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Party System Institutionalization:
A Focus on Kurdistan Region's Party
System (1991-2016)

Doctoral Thesis

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

This study is an in-depth qualitative analysis of the nature of party system institutionalization in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. While the development of robust party systems is often perceived as crucial to industrial democracies, party systems in the Kurdistan regions similar to most of the nascent democracies have been quite slow to develop. Instead, partisan politics are characterized by, a high rate of electoral volatility, strong client-patron relationships, great extents of fragmentations, nepotism, and lack of partisan linkage between the constituencies and political elites.

This thesis examines why party systems of the Kurdistan region are not institutionalized despite more than a quarter of a century of self-rule and democratic maintenance. Drawing on the accomplishments of party system institutionalization in developing democracies, the dissertation contributes to the field by developing arguments on three causal-type factors: (i) the role of structural cleavages, (ii) the institutional effects, and (iii) the foreign influences on party system institutionalization. The research addresses these issues through developing a profound investigation of Kurdistan region, as a novel work not conducted previously.

In order to understand the essence of the fluidity of the polity under scrutiny thirty-three experts and elites from diverse backgrounds were interviewed. Also, data from the surveys conducted by reputable international organizations were employed, and extensive qualitative investigations were additionally done on the previous scholarly achievements. The research applied various sub-variables and indexes in order to justify the following findings; the interrelation between three causal-type factors and the impact on the fluidity of political party system of Kurdistan region. Nevertheless, the institutional weaknesses and alterations are consequences of both structural, and foreign influences.

ABSTRACT (SPANISH)

Este estudio es un análisis cualitativo profundo de la naturaleza de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq. Si bien el desarrollo de sistemas de partidos robustos a menudo se considera crucial para las democracias industriales, los sistemas de partidos en las regiones de Kurdistán, como muchas otras democracias nacientes, se han desarrollado con bastante lentitud. En cambio, la política partidista se caracteriza por una elevada tasa de volatilidad electoral, sólidas relaciones cliente-patrocinador, muchas fragmentaciones, nepotismo y falta de vínculos partidarios entre los electorados y las élites políticas.

Esta tesis examina por qué los sistemas de partidos de la región de Kurdistán no están institucionalizados a pesar de más de un cuarto de siglo de gobierno autónomo y mantenimiento democrático. De acuerdo con los logros de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos en las democracias en desarrollo, la disertación contribuye al campo al desarrollar argumentos sobre tres factores de tipo causal que el presente estudio ha dado por sentado: la función de las divisiones estructurales, los efectos institucionales y las influencias extranjeras sobre la institucionalización del sistema de partidos. La investigación aborda estos temas mediante el desarrollo de una investigación profunda de la región de Kurdistán, ya que no se ha realizado antes un trabajo novedoso.

Para entender la esencia de la fluidez de la política bajo escrutinio, se entrevistaron treinta y tres expertos y élites de diferentes orígenes. Además, se emplearon datos de las encuestas realizadas por organizaciones internacionales acreditadas, y se han realizado extensas investigaciones cualitativas sobre los logros académicos previos. La investigación aplicó varias subvariables e índices para justificar los siguientes hallazgos; los tres factores de tipo causal están interrelacionados y afectan la fluidez del sistema de partidos políticos de la región de Kurdistán. Sin embargo, las debilidades y alteraciones institucionales son

consecuencia de influencias tanto estructurales como extranjeras.

DEDICATION

To those who seek equality and justice
To my Mom and my Dad, and beloved family

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

About three years before being accepted on to this program, I left the party, in the support of which, I had dedicated about half of my life. During my tenure in the third party's Congress, I realized even though it was a prominent member of an international organization such as Social International (SI), realistically, it was far from being institutionalized. So, when I resigned from the party, I decided to dedicate the other half of my life to studying on aligning the parties and politicians to the right path. As Kurds might be among the poorest people in the world regarding academic studies of political parties and party systems, I decided to invest my academic skills, language ability, and political experiences in order to lighten the burden for future generations. Therefore, this program was like a blessed door, which introduced me to new goals. Today, as I take my final steps on the first ladder of my dreams, I would like to profoundly thank my study supervisor, Professor Pablo Onate Rubalcaba, for his sharp, knowledgeable feedback and comments, and also the University of Valencia for this opportunity. I also want to thank three of my friends who provided me with extensive support throughout this long and exhausting journey abroad; Berivan Doski, Daban Shadala, and Darya Monastyrskaya. In absence of their valuable support, I might have faced several unexpected problems. It is also my pleasure to appreciate all the encouragement I received from Professor Scott Mainwaring, whom I will always admire for his excellent achievements. I would also like to thank the scholars, and politicians who dedicated hours of their time to being interviewed and who patiently answered my questions. I have always wanted to thank Shokha Abdulla who played the role of a sister whenever I found myself frustrated, and Jaza Fars for his time, which he spent looking for the books I needed abroad in the library of the Faculty of Law and Political Science in the University of Sulaimani. Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to my parents, and my beloved siblings who are always here for me, irrespective of the physical distance.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Form	Acronym	Full Form
ADM	Assyrian Democratic Movement	KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
AKP	Justice and Development Party	KL	Kurdistani List
BNDP	Bet Nahrain Democratic Party	KICP, KCP	Communist Party of Iraqi Kurdistan
CCS	Chaldean Cultural Society	KDP-I	Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran
CDU	Chaldean Democratic Union	KIHCE	Kurdistan Independent High Electoral Commission and Referenda
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer	KCU	Kurdistan Christian Unity
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority	KAJIK	Liberty, Revival and United Kurds Group
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency	KAD	Kaldo-Assyrian Democrats
Communist-CC	Central Committee of Iraqi Communist Party	JUQD	National Democratic Front of Iraq
Communist-CL	Central Leadership of Iraqi Communist Party	JUD	National Democratic Front
CoR	Council of Representatives of Iraq	IUK	Kurdistan Islamic Union
CRS	Congressional Research Services	ITF	Iraqi Turkmen Front
CSAPC	Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council	IT	Independent and Toilers
DC	Democratic Christians	IRI	International Institute of Republicans
DPAK	Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan	IKR, KRI	Iraqi Kurdistan Region, Kurdistan region of Iraq
EU	European Union	IO	Index of Openness
ICP	Communist Party of Iraq	IMK	Islamic Movement of Kurdistan
IGA	Index of Government Alteration	ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
IGK	Kurdistan Islamic Group	IHEC	Independent High Electoral Commission
KNC	Kurdistan National Congress	KPDP	Kurdistan Popular Democratic Party KRG
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government	MP	Member of Parliament
KRP	Kurdistan Regional Parliament	NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

KSP, HSK	Kurdistan Socialist Party	NDI	International Institute of Democrats
ME	Middle East	NGO	Non Government Organization
NRT	Nalia Radio and Television	PASOK	Kurdistan Socialist Party/Kurdistan Democratic Liberation Party
PJAK	Kurdistan's Free Life Party	PKK	Kurdistan Worker Party
PL-KDP	Provisional Leadership of Kurdistan Democratic Party	PL-KDP	Provisional Leadership-Kurdistan Democratic Party
PM	Prime Minister	PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
PYD	Democratic Confederalist Party	TAL	Transitional Administrative Law
TDM	Turkmen Democratic Party	TPK	Toilers Party of Kurdistan
U-KDP	United Kurdistan Democratic Party	UN	United Nation
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UPK	Unification Party of Kurdistan	US, U.S.A.	United States of America
UAE	United Arab Emirates	SMD	Single Member District
PR	Proportional Representation		

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INTRODUCTION

Huntington's (1965) seminal work on political institutionalization and Mainwaring and correspondingly, Scully's work (1995) on party system institutionalization have emerged as two theories, which have been widely employed in the field of political parties and party systems in both the advanced and nascent democracies of the third wave. Nevertheless, it is not easy to jump to a study of party system without considering the political and social conditions and their differences that stimulate shaping its construct. These differences are significant for applying questions raised elsewhere but may result in different outcomes in accordance with the micro or macro dynamics of these endogenous conditions that may impact different degrees of party systems institutionalization. Therefore, despite the general understanding of these two theories, they need to be reconsidered in the context of the case study, i.e., the Kurdistan region's party system.

Huntington's (1965: 394) definition of political institutionalization, "*The process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability*" presents great importance in analyzing the progressing process of political development and systemness of any political institution. Hence, stressing this definition in the context of Kurdish politics, in fact, enables us to identify the weaknesses of political parties and their associated influence on the reversed outcome, especially in adverse issues concerning informal institutions such as tribalism, clientelism, and corruption that are failing the party system institutionalization.

Furthermore, the dimensions introduced by Mainwaring and Scully are fundamental to determine whether the Kurdish political parties have found their way to stabilize the pattern of their interparty relationships and rootedness, the extent to which they have been awarded legitimacy by people and the level of parties' internal organization and autonomy strength. These criteria have further raised the concerns regarding the influence of the institutional framework,

society's structural compositions, historical legacy, and political culture on the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's (KRI) party system construct; their role in the political parties' accountability development and legitimacy acquisition. Additionally, to determine whether the traditional Kurdish parties' reach and grasp is deep enough in society to face the new rivalries, and finally the probable individual effect(s) of each criterion on the democracy and the factors that might hinder the institutionalization process.

In fact, the dearth of relevant literature in the Middle Eastern academic library is apparent in this field. Therefore, this study is conducting a qualitative analysis of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's party system, which is considered by Freedom House the most prolonged democratic experience in the Arab World. Kurdistan region has presently achieved self-rule for more than two decades and a half; conducted three consecutive free and fair regional elections, and a proper extent of economic development. Its party system is aligned with the state and political elite roles in reshaping it from the above. Meaning that; if social cleavages were shaping party systems of industrial democracies in the previous waves (Mainwaring, 1999), like several other third wave's semi-democracies and transitional regimes, the KRI's party system is influenced by the state and political elites from the top. This tendency possibly is a consequence of tribalism, and neo-tribalism tendencies stimulated by international patronage relationships, being upheld by the charismatic leaders and their families.

Background

Kurdistan region has witnessed more than twenty-five years of self-rule; from 1991-2003 under the protection of international powers, and following 2003, it has existed as a single federal state in Iraq protected by the constitutional law. In addition, it has experienced suppression under previous regimes of Iraq since its establishment in 1921, and therefore it is predicted to have a shadow party system in the struggle phase for national and ethnic rights of the Kurds who until the 1980's did not have the humblest right to education in their mother tongue. Only

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Comment [1]: Shadow party system because a system is where (Sartori and Mainwaring)

after the successful uprising of 1991, by leveraging military evacuation and following the call of the American president, the Kurdish political parties were able to initiate democratic commitment. Nevertheless, the economic, and international influences and the structural composition of Kurdish society, might have affected the overall political conditions. Conceivably the political culture of tribalism has hindered the establishment of robust founding institutions, and eventually, the tribal politics, which originated from the tribes presenting throughout history the use of political parties for their own advantages. Correspondingly, the antagonism of political leaders stimulated by their international patronage relations and some other endogenous and exogenous factors have easily broken the system between the two leading and incumbent parties of the founding government. After about a decade of system fragmentation, the governments unified under the light of Strategic and Unification Agreements, which basically were extensions of the dominance of the two ruling parties despite the electoral changes and deteriorating electoral turnouts. Furthermore, the allegation of national unity of the Kurds, have deteriorated the institutional framework and has been employed to rather empower the dominant parties' supremacy in the KRI political arena until the breakdown of the KRP in 2016.

On the other hand, Iraq is a modern country, which was established in 1921. From the early years, the country's ethnic and religious divisions have become salient mobilizing forces impacting the political instability. Arabs are Iraq's primary ethnic group, encompassing about 75 percent on the country's population and living mainly in the southern and central parts of Iraq, while Kurds comprise approximately 20 percent, residing primarily in the north. Arab population mostly constitutes of Muslims, though; they are divided into two different sects of Islam, i.e., the Shi'a, and Sunni. Roughly 60-65 percent of Iraqi people are Shi'a, and 25-35 percent are Sunnis with the remaining population comprises Jewish, Christian, Sabean, Turkmen, and other smaller divisions (Weinstock, 2005).

The Iraqi Institutional framework is also characterized with factors of instability

and fragility. Under Britain influence, the mandate was of 13 cabinets till the independence of Iraq after the 1958 revolution, post which another 39 cabinets were added that could be attributed mostly to military coups (Ghareeb, 2004).

The Republic of Iraq also was earlier characterized with high government alteration until the Baathist regime under Ahmad Hassan Baker in 1968. Nevertheless, during the years 1968-2003, in addition to the fluctuation of the political system between presidential and semi-presidential, the region only saw two presidential terms, and an over-institutionalized regime under hegemonic Baathist party remained in power until the 2003 coalition invasion. Following the TAL, Transitional Administration Law, and CPA, Coalition Provisional Authority, a democratic constitution, and the corresponding system started to manifest, and accordingly power distribution based on consensus governments among the Kurds, Shi'a, and Sunni have prevailed. Yet the conflicts between the ethnic and religious-based cleavages are still salient, especially over the fulfillment of the constitutional law, federal vs. KRG authorities and financial entitlements.

The history of political parties in Iraq dates back to decades before the emergence of Kurdish parties, though, mostly were national Arabic based parties, which denied the Kurdish rights. The Iraqi communist is the only Iraqi-based party that could gather support in the Kurdistan region prior to the establishment of the KDP, Kurdistan Democratic Party. Throughout the history, the social and political atmospheres of Iraq have motivated the Kurdish groups and parties to adopt nationalist sentiment as the primary mobilizing force, and the independence of Kurdistan to their end. Apparently, this has been stimulated by the social and tribal composition of Kurdish society and enhanced and targeted simultaneously by international forces aiming to weaken the state of Iraq, and fragmenting the Kurdish nationalism. The consequence of these dynamics is the focus of this study and is investigated profoundly during the self-rule and federalism eras. This is achieved primarily by discussing the causal mechanism of these forces and their roles in shaping the two-party system and later by setting the Unification and Strategic agreements, which both further supported the two dominant parties to

eventually result in fluidity and instability of the political system.

Objective

The political and institutional conditions of the Middle East facilitated the collective perception of fluid party systems in these countries. However, the analysis of the validity of this claim has not been yet justified academically. Perhaps, due to the similarity of political culture, this study may be an exceptional case study, which rationalizes this allegation not only in Iraqi Kurdistan but also in Iraq as a whole if not the Arab World. The importance of this study is that it is the first profound case study conducted in the field of political parties and party system institutionalization of a country considered a part of the Arab world. Further, some of the measurements used in this study are new and might, in fact, deliberate a further contribution to a broader understanding of party system fluidity of nascent democracies and the broad academic achievements in the field. Hence the purpose of the study is to analyze the nature of the party system institutionalization in the KRI. Also, it aims to investigate the cultural and social cleavages and institutional influences on the KRI's party system with a particular concentration on a newly causal factor, the foreign influences, whether from institutions or state actors, on the political parties and the KRI party system.

Methodology, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

This is an in-depth spatial, and a temporal qualitative case study of party system institutionalization focusing on the KRI during the period 1991-2016. It employs the historical institutional theory of neo-institutionalism who define institutions as the *“formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity”* (Hall, and Taylor 1996: 938). Therefore, the study focuses on the narrative development of political parties, and their relationships with the stressed causal-type factors mentioned below and their trajectories in each political juncture whether the struggle, the self-rule or federalism phases. It also concentrates on the three

causal-type factors, which, in fact, constitute the principal generators of the fluidity for the polity, namely structural, institutional and foreign factors. Each of these has been scrutinized with a qualitative descriptive analysis using thirty-three extensive semi-structured interviews with the subject-matter elites and experts. It also uses some survey data previously collated by international organizations, and previous scholarly literature, comprising mainly historical and sociological determinant, yet prominent in the political studies of Kurdish society. It employs several indexes such as the Peterson Index for both Electoral and Ministerial Volatility to calculate the stability of the pattern of interparty relations and the rootedness demonstrated by the traditional parties in the Kurdish society. Besides, it engages Nationalization of political parties by Jones and Mainwaring (2003) to measure the influence exerted by geographical concentration of tribes, and their dialect-divisions on provoking the Kurdish parties from dispersing nationwide. The study also uses several qualitative descriptive mechanisms to investigate the ethnic characteristic of Kurdish parties to justify the Kurdish society's voting behavior and their underpinning motivations. Finally, profound investigations of institutional dynamics, electoral law alterations, and quality of political and electoral institutions are measured. Also international relations of state and non-state actors, the role INGO's in increasing corruption, and organizational flaws of political parties, their business liaisons with political leaders are scrutinized profoundly with the aim to comprehend the study's puzzle.

