and Kirkuk as well as Baghdad. Mehmet Ömer Kazancı is the Chairman of the Board (Erbil Gazetesi, 2012). The Turkmen Brotherhood Association had to leave the Iraqi Turkmen Front after it declared itself as a political party and lost its roof feature. It will be seen that the Turkmen Brotherhood Association was in the past of many politicians when we look at Turkmen politics today. In a way, we can say that the Turkmen Brotherhood Association is a political school for Iraqi Turkmen (Duman, 2013).

Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood and Culture Association (ITBCA)

Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood and Culture Association (ITBCA) was established in Istanbul in 2002. Its General President is Salman Nalbant. The Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood and Culture Association, which focuses primarily on religious values, provides its income sources with donations collected from Turkey. It receives aid from the Light House Association, Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Hüder Foundation, Organization of the Islamic Conference, and Islamic Solidarity Fund. The following establishments operate within the body of the association: Quran Recitation Center, Numan Bin Sabit Islamic High School, Imam Ebu Hanife Quran Tahfid House, Musalla Sports Club, Sumer Radio, Ummuhat El Muminin Islamic Girls' High School, and Iraqi Youth and Student Union (Irak Türkmenleri Kardeşlik ve Kültür Derneği Resmi Web Sitesi, 2013).

Turkmeneli Cooperation and Culture Foundation (TCCF)

Turkmeneli Cooperation and Culture Foundation (TCCF) was established on May 18, 1996, in Ankara. Fatih Türkcan is the President of the Foundation. It has two offices in Erbil and Kirkuk. It has stood out as the most active organization among Turkmen since 1996. The foundation carried out a total of 21 water well projects, repaired 14 schools and health centers constructed 400 residences in various parts of Iraq as well as a Healing Dispensary in Kirkuk. Moreover, it provided food, clothing, and health aid to the needy Turkmen living in Iraq through "Maltaser Germany" and "Adra Humanitarian Aid" operating in Germany, Turkey Religious Foundation, International Blue Crescent Humanitarian Relief, and Development Foundation, Turkish Cooperation and Development Administration and Bilkent University (Türkmeneli İşbirliği ve Kültür Vakfı Resmi Web Sitesi, 2013).

İhsan Doğramacı Arbil Foundation

Prof. Dr. İhsan Doğramacı is the sole founder of the foundation. İhsan Doğramacı Arbil Foundation is headquartered in Ankara. Nesrin Erbil is the Secretary-General of the Foundation. There is İhsan Doğramacı Clinic in Erbil within the body of the foundation, which covers the treatment and medication costs of Turkmen patients. Besides, there is a cultural center in Arbil affiliated with the foundation. The most significant achievement of the İhsan Doğramacı Erbil Foundation is its support for education. The Foundation provides scholarships and graduate opportunities to Turkmen students at Bilkent University. Two students finished their master's degrees besides returned to Erbil. The foundation cost the Bilkent Erbil College project, which is one of the most popular schools in Erbil, approximately 60 million dollars. Three hundred fifty students from primary school to high school are studying under the roof of this college (Duman, 2013). Prof. Dr. İhsan Doğramacı founded Bilkent University, Turkey's first private university, in 1985. In parallel with this, the Foundation established the International Bilkent University in Erbil. The construction work of the university, which will cost approximately 40 million dollars, continues. According to the news in the local media in Northern Iraq, the Northern Iraq administration has allocated 30 decares of land for the International Bilkent University to the foundation. It is stated that International Bilkent University will provide education in social, scientific, and technical fields (Sabah, 2009).

Turkmen Congresses

As we mentioned at the beginning of our study, Turkmen are the most prone to politicization when looking at other communities living in the Iraqi geography. Turkmens are a society with a high literacy rate and urban and democratic values. Iraqi Turkmen had the chance to organize in the political arena, especially as a result of the authority vacuum that emerged with the declaration of a no-fly zone in Northern Iraq. This process brought along the Iraqi Turkmen holding congresses on various occasions. We can explain the leading congresses held by Iraqi Turkmens as follows:

First Turkmen Congress (4-7 October 1997)

Iraqi Turkmen took advantage of the decrease in the oppressive attitude of the Saddam regime. They entered the stage of a severe congress to focus on organizational studies. The congress held in Erbil between 4-7 October 1997 is a milestone in the political history of Iraqi Turkmen. The drafting committee was established for managed the congress process. It was envisaged that 30 people from the National Turkmen Party, Turkmeneli Party, Turkmen Independents Movement, Turkmen Brotherhood Association, and 15 people from the Turkmeneli Cooperation and Culture Foundation, as well as the Iraqi Turks Culture and Aid Association, would attend the congress. Besides, It was decided to include five people from the Turkmen Islamic Union, which is not part of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. In addition, Turkmen organizations operating abroad were also invited to the congress.

As a result of the First Turkmen Congress, the organizational process of the Iraqi Turkmen Front was completed considerably. The Iraqi Turkmen Front President and three members of the Executive Board, 30 members of the Shura council, five members of the supreme auditing board, five members of the disciplinary committee, and four members of the Council secretariat were elected in the congress. Vedat Arslan was elected as the first president of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. Besides "The Declaration of Basic Principles" was announced at this congress (Küzeci, 2010). Turkey and other states were thanked for helping the Turkmen community under challenging conditions in the final declaration published on October 7, 1997. Also, it included, "We thank the IKDP administration for helping to hold the convention in a safe environment in our own territory". This expression drew attention despite the tension between the IKDP and the Turkmen parties at that time (Duman, 2011).

At the congress, attention was drawn to the human rights violations against the Iraqi Turkmen. International organizations, especially the UN and the world public opinion, were called for help. A consensus has emerged that Iraqi Turkmen besides Turkmen organizations operate under the Iraqi Turkmen Front. It was stated that the Basic Principles Declaration of the Turkmen Congress binds the entire Iraqi Turkmen community moreover these principles can only be changed by the Turkmen Congress. In the second article of the declaration, Turkmen were defined as "Muslim Oghuz Turks". In the third article of the declaration, it was stated that the written language of the Turkmens was Istanbul Turkish, besides its alphabet was the Latin Alphabet. It is the most important indicator that Iraqi Turkmen are culturally close to Anatolian Turks (Küzeci, 2010).

The fact that the declaration in Article 7 of the Declaration states that the Turkmen society will follow a civil, democratic, and peaceful path to achieve their national goals sheds light on us to understand the political language used by the conditions of the period. Also, the same article contains the phrase "Turkmen society; has the authority to form the necessary organization to protect its existence, rights, interests as well as to eliminate threats". Based on this article, an armed unit called Akıncılar was formed under the Iraqi Turkmen Front Security Department. The Akıncılar organization, whose number is approximately 2000, operated until the 2003 US invasion. In addition, roughly 75 percent of the 400-person Peace Monitoring Force (PMF), which was established in October 1996 to protect the ceasefire between IKDP and IKYP, besides being led by Turkey, was composed of Turkmen. PMF completed its mission as a result of the joint management agreement of IKDP and IKYP in 2002 (Katzman, 2003). This force was perceived as a Turkmen-armed unit, although it was established to maintain the ceasefire between IKDP and IPUK (Cablegate Search, 2011).

Moreover, nearly 10 thousand Turkmen warriors who fought for the protection of the Turkmen identity of Talafer during this period were organized in groups called "Sultan Abdulhamit Continents", "Fatih Sultan Mehmet Continents" plus "Cemaat". The Cemaat is still fighting against Kurdish militias and US armies under the Islamic State of Iraq. The American military with the Kurdish militia has carried out many attacks against the city of Tal Afar together, claiming that there is Al-Qaeda in the town since 2004 (Yılmaz, 2011:231). The aims of the Turkmen society were listed in Article 8 of the Declaration:

- Reaching the legitimate rights of Turkmens as well as other nations within the territorial integrity of Iraq,
- Establishment of a democratic, pluralistic parliamentary system that respects human rights and freedoms,
- Ensuring equality among all ethnic, sectarian, and religious minorities living in Iraq,
- Arrangement of the political, and administrative structure according to the principles of equal rights.

The Iraqi Turkmen Front, acting in line with these principles, tried to establish legitimacy in Iraq and wanted to make itself known in the international public opinion with representative offices opened in Turkey, England plus Germany. A number of messages were sent to the Northern Iraq Regional Government in this congress. The Iraqi Turkmen Front determined some conditions to join this administration. The Iraqi Turkmen Front demanded one-quarter representation in the parliament, three ministries, and the prime minister. When it comes to 1999, it is possible to say that the Iraqi Turkmen Front followed a more active policy than in the past. The Iraqi National Council, formed by the groups opposing the Saddam Regime, has included the Iraqi Turkmen Front in its meetings since this year. The Iraqi Turkmen Front formed an International Coordination Group in order to create a Turkmen Lobby (Duman, 2011:18).

Second Turkmen Congress (20-22 November 2000)

Although significant progress was made in terms of institutionalization of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, the First Turkmen Congress was not sufficient. ITF Chairman Vedat Arslan plus more than 40 ITF executives resigned in response to Sanan Ağa Kasap's entry as a member of the Turkmen Council in the 7th Council meeting between 7-9 June 2000. For this reason, Kenan Şakir Üzeyirağalı, Mustafa Kemal Yayçılı, and Riyaz Sarıkahya, who were the heads of the parties under the roof of the ITF, became the temporary chairman of the Iraqi Turkmen Front every month between July and November 2000 (Küzeci 2011). It caused the Iraqi Turkmen to look unstable and the public's confidence in the Iraqi Turkmen Front was shaken. Therefore, a new congress was organized. Contrary to the First Congress, the Turkmen Islamic Union, the European Federation of Turkmen Associations, the American and Canadian Turkmen Organization, the Australian Turkmen Association, the Kirkuk Foundation, the European Turkmen Human Rights Society, and the Netherlands Cultural Foundation were also invited to the congress.

The Second Turkmen Congress was convened in Erbil on 20-22 November 2000. As a result of the congress, Sanan Ağa Kasap from the Turkmen Brotherhood Association was elected the new president of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. The meeting started with the reading of the messages sent by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem. While Ecevit said, "your congress be beneficial for the territorial integrity of Iraq", İsmail Cem emphasized that "Turkmen are a bridge between Iraq and Turkey". IKDP leader Mesut Barzani sent Erbil Proconsul Ekrem Mantık to the congress. Ekrem Mantık advocated the establishment of a federal Kurdistan in Iraq in his speech. It drew a rebuff with the reaction of the people in the hall (Çakırözer, 2000). It was stated that the main idea of the Turkmen people is the welfare and happiness of the people of the region with which they share the same fate, the establishment of democracy with all its institutions, and principles, the preservation and dissemination of existing multiculturalism, the establishment of peace between peoples and regional peace on solid foundations in the declaration published at the end of the congress (2. Türkmen Kurultayı Sonuç Bildirgesi).

After the Second Turkmen Congress, in which the new administration of the Iraqi Turkmen Front was formed, the problems regarding institutionalization continued. It is seen that the pressure of the IKDP under Barzani on the Turkmen Front increased strongly in this period. The Iraqi Turkmen Front wanted to play an active role in the opposition against the Saddam regime. The ITF participated

in the meetings organized by the Iraqi National Congress, as well as tried to make the voices of the Turkmens heard. However, groups that wanted a Turkmen-free Iraq made their voices heard more. Turkmens were not included in this group, which consisted of 6 groups led by Allavi, Ahmet Çelebi, Şerif Halil, Abdüllaziz Hakim, Celal Talabani, and Mesut Barzani, moreover was planned to form the post-Saddam administration.

The US's tendencies towards the Middle East geography, besides the changing regional dynamics, have given the first signs that the region would be reshaped since the beginning of the 2000s. 1 March mandate for military action, which envisaged the entry of U.S. troops into Iraq through Turkish territory, impacted the atmosphere in Northern Iraq. During this period, many meetings were organized in order to resolve the disagreements in the region between IKDP, IPUK plus ITF, mediated by the USA and Turkey. An offer was made to the Iraqi Turkmen Front to join the administration to be established in the north of Iraq. However, these negotiations did not yield any results. The Iraqi Interim Governing Council was announced on July 5, 2003. It consists of 13 Shiite Arabs, 5 Sunni Arabs, 5 Kurds, 1 Christian, plus 1 Turkmen member. Songül Çabuk is the only Turkmen in the Iraqi Interim Governing Council. She is not a member of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. It is the most concrete indication that the Iraqi Turkmen Front was excluded from Iraqi politics in the post-Saddam period. The fact that Songül Çabuk, the only Turkmen member of the council, was not a member of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, did not prevent her from becoming a target, as well as she was subjected to assassination attempts against her in the same year. The increase in the tension between the Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq and the Turkmens prompted the USA, which wanted stability in the region. It organized a "Peace Meeting" on 26 August 2003. IKYB and ITF representatives Kirkuk Governor Abdurrahman Mustafa plus US officials attended this meeting. The tension between the Turkmen and Kurdish groups was reduced as a result of the meeting. The process leading to the third congress started due to the end of Saddam's regime and the Iraqi Turkmen Front's inability to take the initiative in this period (Radikal, 2003).

Third Turkmen Congress (12-15 September 2003)

The Iraqi Turkmen Front, which wanted to take a position in Iraqi politics in the post-Saddam period, opened various offices in Northern Iraq as a result of institutionalization efforts. It moved its headquarters to Kirkuk, the symbol of Turkmens. Iraq Turkmen Front's Baghdad Officer Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman was elected the new leader of the ITF with 264 votes in the Third Turkmen Congress. The slogan of "Democracy for Iraq, Full Rights for Turkmen" made its mark on congress (Turks, 2011). While it was not possible for Turkmen under the control of the Saddam regime to attend previous congresses, they were also able to participate in this assembly. The Iraqi Turkmen Front, taking advantage of the collapse of the Saddam Regime in this congress, started to open representative offices in other geographical regions where Turkmen live, which are outside the safe zone. Turkmens, who wanted to play a more active role in Iraqi politics, tried to make their voices heard with democratic mass actions after the congress (Milliyet, 2004). Turkmen wished to be recognized as the third ethnic group after Arabs and Kurds in the constitution. The demonstration was organized in the capital Baghdad on February 25, 2004, with the participation of approximately 4 thousand Turkmen who are under the leadership of the Iraqi Turkmen Front (Türkiye Gazetesi, 2004). Turkmens called for a general strike in Kirkuk in addition to rallies and demonstrations. Many of the Turkmen who participated in the call to a large extent took down their shutters, as well as the Turkmen police, who made up about 20 percent of the city's police force, stroke action (Hürriyet, 2004).