Taking into the account the three preconditions by Mainwaring and Scully (1995); at a minimum, the study should consider three successive, regular and competitive elections with no interruption due to civil wars; also the political disorders should be observed at the national level. The KRI's party system can be an excellent multidimensional single case study in the Arab World to seek the answers to these two profound questions; *why after a quarter of a century of self-rule is the Kurdish party system still not institutionalized? And what fostered this fluidity?*

The abovementioned questions are important for three reasons: first, for

increasing the elaboration of the factors that shaped the Kurdistan Regions' political process between the years 1991-2016, and the causal and effects of each stage on the party system institutionalization. The study concludes an inference of a progressing causal mechanism in describing the causal relations that link the dependent variable to the independent variables. Second, for motivating the study and constituting a theoretical contribution, especially in identifying profound qualitative comparisons between the political actors, and their roles in the political development and party system fluidity in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. Furthermore, such questions are instructive for the paradigm formulation that should be proposed for analyzing the reasons underpinning this fluidity, especially those related to the impact of social cleavages, institutional and international and foreign aspects on channeling the actors and their behaviors. Hence, they stimulate a clear understanding of the discussion that will be advanced on variables and sub-variables considered the sources of IKR's party system fluidity.

Finally, the focus of this study is on the three significant Kurdish political aspects in Iraq. The institutional trait embodies the electoral institutions, governing cabinets, formal rules and regulations regarding the party system. The structural trend includes political and social divisions of the Kurdish society, mobilizing forces like ethnicity, linguistic, geographical focus, religious divisions, and some cultural tendencies like tribalism and neo-tribalism. The foreign variable comprises the international and regional states, and non-states actors, in addition to some non-KRI players inside Iraq irrespective of regimes, laws or regulations. These aspects are the robust influencing forces affecting the degree of the four dimensions of institutionalizations by Mainwaring and Scully. And in order to achieve the same, the following three hypotheses have been tested:

- (1) Three causal-type factors; structural, institutional, and foreign influences, provoke the non-institutionalization of the Kurdistan Region's party system.
- (2) The three- abovementioned causal-type factors are interrelated.
- (3) The structural and foreign causal-type factors exert comparatively more effective influence on the non-institutionalization process than the institutional factor.

Structure of the Research

This dissertation comprises six chapters. The first chapter is an in-depth analysis of the theoretical framework of conceptualizing the problem and its primary sources. It develops an exhaustive understanding of institutionalization in the field of the political system, political parties, and party systems, and reviews the scholarly achievements, the dimensions, and mechanisms for its measurement.

The second chapter highlights the methodological approach employed in the study and explains the relationship between independent and dependent variables in the context of its research questions. It also presents a summary of the operationalization of the variables and the justification of hypotheses, through introducing various mechanisms relevant sub-variables and indices to the independent variables.

The third chapter is an introductory chapter to the case study. It accentuates the political history, structural and social composition of Kurdish society not only in Iraq but also in all four countries of the region, i.e., Iran Iraq, Turkey, and Syria, where the Kurdish population is dispersed. A preliminary knowledge on the economic sources, geographical distribution of main Kurdish dialects have been accordingly described, and close attention has been given to the modern Kurdish political history particularly after the Sykes-Picot agreement between the winners of the First World War. Furthermore, a brief history of Kurdish political parties in Iraq has also been reviewed from the establishment of the first nationwide Kurdish political party around the Second World War to the newest party, the Change Movement in 2009. Kurdish parties are divided into two partisan blocs, the national secular or non- religious parties' bloc and the Islamic parties' bloc, and each comprises a number of parties. The study briefly and in a chronological order describes them, and highlights the leading causes for their establishment, splits, merges and democratic performance following 1991.

Chapters four focuses on the structural composition of Kurdish society in Iraq, and their influence on the fluidity of Kurdish parties and party system. The chapter embraces three main variables, nationalistic and ethnic nature of Kurdish parties, tribalism and geographical concentration of Kurdish parties as mobilizing forces. The study highlights the nationalism sentiment under the Othman Empire and later colonialism as a leading mobilizing force in the Kurdish politics. It gives a particular concentration to the proliferation of this sentiment during the British mandate and independence of Iraq. Moreover, the Nationalistic nature and ethnic voting behavior of Kurdish parties are measured through Chandra's (2011) qualitative measurements. Furthermore, special attention has been given to the social cleavages of Iraqi society, which have been subsequently compared to that of the KRI in order to determine the extent of voting behaviors in the KRI as regards the ethnic, geographic, and linguistic trends. The second variable, i.e., the tribalism, and later neo-tribalism, as another leading mobilizing force has been analyzed qualitatively, and their influence on current political outcomes have been evaluated through expert judgments of the field. Finally, the geographical concentration of political parties through Nationalization Index of Mainwaring and Joens (2003), was also measured, which indicates the level of equivalent supports gathered by political parties from all over units and subunits of the country or region.

Chapter five is a broad investigation of the KRI's institutions. It underscores institutional weaknesses and their impact on party system and political parties' dynamics and instability. It scrutinizes major Kurdish political institutions such as the presidential units, the KRG's and KRPs. By employing adapted Pederson's Electoral Index of Volatility to ministerial volatility and old, small, ethnoreligious parties' seats and vote's volatility, the study aims to measure the instability of interparty competition and their roots. Also based on frequent alterations of electoral laws, quality of electoral procedures, disagreements of major parties over issues related to electoral institutions, and political system, the legitimacy, and internal political parties' organizations and dynamics have been evaluated.

This chapter also develops a discussion concerning administrative and political deficiencies, the absence of vital institutions for holding fair, and clean elections, such as reliable censuses and an electoral register, in addition to the politicized electoral institutions and committees; and the rentier policies targeting geographical and demographic aspects aligned with the ruling parties.

Chapter six is the last analytical chapter, which embraces a discussion developed for analyzing the last independent variable, i.e., the foreign influences, which constitutes the current study's contribution to the literature of the party system institutionalization. It has been examined qualitatively based on the narrative investigation and divided into two subchapters; the first subchapter highlights political patronage relations with state-and non-state actors in two different phases, before and after the founding elections. Mainly it is a descriptive examination of the international and neighboring state's relationships with Kurdish parties and their influence in decision making, autonomy, and subordinating to these state and non-state actors that have used their logistics and financial resources and imbalanced relationships to weaken the Kurdish parties. The second variable underscores the patronage-based relations in the economic and businesses sectors. This part analyzes this factor's impact on the increase of corruption and the tendencies towards clientelism in Kurdish political parties. These equations are based on oil contracts with international and influential actors and involvement in suspicious family and particularized oil contracts that serve the will of dominant parties and their ruling families.

Finally, chapter seven is the concluding observation and an overall description of the suggested findings.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. An Introduction to the Institutionalization Theory

Institutionalization of political institutions has garnered excessive attention in the academic field of political studies, especially in the late of the second millennium, simultaneous to the third wave of democracy. Nevertheless, it traces back to more than fifty years, when it was first introduced by Samuel Huntington in his seminal works *'Political Development and Political Decay'* in 1965, and *'Political Order and Political Decay'* in 1968; with the latter as a part of his published book by Yale University: *'Political Order in Changing Societies'*. Huntington (1968: 8) highlighted the importance of political organizations' and procedures' strength for the political community in complex societies, arguing that, *"the level of political community a society achieves reflects the relationship between its political institutions and the social forces comprise it."* Building on this argument, the study of institutionalization has covered a wide field of political studies and emerged as a need for consolidating democracies (Randal and Svasand, 2002). Correspondingly, Selznick (1957) had submitted a question in respect to the characteristics of institutions that some organizations are capable of acquiring, while others are not. According to him, a low institutionalization level of an organization's is an indicator of a substantial level of ambiguity, *"about the nature of desirable policies and mixes of policy instruments"* (Boin, 2001: 4).

Sociological scholars chiefly have engaged this instrument in scholarly articles, especially in the field of political sociology; Witmer (1964) and Polsby (1968) are two sociologists who emphasized the role of institutional formation, which subsequently introduced institutionalization theory to the U.S. House (Camino, 2013). To structure the institutionalization process of norms and social organizations, Eisenstaedt (1968) defines institutionalization in the sociological field as, *"a process of crystallization of [...] norms, organizations, and frameworks that regulate the process of exchange"* (Alexander, 1995: 285).

Meanwhile, focusing was on the political institutions, Huntington (1965: 394) defined it as, *"the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability."* The latter definition underpinned several social studies, though it cannot be considered in isolation of its shortcoming. To review the literature, this section presents, first, Huntington's notion and elaboration of institutionalization, then other scholars' understanding and conceptualizations of the term with a brief focus on the critiques made on Huntington's work.

1.1.1. Huntington's Theory

Huntington (1965) in his classic work highlighted the importance of the institutionalization of political organizations and procedures *and* their relations to political development and modernization. He argues that modernization should be separated from political development and the latter, in fact, should be identified in the context of institutionalization of political organizations and procedures. **Three years later, in his 1968 work, he reemphasized the impact of high social mobilization and expansion of political participation accompanied with an inadequate level of institutionalization of political organizations and institutions on their formative influence as regards instability and disorder in society.** He supported this claim by presenting numerical data of 84 African, Latin American and Asian countries. Accordingly, 64 states were found to be less stable than their earlier years of the given period due to the swift mobilization of new social groups to the political life, given the slow development of political institutions. Hence, **he considered the institutionalization of political institutions as the crux of political development and stability.**

Focusing on the crucial relationship between participation and mobilization from one side, and the growth of political organizations from the other side, Huntington (1965: 394) defines institutionalization as, *"the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability."* **He emphasizes that strong alteration in political organizations and procedures can be engendered from their institutionalization level and support scope. A scope is a level to which**

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Comment [5]: If there is not a compatibility between political participation and mobilization and institutional institutionalization then there may be a great deal of disorder and instability

a political organization and a procedure embody the social activities and the extent to which they gather population, while political development is “the institutionalization of political organizations and procedures” (Ibid: 393).

Furthermore, he liberated political development from modernization and argued the indicators of modernization such as; the increase of literacy, slow per capita growth, rapid urbanization, gradual industrialization, mass political participation, and mass media circulation, might have been achieved. Nevertheless, several other factors of political development tend to be dubious or unachievable, such as democracy, stability, national integrations, structural differentiation, and achievement patterns. Thus, the manifestation of modernization does not imply a simultaneous materialization of political development (Ibid: 391). Moreover, to compare political systems and their developmental level, he identifies four dimensions of institutionalization: *Adaptability vs. Rigidity*; *Complexity vs. Simplicity*; *Autonomy vs. Subordination*; *Coherence vs. Disunity* (Huntington 1965: 394- 405).

In response to his first criteria, Huntington (1965: 394) emphasizes that “the more adaptable an organization or a procedure is, the more highly institutionalized it is.” The author refers to adaptability as, “a function of environmental challenge and age,” indicating that the more an organization adapts to the challenges arising in its environment, the more it acquires age and maturity, and the more it becomes settled and capable of handling problems. Age or maturity enables an organization to resist and tolerate problems. However, an old organization or procedure may fail to stand in the face of crises if it exists in a static environment. A specific response may be a suitable solution for an over-time or frequently challenges, however, when new crises arise, new solutions are demanded. In the absence of an appropriate response by an organization to these new challenges, the organization is doomed. Therefore, the first challenge usually is the fatal one, because the chances of clearing it are lower compared with other impending problems. However, the impact of environmental changes varies from one organization to another, and their adaptability roughly can be measured by their

longevity.

Huntington (1965; 1968) proposes three ways to measure organizational adaptability: (i) Chronological age, (ii) Generational age, and (iii) Functional term. *Chronological measurement* refers to the longevity of organizations or procedures in a way that the older they are, the higher the level of their institutionalization, and hence the higher the likelihood of experiencing sustainability and persistence. *Generation age* refers here to the frequency of peaceful alteration of power between the different groups of leaders. Likewise, the adaptability of an organization that runs by the same cluster of leaders for an extended period is dubious. However, the more an organization sustains peaceful power alteration, the higher is the institutionalization level. Accordingly, generation age can be seen as a function of chronological age, yet there are cases, wherein the founders of an organization have stayed in power for more than their following generations.

Overall, leadership alteration without significant differences in experience cannot be considered a generation age. The last Huntington's age measurement of adaptability pertains to the *functional term*, i.e., the concept underpinning the establishment of a particular function an organization is founded for. The more an organization self-renovates by implementing changes in its principal functions, the more it presents institutionalization. When an organization achieves its goal, it has two options: Either to dissolve or to adopt new goals and adapt to the environmental changes. One example in this regard is the nationalist political parties, which were founded for freedom purposes. On achievement of this goal, they must adapt to their new environment by governing political parties and subsequently embrace governability goals as their new aims; otherwise, they may face severe crises.

The second measurement of institutionalization is the degree of Complexity, presented by an organization. Huntington (1965: 399) argues that “*both multiplication of organizational subunits, hierarchically and functionally, and*

differentiation of the separate type of organization subunits are involved in complexity." The more diverse subunits an organization has, the more it can secure member loyalties. A diversified organization is less likely to lose the purpose of its multi-purposive structure than a simple organization with a unilateral goal; therefore diversified organizations show better adaptability to changes; and consequently, they are more stable, and institutionalized.

The third dimension is "*the extent to which an organization or a procedure exists independently of other social grouping and methods of behavior*" (Ibid: 401). A political entity is autonomous if it is protected from nonpolitical groups' influences. Huntington's sense of autonomy is the relations between social forces and political organizations. **A political organization or a procedure that can prevent itself from becoming a channel for expressing only a social group, a family, a clan, or a class, and pursue its own interests and values is an autonomous entity.** Thus, a political organization should not be susceptible to the non-political forces from within and outside of the society. Usually, the differentiated organizations are more likely to stand against such effects due to their ability to establish various mechanisms slowing down social forces' influence. These mechanisms accord an opportunity for the organization to be systematized while through lengthy procedures adapt the social forces to its own goals.

The fourth dimension, i.e., the *coherency degree*, focuses on the organizations' ability to reach the minimum compromise among its groups on the functional boundaries of their procedures to be able to resolve their internal disagreements within those boundaries. Huntington (1965; 1968) theoretically argues that there is no relationship between the autonomy and coherency of an organization, whereas an autonomous organization has its behavioral standards that prevent any external force's intrusive involvement in its procedures and therefore projecting as a mean for coherency.

Huntington (1965: 409) portrayed the influence of an institutionalized system on

political development, corruption, social mobilization and their relations with modernization. In addition to the distinguished line between modernization and political development, he further argues that personalism and particularistic groups – tribal, ethnic and religious – undermine the coherence of political institutions and consequently plunge their institutionalization levels. The disunity of political organizations such as coups, revolts or turmoil, occurs when the political institutions “lack autonomy and coherence.”

Huntington suggests four ideal-types of political systems according to their levels of institutionalization, their social mobilization, and political participation, presented in Table 1.1 and are: *civic, contained, corrupted, and primitive systems*. The last two systems, i.e., the *corrupted* and *primitive* societies are results of the fluidity of political institutions. This study’s focus might be justified as the corrupted model of this classification, as the social forces are swiftly raised while the political institutions apparently have not been consolidated yet to embrace and regulate these mobilizations. The first system, on the other hand, is a result of harmonic and extended social mobilization and institutionalization, while the last system cannot be observed. Hence, institutionalization plays a crucial role not only in stabilizing politics but also in controlling corruption and forwarding societies.

Table 1.1: Types of political System According to Degree of Institutionalization and Social Mobilization

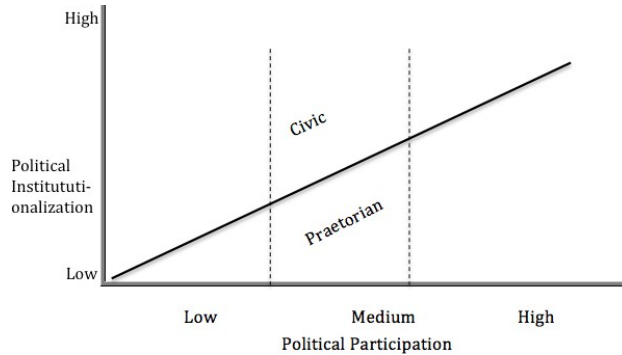
Social Mobilization	Political institutionalization	
	High	Low
High	Civic	Corrupt
Low	Contained	Primitive

Source: Huntington (1965: 409)

Huntington (1968) highlights a correlation between political participation and political institutionalization and introduces three different societies depending on the ratios of those two elements; a low level of both participation and institutionalization results in a traditional society. A society with a high

proportion of political participation to institutionalization is a praetorian or modernizing society. However, a high ratio of political institutionalization to participation produces a civic or developed society, (see Figure 1.1; for a further understanding see Huntington, 1968: 79-92).

Figure 1.1: Political Institutionalization and Political Participation



Source: Huntington (1968: 79)

Before turning to the next section, it is meaningful to add to Huntington's understanding of the political institutionalization's effect on public interest. He emphasizes the role of personal and parochial in non-institutionalized polities, especially those belonging to the third and Arab worlds. Because fluid political systems are incapable of restricting **personalism; correspondingly, clientelism** desires a Hobbesian world where each social force works for its own interest, and eventually as he puts it as "*amoral clanism, and groupism*" (Huntington, 1968: 24), which become the characteristics of conservative societies. Huntington argues, "*Morality requires trust; trust involves predictability, and predictability requires regularized and institutionalized patterns of behavior. Without strong political institutions, society lacks the means to define and to realize its common interests*" (Ibid). In inchoate systems, due to institutional decay and the increase of domination of social forces in the polity, the concept of public interest

becomes the mean of parochial desires while the real meaning of public interest impacts political processes and the interest of public institutions. Thus, to understand what empowers a specific organ to function in correspondence to the public interest, it is essential to focus on its interests and goals.

1.1.2. Critiques of Huntington's Dimensions

Scholars of political science appreciate Huntington's unique contribution to the study of political development and political institutions; nevertheless, his dimensions of institutionalization have been criticized by some scholars. For instance, Keohane (1969) was the first who indirectly criticized Huntington's dimensions in a study on United Nation's institutions. The author introduced his own three measures: differentiation, durability (adaptability in Huntington's expression), and autonomy, arguing the subjectivity of autonomy and durability on an organization's differentiation and its minimum adaptability. Nevertheless, not necessarily do they reinforce each other, and their level differences may produce a different level or type of institutionalization. One year later Kesselman (1970) and Janda (1970) roughly stressed on Keohane's critiques. Kesselman, inspired by France political system, provided evidence against the Huntington's ratios between the increase of participation and political development concerning organizational adaptability and autonomy (see Figure 1.1). He argues that it is doubtless they only resulted in three different outcomes, and Huntington, in fact, neglected the fourth type of relationship resulting from the ratio of over-institutionalization of political institutions to participation, namely constraint politics.

Ben-Dor (1975) in addition to restating the critics by previous scholars, tackled significant problems neglected by Huntington. He argues that the theory failed to infer acceptable distinctions and logical linkages between the (1) micro and macro levels; (2) the behavioral and structural magnitudes, in addition to the ambiguity of definition characters of '*value and stability*.' His first disagreement with Huntington's definition addresses the semantic and logically problematic

issues in encompassing both structural and behavioral characteristics that they are not proving one another. It is either false or tautological, he argues, to assume that a certain organization must be valued and vice versa. Since political organizations can endure for an extended period through the use of threats or forces without being valued by the outside population, and particularly this is true on the macro-level, which underpinned the construct of Huntington's theory.

Furthermore, there is no direct and robust relationship between stability and institutionalization. The latter may be strong along one or two dimensions but weak in the others, therefore, employing all criteria together as independent variables are false and unachievable. The author raises the confusion of Huntington's theory, presented in the ambiguity between macro and micro levels. Some institutions are found to be keen on their micro levels but weak on macro levels, besides the variation of the levels of dimensions and their applicability are an additional issue leading to mis-institutionalization. Semi- institutionalization, as another form, may occur when organizations are institutionalized but the procedures are not and vice versa. Finally, the quasi-institutionalization according to Ben-Dor, refers to the problematic employment of 'valued institutions' due to the fact that institutions may become valued for the concrete bilateral benefits they bring about not for their own sake.

Groth (1979) presented a cluster of five profound and different assessments from previously exposed critiques; however, the strongest distinguish critique he made deals with moral implications of organization features. According to Groth (1979: 210), the theory raises the problem of morality, especially regarding societal preferences of the kind of political system in response to their developments and maternity. The author emphasizes that Huntington failed to resolve the practical questions produced from his theory's indicators, *"Would the society be better served by a stronger or a weaker presidency? A stronger or a weaker legislature? More centralization or less centralization of power? By judicial review or no judicial review?"* Furthermore, the rigorous difference illustrated by Huntington between developed and undeveloped or developing worlds concerning their

institutionalization is vague because he did not precisely declare how and where the separating line between these two worlds should be drowned. Finally, Groth highlights the relation between power, institutionalization, and order as opposed to what Huntington declared. He emphasizes that power is incompatible with a high level of institutionalization, yet it is compatible with organizations.

In conclusion, irrespective of Huntington's response to these critics, it is beyond this study's focus, and his theory is still deemed as one of the most significant theories of political development, and widely have been applied in the political science field. Therefore, this dissertation wouldn't be developed without this theory's broad importance and contribution especially in elaborating the level to the extensive adaptation by KRI's political parties to the scope that followed the struggle era.

1.2. Other Approaches to Institutionalization: The First Generation

Scholars of political science soon after the initiation made by Huntington, started to conduct further studies based on his theory in the political institution's field. Pennock, (1966), in describing political goods as an outcome of political systems and political developments adapted institutionalization of both formal and informal political institutions as the stability and legitimacy instrument. Polsby (1968) emphasized the importance of institutionalization of political institutions. Unlike other scholars who concentrate on institutionalization definition, Polsby highlighted the behavioral characteristics of an institutionalized legislature through three dimensions: (i) *Well boundedness*: distinguished from its environment, its members are easily recognized with complex membership procedures. (ii) *Complexity*: a complex structure with interdependent parts but not interchangeable parts, and finally universality and (iii) *atomicity*: which indicates a virtue system that substitutes personalism and nepotism to universal decision-making methods in order to maneuver its internal business. Two years later, inspired by Polsby, Chaffey (1970) applied the institutionalization theory in state legislatures of the USA.

Along the same lines, Keohane (1969: 860) used the theory to measure the United Nations' National Assembly institutionalization. He adopted three major dimensions of institutionalization: (i) *Differentiation*: "the sharpness of boundaries between the organization and its environment." (ii) *Autonomy* and (iii) *Durability*, which they reflect the interactions between an organization's capacities and pressures it receives from the environment. While *durability* refers to organizational adaptability to environmental changes, *autonomy* means: "The development of political organizations and procedures that are not simply expressions of the interests of particular states or other international actor" (Ibid: 862).

The first scholar who introduced institutionalization to the study of political parties was Kenneth Janda (1970), in his sagacious work: '*A Conceptual Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Political Parties*.' According to Janda (1970: 88), an institutionalized party is a party that is "Reified in the public mind so that 'the party' exists as a social organization apart from its momentary leaders, and this organization demonstrates recurring patterns of behavior valued by those who identified with it." Although Janda agreed to Huntington's definition, he revealed his disagreement to his proposed ingredients; and therefore, he introduced seven different variables as criteria of institutionalization of political parties: *Year of Origin*, *Name Changes*, *Organizational Discontinuity*, *Leadership Competition*, *Legislative Instability*, *Electoral Instability* and (*Number of Pages Indexed*).

Welfling (1973), furthermore, cautiously enriches the studies of political parties and party systems by implementing institutionalization theory on the African party system. Accordingly, both parties and party systems have been testified through different criteria, the former by Janda's dimensions and the latter by Welfling who also presented the use of four dimensions: *stable pattern of interaction*, *adaptability*, *boundary*, and *scope*." Later with Duvall (1973), Welfling implemented her criteria in order to identify and measure the

institutionalization of politics. They reinforce that the government and public intersect can, in fact, promote mobilization if it is well institutionalized and able to enhance the institutionalization of party systems according to which the potential political conflicts decrease. The *Boundary*, to them, occurs when a social system becomes differentiated from its environment and its internal activities become distinguishable from the environmental activities. The *Stability of interaction* refers to the pattern in which the components of a system interrelate with one another. The *Scope* relates to the consideration of the members of the system towards one another, and finally, *adaptability* denotes the adjustment of the system to the internal and external changes.

Following Welfling, Brass (1977), Cotter and Bibby (1980) and many others examined the party system institutionalization through various dimensions, still, seemingly they have originated from the criteria proposed by Huntington and demonstrated adaption to their own scope. For example; the dimensions of Polsby (1968), Keohane (1969), and the scholars of political parties and party systems are either integrations of those dimensions as introduced by Huntington or sub-dimensions to what Huntington introduced. Nevertheless, both political parties and party systems have emerged as two pertinent areas that grabbed the scholars' attention in the following decades especially after the introduction of seminal work by Panebianco (1988) on political parties and Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) work on party systems.

(Table 1.2): First phase of institutionalization's Models

Scholar	Institutionalization Field	Dimensions																			
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	
Huntington 1965, 1968	Political System	X	X	X																	
Sisson 1966	Rajasthan Politics	X																X	X	X	
Polsby 1968	U.S. House of Representatives		X			X															
Keohane 1969	U.N. General Assembly			X			X														
Chaffey 1970	Comparative legislative analysis			X				X													
Janda 1970	Political parties									X		X	X	X	X	X					
Welfing 1973	Party System	X				X				X	X										
Welfing & Duval 1973	Institutionalization of Politics								X												
Brass 1977	Party system																		X		
Cotter and Bibby 1980	National Party			X																X	X

Source: The Author adapted this table from the used sources of section 1.1.3.

The Alphabetic letters, for convenience purposes, have been used and are standing for: A: Adaptability, B: Complexity, C: Autonomy, D: Coherence, E: Boundedness, F: Universality, G: Differentiation, H: Durability, I: Stability, J: Scope, K: Party Origin, L: Party Name Change, M: Organizational Discontinuity, N: Leadership Competition, O: Number of Pages Indexed, P: Interdependency, Q: Political Linkage, R: Generation Gap, S: Responsiveness

1.3. Institutionalization of Party System: The Definition Issues

During the 1980s only a little was done regarding the studies of political parties and party system institutionalization. The most prominent among them is the Angelo Panebianco's (1988: 49, 53) masterpiece in which he defines institutionalization as *"the way the organization 'solidifies.'"* Later he explains it as the process by which an organization *"slowly loses its character as a tool: it becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it. In this way, its preservation and survival become a 'goal' for a great number of its supporters."*

Scully and Mainwaring's considerable emphasis on the party system institutionalization in the middle of the nineties resulted in a renaissance of institutionalization theory. Although the current academics' focus largely on the developed countries, prestige works are concurrently being conducted on developing countries. The impact of the third wave of democracy on the institutionalization process on African, Latin American, and Eastern Europe and to a lesser degree on Asian party systems, has been elaborated in vast angles of view. Yet regarding the Middle East, not much has been conducted, and only a few studies, i.e., a handful can be counted, which mainly focused on Turkey.

The scholars of party systems and comparative politics have carefully observed the modeling of the rapid expansion of the third wave of democratization in the period of 1974-1990, which characterizes with several global economic and political alterations. In addition to the 'snowballing' democracies, expansion of the EC, the changes in the external actors like in the U.S., the Soviet Union, and the striking transformation of national Catholic Churches to opposite authoritarianism has contributed in Asian, Latin American, Eastern European, and African countries to transiting towards democracy. Notwithstanding, the democratic development could only be observed in the countries of Pakistan, Turkey, and Lebanon for variable time periods in the Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern countries (Huntington, 1991).

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Comment [6]: Definition by Panebianco of Institutionalization

According to Casal Bertoa (2009), the scholars of Latin America, (Dix, 1992; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995), Africa (Kuenzi and Lambright, 2005; Lindberg, 2007), Asia (Johnson, 2002; Hicken, 2006) and Europe (Lewis, 1994; Morlino, 1998) have presented an apparent agreement that institutional development is a more vital condition than party system institutionalization for democratic consolidation. However, Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 22) refer to the latter's importance for acknowledging "*how democracies function*" and to what extent political parties in such kinds of systems become the principal actors in arranging political processes.

Along the similar lines, Lindberg (2005) argues that only in an institutionalized party system, the political parties function as the leading organizations that address candidates and aggregate interests and acquire accountability, and eventually bring their common functions to a completion. Hence, the institutionalization of a party system is essential and impacts most of the other political organizations and procedures. To understand the concept of party system institutionalization and how it can be measured, it is significant to comprehend first the concept referred to as the party system. Sartori (1976: 39), implies that the term system fallouts from, and consists of "*the patterned interactions of its component parts*" meaning that it is "*a combination of interrelated parts that interact in a patterned way to form a complex whole*" (Mainwaring, 1998: 7). Thus, a party system is "*the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition*" (Sartori, 1976: 39). This definition suggests several characteristics of a party system; i.e., there should be at least two parties to constitute a party system. The components cannot be seen unilaterally as a set of parties, rather, in addition to those parties, there is a patterned interaction among them, and finally, the definition suggests regularity and continuity of this interaction (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

Although Mainwaring and Scully (1995) were the first to reintroduce institutionalization, they were limited in according any attention to the conceptual

definitions of party system institutionalization. They focused only on the comparative party systems and referred to a group of four dimensions of institutionalization that measures the degree to which the system is institutionalized. Slightly different from the definition of Huntington, they define institutionalization as “*a process by which a practice or organization becomes well established and widely known, if not universally accepted*” (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995: 4). Through focusing on their dimensions: *Stability, Rootedness, Legitimacy, and Organization*, later Mainwaring (1998: 10) defines an *institutionalized party system* is where “*politicians, citizens, and organized groups develop expectations and behavior based on the premise that the fundamental contours and rules of party competition and behavior will prevail into the foreseeable future.*” Casal Bértoa (2010: 5) adopting from Mair (2001) and Bakke and Sitter (2005) also delineates party system institutionalization as “*the process by which the patterns of interaction among political parties become routine, predictable and stable over time.*”

Focusing on the previous definitions, and in alignment with Wolnetz’s (2006) work, this research highlights two points: first, while the former definition by Mainwaring constitutes most of the characteristics of systemness, it lacks regularity and continuity as suggested by Sartori (1976). Second, the latter definition, on the other hand, also presents some shortcoming. For example, in addition to being an operational definition, it only focuses on the stability dimension, while stability might be a consequence of a group of parties that suffer from over-institutionalization or they lack autonomy or are subordinated to foreign players. Therefore, this study projects that stability by itself is not enough for a polity to be considered an institutionalized one. It combines the two definitions and redefines an institutionalized party system as a system where [*politicians, citizens, and organized groups develop expectations and behavior based on the premise that the fundamental rules of party competition and conduct will prevail into a future routine and predictable overtime processes*].