The Iraqi Turkmen Front started to work for the elections after the congress. It contacted many Turkmen movements and non-governmental organizations. As a result of this study, they participated in the polls with the Turkmen Front List in the provinces of Salahaddin, Mosul, Diyala, and Baghdad. Unlike the previous elections, it entered the polls by not forming a coalition with another party. The Iraqi National Turkmen Party, Turkmeneli Party, and the Decision Party, which continue their existence outside the Iraqi Turkmen Front, declared that they will support the Iraqi Turkmen Front. However, Shiite Turkmen parties preferred to stay out of this initiative. As a result of these elections,

Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman, Riyaz Sarıkahya, and Feyha Zeynel Abidin from the Iraqi Turkmen Front entered the Iraqi Parliament. Provincial administration elections were organized along with the general elections in Iraq. The Iraqi Turkmen Front emerged as the second party in Kirkuk with 73,791 votes and obtained six seats in the 41-member Kirkuk provincial council. Turkmens gained the right to be represented in Kirkuk Provincial Assembly with three seats from other party lists (Hadi, 2007).

Fourth Turkmen Congress

The Iraqi Turkmen Front failed to show the expected success in the elections on January 30, 2005. It has caused some disagreements among Turkmen to come to the surface. The Turkmeneli Party and the Turkmen Independents Movement left the Iraqi Turkmen Front as a result of the incompatibility. President of the Turkmeneli Party, Riyaz Sarıkahya, stated that the dialogue with the Kurds should be improved. The Brussels model put forward by Celal Talabani for Kirkuk should be supported (Milliyet, 2011). Even the fact that there are 28 candidates for the presidency of the Iraqi Turkmen Front shows the situation in the congress (Tüm Gazeteler, 2011). The deep divisions about the organizational structure of the Iraqi Turkmen Front became the main topic in the congress. Turkmen have decided on the "presidential council" system as a result of the discussions. It was decided to form a 7-person presidential council to be next to the elected president and a 60-person Central Decision Board under this council. However, the congress was postponed for about two weeks when the parties disagreed about the election statute. Sadettin Ergeç was elected as the new president of the Iraqi Turkmen Front as a result of the congress in June.

The ITF had to enter into a very intense tempo as soon as the congress was over. Both the elections are to be held on 15 December 2005. The new Iraqi Constitution referendum to be held on 15 October 2005 increased the tension in Iraqi politics. The Iraqi Turkmen Front believed that the new constitution submitted to the ballot initiative would lead Iraq first to federalism and then to division. Although it campaigned against the referendum, it was accepted at a very high rate. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul stated that there are many items in the referendum text that raise Turkey's concerns with Iraq. The ITF decided to participate alone in the elections after the referendum. However, it allied with the Iraqi Reconciliation Front, where Sunni Arab political groups came together only in the Mosul province. The ITF participated in the elections in Kirkuk, Mosul, Erbil, Diyala, Saladin, and Baghdad. The election results were not very encouraging for the ITC. The ITF, which could only elect three deputies, was represented in the parliament only by Sadettin Ergeç after Izzettin Abdullah Devle and Muhammed Emin Osman separated the party. It did not take part in the government established by Maliki.

Fifth Turkmen Congress (13-14 June 2008)

According to the Iraqi Turkmen Front's guidelines, a congress must be organized every three years. For this reason, the fifth congress was arranged on 13-14 July 2008. Sadettin Ergeç was re-elected president as a result of this congress. The most important outcome of this congress is that the Iraqi Turkmen Front is no longer an umbrella organization that includes other Turkmen formations and becomes a political party on its own. Thus, other political organizations operating within the Iraqi Turkmen Front separated from there. This situation refuted the discourse that the Iraqi Turkmen Front was the legitimate and sole representative of the Iraqi Turkmen. It caused the formation of new centers of gravity toward the Turkmen in Iraqi politics. The fact that the Iraqi Turkmen were so fragmented for the first time disturbed Ankara. Representatives of many Turkmen organizations came together at the iftar dinner given by President Abdullah Gül at the Chankaya palace. It could not regain this feature of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, which lost its umbrella organization feature. Thus, the fragmented structure among the Iraqi Turkmen continued. The political organizations formed by the Iraqi Turkmen tried to be included in the coalitions organized by the major groups in Iraq. The Iraqi Turkmen Front formed an electoral alliance with the Iraqi National Movement (Al-Irakiye) list, which

was founded in 2010 under the chairmanship of Iyad Allavi and comprised 9 parties that included Shiites and Sunnis (Duman, 2011:29). Sadettin Ergeç was elected as the Honorary President and Kirkuk Provincial President Erşat Salihi were selected as the new president of the Iraqi Turkmen Front on March 5, 2011. The Iraqi Turkmen Front partially increased its votes in the general elections on March 7, 2010. ITF had the chance to be represented in the government established by Nuri-El Maliki. Turhan Mufti from the Iraqi Turkmen Front, who had the opportunity to enter the cabinet for the first time after 2003, became the Minister of State for the Provinces.

Turkey's Influence Period in Northern Iraq (1991-2003)

Turkey had an effective maneuvering area in Northern Iraq courtesy of taking advantage of the authority gap in the region after 1991. Its power in the region started to decrease relatively in the process following the Second Gulf War. Turkey's influence in the area began to wane in parallel with the end of the civil war between Kurdish groups, especially the IKDP and IPUK, which is called the Washington Process (Erkmen, 2002). The "Regional Parliament", in which the IKDP is represented by 51, the IKYB by 49, and the Assyrians by five members, has not been able to convene with the participation of all its members since 1996 due to the conflicts between Barzani and Talabani. According to this agreement, it was decided that the spokespersons of the parliament would alternate between the two parties every three months (Hürriyet, 2013). Following this process, a positive atmosphere emerged as a result of the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan and bringing of him to Turkey on February 16, 1999. It has decreased Turkey's threat perception towards Northern Iraq. We can say that Turkey was the dominant power in the region until the intervention of the Multinational Coalition forces formed under the leadership of the USA and the United Kingdom on 20 March 2003. Turkey maintained this psychological superiority until the Second Gulf War. In this process, we can summarize Turkey's priority in Northern Iraq as the threat it poses to the PKK and the preservation of the existence of Iraqi Turkmen. The reasons for Turkey's gaining an influential power in the region are as follows:

- The embargo imposed on Iraq lasted until the overthrow of the regime in 2003 after the coalition forces led by the USA ensured Iraq's exit from Kuwait with the Desert Storm operation. The central government weakened, and, and the economy turned upside down in Iraq. Turkey played an important essential role in the restructuring of Northern Iraq by turning this situation into an opportunity. The investments made by Turkish companies in the region, the humanitarian aid provided by multinational non-governmental organizations to the region area through Turkey, and, and the transportation of the basic needs in the region through Turkey made Northern Iraq economically dependent on Turkey (Salihi, 1998).
- Turkey's military presence in Northern Iraq, its ability to conduct a cross-border operation whenever it wishes, and the Peacekeeping Force deployed in the region between IKDP, and IPUK are some of the most important reasons for Turkey's psychological superiority in Northern Iraq. It was seen as an assurance by the Iraqi Turkmen and has become a necessity for them to continue their existence.
- Another reason for Turkey's success in the region is its policy of balance between tribes, and groups in the area. As a result of this policy, Barzani, and Talabani were given diplomatic passports and collaborated with IKDP and IPUK against Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Thus, these groups opened up to the outside world through Turkey.163 As a result, Kurdish groups in the region were partially prevented from acting against Turkey's interests (Gunter, 1999).
- The regional atmosphere was suitable for Turkey to be effective in Northern Iraq. The Arab States described the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq as a second Israel in the region and saw the entire Iraqi territory as a part of the Arab World. It is compatible with Turkey's concerns regarding the territorial integrity, and stability of Iraq. It found a response in the countries of the region. Because the Arab states worried that Iran's influence in the area would increase as a result of the disintegration of Iraq.

THE IMPACTS OF THE SECOND GULF WAR ON IRAQ AND TURKMEN POLITICS

Pre-War Regional and Global Atmosphere

After the attack on the twin towers in the USA on 11 September 2001, the US National Security Strategy was published on 17 September 2002 with the signature of US President George W. Bush. It introduced The Preemptive War Doctrine. According to this doctrine, the elements that threaten the national security of the USA will be destroyed away from the mainland of the USA (The White House, 2007). The military intervention in Afghanistan after the attack on the twin towers by the Bush administration increased the tensions in the region again while the wounds caused by the First Gulf War were just closing. Then Eyes turned to Iraq, which allegedly aided al-Qaeda. US President George W. Bush said, "We are bringing freedom to millions of Iraqis. With the freedom we bring with our weapons; We will establish the constitutional order and hand it over to democracy. Iraq will build all its infrastructure as well as become an exemplary country for the region." on February 26, 2003. These words signaled a military intervention in Iraq. The possibility of US intervention in Iraq made familiar IKDP and IPUK. As a result of this rapprochement, IKDP, and IKYB re-established the Kurdistan Parliament under the leadership of Mesut Barzani and Celal Talabani on 7-8 September 2002. Besides, a crossroads has been reached in the relations of Kurdish groups with Turkey. Kurdish groups gave the impression that they didn't need Turkey (Mazin, 2003). Ankara welcomed the decision of IKDP, and IPUK to open the Kurdish National Parliament in Northern Iraq calmly, and gave an account that this arrangement was temporary. Moreover, Turkey expressed its discomfort at the absence of Turkmen in the parliament to be opened (Çakırözer, 2002).

In the event of a war, Turkey's entry into Northern Iraq was the most problematic issue for the Iraqi Kurds. All kinds of Turkish intervention were categorically rejected by the Kurds, and Turkey's policy was described as "imperialist". Turkey's Turkmen policy was opposed, and the influence of the Iraqi Turkmen Front was sought to be broken. In this period, especially the IKDP took a harsh stance against the Turkmen, besides taking an uncompromising stance on the Kirkuk issue. IKDP and IPUK mobilized to realize their expectations in post-war Iraq. The USA and England, who wanted to control the Iraqi opposition, organized a meeting in London on 17 December 2002 by opposition groups in Iraq, especially the IKDP and IPUK. Iraq was defined as the land of Arabs, Kurds, and others, but Turkmen were ignored. The following comment on the London Meeting and the attitude of the Kurds draws attention: "The 1932 memorandum given by Iraq to the League of Nations was violated with the conclusion declaration of the London meeting. It has been revealed that Turkey is not taken seriously." (Özdağ, 2002:16). The administration consisting of six people was formed at the Iraqi opposition meeting to harmonize the post-Saddam Hussein Iraq in the days when the danger of war against Iraq increased. It consisted of Mesut Barzani, Celal Talabani, Chairman of the Iraqi National Council Ahmet Çelebi, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Muhammet Bakir Al-Hâkim, former Iraqi Foreign Minister Adnan Al-Baceci, and the head of the Vifak Movement, Eyat Allavi. This administration did not include Sunni Arabs plus Turkmen. IPUK leader Celal Talabani stated that they do not want an independent Kurdistan, as well as he said, "We have good relations with Turkey and Iran. However, we do not want anyone to interfere in our internal affairs. The Iraqi people should decide the future of Iraq. We will guarantee the rights of the Turkmens." at the meeting of the Iraqi opposition (Balıkçı, 2003).

ITF President Sanan Ahmet Aga explained how the military intervention in Iraq could affect the Turkmen and their expectations for the future as follows: "Our concerns about the future of Iraq and the exclusion of the Turkmen increase as the possible operation date approaches. The fact that the Kurds have increased their pressure on the Turkmen and brought up their scenario about Kirkuk confirms our concerns. Turkmen may be in danger after the intervention in Iraq. We are waiting for how the assurance we requested from the USA will be realized. We aim to ensure that all our citizens have equal rights in a free parliamentary system without disturbing the territorial integrity of Iraq." (Tavşanoğlu 2003).

Istanbul Summit was organized under the leadership of Turkey to ensure that problems are resolved peacefully. This attempt of Turkey could not prevent the war but was welcomed by the Turkmens (Yılmaz 2003:13). The Turkmens supported the entry of the Turkish Army into Iraq in case of the outbreak of war, moreover saw it as a guarantee for their continued existence. The USA asked for Turkey's support to start a war against Iraq. The USA wanted to use Turkish territory to intervene in Iraq. Nevertheless, this proposal was not accepted with 250 negative votes against 264 affirmative votes, besides 19 abstentions in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Balbay, 2004:156). Turkey's failure to give the expected support to the US was used by Kurdish groups to gain influence in the region. It turned into a cold war between Turkey and Kurdish groups. Besides, The USA and Iraqi Kurdish groups wanted to keep Turkey out of the Iraqi reconstruction process. The Iraqi Turkmen paid the burdensome cost of the resolution (Mazin, 2003:187). Hasan Cemal concluded that in the eyes of the USA, the Kurds are more reliable than the Shiite and Sunni Arabs plus Turkmen, so the Kurds, especially in Kirkuk, aimed to rely on the United States to completely exclude the Arabs and keep the Turkmen out of the administration as much as possible. Hasan Cemal also stated that although 177 of the 260 lawyers registered with the Kirkuk Bar Association are Turkmen, 17 are Arabs, and the rest are Kurds, the head of the bar is a Kurd appointed by Celal Talabani. This table presented concretely reveals the nature of the atmosphere formed in the region with the support of global power (Cemal, 2003).

The Process of Reconstructing Iraq in the Period After the Occupation

The US and coalition forces invaded Iraq, using al-Qaeda and the production of nuclear weapons. The invasion of Iraq by the US also coalition forces began with aerial bombing on March 20, 2003. Then, the USA and British troops launched military operations against Iraq. They occupied Baghdad in a short time as a result of the low resistance of Iraq (El Şak El Avsat 2003). The Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid Bureau, which was established on 20 January 2003, was assigned to re-establish the state authority and design the policy (Galbraıth, 2007:92). Retired General Jay Garner, who was appointed head of this office, went to Baghdad to shape the new Iraqi government on May 21, 2003 (Ntv, 2013). L. Paul Bremer, an experienced diplomat, especially fight against terrorism, crossed from Kuwait to Iraq and announced that he would work with Garner on 12 May 2003 (Ntv, 2013). He published Law No. 1 of the Coalition Provisional Administration on May 16, 2003. Bremer, who was appointed as the civilian administrator in Iraq, banned the Baath Party administrators from continuing their public duties with this decision. The lifting of the 13-year economic embargo against Iraq was approved, and, with this decision, broad powers were given to the coalition forces in Iraq at the 4761st meeting of the United Nations Security Council on May 22, 2003. Then, Law No. 2 of the Coalition Provisional Council was proclaimed, and, and with this law, the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Secret Police, the Iraqi Intelligence Agency, the Republican Guard, the Military Wing of the Baath Party, and the Ministry of Defense were abolished on 23 May 2003 (Galbraıth, 2007:119).