1.4. Reintroducing Institutionalization Theory

Mainwaring and Scully (1995) attribute the rise of populism and fluidity of party systems to populist leaders' direct appeals to the masses and their desire of gaining offices compared to ensuring lasting policy impacts. The authors' findings suggest that in an inchoate party system, it is more likely that an anti-institutional president or politician wins office than those who are better institutionalized. They also emphasize the impact of institutionalization of party systems on peaceful alteration in power, since elections and competition in such type of party systems become only the means for pursuing various groups' interests. Furthermore, party system institutionalization facilitates the governability and governing through boosting political participation; absorbing social cleavages; and channeling political conflicts to a peaceful exercise than becoming "*Praetorian Society*" of Huntington, where everyone confronts one another "*nakedly*" (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995: 23).

Through this peaceful maintenance of politics, they argue, people evaluate the legitimacy, and the accountability of government, political parties, and also the electoral rules. Party systems play crucial roles in strengthening the legitimacy and fulfill the interest representations as they embody societal interest groups, and structure preferable choices of people regarding their leaders and policies. Therefore, they serve as indispensable means for the ruling and maintaining of legitimacy for the government. Furthermore, the institutionalization of party polity increases the legitimacy degree through democratic accountability, since legitimacy can be a product of the degree to which political parties representing the society are acceptable to the people. Informed voters can optimally evaluate the political parties, to make right choices, and hence, can increasingly accord with their governments and member of parliaments who mainly are the mediums connecting political parties to voters.

Mainwaring and Scully (1995) claim that all countries have party systems, yet

feeble political parties and high electoral volatility, fail the constitution of a system. Therefore Mainwaring (1998; 1999; 2015), Mainwaring and Torcal (2006) and Maniwarig and Zoco (2007) omit non-democratic systems, where extreme personalism tendencies are exercised, and parties do not have substantial control over who gains political offices in their studies. They only focus on the democratic and semi-democratic states in alignment with the ideology that politics is to some extent predictable.

Mainwaring and Scully suggested four dimensions, (which we discuss them profoundly in 1.4.1-1.4.4), for measuring the institutionalization degree in such societies. Yet when the theory faced scholarly critics, especially on inadequateness of measuring their four dimensions together, Mainwaring (1999) stressed a party system might be well institutionalized along one dimension but weak along the other, and therefore, they do not necessarily go together, although, they almost always do so. This ambiguity leads scholars to adopt diverse perceptions regarding those dimensions. Some have taken the stability of the pattern of interparty competition as the only dimension for measuring party system institutionalization. This group includes Peter Mair (1996; 2001), Mair and Casal Bertoa (2010), Casal Bertoa and Enyedi (2010), Casal Bertoa (2010; 2014), Lindberg (2007), Wolinetz (2006) and Hicken and Kuhonta (2015). While others emphasize multidimensional approaches and focus on more than one of their dimensions or, even have combined them to create new indigenous dimensions. Table (1.3) shows the diversity of dimensions and the indicators used for their determination.

1.4.1. Stability of Interparty Competition

According to Mainwaring and Scully (1995), this is the most significant and accessible dimension to measure. The authors argue that in an institutionalized party system, major parties remain on the political arena for an extended period, while in a fluid or an inchoate system, political parties' combat sudden deterioration and abrupt newborn parties. The frequent changes of political

players can, in fact, be witnessed from one election to another as the result of the unpredictability of elections, and a high degree of volatility in addition to the irregularity of competition pattern evident amongst parties results in unstable and feeble institutionalized polity. The authors of current study employed *Pederson Index of Volatility* as a measurement for this criterion to determine the presidential and legislative volatilities, whether by calculating the net of changing in the vote or seat shares. Electoral volatility is "*the net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers*" (Pederson, 1979: 198), and is computed by adding the net change in the percentage of votes gained or lost by each party from one election to the next, then divided by two. Employing this index requires at least three consecutive, without interruption, lower general elections while the country enjoys a considerable level of democracy (Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005). Therefore *time* plays a crucial role in measuring stability as well as the institutionalization process.

Along the same lines, Mainwaring and Zoco (2007: 161) argue that electoral volatility and stability are influenced by both the age of democracy and the period when the states experience democracy for the first time. Thereof and adopting from Converse (1969), they conclude, "*newly established party systems stabilize over time as voters had more time to identify with parties.*" Furthermore, they underlined an inverse relation, claiming that the older the democracy, the lower is the electoral volatility, since longevity helps political parties to routinize their electoral labels and enables them to set up secure and stable bases in the society they manifest. However, Mainwaring (1998) argues that institutionalization is not entirely a product of time since several cases in Latin America and elsewhere evidence despite substantial time investment, fluid party systems. Therefore, this introduces other probable factors, such as voting behavior. Mainwaring and Zoco (2007) emphasized unpredictable voting behavior might be a consequence of the weakness of ideological and programmatic linkages between voters and political parties in less developed countries, which eventually may lead to the increase rate of floating and non-loyal voters. Hence, as demonstrated in such societies, despite the longevity of their regimes, electoral volatility is still high.

Several scholars emphasize the role of both political and social cleavages in shaping and structuring the stability of party systems. According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), in such societies, the parties demonstrate successful acquisition of loyalties from distinctive social groups. Which they classify them into four categories: *religion*, *class*, *core* versus *periphery*, and *urban* versus *rural*. Bartolini and Mair (1990) focus, on the other hand, on the '*physiognomy*' of party systems, which highlights class, religion, education, region, and ethnicity cleavages, according to which party preference and voting behavior may be structured. According to Maor (1997: 20) "*Cleavages are often conceived of as issues, policy differences or political identifications related to certain long-standing conflicts in a particular society.*" Hence cleavages are essential factors for stability because of their imperative role in providing support to political parties and shaping the pattern of party competitions (Whitefield, 2002).

Relevant national conditions and time differences can produce various kinds of cleavages; and political party formations, accordingly, reflect the interest of those active political and social cleavages that can "*freeze these cleavages even when they have become less salient*" (Maor, 1997: 27). Thus, party systems in heterogeneous societies by passing time become characterized by a low level of volatility, and the competition patterns among the political parties of these accumulated interests acquire a stable pattern over time and consequently, cleavages support the institutionalization of party systems.

However, Mainwaring (1999) argues that this approach may not be very useful for the nascent democracies following the third wave, as was the case in the first wave. The mobilizing forces of integrating labors into political systems in the first wave were class parties, while in the third wave are populist. Furthermore, the size of labor forces in the first wave in comparison to the third wave was considerably more substantial. Also, increasing interclass fragmentations have made it increasingly difficult for labor unions to form working class parties in the societies of the third wave. Finally, the mass media and technology in the third

wave have substituted labor unions and working-class parties as information sources. Hence, it can be understood that those political parties in old and new democracies have different experiences in addition to the various challenges they face, which makes the third wave countries less affected by social cleavages in comparison to Western European cases before the 1970s (Mainwaring, 1999).

While Mainwaring and Scully attribute the electoral volatility of presidential vs. legislation to the typology of political systems, Bielasia (2002) emphasizes the fluidity of electoral systems as a core factor. He highlights how political engineering of rules influences the strategy of voting regulations and political entrepreneurs, and accordingly, the electoral system results in party system size. Thus, changeability in party systems is a product of either the transformation of electoral formula or the reformation of electoral rules, while the frequency of changes in electoral laws may cause misunderstanding of the voters and political parties. Because, the alteration of electoral formulas may alter the party system size, especially from *Single Member District* to *Proportional Representation* that frequently ends with a multiparty competition. Thus, modification in the electoral system decreases the chance of party system stability and hence the pattern of competition changes too as new rivals, initiate contestation.

Unlike Mainwaring and Scully (1995) who emphasizes volatility in legislature seats and electoral turnouts, Mair (1997; 2001), building on Sartori (1976), emphasize the differential patterns in competition for the government and thus, present a range of indicators, first, the frequency of change in government; second, the fundamental pattern of alteration in government whether it is wholesale partial or no change at all. The wholesale refers to the situation when "*a set of incumbents is wholly substituted by a former opposition.*" A partial alteration is when in a fragmented system, the government is established by a group of parties, of which at least one participated in the former government. Finally, no alteration pertains to the condition, when the same parties remain in government for the next term. Third, the stability of government formation stresses whether the government is following a familiar pattern or innovative.

And fourth, the extent to which the government accessibility is open to wide range of parties or is limited to a subcategory of parties. He highlights the role of the institutions in stability or fluidity of party systems and considers the countries' institutional levels the key, even though they may be affected to a lesser degree by cleavage structures.

Some years later Mair and Casal Bertoa (2010) used the abovementioned dimensions to test the institutionalization of party systems within fifteen post-communist countries. They examined the first sub-dimension through the number of changes in the party composition of the government, and the second through the degree of government alteration by the Index of Government Alteration. The third sub-dimension was measured by another Index of Innovative Alteration, and finally, the never governed parties' accessibility for the government was measured through the Index of Openness. This one-dimensional model of party system institutionalization, in fact, was later employed in Casal Bertoia's (2009; 2010; 2014a) investigations of Eastern Europe and East Central Europe; Casal Bertoa, and Enyedi (2014, 2015) of the East and West of Europe.

Wolinetz (2006), likewise Mair and his colleagues, tested only one dimension, i.e., the *"party system core"* in parliamentary and governmental consistency in the industrial democracies of Central, Eastern, and Western Europe. However, unlike them he has not followed Sartori (1976), rather he adopted Gordon Smith (1989) as his guide theory. Smith describes the *"core"* of a party system as *"features of parts of the system which are most immune to change and which provide a significant continuity"* (Wolinetz, 2006: 7). The author accredited Smith's work as an alternation approach to measure the party system institutionalization in the developing societies and attribute this to the differences existing between these societies and those of the developed democracy. Still, unlike Smith, Wolinetz focuses on the political party interactions, which essentially entail the small and principal players not only in election campaigns but also their roles in government formation and maintenance in both presidential and parliamentary systems. Hence, instead of measuring the

institutionalization of Western and Central European party systems with electoral volatility, he turned to investigate the extent within these party systems, their distinct *core*, which is "*relatively constants over successive elections and examining patterns of competition within that core*" (Ibid: 14), and hence any rapid change in that core indicates the weakness or not institutionalization of the party system.

Contrasting the scholars mentioned above, Hicken and Kuhonta (2015), in a study of Asian party systems emphasize the authoritarian political parties' impact on the party system institutionalization. The authors suggest separating democracy from party system institutionalization, since the legacy of authoritarian regimes and semi-democratic regimes in Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan substantially impacted institutionalizing their party systems. The authors used the stability of interparty competition as the only dimension for their measurement and focused singularly on the states that held regular elections. Through the application of only two indicators, i.e., (i) the electoral volatility and (ii) the historical analysis of political parties through conducting public opinion polls; eventually they conclude that democracy is not a necessary element for party system institutionalization as suggested by Huntington, Mainwaring, and Scully.

Finally, I believe that the stability pattern of competition among political parties is a fundamental dimension of party system institutionalization. Therefore, following Mainwaring and Scully (1995) this research concentrates on Pederson Index for Electoral Volatility. Also, I believe that institutions are one of the core factors influencing instability and therefore, I also follow Mair (1997, 2001) in employing ministerial volatility. Nevertheless, the electoral volatility as a whole function is a useful gauge for measuring the stability level of the system and the stabilization degree of the political parties' rootedness; however, it does not provide any information regarding the relational trends of the party under scrutiny. Therefore, this research adds other measurements to fill this gap, as discussed later. On the other hand, the ministerial volatility helps us to understand the relational features of political parties, the influence the spoils of the office

have on within parties factions, and different interest groups emerge as new political parties, in addition to the Bielasiak (2002) emphasis on the electoral system.

1.4.2. The Parties' Stable Roots in Society

Mainwaring and Scully (1995) acknowledge the existence of an intertwining relationship between this dimension and the previous. Strong rootedness is usually accompanied by a static ideological stance that strengthens stability. Although, if political parties do not have loyal adherents and the linkages between parties, citizens and organized interests are not strong enough for an intense presence in the society, they cannot become actors influencing political preferences; thus, failing to have strong roots that challenge the environmental changes. Mainwaring and Scully's argument is based on the regularity in the voters' extending support to the same political parties over time and in different elections. Those parties that enjoy a regular amount of supports present a deep penetration in the society; however, in the case of noticeably large differences between presidential and legislative electoral turnouts or the volatility between two following elections, then the giving parties have not rooted well. Therefore, they cannot shape political preferences as expected from them.

Furthermore, in young democratized systems, party labels are not portrayed well to facilitate aligned casting of votes by the voters, rather, the populist leaders are dominant, and thus, personalism tendencies in elections often enable non-partisan candidates to acquire offices (Mainwaring, 1999). Though in case of well-established parties, who have decently delivered their programs to the citizens, independent candidates may not win offices, and constituencies' preferences would be based on the ideological or programmatic influence (Mainwaring and Tocal, 2005). This argument also was supported by Peter Mair (1997), when he made a distinctive point regarding the foundation atmosphere of parties of the first wave vs. the third wave of democracy. He attributes the firm rootedness of

political parties of the first wave within the context of their engagement and involvement in civil society, in addition to their discipline and hierarchy. Nevertheless, the parties of the recent wave have been typified as, "loose organizational structures, by small if not non-existent memberships, and by an absence of any pronounced ties to civil society" (Mair, 1997: 125). Furthermore, a robust partisan tie between citizens and parties is another characteristic of decent party rootedness. The development of partisanship alters voter loyalties from individual leaders to political parties, i.e., "*the institutionalization of political loyalties from a charismatic leader to a political organization*" (Dalton and Weldon, 2005: 2).

Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 11) emphasize the importance of geography cleavages as another indicator of party rootedness. They highlight the importance of data on "*electoral geography*" in measuring the citizens' perception of political parties and weight of party support in addition to "*assessing voter stability in voters' electoral preferences.*" To support this argument, (Meleshevich, 2007) underscores the historical legacy's influence and its integration in the cultural context on spatial factor and voter's geographical dispersion.

Randall (2007), on the other hand, shows the importance of the year in which a political party was originated for the party's subsequent development, its rootedness, and ability to tolerate difficulties and regularly acquire electorate loyalties to establish an intrinsic value. The political parties of newly democratizing states are characterized by a low level of rootedness, besides the personalism and patronage, exhibited by them. Hicken (2008) and Manwaring (1999) underline the phenomena of disloyal electorates and ticket splits in those societies and attribute them to the low differences level within the competing parties and their policy platforms provide, in addition to the parties' uncertainty about their preferred target groups.

In fact, Panebianco's (1988) 'Genetic Model', Randall and Svasand (2002: 17)

emphasize the role legacy play in the process of party building; "*the extent to which the party has been constructed through a process of 'penetration' from the centre to the periphery (understood both in territorial and more organizational terms) or 'diffusion', in which the party emerged more diffusely out of 'spontaneous germination' from below.*" Accordingly, a political party without a clear identity and an extent of historical legacy cannot penetrate into society. Such parties rather build up their growth on clientelism tendencies and their supports depend on tangible benefits, which they offer to individuals and organizations. Therefore, they cannot become mass parties as they are supposed to be, instead, they become vehicles to achieve the ambitions of politicians or are subjected to opportunistic coalitions and eventually subordinate to the will of other stronger parties or institutions, or even internal factions within their own parties.

Finally, unlike Mainwaring and Scully and their colleagues who analyzed the first two dimensions separately, Weatherall (2013) converge them in only one dimension. He justifies this, by claiming that, the volatility index by itself does not tell much about the political parties' developments. Thus, he provides substantial evidence of a causal relationship between party roots with periodical, structural, and identification of political parties in addition to the cultural and spatial variables of the society. Also, he measures his new dimension, which is the tie between parties and voters through *'party identifications, electoral performance of independents, and electoral volatility.*

In my perspective, measuring political parties' rootedness is not only a time-driven issue but also is a qualitative characteristic of political parties' manifests in a comparative electoral process. Therefore, this study, in addition to the electoral volatility of old parties, and age of political parties that widely have been used by scholars, employs an index for measuring nationalization of political parties by Jones and Mainwaring (2003), and old parties volatility as the gauge to measure the false rootedness claimed by some political parties, and their attachments to the geographies of their concentrations. The old party volatility gives the absolute

rate of changes and voter preferences, regarding leaving the old party and voting for another party – irrespective of being young in age or new in voting preferences. Finally, the old parties' volatility helps us to measure the index dealignments of voters of these political parties, and understand the reasons underpinning the garnering of support by old parties in previous elections. Providing various options may also support the increase of the electoral turnouts through the involvement of the voters who never cast votes for old parties, but with the influence of newcomers they behave differently and become active members of the electoral community when their preferable options fulfill their ambitions.