Bremer announced that the Iraqi Interim Governing Council was established; however, he declared that he had the power to veto the decisions taken by the council on 5 July 2003. The Council, whose task is to prepare a budget and a constitution under the supervision of the USA, organized its first meeting on 13 July 2003 (Polk, 2007:202). This council, consisting of 25 people, elected a 9-person Presidency Commission to chair the board alternately on 29 July 2003. The Presidential commission was created of 5 Shiite Arabs (Abdulaziz Al-Hekim, Iyad Allawi, Ahmet Çelebi, İbrahim Al-Jafari, and Muhammed Bahr El-Ulum), 2 Sunni Arabs (Adnan Paçacı and Muhsin Abdulhamit) also, 2 Kurds (Celal Talabani and Mesut Barzani) (Global Security, 2006). Iraqi Turkmen were represented by Songül Çabuk from the Iraqi National Turkmen Party in the Iraqi Transitional Administration Council, but she was not elected to the presidential commission. Aydın Beyatlı, a member of the ITF Executive Council, stated that Songül Çabuk is inexperienced in the international arena and will not be able to defend the rights of the Turkmen. He expressed that they will protect their legal rights for a person proposed by them to enter the Interim Governing Council (Radikal Gazetesi, 2003). Thus, the differences of opinion among the Iraqi Turkmen became apparent once

again. On the other hand, it was decided to determine a separate Presidency Council regarding who would preside over the Interim Governing Council, which was established on 13 July. It was envisaged that the 9-member Presidency Council, electing 25 members of the Interim Governing Council, would component of 5 Shia, 2 Sunni plus 2 Kurdish representatives. Announcing the results of the meeting, the spin doctor of the IPUK, Berhan Salih, verbalized that it was agreed to hold the presidency in alphabetical order (Arı, 2004:516). It is a clear indication that the Iraqi Turkmen wanted to be excluded from the restructuring of Iraq.

The Interim Executive Council, which was established with the support of the USA in Iraq, determined 25 ministers of the cabinet, which consisted of 13 Shiites, 5 Sunnis, 5 Kurds, 1 Turkmen plus 1 Assyrian on September 1, 2003. Hoşyar Zebari, the spin doctor of IKDP, was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The only female minister in the cabinet, Nesrin Mustafa Pervari, of Kurdish origin, was assigned to the passive position of the Ministry of Public Works. Turkmen Raşid Mindar Ömer was appointed to the Ministry of Science and Technology, which is a passive position. Ibrahim Bahr al-Ulum, son of Mohammed Bahr al-Ulum, a Shiite member of the Interim Governing Council, was appointed to the Ministry of Petroleum, which is considered the most important ministry. The Prime minister, information, and defense ministries were left blank (Sabah Gazetesi, 2003). Chaos prevailed in the country due to the authority vacuum created during the restructuring process of Iraq, and, and incidents of violence have increased to an extreme. Bremer tried to create make an Iraqi police force of 40 thousand people to ensure stability in the country (Keegan, 2005:197). In addition, the Undersecretary of the Pentagon Walter Slocomb announced that the training of the new army to be established to replace the abolished Iraqi Army after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's administration would begin as soon as possible, and, and that the number of the Iraqi Army would not exceed 40 thousand (Ntv, 2003). The US administration is faced with the dilemma of stopping the violence in Iraq but not having a strong solid central armed force in Iraq.

The restructuring of Iraq proved to be very burdensome economically. The chaotic environment in Iraq hindered investments during the restructuring process and brought a severe financial burden to the United States. Bremer said that they had to spend a lot of money for at least a few years before oil production revenues in Iraq reached pre-war levels and between 50-100 billion dollars in the external source is needed for the reconstruction of Iraq in the "Capital Report" program broadcast on the American television CNBC in the summer of 2003 (Ntv, 2003). The additional budget package of 87.5 billion dollars requested by US President George W. Bush for the restructuring of Iraq and Afghanistan was approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate in October 2003. $18.6 billion of the foreseen budget was given to Iraq as a grant, as well as 51 billion dollars, was used to evaluate military expenditures in Iraq (Koçak, 2004). While the restructuring process of Iraq continued, a turning point took place in Turkish-American relations, which took a new dimension with the rejection of the 1 March resolution by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. US soldiers in Iraq, with the help of Kurdish peshmerga, arrested a Turkish military unit consisting of 3 officers plus eight non-commissioned officers from the Turkish Special Forces Command, serving in Sulaymaniyah on July 4, 2003. It was remembered by the public as the "Sack Incident" because of putting a sack over arrested soldiers' heads (Silleli, 2005:216). The fact that the 4th of July, when the incident occurred, was the most important national holiday of the USA, "Independence Day", hindered the diplomatic contacts that should have been established between the two countries, and Turkish soldiers were detained for 60 hours (Ntv, 2003). Turkey closed the Habur border gate with Iraq in the process that followed (Ntv, 2003). Turkish soldiers were released as a result of diplomatic efforts on 6 July 2003. The sack incident is an expression of the US administration's discomfort with the Turkish soldiers in the region.

The second resolution regarding Iraq was brought to Turkey's agenda in the shadow of the rejection of the 1 March resolution and the sack incident on 7 October 2003. It included the assignment of Turkish soldiers to Iraq in return for a loan of 8.5 billion dollars. It was decided to deploy the Turkish soldiers to Iraq for one year as a consequence of voting in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Yıldız, 2004:194). However, the Iraqi Interim Administrative Council opposed this agreement between the USA and Turkey, moreover stopped the deployment of Turkish troops

in Iraq. There is resistance from the local groups in Iraq against the Turkish soldiers not serving in Iraq. This situation needs to be carefully studied in terms of Turkish foreign policy decision-makers. The UN Security Council decided Iraqi Interim Governing Council transfer political authority in the country to an Iraqi government, Setting a timetable for the Iraqi Constitution and elections until December 15, 2003, mobilize all the resources of its affiliated organizations for Iraq in its 4844th Session on 16 October 2003.[1]Following this decision, it was planned to form a transitional government between the Iraqi Interim Governing Council and the American civilian administrator of Iraq, Paul Bremer, to accelerate the political process in Iraq. The Chairman of the Iraqi Interim Governing Council Jalal Talabani declared that the studies would be accelerated to lay the foundations of an Iraqi government that will ensure the separation of the legislative, executive, and judiciary and that a new government will be elected in the general elections in late 2005, with the creation of a new constitution.

Another critical step in the political restructuring of Iraq was made a stride on November 15, 2003. The "Political Process Agreement" was signed between the Iraqi Interim Governing Council and the US-led coalition forces. The administrative-based federation was envisaged in 18 provinces in Iraq, as the Turkmen and Sunnis wanted with this treaty. Although the US administration seems to support this thesis, it did not oppose the Kurdish leaders' attempts for an ethnic-based federation in Northern Iraq (Şimşir, 2004:405). Kurdish parliament in Erbil submitted two drafts of the constitution, under the headings of the "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Iraq" and the "Constitution of Kurdistan" to the Provisional Government Council and, and the US authorities for accelerating its efforts for a federation based on Kurdish ethnicity in Northern Iraq on 20 December 2003. It was expressed that the Federal Republic of Iraq was based on the rule of Arabs and Kurds. Besides, The president or prime minister would be elected from among the Kurds, and the security of the Kurdish region would be handed over to the peshmerga (Durukan, 2003). These initiatives have been a propellent power for the divided Iraq imagined by the USA. Significant progress has been made in terms of institutionalizing the formation based on Kurdish ethnic nationalism in Northern Iraq.

Abdullah Gül, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, warned that "The proposals pointed out by the Kurdish leaders to the Interim Government Council for the establishment of a federal Kurdish state in Northern Iraq is a perilous step." He emphasized that taking steps targeting the political and territorial integrity of Iraq would be the beginning of a dangerous escalation. Gul also preached that everyone should protect their land as well as try to create a democratic and peaceful Iraq through peaceful means (Milliyet Gazetesi, 2003). The members of the Iraq Interim Governing Council announced that they agreed to the Iraqi Transitional Administration Law on 1 March 2004. It is planned to regulate the transition period in Iraq and remain in force until the new Iraqi government is formed. The point of Council verbalized sharia law was determined as the fundamental law and that no article adopted later could be contrary to religious principles in the agreed text. According to this law, it was decided to form an elected government as of 30 June 2004, to bring the Iraqi National Assembly to power with nationwide elections to be held until 31 January 2005, and then to establish a permanent constitution by setting the second Iraqi government.

Iraqi Election System

The articles in the election law, which is based on the proportional representation system as well as accepted by the Iraqi Election High Commission, should be taken into consideration as they directly affect the alliances and disagreements between political actors. [2] In this respect, we will consider the Iraqi electoral system under four main titles:

[1] Resolution 1511 of the United Nations Security Council.

[2] Iraqi Election Law No. 96, Part 3.

Country Electoral District

The Iraqi Election Law has adopted the principle of the country's electoral district. The whole country is considered a single constituency. The parties nominate candidates as much as the total number of deputies in the parliament. If we summarize the positive aspects of it; Thanks to this system, diminutive minority groups will have the chance to represent themselves in the parliament (Özbudun, 2000:270). This system has an advantage for the Turkmen who resident dispersedly in various parts of Iraq. If the election law had been adopted based on provincial and periphery elections, Turkmen votes would have been wasted in settlements where the Turkmen population is low. However, Turkmen have the chance to represent the votes in the parliament wherever they are in Iraq within the framework of the country's electoral system. One of the negative aspects of the country's electoral environment used in the Iraqi electoral system is the risk of not representing the sparsely populated settlements in the parliament. Because, no separate quota is charged for each province in the country's election system, on the contrary, the local election system. Moreover, regions may not be represented proportionally to their populations in this system. The regions don't have a homogeneous structure in terms of security, stability, a culture of democracy, and unity of political attitudes when we look at the current conditions in Iraq. For example, the northern part of the country, where the Kurdish population is in the majority, also, the southern regions, where the Shiite population is concentrated, have safer and more stable conditions than the central parts, where the Sunni population is dominant. This situation brings along an imbalance between the geographical regions within the country in terms of going to the ballot box and being represented in the elections. Therefore, it seems unlikely that Sunnis living in the central parts of Iraq will be described in the parliament in direct proportion to their population (Soran & Mazin, 2005:33).

Low Election Threshold System

Although the Iraqi Election Law accepts the threshold system, It does not exceed 1 percent. The shallow threshold system of 1 percent is essential in terms of representing diminutive political parties and groups in the parliament. Because it is not possible to talk about the possibility of representation of small parties and groups in high threshold systems such as 5 percent (Germany) also, 10 percent (Turkey) (Sabuncu 2002:165). It aimed to provide a suitable environment for the representation of different views and different ethnic groups in the parliament by keeping the election threshold very low.

Closed List Basis

Election systems are divided into two list methods and a single-member district system, according to the number of deputies to be elected by electoral districts (Özbudun, 2000:260). Election law in Iraq adopted the list procedure applied in the vast majority of democratic countries. The list system is based on the principle of selecting the candidate or candidates with the most votes (Wikipedia, 2013). Besides, the Iraqi election law preferred the block list principle, which is one of the three variants of the list method. The main reason why the block list principle is chosen in electoral law is to encourage electoral alliance negotiations between different ethnic and sectarian groups. Because in the block list, voters cannot change the order of candidates in the list of the party or electoral alliance group they have chosen. In this way, it will be possible to prevent surprise results in electoral alliances. The order of the candidates on the list is significant. Because the deputies won by a list are determined according to the list order from top to bottom. Therefore, political groups participating in a particular electoral alliance need to carefully calculate the order in which their candidates will be placed in the electoral alliance list.

Election Participation Principles of Iraqis Abroad

One of the most critical factors that will affect the election results in Iraq, is the inability of nearly three million Iraqi citizens who took refuge in other countries to vote abroad due to the internal turmoil in the country, especially after 1990. The Election High Commission took a decision that allowed Iraqis living abroad to vote as a result of the regulations made on this issue (Soran & Mazin, 2005:34).

Basic Dynamics Determining the Post-Occupation Political Structure

Tribalism Approach

The tribalism Approach, which has survived from the historical background of Arab geography, is also a practical element in Iraq. The modern Iraqi state has been ruled by powerful tribal confederations since its inception. It has been a factor that undermines the central authority. The central authority's unwillingness to share dominance with the feudal powers spontaneously built a center-periphery model in Iraqi politics. Tribalism has an important place in the "mind map" of Iraqi society. The efforts of the republican government to break the existence plus power of the tribes with political, economic, and, and military devices were inconclusive after the military intervention in 1958. When the Baath Party came into force in July 1968, it rejected the tribalism in Iraq in its declaration No. 1. (Baram, 1997:1). Baathism sees the sheik and aghast institutions as a symbol of backwardness. That's why it blasted away these institutions (Bengio, 1995:88). One of the two most important turning points in the Baath regime's policy regarding tribes is the Iran-Iraq war that started in 1980. the regime's policy towards tribes had two primary dimensions. The largest tribes were relocated and removed, especially from near Baghdad. But at the same time, they were granted partial rights plus, privileges in order to establish good relations with the regime. On the other hand, the Bedouin Arabs, who were a good source of soldiers for the government in the Iran War, were encouraged to fight. The Bedouin lifestyle was put into action by being translated into the national language (Baram, 1997:4).