1.4.3. The Legitimacy Accorded to The Parties and The Electoral Processes

According to Mainwaring and Scully (1995) in an institutionalized party system, political elites perceive elections as the principal route to governing, and parties as indispensable means to rule. Mainwaring (1998: 27), following Linz (1978), Morlino and Montero (1995), defines legitimacy as "*attitudes about the political regime*", and emphasizes the extent to which political actors sense political parties as fundamental parts of "*a good political regime.*" Underscoring hegemonic regimes' coercive attitudes in maintaining high electoral results, Mainwaring (2015) attributes those regimes' stability to their tendencies in excluding competitive elections. The electoral process in such type of countries is not the primary means for ruling; therefore, it is easy to uphold low electoral volatilities and regime stability.

Adopting from Selznick (1957), and Huntington (1965), Levitsky (1998: 79), emphasizes '*value infusion definition*', which pertains to the individuals' observation of the political parties they vote for or tend to vote for, to see if they are legitimate and eligible to meet their own goals. Individuals, accordingly, see political parties as valuable tools to personal achievements; the better the parties align and adjust to the people's goals and meet their personal satisfaction, the

better they are accorded legitimacy and thus the better they are institutionalized.

Jones (2005) measures the legitimacy of Latin American political parties through *indispensability* and *confidence* while he engages *cleanliness* and *real choice availability* in regulating the legitimacy of the electoral process. The author embraced data from Latinobarometro to test the extent to which the people consider the political parties *indispensable means* for the ruling, and what extent of *confidence* they have in those political parties. He links the legitimacy of electoral processes to voter's perceptions in elections and the extent of their belief in parties' fairness and cleanliness. He focuses on the degree of freedom the people have in voting and their consequent election of real choices among contested candidates and parties.

Finally, there are several critics of this dimension. While Wolinetz (2006) and Casal Bertoa (2010; 2014) consider the "*legitimacy*" dimension of Mainwaring and Scully a tautological and immeasurable dimension, Carreras (2012) denotes the possibility of a brief rising of electoral volatility after stabilization; therefore, it is more applicable to observe voters' behaviors in the ballot boxes than in survey data. According to him, legitimacy is the gap between people's anticipation of parties and the actual parties' performance in offices; thus, electoral results might be the best gauge for measuring this dimension.

Albeit, this study considers Mainwaring's (1998; 1999) measurement of this dimension through analyzing data obtained from public opinion surveys as a significant gauge for its justification. Legitimacy at the end is the people's confidence in political parties; therefore, the electoral turnout used by Carreras is impractical for the nascent democracies following the third wave, especially given that electoral frauds and forgery are common to align with the wills of dominant parties holding the offices. Hence, Mainwaring, Levitsky, and Jones' analyses of the evaluations of political parties and electoral processes, whether from public data or expert's judgments, are significant tools to test hypotheses related to this dimension.

1.4.4. The Organization and Autonomy of Political Parties

Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 5) attribute the solidity of political parties to their well-established structure, and independence from ambitions of egoistic leaders in addition to *having "acquire[d] independent and value for their own."* In an institutionalized party system, political parties are not subjected to personalism, clientelism, or patronage. Furthermore, party structures are institutionalized; interparty procedures are routinized; political elites are faithful to their parties, clear procedures are laid out for leader nominations and their selection process, parties have their own resources, i.e., transparent financial resources, stable and professionalized staffs, and roused loyalty on elected representatives. Thus a party system is institutionalized if its components are territorially coherent and its internal structure and procedures are well defined (Mainwaring, 1998; 1999). Although, Mainwaring and Scully (1995) combined the organizational variable with autonomy of political parties in one single dimension, they are separately defined and measured by some other scholars such as: Janda (1970); Panebianco (1988); Janda and Colman (1998); Randall and Svasand (1999; 2002) and Basedau and Stroh (2008). Furthermore, apparently the variables of political parties' organization and autonomy dimension differ from one scholar to another and are based on the scope condition, wherein the party system under scrutiny exercises its activity.

Janda (1970) in his ICPP project of a comparative study on political parties of 50 countries worldwide, employed different indicators for each parameter of party autonomy and organization. He considers autonomy a distinct characteristic of political parties and excludes it from political parties' institutionalization dimensions. Janda (1970: 102) defines autonomy as a *"party's structural independence from other institutions and organizations, whether in or out of the country."* His party structure and internal organization's dimension is inspired from each of Anderson's *'formalization,'* Duverger's *'structural articulation'* and Huntington's *'complexity-simplicity'*. Two decades later Colman and Janda

(1998) stress only four dimensions of Janda's previous (ICPP) project as factors of party organization, *complexity*, *centralization*, *Involvement*, and *factionalis*, and each of these criterion was examined through different variables and indicators.

Panbianco (1988), on the other hand, emphasizes internal 'systemness' and external '*autonomy*' of political parties in measuring political parties '*Solidification*'. Systemness to Panbianco pertains to the interdependence of different actors in handling internal procedures and party tasks, i.e., a mixture dimension constructed from two of Huntington's dimension, i.e., complexity and coherence, while autonomy to Panbianco is the same as Huntington's autonomy dimension (Randall and Svasand, 1999). Informal institution's impact on political parties' institutionalization is another causal variable pointed out by Helmke and Levitsky (2003; 2004). The authors argue that formal institutions have been systematically affected by informal rules and norms whether they originated from bureaucratic and legislative norms or clientelism and patrimonialism that "*shape strongly political behavior and outcomes*" (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 725). Political parties' internal organizations interact with those informal institutions namely "clientelism, personal networks, corruption, civil society, traditional cultures, veto players – religious brotherhoods, clans, and mafias – in different forms of relations (Helmke and Levitsky, 2003). Consequently, political parties cannot become independent from those informal institution's effects, rather they become effective formal institutions, especially when informal institutions play "*complementary*" or "*accommodating*" roles and do not have the power to compete or substitute them. However, they become ineffective in the event that informal institutions play "*substitutive*" or "*competing*" roles.

The problem of leadership shortcoming might be the most significant facilitating factor for informal institutions to affect political parties' organization, especially in newly democratizing societies. In such societies, party organizations can be easily influenced by clientelism, patronage, and personalism, since, in the absence of professionalism and qualifications, clientelism emerges as a secure alternative.

Kopecky and Mair (2006; 2011) argue that in such societies, personalistic ties and cronyism can take on fresh motivation in political parties, especially at their leadership level. Party patronage phenomenon, which is "*the power of parties to appoint people to positions of public and semi-public life*" (Kopecky and Mair, 2011: 1), can be measured according to the extent to which it becomes an important and effective element of party building.

Thus, patronage and clientelism are intertwined phenomena of weak political parties in nascent democracies. Given that parties' roots and their values rely on incentives offered by politicians in a sequence of operations, which start at the highest level of the party and stretch down to the very lower cells of party's organs through brokers. Additionally, this may be observed in reversed conditions, when candidates are selected in the party's internal nominations, wherein the selections depend on favors given back to supporters as values of their votes, or when a leader tries to nominate his close associates. Eventually, this broker-patronage phenomenon increases in the absence of party identification, especially when there is no distinction among ideological position of the political parties, when the party programs are weak and not coherent, have unidentified financial resources, and shows easy intervention of social forces in party decisions (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2008).

Koole (1996) describes parties of the third wave of democratization or "the cartel parties" as "*stratarchy*" parties that rely on governmental subsidies.¹ The "*Stratarchy*" refers to the autonomy enjoyed by both national elites and office holders independently from one another, which can be a potential fractionalization source. Finally, due to the economic help that governments or other entities offer to these political parties, their internal organizations may become targets for intervention by those supporters, including government, which usually have the resources of funds and powers (Randall, 2001). This may also be

¹ The cartel parties are those parties that "employ the resources of the state to limit political competition and ensure their own electoral success" (Katz and Mair 2009: 753).

the condition when political parties are supplied by international donors to deliver technical or financial aids, especially to those of transitional democracies and post-conflict societies. Hence, the lack of coherence and autonomy, due to absence of individual economic resources, and weak ties between their elites in both party and government offices are two salient features of parties in transitional societies. Another issue of scholarly consideration is the cleavages' influence on parties' performances and identifications. A cohered party is the party that collectively holds diversified groups and embodies all the cultural and social cleavages. It is the party that cooperate in recruitment of parliamentary, and government to establish close linkages between those differentiations and deepen the party's roots within the society as Bartolini (2005, 13) put it "*to translate ideological profiles to policy packages*". The heterogeneity of the Third World societies supports cleavage diversifications to categorize parties according to religion, ethnicities, and regions, while the functional cleavages of economic interests is not a strong feature of parties (Randall, 2001). In other words, in Third World societies, class cleavages are not strong enough to encourage party establishment and development. The identities of parties are quite clear, which on the one hand helps freezing cleavages and stabilizing voting behavior, on the other hand, increases the clientelism and patronage phenomena made by personnel on account of systemness (Randall, 2001). Consequently, this kind of division does not support political parties, and parties in return are unable to articulate them reliably.

Historical legacy and economic performance, in addition to cultural development, are other variables, which either support or hinder autonomy and internal organization of political parties. Randall and Svasand (1999; 2002), Basedau and Stroh (2008) and Gyimah-Boadi (2007) emphasize weak institutionalization in African political parties and attribute them to the cultural and economic development level, and the historical legacy of the parties in party building and development. They argue that the conditions in these societies are different from those of industrial or developed countries. In such societies, political and economic developments are not the only factors influencing political parties, but

also institutional development impacts party institutionalization. For example, the regime system whether it is presidential or parliamentary; the electoral system; the power distribution within government whether it is horizontal or centralized, constitute the various causes of institutionalization degree differences.

In conclusion, the dimensions presented by Mainwaring and Scully have become the core elements for measuring institutionalization of any party system, taking into the account economic, cultural, and institutional development, the age of democracy, the time-effect and the legacy of previous regimes as they result in various institutionalization levels. However, from one party system to another, and from one political party to another the causal variables have different influence and different outcomes. Some of the variables, such as foreign driven influences – exogenous factors – may have a stronger effect on one political party than the others due to its internal shortcoming, whether in leadership resources, ideological ambiguity, or internal organization's relationship within the party's organs and with external actors. Therefore, this study considers some of aforementioned causal factors, relevant yet not all of them.

Region	Scholar	Dimensions										
		Stable pattern of party Competition	Stable Root-in Society	Legitimacy	Party Organization	Bound-ary	Scope	Adapt-ability	Auto-nomy	Voter-party linkage	Electoral system	Party System Core
Latin America	Mainwaring and Scully (1995)	A or B	F, S, Z1, T, J1	V	T, J1, M, U, Z2, Z3	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	Welfing (1973)	B, J, K, N1, C1, H1	/	/	/	G	L, M	N, O, P, P1	/	/	/	/
	Riedl (2005, 2008)	A	F, R, S	G1, F1, E1, B1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Africa	Bessadau (2007)	A	Q	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	Sanches (2014)	A, B, C, D, E	F, G	/	H, I, J, K	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	Lindberg (2007)	B, X1, W1, C1, Y1, Q1, E, M1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Post-Soviet Union States	Bielasiak (2012)	A, X	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	W, L1	/
	Meleshevich (2007)	A, F	/	/	/	/	/	/	G, Y, K1	/	/	/
Asia	Weatherall (2013)	/	/	/	U, J1	/	/	/	/	A, T, G	/	/
	Hicken and Kuhonta (2014)	A, O1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Middle East	Herzog (2011)	A, X	R1, S1, Z1	L, V	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Europe	Mair and his Colleagues	D, D1, A1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	Wollnetz (2006)	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	T1, U1, V1

The letters standing for the following indicators; **A**= Electoral Volatility; **A1**= Index of Closure; **B**=Legislative Seat Volatility; **B1**=Military Interruption of Elected Government; **C**=Total Percentage of Votes Won by New Parties; **C1**=Total Percentage of Legislation Seats Won by new entities; **D**=alteration government (Ministerial Volatility); **D1**= Index of Familiar Alteration; **E**=share of seats for the most voted party; **E1**=Irregular International Observation of Elections; **F**=Share of seats of parties founded by particular year (old parties); **F1**=The Losers did not Accept the Results; **G**=Share of seats of independents in legislatures; **G1**=Election Boycotts; **H**=electoral strength of Merging group; **H1**= New Interactions; **I**= electoral Strength of Splitting group; **I1**=Widespread of Ticket Splitting; **J**= legislative Strength of Merging group; **J1**= Nationwide party organizations; **K**= Legislative Strength of Splitting group; **K1**= Geographical Pattern of Parties Support; **L**=Electoral Participation; **L1**=Reformation of Electoral Rules; **M**= National Orientation; **M1**= Share of Legislature seats of Runner-up; **N**=Electoral Discrimination; **N1**= Name Changes; **O**=Arrests; **O1**=Historical Legacy of Political parties; **P**=Bans; **P1**=Legal Single Party; **Q**= Average of Party Age per seat in particular year; **Q1**=The Number of Parties Voted Out of The Legislature **R**= The Age of Parties that have Received a Certain Percent of the Vote in the most recent legislative elections; **R1**=The Age of Parties that have Received a Certain Percent of the Vote-Share; **S**=Presidential/Legislative Percentage Difference; **S1**= National/Local Vote-Share Difference; **T**=Party Identification; **T1**=Discernable Core; **U**=Nationwide Organization Party Membership; **U1**=Relative Constant Core; **V**=Elites observation whether they see Political Parties are necessary for making Democracy; **V1**=Pattern of Competition; **W**= Transformation of Electoral Rules; **W1**=The Number of Parties in legislature; **X**= Effective Number of Electoral Parties; **X1**=the Number of New Parties; **Y**= The Legislative Parties recruitments in Executive Branches; **Y1**= The Percentage of Parties Voted Out of Legislature; **Z**= Total Percentage of Votes Won by Old parties; **Z1**= Geographical Rootedness; **Z2**= Personalism and Clientelism of Party Leadership; **Z3**=party Switching

1.5. Party System Institutionalization in Iraq

Very little has been said about Iraq and Kurdistan Regions' party systems. In fact, the democratic competition in Iraq is very recent and has only emerged after the collapse of Baathist regime following the year 2003 invasion of Iraq. Therefore, the literature of political parties and party systems is very recent and somehow it is challenging to find scholarly works conducted in this regard; however, this, in fact, might be true for the whole Islamic Middle East party systems. In comparison, limited studies have been conducted on this subject, in other regions like on Turkey by Herzog (2011), Hazama (2004) and Dinc (2012), Sayari and Esmer (2002) and on Iran by Mohammadighalehtaki (2012).

One might ask that as this dissertation focuses on Iraqi Kurdistan Region's party system, why has it stressed on Turkey and Iran? The answer is, in addition to the fact that Iran and Turkey's political parties and party systems are almost the only two of which that have grabbed scholarly attention, the studies conducted on these two states display an extension of knowledge about the institutional, cultural and ideological roles in shaping political parties and party systems of the Kurdistan Region and Iraq.

Additionally, several other points shall be taken into account regarding these two party systems and that of Iraq, such as: Conflicts over Kurdish issues, similarity of their sect and religious cleavages to some extent. Also the economic and political relations of Turkey and Iran with Kurdistan Region of Iraq (IKR), which, in fact, is one of the leading causal factors that this study analyzes regarding the fluidity of IKR party system.

Yasushi Hazama (2004) and Herzog (2011) attribute the short-lived trend of Turkish political parties to various influences like the military intervention in the political life, the fluidity of political parties that encourage splits and party divisions, and the constitutional court's decisions to dissolve parties from time to time. Specifically, only between the years 1962-2001, twenty-two political parties

were dissolved in Turkey, which probably affected political instability and the institutionalization of their polity. Herzog (2011) in his dissertation highlights the military interventions in political life as a core factor for weak social rootedness of the parties and their lack of public legitimacy. Additionally, he underscores the fragile linkage between civil society and political parties and the high level of electoral volatility, high level of personalism, as other central characteristics that shape Turkish party system.