The second essential factor that led to the rise of tribalism was the First Gulf War. It has three substantial impacts on the tribal structure in Iraq: economic, military, and political. The prime dimension of the economic reason is the decrease in the purchasing power of the regime's loyalties due to the financial cost of the war to the country. Thus, the central government's economic reward for those who cooperate with the tribes as well as the punishment of those who oppose was weakened to a great extent. The root cause of the military is the increase in the number of the Republican Guard and other paramilitary groups. The increasing need for soldiers is met by pro-regime tribes parallel to the growth of these groups (Erkmen, 2010:7). The important political reasons are the rebellions that broke out during the First Gulf War and the place of Baath in these rebellions. A significant part of the Shiite tribes in the southern region did not participate in the revolts. The most important reason for this is that they gain substantial benefits from their relations with the regime (Nakash, 1994:174). Therefore, the role of tribalism increased in Iraq after the 1991 uprisings. After the invasion, a good part of the tribes was excluded by the USA and, and the new administration of Iraq. After the occupation of Iraq, some of the tribes affiliated with the old regime joined the resistance. The other part tried to be influential in Iraqi politics by collaborating with different political circles (Erkmen, 2010:6).

The Impact of Ethnic and Religious Tendencies on Iraqi Politics

The political structure in Iraq was formed on an ethnic and, and sectarian level after the occupation. It is seen that Kurdish nationalist groups and, and Sunni and, and Shiite Islamist groups are more active in Iraqi politics. Each ethnic and, and sectarian group has its own unique understanding of management and, and political purpose. Sunni Arabs see the integrity of the country

in danger and, and reject federalism and, and decentralization. Kurdish nationalists want to have a weak relationship with the central government as much as possible by developing the autonomy they have in the places where they are the majority in terms of population. The Shiite population, which constitutes the most populous part of Iraq, was exposed to some divisions within itself. They claimed rights throughout the country, relying primarily on their numerical superiority in Iraq. They defended Iraq with a strong central government. However, it is seen that there are divisions between parties such as the Dawa Party also Sadrists, which advocate a centralist solid structure, and the Iraqi Islamic Supreme Council, which supports strong federalism (Erkmen, 2010:7). The failure to produce politics at the national level and the lack of a culture of democracy caused ethnic and religious groups to see each other as a threat by marginalizing each other. The primary way of doing politics in the country was still carried out over Ethnic and religious identities due to the aforementioned reasons. The problems seen in every society that has not completed the process of nationalization are still carried out through ethnic and religious identities, the primary way of making politics driven by external pressures and internal Dynamics (Erkmen, 2010:9).

The New Political Structure Established in Iraq

Iraq has a three-member Presidential council. It consists of the President plus, two deputies. Decisions on the board are taken unanimously, not by majority vote. [3] They are elected by the National Assembly based on a two-thirds majority. The Prime Minister, who is the leader of the party with the most immense majority in the parliament, determines the cabinet after being appointed by the President. The National Assembly/Council of Representatives consists of 275 seats. 230 of them were allocated to elected representatives from 18 provinces of Iraq. The remaining 45 seats are determined by the proportional representation method according to the votes of the parties. At least 25% of the deputies in the parliament are required to be women. The Assembly is appointed for a four-year term (BBC Türkçe, 2013).

Election Alliances

We need to state that a healthy democracy is not just about elections before explaining the electoral alliances that appear in Iraqi politics. Democracy is a system vision. This system includes fundamental factors such as judicial independence, media freedom, human rights, and a questionable state system. Elections held in countries where these factors work well can be described as the crowning of an existing democratic system. Elections are organized in many authoritarian regimes. However, they can never be called democratic regimes. It will not be easy for the Iraqi people, who have been ruled by a dictatorship for many years, to get used to democracy. Security problems and ethnic and sectarian divisions have shaken the Iraqi political structure. The most obvious argument that increases the importance of the elections to be held in Iraq is that the parliament to be formed will prepare the permanent constitution of Iraq. This situation accelerated the search for a consensus among the structures operating in Iraq. Each political group sought its own electoral alliances in order to exist in the new political system to be formed. The number of election lists submitted to the Election High Commission has exceeded 40 since the role, moreover participation of political parties is essential (El Rai El Am, 2004). Four lists come into prominence: Shiite, Secular-nationalist, Kurdish, and Turkmen lists. These groups gave known names to the lists they had prepared, such as "national" and "unified national". The conceptualization of Iraq's social situation is unique. Therefore, we will define the aforementioned lists as "Al-Sistani", "Government", "Kurdish", and "Turkmen" alliances as mentioned in Iraqi plus Arab sources. It is tough to talk about the existence of a common political-democratic culture. Elections can be considered a step toward the transition to a democratic system.

[3] Transitional State Administration Law, Article: 36/C.

Shiite-Religious Alliance (Al-Sistani List)

One of the most essential features of the Interim Iraqi Government under the Presidency of Ayat Al Allavi is that it neutralized the Shiite-Islamist groups. Because the Shiite groups (Iraqi Islamic Supreme Revolutionary Council, Dawa Party) in this government are not represented in direct proportion to their bases in Iraq. The only explanation for this situation is the desire to establish a secular system in Iraq (Mazin & Soran, 2005:34). It was desired to prepare a national election list that would include all groups, but the Shiites did not agree to this. The Shiite religious groups withdrew from the alliance negotiations as a result of the Iraqi Interim Government's efforts to neutralize the Shiite groups. Shiite religious groups, who could not find what they expected in their search for an alliance, formed a Shiite Assembly among themselves (El Hayat, 2004). Al-Sistani, Head of Al-Havza al-Ilmiye in Najaf, the Iraqi Islamic Supreme Revolutionary Council, and the Dawa Party attended this assembly. Although the Sadr Group supported the El-Sistani List, Sadr and, and his staff were not included in the list (El Hayat, 2004). Apart from these religious groups, the Iraqi National Congress led by Ahmet Çelebi, who was politically isolated due to the deterioration of relations with the USA and who came from a secular-Shiite tradition, and the Shiite Political Council, consisting of 38 small Shiite parties, also attended (Mazin & Soran, 2005:35). However, this Shiite Assembly that was formed had some difficulties in creating an electoral list among the groups that formed started it (IKDP Resmi İnternet Sayfası, 2013). The Shiite Political Council announced that it has stopped the talks with Al-Sistani on the joint list. They stated that the reason for this was that the list was controlled by extremist religious Shiite groups and would emerge as a government open to Iranian influence (Associated Press, 2004). The Shiite Assembly aimed to include some Sunni, Kurdish, and Turkmen groups in the coalition in order to give Iraqi identity to the alliance they formed. The predominantly Sunni Shammar tribe, 4 Kurdish parties, two Turkmen Shiite parties, and Yezidi political formations were included in the coalition as a consequence of these efforts (El Rai El Am, 2004).

Government List

The nationalist formation including Sunni Baathists emerged with the initiatives of Allavi due to the extreme power of the Islamist Shiite groups, a separate organization of secular Shiite groups. The electoral alliance was organized with Prime Minister Al-Allavi, the Community of Iraqis led by President Al-Yaver, Chairman of the United National Movement Hatem Casim Muhlis, Chairman of the National Democracy Party Nasır Çadırcı, Chairman of the Iraqi People's Party Sait Salih Cebr, Secretary-General of the Arab Socialist Movement Abdul Ilah El Nasravi and Saad Abdurezzak, member of the Iraqi Democratic Community against religious-Shiite groups. Besides, the Democratic Ashuri Movement led by Yonadem Kinna, the largest organization representing Christians in Iraq, joined this alliance. It has been defined as the "Government List" in Iraq, as it was prepared under the leadership of Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Eyat al-Allavi and most of the parties participating in the list are in the interim government (Erkmen, 2010).

Kurdish Alliance

In the Northern Iraq region, the process of Kurds towards independence has been going on since 1990. The understanding of Shiites defending the integrity of Iraq and the central authority contradict each other. The Kurds did not look forward to taking part in the Shiite alliance due to the difference in political stance. Therefore, the Kurds continued their electoral alliance activities for a while within the framework of the "Government List". However, the reason that brought the Kurds to this point is nothing but the fear of losing the election against the Shiites. The Iraqi Kurds decided to enter the election with a Kurdish alliance that included all Kurdish groups, Kurdish-supported Turkmen, besides, Christian Small organizations (about 18 parties) when the work of the Government List did not satisfy the Iraqi Kurds. Besides, an alliance was established between the same parties regarding

the local Kurdish parliamentary election in Northern Iraq. Thus, an agreement was reached between the two major Kurdish parties (IKYB and IKDP) sharing power in Northern Iraq, although it is not known how long it will last.

Turkmen Alliance

Iraqi Turkmen preferred to take part in the election process by forming a unity within themselves in order to maintain their existence among the mixed political, ethnic, and sectarian attitudes of the Iraqi geography. The consensus was reached on the electoral alliance between the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, the Turkmen Independents Movement, the Turkmeneli Party, the Turkmen Islamic Movement, and the Turkmen Justice Party under the roof of the Iraqi Turkmen Front (El Mustakbal, 2004). Although nine Turkmen parties were planned to be brought together at the beginning of this process, the Turkmen People's Party as well as the Nationalist Turkmen Movement decided to enter the elections with a separate list under the name of the Nationalist Turkmen List. Besides, The two Turkmen Shiite parties, the Turkmen Islamic Union and, and the Vefa Movement, decided to enter the elections under the Shiite alliance. This situation gave the appearance of a sectarian division among Iraqi Turkmen. Another important critical problem for the Turkmen is the Kurdish-supported Turkmen parties. The Secretary-General of the Turkmen Doğuş Party, one of these parties, stated in a statement that the group consisting of seven parties will participate in the elections under the Kurdish alliance (IKYB Official Website, 2013).

January 30, 2005, Iraqi Elections and the Political Table

The general election held on January 30, 2005, is the most critical stage of the US's process of restructuring Iraq. According to the statements made by the Election High Commission the voter turnout in the elections was 59 percent despite many shortcomings and challenging conditions (El Beyan, 2005). The total votes cast were 8 million 456 thousand, and the invalid votes were 94 thousand 305. The total votes of the 99 parties that did not receive enough votes to enter the parliament were stated as 444 thousand 816. The voter turnout was 80-89% in Kurdish regions and 59-73% in the Shiite region the Shiite areas. In Anbar province, where Sunni Arabs live intensely, the rate of participation in the elections was 2%, and, and 29-34% in other Sunni Arab regions. While 17% of the voters in Mosul, one of the disputed regions of Iraq, participated in the elections, this rate increased to 70% in Kirkuk (Çetinsaya, 2007). The Iraqi Independent High Election Commission has given the votes received by the parties and the number of deputies as follows:

- United Iraqi Alliance: 4 million 75 thousand 295 votes (140 seats)
- Kurdish Alliance: 2 million 175 thousand 551 votes (75 seats)
- Iraqi National List: 1 million 168 thousand 943 votes (40 seats)
- Iraqis Party: 150 thousand 680 votes (5 seats)
- Iraqi Turkmen Front: 93 thousand 480 votes (3 seats)
- National Independent Elites: 69 thousand 938 votes (3 seats)
- Iraqi Communist Party: 69 thousand 920 votes (2 seats)
- Islamic Kurdish Association: 60 thousand 592 votes (2 seats)
- National Democratic Alliance:36 thousand 795 votes (1 seat)
- National Rafidine List:36 thousand 255 votes (1 seat)
- Reconciliation and Liberation Movement:30 thousand 796 votes (1 seat)

The Iraqi election, which was followed by very few international observers for security reasons, was met with reactions by groups other than Kurds and Shiites because it was not under the control of the UN. The USA winked at the corruption before and after the elections (Önal, 2005). Ballot boxes could not be established, especially in the so-called Sunni triangle (Baghdad, Mosul, Fallujah, Ramadi, and Tikrit) due to attacks and threats. It could not even be determined how voter records were kept in the Shiite regions plus in the north, where the elections were held with high participation

(Laçiner, 2005:28). The elections were a severe disappointment to both Iraqi Turkmen and Turkey. The Turkmen who participated in the polls within both the Shiite and the Kurdish alliance elected seven deputies apart from the Iraqi Turkmen Front (Selim, 2005). The Turkmen did not accept that the votes they received in the elections were proportional to their population. The Turkmen attributed this situation to the fact that the majority of Turkmen did not vote in the polls and the irregularities continued before the elections.

The ITF leader Abdurrahman's visit to Najaf and the Shiite Spiritual Leader Ayatollah Sistani were interpreted as the ITF-Shiite alliance after the election. It was also commented that an agreement was reached not to include Kirkuk in the Kurdish region (Ergin, 2005). The fact that approximately one-third of the Turkmen population is Shiite was considered an advantage in an area like Iraq where alliances are essential. On the same date, a simultaneous election was organized for the Kurdistan Regional Parliament elections, called the Kurdistan Milli Majlis, together with the general elections. 111 parliamentarians were elected in these elections. 1,753,919 electorate voted in these elections. The Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan, formed by IKDP President Mesut Barzani and IPUK President Celal Talabani, won 89.55% of the votes and elected 104 deputies. The Kurdistan Islamic Society, headed by Ali Bapir, was represented in the parliament with 6 deputies, and the Kurdistan Toilers Party, led by Qadir Aziz, with 1 deputy. Turkmen did not participate in this election. (Wikipedia, 2005).

The coalition talks were initiated since no group in the parliament obtained a two-thirds majority as stipulated in the Iraqi Transitional Administration Law, a government couldn't be formed alone. The government in Iraq was formed on 28 April 2005 as a result of lengthy negotiations. The candidate of the Shiites, Ibrahim El Caferi, created his 37-person cabinet. However, deputies were appointed to replace the five ministers who were vetoed in the parliament. It received the government's vote of confidence with the votes of 180 of the 185 deputies who attended the parliament. Thus, the candidate of the Shiites, Ibrahim El Caferi, became the prime minister plus Celal Talabani, whom the Kurdish Alliance nominated for the Presidency, became the President (Anadolu Ajansı, 2005). 17 Shiites, 8 Kurds, 6 Sunnis, a Christian, and a Turkmen Minister took part in the government. Turkmen Minister Casim Muhammed Cafer was selected from İbrahim Caferi's list moreover became the Minister of Construction and Settlement (Yeni Şafak Gazetesi, 2005).

The Permanent Constitution of Iraq and the Position of the Turkmen

According to the Iraqi Provisional Administrative Law, the newly formed government and the elected parliament were envisaged to create the permanent constitution of Iraq by August 15, 2005. The constitutional commission was established in the Iraqi parliament for this purpose. The text of the body was prepared with the joint effort of the US Embassy in Iraq also, the Iraqi Constitutional Commission (Galbraith, 2013). The Iraqi Constitutional Commission was initially established as 55 people. Then, 15 Sunni and 1 Sabi sect were appointed as a commissioner. Twenty-eight of the members of the commission were elected from the United Iraqi Alliance, while the remaining 27 were selected, 15 from Kurds plus one from Christians. Two more Sunni members, one independent and one member of the Iraqi National List led by Iyad Allawi, took part in the commission (Tavernıse & Al-Saıedy, 2005). Turkmen were represented by 2 members of the Constitutional Commission. One of the Turkmen members is Riyaz Sarıkahya, President of the Turkmeneli Party and the other is Abbas El-Beyati, a member of the United Iraq Alliance. However, Abbas Beyati acted in line with the views of the Shiite alliance (Duman, 2007).

Despite all the disagreements, the US Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad gathered the Iraqi leaders for three weeks. So, The constitution was created based on the agreement of the Kurds and the Shiites (Galbraıth, 2007). According to the Iraqi Provisional Administrative Law, the constitutional work, which was planned to be completed on August 15, 2005, could not be completed on time. It was submitted to the Iraqi parliament on 28 August 2005 with a delay. After this date, additions were made to the Iraqi Constitution Draft. It took its final form on September 19, 2005 (Erkmen, 2005:28).

The created Constitution was submitted to a referendum on 15 October 2005. According to the official results announced by the Iraqi Independent High Election Commission on October 25, 2005 (IECI, 2007). 9,852,291 people out of 15,568,702 registered voters participated in the voting, 78.59% of them voted yes and 21.41% voted no. Thus, despite all objections, the Iraqi Constitution was accepted (IECI, 2007).

The restructuring process of Iraq has been a harrowing one. The most essential feature of this process is that the political polarization is based on ethnic and sectarian arguments. The country is designed in this way. Thus, the country tangled, and the foundations of years-long chaos were laid. The polarization of the country along ethnic and religious lines was encouraged by the US administration. Structures established since the occupation was shaped by ethnic and sectarian concepts such as the Interim Governing Council, the Council of Presidents, the Assembly, and the Council of Ministers. Iraq politics has become Lebanese in a way. The new constitution was created in parallel with this process. The new body failed to establish an Iraqi identity. It has been criticized for the loose federal structure created made in Iraq, allowing the existence of regional militias and concerns that the regulation on oil will lead to civil war (Mazin, 2007:76). The fact that the text was prepared in a short time and did not respond to many requirements caused problems. These problems continue (Lake, 2005).

Although the Kurdish leaders seem to be defending federalism, it was revealed that they wanted 95% independence with the referendum in 2005 (Barkey, 2005:69). Turkey objected to the 2005 Constitution granting official status to the Kurdish identity. Turkey accused Barzani of providing logistical support to the PKK and changing the demographic structure in Kirkuk, while Barzani accused Turkey of not recognizing the Kurdish identity in its own country. At this very moment, the USA proposed a mechanism that envisages intelligence sharing between Turkey, Iraq, and the USA. On August 25, 2006, US General Joe Ralston was appointed as the special representative in the fight against the PKK. The commission, which organized 7 meetings for 15 months, completed its task of pacifying the constitution-making process in Iraq by delaying the Turks from entering the region, and, finally disintegrated (Philips 2009:10).

The Turkmen fulfilled the requirements of their historical mission once again during the preparation of the constitution. The attitude of the Turkomans in the constitution-making process is a continuation of the discomfort they felt about the balances in Iraq after 1991. Turkmens continued to defend Iraq's territorial integrity, political unity, and non-interference in internal affairs. The threat perception of the Turkmen shaped the Kurdification of Kirkuk. It's coming under Kurdish control, the annexation of Kirkuk to the Northern Federated Region, Kurdization of Turkmen-dominated regions by the Kurdish regional government in the North, and political-cultural oppression of Turkmen (Mazin, 2007:77). The status of Kirkuk was one of the issues that the Turkmen focused on the most in this process Turkmens argued that Kirkuk should remain attached to the central government because it contains all ethnic and religious ingredients in Iraq. Besides, Turkmens argued that Turkish should be included in the constitution and demanded that their cultural rights be guaranteed.

Turkey demanded the inclusion of Turkmen as an ethnic group in the New Constitution and the protection of the special status of Kirkuk. Moreover, Turkey hosted a part of the negotiations on the new constitution. In addition to the representatives of all groups in Iraq, Ismet Abdulmecit, Undersecretary of the Iraqi Ministry of Justice, and Osman Korutürk, Turkey's Special Representative for Iraq joined the negotiations. The views that Kirkuk and oil assets will not be attributed to a specific group, that natural resources belong to all Iraqis as well as that the expectations of the countries neighboring Iraq are in this direction were expressed once again by Turkey at the meeting (Şık, 2005). Ahmet Muratlı, Ankara Representative of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, expressed the concerns of the Turkmen in the constitution-making process: "The constitution formed by the Kurdish-Shiite alliance leads to the division of Iraq. It turns Turkmen into minority status, usurps their rights, restricts their roles, and erases their language and existence. Arabs and Kurds are considered the founding ingredients with the statement that the official languages of Iraq are Arabic and Kurdish. Other ethnic groups are only considered minorities. Kurdish groups want to include Kirkuk in their region through

the Constitution. In this case, the Turkmen region, including Kirkuk, will fall into Kurdish hands. They settled more than one hundred thousand people in Kirkuk to gain a majority in the general elections. Efforts continue to change the demographic structure." (Mazin, 2006).

Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that the constitution submitted to the referendum did not reflect all Iraqis. He underlined that rather than preserving the unity and integrity of Iraq, it has a content that paves the way for separation, limits the powers of the central government, grants strong powers to the federated regions, and even rules that the articles in this direction cannot be changed. Moreover, Erdoğan also expressed that it is hopeful that the parliament that will be formed after the December 15 elections will amend the constitution with a comprehensive amendment for once (Milliyet Gazetesi, 2005). It is not possible to talk about a particular article regarding the Turkmen in the new constitution. Article 4. is one of the most essential articles concerning Turkmens in the said constitution. It was declared that Arabic and Kurdish are the official languages of Iraq. Thus, Arabs and Kurds were presented as the two main ingredients of Iraq. Turkmens and Assyrians were in minority status. Turkmen and Syriac were accepted as official languages in the regions where these peoples lived intensely.[4]

In the preamble of the Constitution "…In the light of the international support of our friends and, and those who love us, keeping in mind the oppression and, and suffering of our people as a result of the sectarian pressures of the despotic administration, being inspired by the tragedies of our Iraqi martyrs from Shia-Sunni, Arab-Kurdish-Turkmen also all other brotherly circles…" [5] Turkmens were officially recognized, and Turkmens were accepted as the third largest ethnic group after Arabs and, and Kurds. In the continuation of the constitution, references are made to the massacres committed against the Turkmen "…We commemorate the dramas of the Turkmens in Bashir…" The massacres against the Turkmen were accepted. However, Turkmens, on the other hand, oppose limiting the crimes committed against them only to "Beşir Village" (Kerkük Net, 2005).

The administrative, political, and cultural rights of the Turkmen were guaranteed by Article 122 of the Constitution. According to the related article, "This constitution guarantees the administrative, political, cultural and, and educational rights of various nationalities such as Turkmens, Chaldeans, Assyrians and, and other communities. These matters are regulated by law."[6] The phrase is an assurance for Turkmens. Another weighty matter that worries Turkmen in the new constitution is the uncertainty in the status of Kirkuk. According to Article 138 of the Constitution, the Temporary Administrative Law and the documents constituting its annex are canceled except for Articles 53/a and 58 after the Iraqi Government is established. Therefore, all articles have been repealed except for subparagraph (a) of Article 53 plus Article 58. [7] The autonomy of Kirkuk was reserved in subparagraph (c) of Article 53 of the repealed law. The Turkmens became more concerned that Kirkuk could be included within the borders of the Kurdish administration in Northern Iraq with the repeal of this article. Uncertainty regarding the status of Kirkuk continues. The election process was started to elect the Iraqi government and parliament, which was announced before the preparation of the constitution and planned to govern Iraq for 4 years. Thus, Iraq's first elected parliament completed its mission. The reason for reorganizing Iraq under the theme of "democratization" was realized as stated despite previous reactions.

15 December 2005 Elections

Two essential features distinguish the general elections organized on 15 December 2005 from previous elections. The first is the participation of a large part of the Sunni groups that did not

[4] Paragraph 4 of Article 4 of the Permanent Constitution of Iraq.
[5] Introduction to the Permanent Constitution of Iraq
[6] Article 120 of the Permanent Constitution of Iraq
[7] Article 138 of the Permanent Constitution of Iraq.

participate in the January 2005 elections and the second is the establishment of a non-temporary government for the first time after the occupation (Mazin, 2005). Turkey's initiatives were influential in the Sunnis' participation in the elections. The US Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Halilzad and the President of the Iraqi Islamic Party Tarık Al Hashemi signed a memorandum of understanding that Sunnis would participate in the 15 December 2005 elections under the leadership of Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül on 4 December 2005 (Yeni Şafak Gazetesi, 2005). At the meeting, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul stated "This parliament will re-establish Iraq. All components of Iraq must take their place in this establishment when Iraq is re-established. Some groups, especially Sunni groups, did not participate in previous elections and referendums. Those who did not participate in the previous election should participate in this election as well as say what they will say in the political struggle and, and take a role in the establishment of Iraq." He pointed out that Sunnis can prevent separatism by balancing Shiites and Kurds (Demirkaya, 2005). Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul called on Turkmens as well as Sunnis to vote in the Iraqi elections. Turkish diplomats, who stated that Ankara has taken the necessary initiatives in the Turkmen policy, said, "Turkmen are receiving moral support. There are no Turkish soldiers in Iraq in terms of security, but there are enough diplomatic attempts in Iraq for the safety of the Turkmens'" (Akdağ, 2005). It is seen that the Turkmen are divided into three parts:

- Pro-Turkey: ITF decided to enter the elections in Kirkuk, Baghdad, Diyala, and Saladin alone, and in Mosul from the list of the Iraqi Islamic Party.
- Pro-Shiite Arabs: The Turkmen Islamic Party, based on Shiite Turkmen, decided to enter the elections in Baghdad, Saladin, and Mosul together with the "Shiite Entente Front", which was formed by Shiite Arabs besides led by Abdulaziz Hakim.
- Pro-Kurdish: Turkmen Brotherhood Party, based on Sunni Turkmens, decided to participate in the elections in Erbil and Kirkuk from the joint list of IKDP plus IPUK (Bila, 2005).

According to the latest election list announced by the Iraqi Independent Supreme Election Board on 4-5 November 2005, 228 parties plus 19 coalitions decided to participate in the elections (IECI, 2005). On the other hand, independent candidates also participated in the polls. The election polls started in the shadow of guns. 31,348 ballot boxes in the 18 provinces of Iraq and, and 560 ballot boxes in 15 countries (Denmark, Sweden, England, Lebanon, Austria, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Iran, Syria, Canada, Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Turkey and, and the United States) voted by-polls (IECI, 2005:1). Elections outside of Iraq started on 13 December 2005. It lasted until the evening of December 15, 2005, when the elections were organized in Iraq (Raphaeli, 2005:1). The official results of the election were announced on 9 February 2006. According to the announced reported results, the political picture in the Iraqi parliament is as follows (BBC Türkçe, 2008):

- United Iraqi Alliance: The Shiite Coalition has a total of 128 seats, including the Iraqi Supreme Islamic Council 30, the Dawa Party 28, the Sadr Party 30, the Fadila Party 15, and the others 25.
- Kurdish Alliance Bloc: It has a total of 53 seats made up of Kurds
- Iraqi Cohesion Front: It consists of Sunni Arabs and has 44 seats.
- National Iraq List: It consists of secular Sunni parties led by Iyad Allawi, holding 25 seats.
- National Dialogue Front: It is composed of Sunni Arabs and has 11 seats.
- Kurdish Islamic Union: It has an organic relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood and has 5 seats.
- Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc: A Sunni secular organization has 3 seats.
- The Formation of the Risalay: Pro-Sadr, has 2 seats.
- Iraqi Turkmen Front: It has 1 chair.
- National Mesopotamian Party: Syrian Christian, has 1 chair.
- Ummah Party: A secular party has 1 seat.
- Yazidi Movement: It is composed of Yazidis and has 1 seat.

The high turnout of Sunnis and the support of some rebel groups, this time, created cautious optimism in Washington that Iraq could maintain its unity. Bush said the elections, which he described

as "historic", "marked a considerable step towards a democratic Iraq that can stand on its own feet, defend itself and be an ally in the war on terror." He emphasized that such an Iraq would "provide a strong precedent for other people in the region, for example, those living in Iran and Syria". Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State, said that the elections took place "with a success beyond expectations". Zalmay Halilzad, the US Ambassador to Baghdad, also argued that the elections were a "qualitative leap" in the Islamic world. These statements are an indication that things are going well for the US in Iraq (Çongar, 2005). Iraqi Turkmen Front President Sadettin Ergeç plus 8 more Turkmen from other parties entered the Iraqi National Parliament. Izzettin Devle and Muhammed Emin Osman from the Iraqi Reconciliation Front, Abbas El-Beyati, Taki El-Mevla, Muhammed Mehdi, Fevzi Ekrem Terzi, and Feryad Tuzlu from the United Iraqi Alliance list were elected as deputies (IECI, 2005:9). The primary criticism of the Turkmen regarding the election is that the Shiites and Kurds cooperated to determine the number of seats in the provinces. It was argued that assessing the number of seats without a census was aimed at establishing Shiite and Kurdish dominance. Moreover, it was emphasized that although Kirkuk has twice the population of Sulaymaniyah, giving 13 deputies to Saladin as well as 9 deputies to Kirkuk was aimed at reducing the number of deputies of Turkmens. Also, It was pointed out that Shiites and Kurds played in the administrative structure by connecting the Turkmen-dominated districts to other cities (Bila, 2005).

The USA informed Ankara that the Iraqi Kurdistan Solution Party (IKSP), the political affiliate of the PKK, would be prevented from entering the elections on 15 December. Although Jalal Talabani promised, It was not fulfilled (Sarıkaya 2005). The Iraqi Kurdistan Solution Party entered the elections. It received 5,183 votes on 30 January 2005.292 IKSP, which took its place on the election ballot with the number 779 and, and wanted to take an active role in Iraq by being politicized for a long time, has achieved one of its goals as a result (Söylemez, 2005:576). Groups reacting to the election results are not limited to Turkmen. Thousands of Iraqis protested in Baghdad to protest the election that resulted in the victory of the Shiites. The crowd gathered at the call of the "Maram" movement, which brought together 42 political groups and formations that objected to the results of the elections, carried banners reading "Maram says no to the election commission", "No to the division of Iraq" and "We want new elections". Also, They chanted "neither Shia nor Sunni, Islamic Union".(Milliyet, 2005). Hundreds of Turkmen and Sunni Arabs demonstrated to protest the election results in Kirkuk. The demonstrators carried banners reading "Long live Arabs and Turkmens". They claimed that the election was rigged (Milliyet, 2005). These improvements reveal that there is a requirement for time to establish democratic practices in Iraqi politics.