Dinc (2012), Hazama (2003), on the other hand, investigated the correlation between the Turkish party system and social structural change. While Hazama attributes the escalate of electoral volatility in Turkey to social cleavages, Dinc concludes that the historical legacy of Turkish institutional and social structure shaped several different and new types of cleavages such as Kamalist state vs. Kurds; secular state vs. Islamic organizations; old Istanbul economic elites vs. new emerging Anatolian economic elites; Kemalists (one nation) vs. liberalists-federalism supporters; and finally the cleavage between heterodox Alevi Muslims vs. orthodox Turkish Sunni Muslims which all together destabilized the Turkish party system.

Finally, Mohammadghalehtaki (2012: 2) highlights the narrative-historical analysis of Iranian political parties development under the Islamic regime and attributes the internal parties poor institutionalized trends to the *“hostility and uncertainty in party environment”*, *“organizational zones of uncertainty”* and the state’s impact on party institutionalization in Iran to have developed in the shadow of the Iranian Islamic regimes scope condition.

1.6. Causal Factors of Party System Institutionalization

Scholars suggest various factors as sources of party system institutionalization. For instance, the dissimilarity of institutionalization levels can result from institutional, economic, temporal, or structural and cultural factors, altogether or separately (Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005; Mainwaring and

Scully, 1995; Riedl, 2008; Weatherall, 2013; Casal Bretoa, 2011; Hichen and Kuhonta, 2015; Basedau, 2007). However, this study's purpose is to apply the theory of institutionalization to the Kurdistan Region's party system in the context of Iraqi political framework; therefore, based on the literature reviewed above, only the possible relevant factors have been highlighted in this dissertation.

Period Effect

The time duration in which countries transition towards democracy results in different institutionalization levels. Scholars emphasize that the political parties played stronger roles in the first and second waves of democracy in political mobilization as well as in incorporating citizens into political system, compared to the third wave (Mainwaring, 1999; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005; Maiwaring and Zoco, 2007; Casal Bertoa, 2011; Casal Bertoa and Mair, 2010; Hicken and Kuhonta, 2015). They attribute this change to the influence of communication technology and media on parties during the third wave.

Mainwaring and his colleagues argue that political parties were more rooted in society before the emergence of advanced communication methods and solidified loyalties of organized social blocs could easily be witnessed to the preferred parties by the societies. However, the influence of the mass media on the political parties of the new emerging democracies has prevented them from penetrating deeply into society and establishing their own strong roots with targeted social forces. In such societies, thus, political organizations are weakly structured as populist leaders, and office candidates have media channels to deliver their messages without relying on their political parties' structural bureaucrats and procedures. The orientation, eventually, in the third wave, has become more personalistic, and leader- centered than programmatic and cooperative; thus, party developments and their organizational structures have become characterized by weaknesses and delicacy.

Joe Khalil (2016:12) emphasizes the role of local televisions on social cleavages,

in the contexts of Islamic world, arguing that “*local media are forging regional alliances with traditional market leaders, and the information divide is widening between news leaders and laggards.*” Khatib (2009: 1), similar to the same vein, underscores the “*technology revolutions*” to signify the role of technology in escalating political participation and mobilization. He attributes this to technology and satellites and highlights their impact on raising public questions regarding the legitimacy and the accountability of ruling parties and politicians involved in corruption and political violence. These have been achieved mainly through establishing anger and dissatisfaction among the public and engendering struggle over power in these societies.

In addition to the increase of cleavage diversity and political participation, this factor activated the so-called civil society in a novel way. The social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, have significantly affected public awareness and created a sort of “*online civil society*” (Howard and Hussain 2013: 10). Thus, these political mobilizations stimulated from this easy and cheap method, in fact, encouraged politicians and personalities to use their party media platforms, and social media accounts to communicate with constituencies regardless their degree of loyalties and eventually produced populist and weak institutionalized parties (Mainwaring, 1999).

Structural and Social Cleavages

The scope conditions where each party system emerges is another causal variable that result in the variation of institutionalization (Mainwaring, 1999; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005; Weatherall, 2013; Lewis, 2008; Madrid, 2005; Casal Bertoa, 2011; Mainwaring and Zoco, 2007; Hicken and Kuhonta, 2015; Hazama, 2003; Sayari, 2012). Based on the discourse of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) emphasizing the impact of social position of individuals on stability of party system, Mainwaring and Zoco (2007), and Lewis (2008) argue that social cleavages – religious, economic, residence, and cultural – are expected to decrease volatility and stabilize party systems. However, Hicken and Kuhonta

(2015) raise crosscutting cleavages as a factor for political parties' shallow rootedness of cleavage-based parties and emergence of catchall parties as a moderate tool for conflicts.

Bartolini (2000) tested the influence of several factors including the working class organization; ethnic/linguistic and religious heterogeneous relations on electoral volatility in Europe between the years 1860 to 1980 and his findings suggest that the above-mentioned social cleavages reduce the electoral volatility. This claim was further supported by Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) in analyzing the *ideological distance* of some developed and developing states. Surprisingly, they found that cultural cleavage influence is strong only in industrial societies but not in developing ones. Hazama (2003), following Bartolini, tested the Turkish social cleavages' impact on electoral stability. The authors' findings suggest that in the long term, Turkey's social cleavages have affected the voting behaviors and accordingly the electoral volatility has increased, and therefore can be considered as one of the factors of Turkish party system weak institutionalization. Though, according to Dinc (2012) some ethnoreligious cleavages might have a more efficient role on party system institutionalization than others, as Alevi- sect cleavage has not contributed actively in Turkish party system change unlike the other ethnic groups such as Kurdish, and Arminian. Sayari (2012) stresses the social and structural phenomena's effect, like clientelism, and patronage, on electoral behaviors and party supports to Turkish political parties. The author's findings suggest the clientelism and patronage-based relationships with the urban constituencies can, in fact, be used as a mechanism by both secular and religious bloc parties under different names and categories to gather supports in poor urban areas through hiring policy to public offices.

Although, Dalton (2005) refutes Bell's (1960) '*End of Ideology*' and the notion developed by Franklin (1992) and his colleagues with the claim that ideological polarization is faded in the western world attribute to their containment within other social group cleavages. Dalton's findings support the belief that Left/Right polarizations still create cleavages between different groups, however, beyond the

traditional meanings of those ideological categories. Contemporary meanings are no longer related to '*socioeconomic ideology*' rather they are related to '*libertarian issues*' and have new dimensions such as nuclear energy, sexual equity, multiculturalism, and so on. Despite these sophisticated arguments, in the developing societies, ideology still plays crucial roles in mounting conflicts over identity, and therefore, they constitute indispensable variable in studies related to political parties and party systems in heterogeneous societies (Rothbart and Korostelina, 2006).

Despite Mainwaring (1999) and Norris and Inglehart (2004) who identify ideology in the context of Left/Right orientation, Casal Bertoa (2011) and Dalton (2005) have separated ideological variable from social and political variables. Yet this study discusses them in the context of structural factors for two reasons: First, ideology, especially of the states engendered from fanatic and religious beliefs, is considered as a leading factor for system instability, for example, in states of Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, transitional democracies followed communist regimes, India and elsewhere in the world (Dinc, 2012; Mohammadighalehtaki, 2012; Midlarsky, 2011). Second, the Quran is either the only or the primary source of Arab, and other Islamic states' constitutions, even in quasi-democratic regimes like Iraq, and Pakistan, therefore, the discussion of Kurdistan Region will not be accomplished unless it is developed in the context of Islam and the political thinking of structural groups related to the ideological and fanatic bases.

Furthermore, gender and religion are considered two traditional value-oriented issues of developing societies, especially in the Middle Eastern and Latin Americas' societies (Dalton, 2005). And the exclusion of non-Islamic or secular parties in some states like Iran from political scene, with simultaneous banning and outlawing Islamic-based political parties in other countries, like Iraq under Abdul- Karim Qasim's, and Saddam Husain's ruling, Egypt before and after Arab Spring, and Turkey before AKP, on the other hand, are considered limitations to democracy and hindrance to maintenance of establishing healthy party systems and electoral competitions (Lust, 2011). Resultantly they may enable denied

groups to penetrate into the society and launch clandestine groupings, and eventually, a little initiation toward permissiveness and openness in electoral rules may inspire them to agitate the system, thereby probably producing extreme electoral volatility.

Additionally, evidence from Turkey suggests the states' policies involvement in ideological orientation and in expunging Islamic political views from public life, in fact, caused instability in those states' party polities. Islamic-prone parties that emerged after the electoral permissiveness in Turkey's the 1940s were escorted with frequent bans and party dissolution by the Constitutional Court. In 1960, the Democratic Party was banned, and the military coup toppled this party's actual prime minister in 1960. Another military coup demised the National Order Party in 1971, in addition to the Welfare Party that was banned by the Constitutional Court (Kassem, 2013). Closure of the Virtue Party in 2016 was a consequence of the unsuccessful coup, which resulted from ideological differences between the two Islamic parties. According to Sayari and Esmer (2002) this type of behavior against Islamic parties through military interventions and constitutional bans in Turkey, is considered a core factor for extreme electoral volatility, short-lived parties, and non- institutionalized political parties.

Political and Electoral Institutions

Neo-institutionalists emphasize the influence of political institutions on reshaping political parties and party systems (Olson, 2008; Peters, 1999). Maurice Duverger (1954) stresses the importance of electoral institutions in shaping the number of political parties in party systems. However, Mozaffar et al. (2003) argue that Duverger's claim is only valid in ethnically heterogeneous societies, and not in homogeneous ones, because, in such societies, electoral systems and nature of political systems can result in differential outcomes regarding political parties and party systems. Presidentialism, for example, may obstruct the cohesion of parties (Hicken and Kuhonta, 2015; Hicken, 2008) while electoral rules may affect the number of parties in the system, the degree to which the

political parties are institutionalized and the electoral volatility (Lijphart, 2005).

The change from a Single Member District (SMD) to Proportional Representation (PR) may change the party system from a two-party system to a multiparty system. Turkey's party system in (1961) is an excellent example in this regard. The change in electoral system from a Multimember District System to a Proportional Representative increased fragmentation and eventually transformed the two-party system into a moderate multiparty system. Furthermore, the electoral system change, influences the internal unity of political parties and eventually factionalists within political parties may be encouraged to emerge new rivals to the system. The 10% Turkish national threshold in (1983), on another hand, was to decrease the fragmentation and maintain political stability; nevertheless, it generated another problem of democracy shortcoming and lack of minority representations (Sayari and Esmir, 2002).

Gallagher and Mitchel (2005) argue that electoral systems impact big differences in policy outputs. They shape the party system and affect the nature of government formation and its stability, the types of choices for voters at elections, the capability of voters to hold their representatives accountability, the number of political parties in parliament, the kind of democracy and its coherency within parties, and finally the behavior of legislators. These scholars further argue that in addition to the district magnitude that affects small parties, the number of vote casts, ballot structures, choice of the candidate within parties and pattern of seat allocations may also influence the outcomes, and hence the electoral volatility and party system stability.

Electoral rules, in addition, affect some criteria within political parties. According to Reynolds and Reilly (1997), the electoral rules influence the cohesion of internal organization of parties, their campaign methods, and political elites' behavior that determines the political climate. Shugart (2005) stresses the same point, further adding that, the internal organization of parties in candidate selection and the ways in which they link to constituents might also be affected

by electoral rules, especially regarding women, and other minority group representations. Studies show that women ratio in PR is higher than in SMD, particularly evident in the very low district magnitudes, political parties usually candidate men more than women. In contrast, in some PR-list systems, gender quotas are adopted to decrease gender gaps and the internal laws of political parties may accordingly respond to these rules.

Along the same line, Schmitt (2009) highlights the advantage of proportional representation is in its focus on political parties than individuals as it is in the Mixed Systems and SMD. This concentration makes political parties emerge as indispensable elements for ruling and politics, while in the other systems individuals and non-party members may become the focus of electorates, and hence personalism tendencies increase in a way that affects political parties internal organs and thus fluid the party system. Furthermore, corruption and clientelism might also be a consequence of electoral rules and institutional frameworks. The personalism pattern in SMDs encourage the political parties to rely on ranked individuals compared to party labels, therefore, strong personalistic linkages between candidates and interest groups can be emerged, which may eventually lead to not only patronage type of relations but also corruption and public money misuse. Political system as another institutional framework may, in fact, enhance this shortcoming. According to Hicken and Kuhonta (2015) and Mainwaring and Scully (1995) presidentialism hinder the coherence of party organizations. As the personalistic voting pattern and the increase of electoral volatility diminish the chances of institutionalization.

Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) argue that with the personalization of the first position in the government, voting for anti-party and outsider politicians may emerge as a pattern, which may be vulnerable to party rootedness and therefore affect an increase in the electoral volatility. In fact this tendency differs from one party system to another, for example: The authors in their study of Latin Americas found evidence that comparative cross-national study support this hypothesis while no evidence supported this claim in Mainwaring and Zoco's

(2007) study of 47 democratic and semi-democratic regimes. Tavits (2007) points out another issue of the new emerging parties' possible confrontation with complication in registration and vote-seat transferring processes, thus, the permissiveness of new party registrations and difficulties raised by electoral rules in electoral procedure are another two pressure points, which the electoral laws may impose on new rivals.

The last issue is what Lijphart (1994: 54) has introduced regarding the frequent change of electoral rules. He emphasized, "*Healthy partisan competition requires that the electoral system—the basic rules of the democratic election game—be broadly supported and not be changed too frequently.*" Later Bielasiak (2002) in examining the Ukrainian transitional party system and Sayari and Esmir (2002) in measuring Turkey's party system stability employed this factor, and concluded it as a principal factor for party system instability. Thus, the institutional factor is an influential variable influence not only the stability dimension but also political parties' autonomy and intra- organizations.

Economic Performance

There is a collective agreement among scholars that economic conditions affect electoral participation (Nevitte et al., 2009). Tavits (2007) refers to the economic voting as a phenomenon of developed democracies. Powell (1982) argues that people living in weak economic states are less thoughtful about politics and show reduced tendencies to vote because of other more demanding concerns than ballots. In addition, the distribution pattern of wealth within a society could also impact voters, for instance, the low- income fragments of those states that are characterized by the concentration of wealth within a small segment tend not to vote and do not have active roles in elections. Furthermore, the 'reward-punishment' strategy is a remarkable tool to explain the voting behaviors in those societies (Nishizawa, 2009), as voters have short-term memories regarding economic conditions and retrospectively cast votes based on

national economic prosperity, and personal economic and incomes.

Economic voting is more noticeable in parliamentary than states with presidential system because of the simplicity of plural systems in facilitating the easy identification by the masses of party to blame for poor economic performance and reward the ones which maintain welfares and boost the economic performance. Weak economy may upturn voter volatility by declining political party traditional loyalties; in contrast, a robust economy may solidify support for the status quo, and decrease electoral volatility (Weatherall, 2013). Based on Freedom House's data, Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) examined the Human Development Index and GDP, Gross, Domestic Product, of 39 countries in 2003 and inferred a strong correlation between these two indicators and volatility. Party system stability of industrial and developed countries, i.e., the well-established economies, was found to be higher than those of semi-democracies and developing states.

Political party membership and organizational structures may also be affected by poverty and economic development. Randall (2006) argues that poverty has noticeable consequences on political parties' accessibility to subsidies. For instance, the number of membership dues, the quality of party offices and means of communications might help political parties become better institutionalized. An extreme shortage of resources affects the inspirations of related actors, especially if those resources are monopolized by states, and liberal economic activities are significantly limited.