2000 election violations were detected by international observers after the unofficial election results were announced. However, it was seen that the report prepared by international observers did not have any effect on the election results. There was no difference between the official results announced by the Iraqi Supreme Election Board as well as the unofficial results. Therefore, these developments also confirmed the claims that the election results were predetermined in line with the interests of the occupying power (Kazancı, 2006). The United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) was the group with the most deputies in the new parliament according to the results of the elections. They get is 10 seats more petite than the number needed to form the government. For this reason, the United Iraqi Alliance formed a coalition with the Kurdish Alliance. Although the United Iraqi Alliance first nominated Ibrahim Al-Jafari as prime minister, the Shiite parties that created it could not agree on the name Jafari. Therefore, the leader of the Dawa Party, Nuri El Maliki, was appointed to this mission. The Iraqi Parliament held sessions that lasted for about a month After Nuri al-Maliki assumed the task of forming the government. As a result of these sessions, the Maliki government received approval from parliament on 20 May 2006. However, the Interior, Defense, and National Security authorities served as a substitute in the approved council of ministers (BBC Türkçe, 2006). As a result of the sessions held in the Iraqi Parliament, on 8 June 2006, Prime Minister Maliki announced to the public that appointments were made to the ministries carried out by proxy.

The 37-person Iraqi Cabinet, headed by Nuri al-Maliki, consists of 19 Shia, 8 Sunni, 8 Kurdish, 1 Turkmen plus 1 Christian minister. In this cabinet, Casim Muhammed Cafer from the Iraqi Turkmen Islamic Union, known for his closeness to the Shiites, was brought to the Ministry of Youth and

Sports, besides becoming the only Turkmen minister in the cabinet. It is a concrete indication that Iraqi Turkmen are excluded from the newly formed power structure. Iraq's politics, which has a very fragile structure, could not stabilize despite the formed parliament and government. In this process, the Sadr bloc, which is a part of the United Iraqi Alliance, announced its withdrawal from the government on 16 April 2007. They aimed to impose a sanction on the withdrawal of US soldiers from Iraq with this method. It triggered divergence between different Shiite groups within the United Iraqi Alliance. Besides, the Iraqi Integration Front, the Sunni Arab party in the cabinet, announced that it had withdrawn its 6 ministers from the government on 1 August 2007, but their resignation was not accepted by Maliki. Nuri al-Maliki established a new four-party Shiite-Kurdish bloc with the Dawa Party and he aimed to repair the cracked voices in the cabinet. The coalition consisting of the Shiite Islamist Dawa Party under the chairmanship of Nuri Al-Maliki, the Iraqi Islamic Supreme Council under the chairmanship of Abdulaziz Al-Hakim with a Shiite axis, the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party under the chairmanship of Masud Barzani, and the Iraqi Kurdistan Patriotic Union under the chairmanship of Celal Talabani came to power on August 16, 2007, after receiving the vote of confidence from the parliament.

31 January 2009 Iraqi Local Elections

The "Transitional Iraqi State Administration Law (Provisional Constitution)" was created after the invasion of Iraq in 2003.[8] It was decided to establish a federal system in Iraq as well as to form a provincial council in each province.[9] The "Constitution of the Republic of Iraq", which was enacted in 2005, besides entered into force in 2006, was endowed with broad powers in the federal region and provinces.[10] Provincial councils were established . The first general election in Iraq after the occupation was organized together with the local elections on January 30, 2005. However, this election took place in the shadow of the general elections and the occupation. The content of local governments could not be filled because the constitution was not fully established. Although there were 18 provinces in the local elections, 14 provinces areas went to the polls. The provinces of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, and Dohuk, which are under the auspices of the Northern Iraq Regional Government, and, and Kirkuk province, whose status is still in dispute, were excluded from the election. Nine of the 14 provinces areas where the elections were organized were predominantly Shiite populations. Only the Anbar region had a predominantly Sunni population, and the remaining four regions areas constituted the cosmopolitan places in Baghdad. A partial-open list system was applied for the first time in local elections. Thanks to this system, voters got the chance to support candidates outside the lists instead of being stuck between blocks. Thus, the representation ratio was strengthened, and the reflection of voters' preferences in the ballot box was facilitated (Hürmüzlü, 2009:18).

The Sunni Arab segment, which boycotted the previous elections, aimed to increase its effectiveness by finding a place in the political system in this election. Sunnis participated in the elections to a large extent. This changed the balance in Iraqi politics significantly. Kurdish groups took advantage of the Sunnis' failure to participate in the previous elections. However, with the participation of the Sunnis in this election, the Kurds fell far short of the success they had achieved during the last elections, especially in Mosul. The winner of the elections was the Dawa Party of the Shiite Prime Minister Nuri El Maliki, which entered the elections under the name of "State of Law Coalition". It emerged as the first party in the provinces of Baghdad, Babylon, Najaf, Qadisiya, Meysan, Zikar, Mutanna, Wasit, and Basra. They were defeated only in Karbala against the independent candidate, General Yusuf Mohammad Al Habubi (Al-Sumaria TV, 2009). The only reason for this is that Karbala has been under the rule of the Dawa Party since 2005 and is quite worn

[8] Article 4 of the Iraqi Interim Constitution.
[9] Article 55 of the Iraqi Interim Constitution.
[10] Constitution of the Republic of Iraq, Article 122.

out locally (Çubukçu & Özkan, 2010:14). Sunnis scrabbled to compensate for the cost of being excluded in the 2005 elections. As a result of this intense effort, the Reconciliation Front in Diyala and Salahaddin, the National Hadba List in the Mosul Province, and the Iraqi National Project Group in the Anbar Province took the lead, making the Sunnis the first party in these provinces.

Iraqi Turkmen participated in the elections under the roof of the Iraqi Turkmen Front in the provinces of Saladin, Mosul, Diyala, Baghdad, and Kut, where Turkmen are concentrated. The Iraqi National Turkmen Party, Turkmeneli Party, and Decision Party, which are outside the Iraqi Turkmen Front, also supported the ITF list from outside. However, Shiite Turkmen parties did not take part in this formation. Turkmen received more votes than expected in Mosul and, and Saladin provinces. ITF list received 27,000 votes in the Tal Afar district of Mosul with a population of 400 thousand. The fact that Tuzhurmatu, which was a Turkmen district in Selahaddin, was connected to this gave an advantage to the Turkmen. Ali Haşim Muhtaroğlu and, and Niyazi Mohammed Kamber, who are in the first two places on the ITF list, were entitled to enter the 28-seat provincial council (Hürmüzlü, 2009:20).

The fact that the Turkmen list was victorious in Talafer and Tuzhurmatu as well as emerged as the first party in the two regions refuted the claims of the Kurdish groups on the region and, and registered that these regions are Turkmen cities. All the presidents who active duty in 14 provinces lost the election. Thus, Iraqis see local administrators as the source of the problems that most impact their daily lives after the occupation. The desire of the people to replace all local administrators, regardless of ethnicity or sect, was determinative in the election results. Moreover, the 2009 local elections contain some messages for the general elections organized in 2010. The defeat of the Iraqi Supreme Islamic Council and the Kurdish groups in the electoral districts, which wanted the federal system to be implemented in Iraq, explained the sensitivities of the Iraqi voters on this issue. This situation can be interpreted as a sign given by the Iraqi people for the strengthening of the central government (Çubukçu & Özkan, 2010:14).

March 7, 2010, Iraqi Parliamentary Elections

Iraq went to the polls for the third time in the last five years with the 2010 general elections. The election atmosphere occurred in an environment where the constitutional debates continued, there were various confessions about the election law, the American occupation continued, also ethnic and sectarian tensions escalated. As stated in Article 49 of the Iraqi Constitution, parliamentary elections, which should be organized every four years, were scheduled for January 21, 2010. However, the election date was set as 7 March 2010 due to the delays caused by the adoption of the election law. Significant changes happened in the Iraqi political system with the new election law. According to the aforementioned new regulation, the number of seats in the Iraqi Parliament was increased from 275 to 325. Thus, profound changes occurred in the representation rates of essential provinces such as Baghdad, Basra, and Nineveh (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009). Five seats reserved for minorities were allocated to Christians, one seat in Nineveh to Shabaks, another to Yazidis, and one seat to Mandeans in Baghdad. In addition, in the distribution of the Parliament to be formed after the 2010 elections, 25% of all seats were allocated to female candidates, as stipulated by the new election law.[11]

The Hare electoral system, which is a kind of proportional representation system, will be used in Iraq (Duman, 2010:27). According to this system, a quota is determined for each constituency based on the number of representatives in that region. Votes exceeding the quota are also transferred to the parties according to the general vote distribution. According to the election system in Iraq, an Iraqi going to the polls votes for one of the alliances and then votes for a candidate from this alliance. Thanks to this system, it is possible for the public to support whichever candidate they want more

[11] Iraqi Constitution, Articles 48 and 49.

(Özkan & Çubukçu, 2010:22). 310 candidates in the 325-seat Iraqi Parliament come from the constituencies. 15 of them are determined from candidates, 8 of whom are from minorities as well as 7 of them are selected from transferable votes (the Republic of Iraq The Independent High Electoral Commission, 2010).

One of the most essential features of the general elections organized in Iraq on March 7, 2010, in terms of Iraqi politics is the position of the Sunnis. Sunni Arabs, who did not participate in the first elections in Iraq and entered the second elections in a scattered, unorganized way, tried to enter the general elections in a more organized way after the results of the provincial council elections. The Sunni Arabs, who were excluded from Iraqi politics in the post-Saddam period, boycotted the previous polls, which benefited Kurdish groups. It has gained these groups a much higher number of representations in parliament than they should have achieved. Another factor that makes the 2010 Elections more critical than the previous elections is the SOFA Agreement signed between the USA and Iraq. According to this agreement, it is foreseen that the US soldiers will leave the country as of December 2011. The government that will come to power as a result of the upcoming elections is critical in terms of managing the withdrawal process and the conjuncture that will occur after the withdrawal until 2014. The Status of Forces Agreement, shortly called SOFA, is a text prepared to resolve legal problems that may arise in matters related to American soldiers in a foreign country and, and determine how foreign law will be applied to American soldiers (Mason, 2009).

It was signed on 17 November 2008 between US Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker and, Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoşyer Zebari, and entered into force on 1 January 2009. This treaty determined the US withdrawal plan from Iraq. The status of the soldiers who will continue to serve at US bases plus facilities in Iraq after the withdrawal. The treaty was gone through by the Iraqi Parliament on 27 November 2008. According to the treaty, American troops will begin to withdraw on June 30, 2009. They will be removed entirely from Iraq before December 31, 2011 (The White House, 2010). Turkmens, who wanted to be more influential in Iraqi politics during the current process, started their election preparations long ago. Turkmens came together at the invitation of President Abdullah Gul to determine their election strategies and, and tried to create an ordinary mind for the 2010 elections. Officials from the Presidency, Prime Ministry, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as political formations and non-governmental organizations representing Iraqi Turkmen, came together for the iftar dinner in September 2009. In his speech at the dinner, Abdullah Gül gave a message about Turkey's policy towards the Iraqi Turkmen, by stating that "It is my greatest desire to see you in unity and solidarity" (Haberler.com, 2010). Nonetheless, no decision could be reached regarding the participation of Turkmens in the elections as a single list at the meeting. According to the standard view adopted at the meeting, it was aimed to increase the number of Turkmen in the Iraqi parliament and to form a group, regardless of their political and ideological views or any identity (Duman, 2010:62).

A number of Turkmen parties joined the coalitions formed by large groups after the meeting. The Iraqi Turkmen Islamic Union and the Turkmen Resolution Party, with the State of Law Coalition, led by Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki, the Turkmen Vefa Movement and the Turkmeneli Party with the Iraqi National Alliance led by Ammar El Hekim, the Turkmen Justice Party with the Iraqi National Reconciliation Front, also the Iraqi Turkmen Front with the Iraqi National Reconciliation Front under Iyad Allavi. with its list, Turkmen Liberals Association, Turkmen Brotherhood Party plus Erbil Turkmen List participated in the elections under the Kurdistan Alliance. Besides, the Iraqi Turkmen Front participated in the election polls with a separate list in Sulaymaniyah and Erbil. the Erbil Turkmen list participated in the elections with the Kurdish Alliance. According to the announced results, the political picture and coalitions formed in the Iraqi parliament are as follows:

- State of Law Coalition: It is a list brought together by many small parties and formations gathered around the Islamic Dawa Party led by Prime Minister Nuri El-Maliki. Although mostly Shiites, there are a small number of Sunni, Kurdish, and Turkmen groups. We can summarize the essential vision of the coalition as centralism, nationalism, and secularism (Erkmen, 2010:16). It won 89 deputies with 24.02% of the votes in the elections (Çubukçu & Özhan, 2010:19).

- Al-Iraqiya List: It is a coalition list of Sunni Arabs, ex-Baathists, and nationalist Arabs. At the head of the coalition is Iyad Allawi, who served as prime minister for a while after the invasion. Groups that were outside the political system due to the boycott in the previous elections generally supported the Al-Iraqiya list in these elections. The coalition, which includes Secular Sunnis and Secular Shiites, especially emphasized that it follows a supra-sectarian policy (Torlak, 2010). It won 91 deputies with 24.48% of the votes (ORSAM, 2010).
- Iraqi National Alliance: It is the successor of the United Shiite Alliance, which entered the elections in 2005 as a unit. It includes many large and small political groups, parties plus substantial figures, as well as major Shiite parties such as the Iraqi Supreme Islamic Council (Ammar Al-Hakim), Badr Organization, Sadrists (Muqtada al-Sadr) Virtue Party, and the National Reform Movement (BÜSAM, 2010:17). 319 Listedeki ğii partilerin önemli bir bölümü kuzeydeki federal bölge gibi tüm Şii vilayetlerini kapsayan büyük bir Şii federal bölgesi istemektedir (Erkmen, 2010:19). It obtained 70 deputies with 17.98% of the votes (Republic of Iraq IHEC, 2010).
- Kurdistan Alliance List: It includes IKDP, led by autonomous administration leader Masud Barzani, IPUK, led by Iraqi President Celal Talabani, and many large and small Kurdish formations operating in Northern Iraq. It advocates connecting Kirkuk to the government in the north, controlling the revenues of oil extracted in the north by this region, maintaining the relations between the central government and, and the regional government in line with a consensus-based policy, training the security forces with modern equipment, training and the application of a free market economy (Erkmen, 2010:20). It had 43 deputies with 14.48% of the votes (Wikipedia, 2013).
- Iraq's Unity Alliance: The alliance led by Iraqi Interior Minister Javad Bolani is participating in the elections for the first time. The coalition includes the Chairman of the Council of the Sunni Foundation Ahmed Abdulgafur El Samarrai and the former speaker of the parliament Mahmud El Meşhedani. The region where the party is strongest in Anbar province. It won 4 deputies with 2.70% of the votes in the elections
- Iraqi National Consensus: It is a coalition of predominantly Sunni Islamists led by Iyad Samurai, the chairman of the current Iraqi Parliament. It won 6 deputies with 2.61% of the votes.
- Goran (Change) List: It was founded in 2009 under the leadership of Neşirvan Mustafa, breaking away from IPUK. The center of the Goran Movement is Sulaymaniyah. The central policy of the Goran Movement is democratization, transparency, administrative reforms, disarmament of parties, and development of civil society.325 It obtained 8 deputies with 4.18% of the votes (Erkmen, 2010:22).
- Kurdistan Islamic Union List: It has organic ties with the Muslim Brotherhood organization. We can list the issues emphasized by the alliance as democracy, the fight against corruption, freedom of the press, and strengthening the regional government. It won 4 deputies with 2.27% of the votes (Wikipedia, 2013).
- Kurdistan Islamic Community: The movement led by Ali Bapir wants the implementation of Sharia laws, the prohibition of interest plus the strengthening of Islamic identity. It also supports leaving Kirkuk to the administration of Northern Iraq as well as turning the peshmerga into a regular army. In the elections, it won 2 deputies with 1.41% of the votes.

Rebwar Kerim, Editor-in-Chief of the Hewler Post newspaper published in Erbil, commented on the elections as follows (Kerim, 2010):

- The elections were the elections of Iraq's neighbors, not Iraq itself. Iran was on one side while Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the USA were on the other. Iran won by the end of the day. Iran will not let Sunnis pass and the Shiites will dominate. Iraq was the stronghold of the Arab world, but Iran broke it. Iraq is now a Shiite state.
- Kurds had higher expectations in Kirkuk before the elections. The rivalry among the Kurds prevented them from gaining more seats. The Kurds received one-third of the votes in Mosul.

It is confident that the political weight of the IKDP will increase. However, IKDP does not want to lose its secular rival IPUK completely. Because its main fear is Islamists.

- IKDP requires IPUK support for the presidency of the regional government. Because the most powerful authority representing the region is the regional presidency. IKDP is waiting for Jalal Talabani's death. The dissolution of the IPUK depends on the existence of Talabani. However, there is also increasing resistance among the Kurds against the domination of the IKDP.
- The emergence of the Goran Movement was a reaction to Kurdish politics. It is a very leader-focused movement. The future of the movement is uncertain after Neşirvan Mustafa. Goran is also accepted by the IKDP. It prefers Goran over its Islamist rivals.

Agit Zaher, Turkey Program Director of the Sarenj Research Center in Erbil, evaluated that after the elections, the Kurds began to think that they would not be addressed in Baghdad as before and that Turkey's importance for them increased in parallel. Zaher's evaluations of the 7 March 2010 elections are as follows (Zaher, 2011):

- IKDP is the sole authority in Kurdish politics. The IKDP has also become the sole force for the Kurds in Iraq policy. The representation power of IPUK and Islamist parties in Baghdad decreased. Recent developments may impact the strategic alliance between IKDP-IPUK, which is based on 50-50 percent equal sharing.
- Despite the disagreement, the Kurdish lists and parties decided to actively collaborate in the parliament in Baghdad. They will act jointly and collaborate on national issues such as the Kirkuk issue, the oil law, and the implementation of Article 140. The situation of the peshmerga with the signed 4-member agreement.
- Considering the general balance of Iraq, the Kurds think that they came out of the elections weakened. Therefore their importance in Iraq has decreased. This situation had a positive impact on relations with Turkey. The Kurds thought that they would not be considered in Baghdad. This situation increased the importance of Turkey.
- Kurds think that Turkey can be the source of both the most positive and, and the most damaging developments for them. Because Turkey is a significant regional power. Turkey's agreement with Baghdad will disable the Kurdish administration. On the other hand, the election results strengthened the Kurdish parties' idea of uniting in Baghdad to act more powerfully on national issues.

Turkmens were more successful than in the last election. Because Turkmens won more seats than in previous elections. the Iraqi Turkmen Front formed six deputies, three (İzzettin Devle, Nebil Harbo, Müdrike Ahmet) in Mosul, two (Erşat Salihi, Jale Neftçi) in Kirkuk, and one (Hasan Özmen) from Diyala. It had the highest number of deputies among the Turkmen movement. Mahmut Osman, who participated in the polls from the Iraqiya list, was elected as a deputy from Diyala, while Taki Al-Mevla, who was a candidate from the Iraqi National Alliance list from Mosul, besides Abbas Al Beyati from Baghdad was elected as a member of the State of Law Coalition. Moreover, Muhammed Casim Cafer, who participated in the elections with the State of Law and could not get enough votes to be elected as a deputy, became a deputy from the National Balance (Duman, 2011:27). Despite all kinds of violence, ethnic and sectarian tensions, external factors, and occupation, the successful completion of the elections is a positive step in Iraq's effort to transition to a democratic system. When we look at the election results, we see that religious and separatist parties are on the decline. The Iraqi voters generally expressed their preference with a nationalist and centralist attitude. The winner of the election results was the State of Law List, led by Nuri El Maliki, who was the Prime Minister. The Maliki list finished ahead in 9 out of 14 provinces.

Osama Nuceyfi, who entered the parliament from the Iraqiya list after the elections, was elected as the chairman of the parliament, and, and Celal Talabani was selected as the president by the parliament.331 As a result of long efforts, the government headed by Nuri El Maliki received a vote of confidence from the parliament on 21 December 2010. Within the framework of the coalition agreement, the head of the Iraqiya list, Iyad Allawi, was appointed as the head of the council, which

would handle the affairs related to foreign and security policies.332 Turkmens obtained 3 ministries in the 42-person cabinet. It is the first time that Turkmen have gained such a large number of representations within the established governments. Izzettin Devle, who was elected as Mosul deputy from the Iraqi Turkmen Frontlist, was appointed to the Ministry of Agriculture, Turhan Mufti, who was elected as Kirkuk deputy from the Iraqi Turkmen Frontlist to the Ministry of State for Provinces, Casim Muhammed Cafer, who was nominated from the Salahaddin province from the State of Law Coalition to the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the formed government.

Reasons Why Iraqi Turkmen Failed in Iraqi Politics

When the election results are evaluated, it is not possible to say that there is significant progress in terms of Turkmens. While the number of votes received by Turkmen in the elections is compared with their population, they received much fewer votes compared to the Turkmen people. We can list the main reasons why the Turkmen could not achieve the desired success in the elections as follows:

- Irregularities and machinations in the election overshadowed the Turkmen's decree. These irregularities made by Kurdish groups in Kirkuk, whose status is in dispute, became one of the essential issues that the Turkmen complained about in the elections (El Kuds El Arabi, 2005).
- Another reason why Turkmen remain passive in the elections is security problems and instability in the region. It created a severe obstacle for the Turkmen to go to the ballot box. The central government's inability to provide security created a serious legitimacy problem.
- Turkmens have hardships from the point of geographical integrity. The fact that they live in completely disconnected geography has been a significant factor preventing them from forming a political and, and cultural unity. Living in dispersed geography is a fundamental factor that prevents Turkmen from using their population power effectively (Mazin & Soran, 2005:22).
- The popular wisdom among Turkmen is the low belief in elections. The understanding is that the people do not believe in the polls. It is not possible to change the administration in the region through elections appears as an obstacle for the Turkmen to go to the polls.
- Another critical factor is that Turkmen working in the public sector voted for the IKDP and IPUK lists in order not to lose their positions. It is known that many Turkmen have been working with organizations under the regional administration in northern Iraq since 1991 (Duman, 2009:26).
- The fact that Turkmen voted with religious and political reflexes, and turned to religious and sectarian parties was another factor affecting the election results of Iraqi Turkmen. Especially Shiite Turkmen participated in Shiite-oriented coalitions.
- Another factor that reduces the chances of Turkmen candidates in Mosul is that the number of candidates coming out of Tal Afar, which is a vote depot for Turkmen, is extremely high. While almost none of these candidates had a chance to win on their own, they split the votes (Erkmen, 2010:32).

SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF IRAQ AND, STRATEGIES THAT TURKMEN SHOULD APPLY

The political crisis that started in Iraq shortly after the withdrawal of the USA was overshadowed by the events that developed within the framework of the Arab Spring for a while. However, the geopolitical regulation of geography and the total upheavals in the Middle East brought Iraq back to the agenda. Political developments, internal conflicts, and religious-ethnic-centered reckonings caused the political developments in Iraq to come to the fore again. Many possibilities for the future of Iraq were discussed both in Turkey and in the presence of global powers. Considering the regional and international repercussions of the events that may occur in the Iraqi geography, the countries of the region should be cautious in their Iraqi policy. The Iraqi people, who got rid of a dictatorship like the Baath regime, unfortunately, could not fill the authority vacuum created by the collapse of the regime with democratic values. The uncertainty of Kirkuk's status, the Northern Iraq issues, and the reliability of the elections. The violence experienced is the most critical problem in this process. In this part of the study scenarios for the future of Iraq will be discussed under three main headings: Scenarios for the Continuation of Iraq's Territorial Integrity, Fragmented Iraq Scenarios, and Political-Strategic Options According to Possible Situations.

Scenarios for the Continuation of Iraq's Territorial Integrity

The integrity of Iraq depends on the central government's control over the country, integrating the Sunni Arabs into the system, discouraging the expansionist and pro-federal efforts of the Northern Iraqi Regional Government, neutralizing the elements of the structure in the north of Iraq, besides ensuring the integrity of Iraq in the country. Although many adverse developments weakened the central government in the Iraqi geography, the elections in 2010 resulted in the victory of 3 centralist lists (State of Law Coalition, Al-Irakiye List, Iraqi National Alliance). However, the three lists with a centralist character don't have a homogeneous structure within themselves. Moreover, the power struggle between the parties weakens the decree of the central authority to be strong. Considering that approximately 200 parties participated in the Iraqi elections, it can be seen that Iraqi politics is doomed to coalition due to its nature. It is a fact that in a country that has been dragged into political-social ruptures and internal conflicts, governments based on unions are fragile because they rely on delicate balances. Ethnic and sectarian groups, who felt excluded from the central government, took an open stand against the central authority. The Kurds pioneered this opposition and established their own federal districts in Northern Iraq. The Sunnis, who felt excluded from the central administration with the Shiiteization of the central structure in Iraq, could not have a say in the country's administration as they did during the Baath regime. Sunnis may start to seek a federation in the regions where they are the majority in terms of population, as they fear that they are in the minority in numbers and will not be able to have a say in the central government in Iraq through democratic means.

They presented the "79 Recommendations" to the Bush administration as a result of 9 months of work by James Baker, former Secretary of State for the Republican Party, and congress members consisting of 10 people headed by Hamilton from the Democratic Party in order to overcome the crisis experienced by the USA in Iraq. It was emphasized that the US military forces should be withdrawn within a particular program as of 2008, diplomatic talks should be started with Iran, and Syria, the situation in Kirkuk was dangerous and the necessity of international arbitration for its resolution and Article 140 regarding the referendum should be postponed at the beginning of these recommendations. However, the Bush administration took decisions contrary to this report in its new policy regarding Iraq. The article was postponed to a later date only due to international cyclical reasons regarding the Kirkuk issue (Mengü, 2008). The report disturbed many Middle Eastern countries, except for Iran and Syria. Despite the reasonable proposals regarding Kirkuk, the reaction of groups in Iraq to the report was different. The most violent reaction came from Kurdish groups. The statement rejecting the view that stability can be achieved by dividing Iraq into three and opposing the dismemberment of Iraq contradicts the federation system advocated by Kurdish groups. They

opposed the proposal in Article 28 that the Kurds would lose their most essential economic and strategic advantage "control Iraqi oil by the central government" because their ultimate goal was to establish an independent state. The most violent reaction of the Kurdish groups was against the proposals on Kirkuk. Mutually acceptable reconciliation is suggested for Kirkuk in Article 2 of the report. Article 30 recommended that the referendum planned to be organized in Kirkuk until the end of 2007 be postponed and that the problem is resolved on an international platform.338 The Kurds, who started a great campaign against the Baker-Hamilton Report, emphasized that they ultimately rejected the report. Because, The Kurds had all kinds of convenience, opportunity, and comfort that an independent state could have, by getting all sorts of political, military, and financial support from the USA until 2006.

The view and interests of the USA regarding its relations with Iraq and Northern Iraq can be summarized as follows: "Division is still possible in Iraq, and the civil war may require urgent humanitarian action as well as having strategic consequences that spill over into Turkey and the Middle East countries. The collapse in Iraq undermines the prestige of the United States regarding its power and authority. The United States should not have to choose between Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds. Turkey is a valuable NATO member who fought with the USA in Korea as well as holding the eastern flank of the alliance throughout the Cold War. It has led ISAF in Afghanistan besides is an integral part of NATO activities in that country. Turkey's cooperation is also essential in delivering US troops and supplies to Iraq from the north. The Northern Iraqi Regional Government has proposed military bases to house the US rapid reaction forces in the fight against terrorism in Iraq. While this proposal angers Iraqis who want to dominate the whole country, it also angers Turkey, which wants to lose its strategic value for the United States. With its unused energy resources, the Northern Iraq Regional Government is essential for the energy security of both the USA and Iraq. Kirkuk is a significant city that carries oil from Iraq to the Western market via the Ceyhan pipeline. Şaşamal, east of Sulaymaniyah, and Qader Karam in Kirkuk are alternative sources for the European market with their natural gas. Iraq can also contribute to the profitability of the NABUCCO pipeline." (Philips, 2009).