While some of the dimensions that have been discussed above such as stability, party organization and their rootedness are influenced by weak economic conditions in most of the regions, *good* economic conditions may decline these dimension's levels and also affect political parties' legitimacy. Correspondingly, weak institutional structures and Rentier economies fuel clientelism and nepotism and eventually undermine the fairness of party competitions (Kitschelt et al.,

2010).² 'Rent-seeking' involves seeking to increase one's share of existing capital without creating new sources of wealth. Rent-seeking results in declined economic efficiency through an insignificant allocation of resources and actual wealth-creation, misplacing government revenue, and augmented income inequality (Dabla-Norris and Wade, 2011); therefore, the oil countries with the abovementioned characteristics are classified as Rentire states (Mohammadighalehtaki, 2011; Doust, 2009). The authors argue that the clientelism strategy in a Rentier economy hinders traditional parties from complying with the international conditions of economic competitiveness. The monopolization of the market by state parties and the problems that come alongside the economic crises and are resulted from price fluctuation of hydrocarbon products may produce series conflicts and troubles among political actors.

In fact, several countries of the Arab and Islam world, including Iraq and Kurdistan Region, derive their significant revenues from hydrocarbon exports. This may give the ruling parties to hold power for a substantial period of time and adapt rules and regulation to their wills. Davis (2015) attributes the conflicts between Arab political elites in Baghdad and Kurdish political elites in the Kurdistan Region to Rentierism. He further attributes the escalation of political cleavages between KRG vs. Baghdad, and Baghdad vs. other Arab provinces of the Sunni majority to this causal factor.

Along similar lines, Iranian political parties suffer from this economic policy primarily due to the oil money fueling the bureaucracy of the "*Iranian office of leader*" and preventing the institutionalization of opposition parties challenging the ruling party. Furthermore, the reciprocal relations that depend on loyalty for intensives from oil revenue has hindered Iranian political institutions and over-institutionalized the state institutions to turn to authoritarianism

² In the context of this dissertation, rent-seeking and '*Rentire*' have been used interchangeably.

(Mohammadighalehtaki, 2011). Thus, proper economic performance from oil revenue is rather as Michael Ross (2011) puts it, a 'Curse' for party regimes surviving on a rent-seeking economy.

Legacy of Former Regimes and Civil Wars

Previous regime inheritance and the political conditions after civil wars impacted emerging political parties and party systems in both conflict-prone societies and societies that have experienced authoritarian regimes. Correspondingly, a large body of literature emphasizes the impact of this factor on party system institutionalization (Weatherall, 2013; Hicken and Kuhonta, 2015; Hicken, 2008; Manwaring and Scully, 1995; Ishiyama, 2014; Riedl, 2008; Van Biezen, 2008; Reilly and Nordlund, 2008; Zeeuw, 2008; Norris, 2014; Caton and Soldevilla, 2008). Ishiyama (2014) stresses the possible instability in party systems and emergence of dominant systems in transitional periods, particularly in the societies that hold elections directly after the end of civil wars. He argues that in such societies political violence and party development are, as a consequence, entangled in political environment and boundaries. Accordingly, volatility, fractionalization, and dominant party systems may emerge as the biggest threats to the forthcoming party polities.

Reilly and Nordlund (2008), on the other hand, stress the weak infrastructure, the continual threat of repeated violence, and the vast numbers of internally displaced individuals as some of the critical dilemmas frustrating political parties in such societies. The rebel groups usual control the electoral systems and economic resources through their militia forces, thereby constituting barriers to the new competitors emerging after civil wars and eventually limit effective political competition and encourage the building of dominant party systems, particularly they claim legitimacy originated from their militia and revolutionary legacy (Ishiyama, 2014).

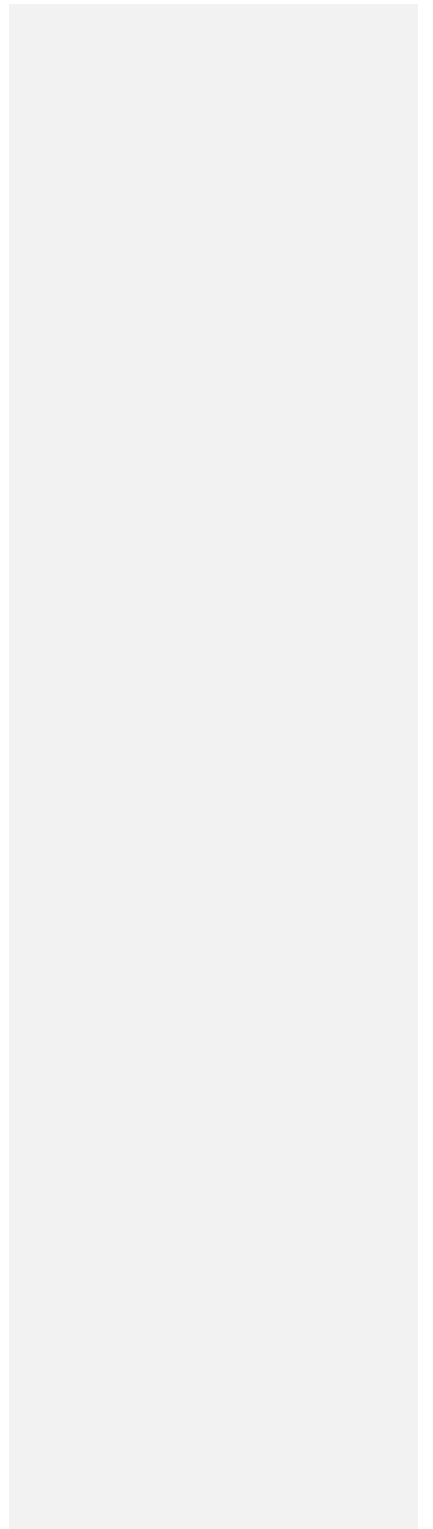
The weaknesses of revolutionary parties are another problem several party

systems face in the immediate periods post the collapse of authoritarian regimes (Caton and Soldevilla, 2008). The process of transformation from rebels to civil parties in most of the cases is slow and not assured due to the leadership and structural barriers of those groups (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008), yet it might also be due to apparent difficulties in adaptability to the new environment and adopting new goals, different from the revolution-era's already achieved goals (Huntington, 1965). On the other hand, unlike Mainwaring (2015) and his colleagues who underscore the influence of the length of authoritarian period on destabilizing emerging party systems in such societies, Hicken (2008) and Hicken and Kuhonta (2015) argue that the legacy of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes stimulate party systems in democratic periods and, in fact, refute the existence of a direct relationship between the length of authoritarian regimes and party system instability as has been suggested by Mainwaring. However, Riedl (2008: 136), justifies the role of those authoritarian regimes in reshaping the African party systems, if and only if they run for democratic founding elections, otherwise, it results in the shaping of a fluid party system;

“Where authoritarian incumbents were able to win the majority of legislative seats in the founding elections, the party system remained highly institutionalized in the democratic era whereas where the incumbent was not present in the transition or was swept out of power with the founding elections, the party system exhibited continually low levels of institutionalization.”

Party system in Lebanon might be a perfect example in this regard, which has experienced a long history of civil wars between religious divisions that were supported by regional powers. Following the demise of civil wars, elections were accompanied by noticeable electoral volatility, disruption of internal parties' organizations and unpredictable pattern of completion, with a substantial portion of independent and non-party MPs who gain seats for their ethnoreligious, and geographical references. Jones (2007) and Ezrow (2011) attribute this fluidity to the voter's loss of confidence in political parties to an extent, wherein they fail to

see them as principal means of ruling.



Foreign Influences

Janda (1980: 19) refutes the existence of causal relationship between autonomy and institutionalization, “*a party can be highly institutionalized and yet lack independence of other groups*”, but the literature of institutionalization of political system introduced by Huntington (1965) and party system by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) emphasize the existence of a significant causal relationship between institutional autonomy and institutionalization. Therefore, this study adopts this notion in the context of the relations the political parties develop with foreign players in order to measure the extent to which these relations impact the fluidity of the party polity. Based on the literature introduced by Mathisen and Svasand (2002: 9) political funding may escalate subordinations to the foreign governments, and alter electoral results “*External support for parties and candidates can backfire in the electoral process, and allegations about foreign funding are being used to portray opposition parties as tools of foreign governments*”. **It may also generate one-party system and authoritarian regimes.** One good example is following 30 years of support provided under the Stiftung of German Bundestag to political parties of developing democracy; they recognized that their effort helps rather an establishment of authoritarianism than promoting democracies, especially in the African party systems, therefore, they dropped political parties from their subsidy program. Furthermore, evidence supports allegations regarding the funds the American NDI, National Democratic Institute and the IRI; International Republican Institute provided to the parties of developing democracies; these establishments were rather accused of some types of patronage relations inclined toward Western democracy (Ibid).

According to Nader (2015), one of the core factors that fuels political instability in emerging democracies and political parties following civil wars is the subordination revealed by the revolutionary and opposition parties to the foreign patrons, whether are international organizations, states, or other foreign actors that influence the party system and political parties’ interrelationship and independence. Opposition parties resort to such types of patronage relationships

mostly on ideological or ethnic-based orientations while the subsidies take different forms; money, weapons and technical training (Ibid). Nevertheless, there are cases that target the democratization process, and humanitarian purposes - especially the support provided by international and charity organizations, classified under '*Subsidy Reform*' and '*Financing Democracy*', which are less influential in damaging party systems. Still, such financial support may increase corruption and clientelism and harm the internal parties' organizations through escalating personalism and opportunism. They also may alter the outcomes of electoral process, weakening the linkage between parties and civil society and would be less inclined to represent the voters' opinion, in addition to fractionalization and providing artificial strength to small and not well-penetrated parties (Mathisen and Svasand, 2002).

The opposition groups in the struggle phase, on the other hand, establish strong linkages with their patrons against the authoritarian regimes. Nevertheless, in the democratic competition age they cannot easily release themselves from such financial favors, or, sometimes, they prefer to receive more for further growth and expansion. Eventually, these parties' dependency on outside funds and subsidies, results in a decline of their autonomy in decision-making. In fact, they gradually become attached to those entities and politicians, with an inherent association within their own parties or those who sponsor and develop such egoistic linkages.

The other frustration is the impact of this factor on political stability. When rebel groups or political parties receive subsidies from regional countries for mutual purposes, this help eventually hinders the systematization of political parties and stabilization of democratic competitions, especially in heterogynous societies (Maiyo, 2008). These patronage relationships are based on religion and sect interests accompanied by the voracity of economic gains and political expansion (Jones, 2008). The struggle for expanding leverages over the Middle East region from each of Iran '*the capital of Shi'as*', Turkey '*the inheritor of Othman Empire*', Saudi Arabia '*the successors of Prophet Mohammed*', Egypt '*the capital of intellectuals and Pan-Arab nationalism*', and Iraq '*the country of*

Mesopotamia is very old and continual, and can be considered as a good relevant example in future studies. Iran had helped each of Iraqi opposition's pre 2003; Iraqi ruling Shi'a parties after 2003; Kurdish parties of Iraq and Turkey before 2005; and the Shi'a oppositions in each of Yemen, Saudi, and Bahrain (Nader, 2015; Millo, 2010). Syria and Iran's interference in Lebanon's issues on a daily basis especially in supporting Hezbollah against pro-western parties (Jones, 2011; Nader, 2015); Saudi Arabia and Qatar's support to Sunni Wahhabi groups in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Yemen and Lebanon (Dorsey, 2013), from one hand, and Egypt's role before the Arab Spring in the polarization of the region over Arab-Israel issues (Daoudzai, 2010) all are, in fact, effecting the party systems within these states. Finally Turkey's role, before the AKP, initially was to diminish the leverage of Iran in the region (Mohamed, 2010), and presently Turkey's role under the AKP is expanded to Promotion of Muslim Brotherhood organizations and those Islamic organizations and parties orienting in the same ideological span.

Consequently, in such atmosphere, fueled with ethnic and sectarian conflicts, avoiding involvement is challenging as some civil society organizations and political parties eventually have altered to armament parties and constructed their own militia in order to survive. One good example is the Shi'a-based political movement "*the Movement of Dispossessed*", initiated in 1969 known as the Amal party in Lebanon, which turned from a civil society political party to a militia with the help of Syrian regime in the civil war 1975-1990, then turned back to a civil political party competing for democratic political shares following 1990 (Byman, 2008; Jones, 2011).

Finally, this variable has not been appropriately covered in the literature of party system institutionalization, while regional and international interference to internal issues of other states may frustrate their party systems in two ways: 1), they enlarge the nepotism and patronage accompanied with mass corruptions resulting from international funds, 2), managed by elites usually recommended and backed by foreign players in reciprocally arrangements (Natali, 2010). The

corresponding cases of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Iraq might be considered two strong cases to be analyzed in this regard.

1.7. Conclusion

This body of literature has covered the institutionalization theory introduced by Samuel Huntington (1965: 394) who defines it “*the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability*” and identifies four dimensions for measuring the level to which a political institution is institutionalized; *Adaptability, Complexity, Autonomy, and Coherence*. Huntington attributes the stability of political systems in advanced societies to the institutionalization level of their institutions and procedures; and in contrast, the fluidity of those of the third world to the political crises, especially those emerged from lack of political development. He distinguishes modernity from political development and claims the correlation between institutionalization and the latter, while modernity, according to him, might present some of the trends of political development yet, which are not vital for institutionalizing political institution. The theory has been reintroduced by Mainwaring and Scully (1995), and become popular in the field of the political party and party systems, and accordingly, they become essential, but not indispensable, for democracy consolidation, regime legitimacy, and leadership accountability.

Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 4) define institutionalization “*a process by which a practice or organization becomes well established and widely known*”, however, they did not identify specifically party system institutionalization. Later Mainwaring's definition of 1998's essay lacks regularity and continuity; therefore, this research redefines party system institutionalization [*a process in which politicians, citizens, and organized groups develop expectations and behavior based on the premise that the fundamental rules of party competition and conduct will prevail into a future routine, and overtime predictable processes*].

Likewise, Huntington, Mainwaring and Scully present a group of four continuum

dimensions for a *Democratic* Party system to be institutionalized. They attribute the diversity of the institutionalization level from one party system to another, to the scope conditions in which the party system emerges, and according to each of *stability and patterned interparty competition, rootedness of political parties, their legitimacy* and finally *party's internal organizational and autonomy*, are affected.

The dimensions that mentioned earlier were examined by scholars of the field, however, the core dimension, i.e., stability has grabbed scholars' attention more than other dimensions due to its essential role, especially in consideration of its entity as an intertwined dimension with rootedness, which is the second dimension (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Thus, several researchers investigated it with different tools and mechanisms; Mainwaring and his colleagues used the Pederson Index of Volatility to determine legislature seat share volatility and electoral volatility in lower house and presidency elections; Peter Mair (2001) and his colleagues tested government stability through ministerial volatility adapted from Pederson Index for that purpose and several other indices.

According to the scholarly achievements, researchers are divided into two groups; Mainwaring and his colleagues reinforce democracy as a matter for measuring institutionalization, while Hicken and Kuhonta emphasize the role of authoritarian regimes and hegemonic party systems in the institutionalization process of nascent and transitional democracies. The latter argument has also reflected the works developed by Kuhonta, Riedl on the African party systems.

The diversity of the degree of institutionalization of party systems from one state to another and from one region to another is a consequence of various causal factors. According to scholarly reviewed literature, it may be a result of the *period effect*; the period in which the system transformed into democracy. The influence of time on progressing political cultures; especially those related to social media, technology, and mass media impact the structural dimension of political parties, leadership building, and the political mobilization especially of

the states belonging to the third wave of democracy. *The Political Institutions* whether through the electoral systems or the nature of the political regimes have been observed to weaken the rootedness of political parties in some regimes and escalate the electoral volatility between elections. They may also fuel personalism, clientelism, party splits and geographical concentration of parties.