The 2010 elections are very crucial in terms of strengthening the central government in Iraqi politics from a democratic point of view. In addition to the victory of the parties advocating centralism in these elections, the representation of Sunnis who boycotted the 2005 elections in the parliament is a significant development. However, the establishment of a strong central government in Iraq may cause very harsh reactions in Northern Iraq. Because a strong central government will see the Northern Iraq Regional Government, which is on its way to becoming an independent state, as a potential threat. Inevitably, a central government that builds itself on the common ground of opposition to the separatist Kurdish movement will deepen the divide between Northern Iraq and the Iraqi center. Another major obstacle to the establishment of a strong central authority in Iraq is the influence of the sectarian factor on politics. The phenomenon of religion began to be a practical element in the administration of states after the Iranian Islamic Revolution. This phenomenon has evolved into a sectarian point of view. This situation influenced all the countries of the region like Iraq. Iraqi politics could not improve a political language based on Iraqi or Arab identity by throwing sectarianism into the background. The absence of military power to enable central authority in Iraq is another obstacle to centralization. Despite all efforts, the environment of violence continues and stability cannot be achieved in the country. Parties that engage in legal politics. They have significant power in the parliament and also have an armed wing. The Badr Brigades, the militias affiliated with the Sadr groups, and the peshmerga groups in Northern Iraq are the primary examples that can be given to this situation. There was a hot conflict between the military forces affiliated with the Iraqi central government and the peshmerga forces affiliated with Barzani in Mosul, Kirkuk, and both sides suffered losses. It seems very difficult for the central government in Iraq to establish authority over the entire territory of the country. The armament of some tribes in the region, the PKK presence in Northern Iraq. The presence of Al-Qaeda, which has the power to take action in a significant part of the country, is among the reasons for this situation (Erkmen, 2012:8).

Another factor disrupting the political stability in Iraq is the Kirkuk issue. Kirkuk, which provides 3% of the world's oil reserves, can't be shared between groups in Iraq. One of the most essential

sources of conflicts between political groups in Iraq is the issue of sharing economic resources in Iraq. Each political group is struggling to maximize its economic power. It does not seem possible for all groups in Iraq to come to an agreement and solve the Kirkuk issues. Another factor in ensuring the security and stability of Iraq is the position that the countries of the region will take. It is a question mark to what extent the regional governments will take a systematic stance on the territorial integrity of Iraq. Even if these countries will take a stand in favor of preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq at the first stage, in case of civil war and instability that may break out in Iraq, the countries of the region can play a role in deepening the fragmentation of Iraq through the political groups they support in order to expand their population in the Middle East geography. It can undoubtedly result in the Shiite-Sunni conflict in the region becoming more active. A Shiite state that will emerge, especially with the disintegration of Iraq, will face adverse reactions from some countries in the region, especially Saudi Arabia. Thus, the Shiite state to be established will approach Iran and the foundations of a sectarian regional conflict will be laid.

Divided Iraq Scenarios

A fragmented Iraq will occur as a result of great chaos and civil war. The extent to which fragmented Iraq will be divided. The boundaries of the division will be largely mainly proportional to the arguments that will emerge from the chaotic environment. It is necessary to consider the repercussions of ethnic and, and sectarian divisions, which are likely to occur in Iraq. Kurdish groups see the US invasion of Iraq as an excellent opportunity to realize their historical ambitions. They appear to be candidates for being the dominant element of an ethnically based division. Iraq may be divided into two in such a case. The provinces of Mosul, Kirkuk, and Saladin are in a position to be pregnant with many conflicts. Iraq is at risk of being divided into two, based on Arab, and Kurdish ethnic groups. The conflict in the region is likely to be between Kurds and Arabs. It is estimated that the Turkmen living in the area will suffer a lot from this conflict. The status of Kirkuk, the state of the budget to be allocated to the Kurdish administration from the central government, and the efforts of the Northern Iraq administration to market the oil they extracted from its region in the international arena without the approval of the central government are the main factors that may increase the tension in the area.

Today, the greatest desire of Kurdish groups in Iraq is to establish an independent Kurdish state. Iraq is the birthplace of Kurdish nationalism and the country where Kurds are closest to their dream of independence (Galbraith, 2007:142). IKDP and IPUK are two parties that clash from time to time and cooperate from time to time, but the power struggle between them never ends. The main goal on which IKDP and IPUK agreed without hesitation is the establishment of an independent Kurdish state if conditions allow. Kurdish groups in Iraq have many advantages in any conflict with the central government. First of all, a significant part of the heavy weapons left over from the Saddam regime is in the hands of Kurdish groups. It gives the appearance of a regular army with the peshmerga units they organize, and it is known that the PKK terrorist organization also participated in these peshmerga groups. In addition, it may be possible for Kurdish groups to turn the crisis into an opportunity by bringing a possible conflict in the region to the international arena by intervening in international organizations, especially the United Nations, and NATO. The Kurds have the potential to implement a second Kosovo model in Northern Iraq, under the umbrella of the UN, with the support of the West. (Erkmen, 2012:15). On the other hand, Arabs will inevitably find themselves in an alliance based on Iran-Russia-China. Such a political process will probably result in the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq.

Another scenario is a sectarian division. The area where this division emerges may be more central areas of Iraq such as Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad. In this case, the weakening process of the central government may be in a much shorter period. Secessionist Kurdish groups, who take advantage of this conflict, will have the opportunity to reach their historical ambitions with much less loss. There will not be a monolithic block against the separatist Kurdish groups since the groups that have the potential to oppose the independence of the Northern Iraq region conflict with each other. The people

who will suffer the most from the sectarian division in Iraq are the Sunnis community. Sunnis can't gain superiority over Shiites because they are in the minority in the population, and Shiites dominate the state apparatus in the post-Baath period.

Political-Strategic Options According to Possible Situations

The design of the post-modern social situation based on "religious-ethnic" differences, and its presentation as "liberation" give important clues about the possible problems to be experienced in Iraq. Considering the actual situation, political actors, patterns of disintegration, and other formations, it is seen which models the "fragmentation" process will be shaped around. It becomes clear what political-strategic options the Turkmen have. It is highly probable that regions such as Mosul, Kirkuk, and Diyala, where Turkmen are concentrated, will host the power struggle of groups in Iraq. It is among the possibilities that a conflict that will take place in Kirkuk, which we can call the miniature of Iraq in particular, will be reflected in the whole of Iraq in a short time. Because the region is rich in oil, all ethnic, and sectarian groups will inevitably want to implement a policy of destruction against those who do not belong to them. The efforts to completely disqualify the Turkmen from the region, the power struggle between the Sunni Arabs, and the Kurds, and the oil reserves in the area are the most sensitive issues. Alleviating any conflict that may arise in Kirkuk is quite tricky. For these reasons, the centralization of Iraq is essential for the Turkmen.

The people who will suffer the most in the region will be Turkmen due to an Arab-Kurdish ethnic conflict that may arise in the country. If the scenario of the Northern Iraq Regional Government leaving Iraq is realized, some of the Turkmens will be divided into two, within the borders of the regional government, and the other part within the borders of the central government, and they will remain in minority status in both parts. Provided that the Turkmen side with the Arabs or Kurds in such a process, they will be a party to the hot conflict, and they are likely to suffer significant losses. Moreover, the Sunni Arabs expel the Kurds from the region; it is not clear how long the cooperation with the Turkmen will last. Iraqi Turkmen will suffer from a sectarian division, and sectarian division will appear as an element that will damage the unity of the Turkmen. The Turkmen, who are stuck between Arabs, and Kurds, will face the danger of extinction if they experience such a division among themselves.

Conclusion

The USA seeks to establish a pax-American world model just like the Roman Empire, and the British Empire. America's vital interests extend from western India to the Mediterranean. Provided that it cannot control this geography, it will eventually become an island state on the edge of Eurasia. In this process, the geography of the Middle East in general, and the geography of Iraq, in particular, are of great importance for the global balance of power. For the first time in modern history, the Arab world is changing with interventions from inside, and outside. The USA shapes societies within the framework of its strategy by using freedom, and democracy discourses, unlike the classical western colonization. The USA aims to be a permanent hegemonic power in the Middle East, with the difference of the Cold War period. The Kurdish phenomenon has now found global political support with the developing process in the Middle East geography. Today, there is a de facto formation that is irreversible in Northern Iraq. Turkey should constantly have the ability to develop policies that can respond to, and react to the changes in its environment. However, it is not considered possible for Turkey to intervene in the new structuring in Iraq after the March 1 resolution. The formation in question continues to progress rapidly on the path of statehood. It is necessary to consider what kind of a model Turkey will develop its relations if the formation, which is on the way to becoming an independent state in Northern Iraq, gains its independence. The level of relations with the condition to be established, and how the security, and rights of the Turkmen will be protected are two main problems.

The presence of Turkmen in the region is not only a historical, and cultural phenomenon for Turkey. It does not seem possible for a country in this geography to ensure its security from its borders, considering the problematic conditions of the Middle East geography. A country's security begins beyond its borders. For this reason, Iraqi Turkmen are also a security issue for Turkey. Because a Kurdish movement that broke out in any of Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria is very likely to spread to other neighboring countries by creating a domino effect, just like in the Arab Spring, from this point of view, it is essential for the Turkmens to balance the Kurdish movement, and to act as a counterbalance to the PKK presence in the region. There is a Quebec model for the administration in Northern Iraq, which they can implement differently from an independent Kurdish state. Quebec is one of Canada's ten provinces, but it is a province that makes up 15% of the population and has unlimited authority. It has the power to open consulates abroad and has its armed units and security forces. Apart from the declaration of their independence, and their recognition as a sovereign state by the UN, it gives the appearance of an independent state. The Iraqi Kurds, who are afraid of the reaction of the countries in the region, and the elements in Iraq if they become separated, can adopt such a model within federal Iraq. There are representatives of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party in the Quebec parliament.

The Kurdish problem has become a regional problem in the process that the Middle East has gone through. Turkey needs to act in coordination with the countries in the region while solving this problem. If this problem presents an international situation, it may lead to some consequences that Turkey cannot prevent. Provided that the problem becomes global, it is complicated to reinstate it. Many symptoms in Iraq give the impression that there may be a civil war in the upcoming period. The position of Turkey is critical. All Arab, Shiite, Sunni, Turkish, and Kurdish living in Iraq are also present in Turkey. Therefore, the possibility of an internal conflict in Iraq spreading to Turkey is exceptionally high. From this point of view, Turkey needs to be extremely insistent on the territorial integrity of Iraq. It is seen that the Shiites will continue to have a say in the central administration of Iraq for a long time. Turkey requires to develop an attitude against policies based on sectarian tensions, divisions, and conflicts. Developing an anti-Shiite policy by implying the Sunni-Shiite-centered split may lead to both the dissolution of Iraq, and the Iraqi Turkmen, and the transfer of the problem in Iraq to Turkey. Developing policies by considering the effect of sectarian-centered politics produced to disrupt the fabric of living together is the prerequisite for living together.

They need to develop a new discourse appropriate to the language of the time for the Turkmens to be influential in Iraqi politics due to their population, and differences in Iraq. It is necessary to lay the foundations of a new political formation in which the Turkmen will be dominant within this scope.

Iraqi Turkmen should develop a language that provides a national alliance to overcome the divisive political language expected by the post-1990 period. Supporting the political structures on this basis, and establishing alliances with them can ensure Iraq's territorial integrity. It can be ensured that the religious, and ethnic elements that make up the demographic structure of Iraq are included in the political formations developed by the Iraqi Turkmen. Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, and Yezidis should also take part in such a formation. It can also be an essential political medium, especially for Assyrians, and Yezidis. Thus, a national-based political party to be established will also serve the territorial integrity of Iraq.

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The Political Situation of Iraqi Turkmen After The 1990 Period

In the process that started with the Seljuk period, the Turks belonging to the Oghuz tribes living in the Middle East, Anatolia, and the Caucasus were called Turkmen. The concept of Iraqi Turkmen appears as a product of the British mandate in the region in the post-World War I period. It is seen that the main factor in the emergence of this concept is to create a separate sub-identity by removing Iraqi Turks from their position in Turkey, and the Turkish World. In order to emphasize the sensitivity of this issue, it was deemed appropriate to use the definition of Iraqi Turks in the title of the thesis. However, considering the definition of Turkmen in the official names of the organizations, and political parties in the region, and the synonymous use of the words Turk, and Turkmen, the concept of Iraqi Turkmen is used in the rest of the study. Iraqi Turkmen are the third most populous ethnic group in Iraq in terms of population, after Arabs, and Kurds. The population of Turkmen varies between one, and two, and a half million in various sources. Turkmens reside in the most critical strategic regions in Iraqi geography. Besides, Turkmens constitute the most outstanding segment of the Iraqi population in socio-economic terms. Throughout history, Turkmen have faced many difficulties in preserving the unity, and identity of Iraq. Turkmen set an example for the region in terms of ensuring stability, and peace in this process. Turkey has a historical responsibility toward the Turkmen, who are the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. Unfortunately, the manifestation of this responsibility to the academic community is not enough. Considering the actuality of the subject, and its impact on world politics, Iraqi Turkmen could not find the place, and the importance they deserve in the works written on Turkish Foreign Policy, and the Middle East. In the study, which was carried out in the form of resource research in libraries, literature review on the Internet, and examination of newspapers, and magazines related to the subject, the post-Cold War period was specially selected considering that the regional, and global dynamics were extremely active. While conducting this research, it was primarily aimed to include strategic projections that shed light on the future. One of the criteria taken into consideration was to convey the conceptual infrastructure needed by someone who did not know this subject at the beginning of the thesis, to the reader when reading the studies. Thirdly, an answer was sought to the question of the reflection of the post-Cold War political conjuncture on Iraq, and to what extent the Iraqi political system had a share of liberal values such as human rights, and the rule of law. Finally, it was desired to be an encouraging factor for a more detailed study on the subject in the future. With this study, the historical, and political accumulation of the Iraqi Turkmen were evaluated chronologically, and the reflection of the changes that took place after the Cold War in Iraqi geography was emphasized. The role played by the Turkomans in Iraqi politics, and in the construction of Iraq was evaluated in the table created as a result of the First, and Second Gulf Wars.

BİDGE