The legacy of former regimes and civil wars is another factor, which hampers an emerging party polity due to instability whether from military interventions, coups and the superiority of military over political elites, or previous state parties' rootedness that restrict emerging political parties from establishing stable interactions pattern and deep societal penetration. *Economy performance* and *cleavages* also increase the fluidity of party polities. Even though, there is a universal agreement among scholars that party systems of industrialized societies are more institutionalized for the influence of high GDP and the increase of national economic performances have, yet evidence states that economy boost may also hinder institutionalization especially in Rentier states, as it increases personalism and nepotism. The structural and social cleavages by Lipset and Rockkan (1967), on the other hand, may also affect the instability of party systems, especially in certain societies that enjoy poor institutional framework, rentier economy, or political system does not support the rights of those ethnic or ideological cleavages. Finally, this study's contribution to the field of party system institutionalization is the projection of *International influences*, as a causal factor to be tested in the nascent democracies. It may cause instability of party system and affect the autonomy, and legitimacy of political parties especially in those party systems, which have emerged after civil wars, or present struggle legacies and experience of receiving subsidies from foreign actors.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Research Questions

The failure of more than a quarter-century of self-rule in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq raises several questions regarding the paradigm of governing and the conduction of politics, especially, the role of political parties in representing social interests and developing democracy. Highlighting the period of (1991-2016), this dissertation focuses on party system institutionalization in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and tries to find suitable answers for two fundamental questions presenting critical emphasis and intersect in several other studies of party system institutionalization in developing democracies, especially those that have followed the third wave; *Why after a quarter of a century is the Kurdistan Region's party system still not institutionalized? And what are the core factors of this fluidity?* This study addresses these two questions mainly to determine the core causal-type factors that foster the elaborate non-institutionalization and to measure the institutionalization level in responding to the theory reintroduced by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) in the field of political parties and party systems.

2.2. Methodology

Since the literatures introduced by political thinkers, Aristotle, Hobbes, John Locke, and Montesquieu, institutional studies present an augmented association with the field of political science, nevertheless, the differentiation between '*moral philosophy*' and contemporary political phenomena emerged only in the nineteenth century, and accordingly not only the role of political thinking but also the role of formal institutions in shaping political outcomes have been underlined. Consequently, institutionalism has become an excellent methodology for political studies (Peters, 1999). The underpinning reason of this in-depth spatial and temporal qualitative case study on party system institutionalization employing this methodology, is the significant role of structure in explaining political behavior and outcomes of political processes of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

between the period of 1991 to 2016.

Following neo-institutionalism, this research sees historical approach as the best-comprehended approach to optimally achieve the intended outcome in this study, for several reasons: First, difficulty in making a distinct line between this approach and other approaches of institutionalism, especially, historical approach is an integrated approach to almost all other methods. Therefore, premises of institutional foundation and their path-dependent adaptations to political, and environmental changes suggested by this approach are significant to answer the research questions. Since this approach is closely related to the historical development of political institutions associated with one society but not the others, understanding the profound relationship between KRI institutions and prevailed political behaviors, thus, can be significantly elaborated. Historical institutionalists define institutions as “*formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity*” (Hall, and Taylor 1996: 938). Accordingly, this approach manages to conceptualize the relationship between formal and informal institutions, individual behaviors and institutions through two interchangeable sub-approaches used in analyzing individual-institution causal relationships, first, ‘calculus approach,’ i.e., strategic behavior in canvassing all possible options in order to maximize benefits, and second, ‘cultural approach’, i.e. individuals’ worldview and interpretation of political situations in order to establish routines or familiar patterns to achieve their goals (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 939). Hence, institutions not only provide useful information, but also influence identities and actors’ preferences regarding the individual-institution relationships.

Neo-institutionalism also stresses the asymmetries of power correlated with the institutional development and operation. According to Hall and Taylor (1996), instead of premises based on ‘*free-contracting*’ individuals in distributing power as John Lock suggested, and was embedded in old institutionalists’ conceptualization of power, neo- institutionalists stress the atmosphere, wherein the institutions accord certain interest groups more opportunities of access to

power and decision making than others. Furthermore, instead of emphasizing the degree to which political outcomes satisfy each individual or group, they stress how some groups and individuals succeed, and others fail.

Besides, it is an ideal methodology for case studies, attributed to its rejection of the generalization of outcome similarity of similar operative forces. It analyzes these operative forces in their environmental and contextual features, i.e., institutional contexts, with further stress on the historical developments, and the paths adopted to become what they are eventually. Neo-institutionalists have advanced two notions for explaining the way in which institutions constitute response to new challenges; (i) one view underscores the 'state capacity' and 'policy legacies' in structuring following policy choices; (ii) the newer understanding, however, highlights the impact of past lines of policy conditions on societal forces to become organized in one perspective, but not others, and accordingly to develop policies of interest, i.e., unintentional subsequent (Hall, and Taylor, 1996). The last reason that encourages this research to use historical institutionalism is that this approach does not intend to insist upon classifying institutions as the only causal factor in politics. Instead, it accommodates other factors such as socioeconomic, and the role ideas play in institutional structures (Hall and Taylor, 1996). This case and mechanism-based analysis trends have been encouraged this study to assess its utility in explaining the construct of Kurdish political mechanisms, and the structure of these mechanisms leading to such outcomes in the context of Iraqi, and the KRI political frameworks (Figure 2.1).

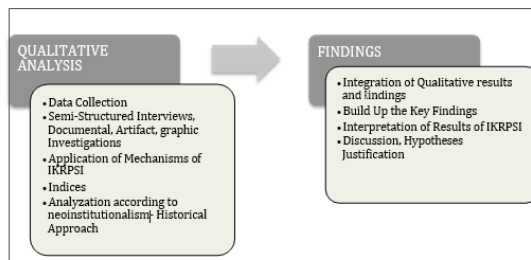


Figure 2.1: Visual Model for Qualitative Analysis Method for This Study

In order to explain the historical development of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region's party system and the paths it took in different junctures, which impacted substantial institutional changes to generate branching points from which historical developments transferred to new routes, this study highlights three critical junctures in Iraqi Kurdistan Region's party system development process occurred during a specific period (1946-2016).

First, political parties' manifestation in the struggle phase, i.e., 1945-1991. This juncture reflects the development process of KRI's political grouping and interest forces in mobilizing social cleavages such as ethnicity, territorial based, linguistic, religion, nationalism sentiment and socio-economic cleavages like tribalism and political culture, their initial decisions, fractions, merges and splits, the main actors and decisions of their earlier and foundation periods, the impact of those decisions on their political trajectories in the other two junctures.

Furthermore, the influence of Iraqi regimes formal institutions and other exogenous and international forces in structuring political parties and their polity's outcomes. The second juncture underlines political development since 1991, marked by the establishment of democratic institutions, founding Government and National Assembly, and the emergence and subsequent end of fluid two-party system in 2005. Finally, the last juncture reflects the party system alteration to an extreme multiparty system from 2005 to present, which is also developed in two phases: (i) The emergence of a moderate party system in 2005, and later (ii) an extreme pluralism was established following the formation of the Change Movement party.

Apparently these junctures are embedded in the literature and emphasized whenever they are imperatively needed to be in the framework of this research's mechanism chain of process tracing. This research addresses three primary causal-type factors in explaining the questions presented in section (2.1), namely structural, institutional, and foreign influences. Based on the discourses of the previous chapter, the structural factors have a profound influence on party system formations, institutional malfunctions, and alterations. In the Kurdistan Region,

these factors, specifically, seem to hinder the creation of national mass parties, and the maintenance of party system stability and eventually continue to generate obstacles to party system institutionalization. Therefore, it is important to highlight fundamental causal-type factor in this regard. The institutional factors explain the nature of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region's party system under the influence of institutional changes and adaptability. Institutions shape the changeability and stability of the party system, stimulate or hinder the political parties' strength, and create opportunities for new competitors to enter the political arena, in addition to the ability to drive and constitute the interparty relationships. Finally, the exogenous causal factors may also impact the policy conditions, decision-making, autonomy and internal organizations of political parties. Correspondingly, the Kurdistan Region's political institution and players have been affected by political, legal, economic and security pressures from foreign influences, including states, individuals or INGO's; therefore, it is essential to analyze their impact in eventual political outcomes of the KRI.

Through qualitative analyses of the semi-structured interviews carried out with the Kurdish scholars, and experts in the field, in addition to the previous scholarly works, and survey conducted by international organizations, the research develops the understanding of the problem and links the events to the effects. It also traces the process of the quality of representation of social forces and political institution by political elites to determine the extent to which these representations have been mingling from the above to gain personal returns. It also helps deduce the level of ethnoreligious and socioeconomic variables that shaped political outcomes and generated corruption, clientelism, nepotism, and finally their impact on the instability of political institutions.

2.3. Hypotheses and Operationalization of Variables

Through underlining social cleavages introduced by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), electoral institutions by Duverger (1962), the theory of party system institutionalization of Mainwaring and Scully (1995), in addition to the scholarly

literature presented in chapter (1), this study tends to test three following hypotheses in order to answer the abovementioned research questions.

- Three causal-type factors; structural, institutional, and foreign influences provoke the fluidity of the Kurdistan Region's party system.
- The three-abovementioned causal-type factors are interrelated.
- The structural and foreign causal-type factors have more effective influence on the non-institutionalization process than the institutional one.

The first independent variable of the first hypothesis, the **Structural Factors**, is operationalized through three social cleavages; nationalism, tribalism and geographical concentration of Kurdish parties. Following Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) peripheral vs. dominance culture's cleavage, and emphasizing Ozbudun (2013), Sayari and Ezmier (2002), Gunes-Ayata and Ayata (2002), Horzog's (2011) social cleavage and cultural diversity in addition to Erdman (2007), and Cheesemean and Ford's (2007) investigations of ethnic voting behavior and geographical concentration; this study build the analysis of the abovementioned cleavages through three variables. The nationalistic and ethnic-based tendency of voting behavior is investigated through an in-depth qualitative research of normative development of nationalism and the emergence of nationalistic political parties within the struggle period. Subsequently, Chandra's three gauges; parties' names, their explicit messages, and ethnic voting behaviors are additionally employed to determine the extent to which Kurdish political parties are ethnic-based parties, and gather their strength on ethnic and geographical bases.

The political culture of tribalism is examined by a profound investigation developed through qualitative semi-structured interviews and previous studies especially the seminal achievements by Holland scholars Martin Van Bruinessen, and Michiel Leezenberg, and the British historian David McDowall who have been studying Kurdish history and cultures for decades and their findings become indispensable sources in almost all the Kurdish studies of political science and sociology. Furthermore, the political parties' program and bylaws have also been

investigated to determine the extent of the influence of focused political culture of tribalism internal organization and policies of political parties, which is accordingly reflected in the overall political life of Kurdish society.

The geographical concentration of political parties is measured through a gauge introduced by Jones and Mainwaring's (2003) nationalization of political parties. The Nationalization of Kurdish parties has being operationalized through *Gini Coefficient*, which is a significant index for weighing nationalization and drawing comparisons across time and parties and party systems in different states, provinces, and communities. It is based on Lorenz curve, which "plots the cumulative proportion of states that the *i*th state represents the total number of states" (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003: 161). The value of 0 indicates that X party has received the same share of the vote in every sub-unit, while 1 means that it has received 100% of its strength in one sub-national unit and 0% in all other units. The determined Gini Coefficient is subtracted from 1 to determine the 'Party Nationalization Score' as is stated below. This sub-variable helps us to determine the extent to which the Kurdish parties have lost opportunities in order to expand nationwide, and reshape their parties' goals and visions in a way magnetize different interests and forces. Moreover, the Party System Nationalization Score (PSNS) is a product of multiplying the PNS of parties by their shares of the valid national vote, and then by summing the product of all the parties, the score of nationalization of the polity can be calculated. The nationalization score has been diversely used by Mainwaring and his colleagues to determine political parties' rootedness; nevertheless, Meleshevich's (2007) aim was to measure the autonomy of political parties from interests of geographical-based groups. In addition to the rootedness of political parties in Kurdish society, this study's purpose is to determine the extent to which political parties are aligned with the interests of geographical tendencies with a focus on the role of neighboring countries in maximizing these localization trends. According to Jones and Mainwaring (2003: 161 and 162), the Gini coefficient equation is

$$Gi = (iY_{i+1}) - (i+1Y_i)$$

Where X_i is the increasing proportion represented by the percentage of the valid vote won by Party X in the i th state divided by the sum of percentages won by Party X in all states; and Y_i is the increasing proportion that the i th state represents of the total number of states or other political sub-units.

$$PNS=1-Gi$$

$$PSNS = \sum_{i=1}^n PNS_i * V_i$$

Where V_i is the vote share of the i th party, and $PSNS$ is party system nationalization score for the same party.

The second variable of the first hypothesis, the **Institutional Factor**, is operationalized through two sub-variables, (2.1) *Institutionalization of Political Institutions* and (2.2), *Quality of Electoral Institutions* adapted from Bielasiak (2002). Institutionalization of Political Institutions emphasizes 'frequent alteration of electoral laws,' and 'presidential dilemma' and 'government instability'. *Frequent Alteration of Electoral Laws* enables us to develop a clearer view of how changes in electoral rules, affect the electoral processes and their turnouts. Here, these changes, particularly refers to those related to the extent of permissiveness to new rivals, whether resulted from district magnitude, alteration of assembly size, mechanisms of seat allocations, threshold, voting, and list formulas. The electoral rules in party systems shape party strength and voter behavior. Eventually, they make significant changes in party systems whether in numbers of parties, or the formalization of political party inter-competitions, their expansions, and their legitimacies.

This study employs Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) *Electoral Volatility, Legislation Seat Volatility, and Small Parties, and minority groups' ethnoreligious seat volatilities* to determine the impact of these electoral rule changes on party system competition in the KRI. Furthermore, the study sees it

suitable to employ *Old Parties Seat Share Volatility* by Meleshevich (2007) and Mainwaring and Scully (1995), for measuring the level of old parties' rootedness in the KRI, and the extent to which young parties tend to penetrate into Kurdish society.

Electoral volatility is defined as “the net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers” and **Mogens N. Pedersen's Index of Electoral Volatility** is “the cumulated gains for all winning parties in the party system, or—if the symmetrical interpretation is preferred—the numerical value of the cumulated losses for all losing parties”. The index measures the net change of aggregate distribution of votes (seats) in two consecutive elections. The interpretation of these indicator whether in calculating seat volatility or electoral volatility or both has emerged as a standard measure to assess the party system stability, and the higher its value is, the lesser is the degree of stability of the measured party system (Janda, 1979: 2-3).

Pederson Index is a highly recommended index for determining the extent to which the cleavages mentioned above stimulate the instability of party systems; it is presented as follows:

$$V_t = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n |P_{i,t} - P_{i,t-1}|}{2}$$

$$0 \leq V_t \leq 100$$

Where, (n) is the total number of participating parties in two consecutive elections and (P_{i,t}) is the percentage of the vote (seats), which was obtained by a party (i) at the election (t).

The presidential dilemma is qualitatively investigated and supported by the scholar's judgement, in addition to surveys conducted by NDI and IRI as two independent international organizations concerning people's opinion of their

preferred political system. Finally, the 'government instability' or "systemness" is suitable for measuring the path dependency of influences manifested by institutional decision-making, and party leadership on KRI's party system instability and is measured using three gauges introduced by Mair (2001), *Frequency of Alteration; Government Alteration; Access to Governments*.

Frequency of Changes: "the sheer frequency of change in the partisan composition of government" (Casal Bertoa and Mair, 2010: 9) stresses the number of times the political parties in government are substituted by other parties, whether in entirety/wholesale or in partial, for instance, in a weakly institutionalized party system, cabinet alteration occurs more often and within elections than after electoral term terminations. *Alteration in Government* detects the alteration level in the newly formulated cabinet. A party system is considered more institutionalized with the occurrence of a wholesale change or a non-alteration in the government formation. Correspondingly, if a cabinet is entirely changed by a new group whether by a different party or a group of parties or the previous group without a minute change in the new cabinet for the entire extended period of time, then the party system tends to be more institutionalized. However, partial alterations, especially when the index scores are computed between 25 and 75, it indicates production of less institutionalized party systems. When only one or several parties from the old cabinet remain in office, while the rest leave – it is not necessary they replaced by substitutes – then the government is considered to be less stabilized. The Index of Government Alteration (IGA), which has been adapted from Pederson's Index of Volatility, is measured by adding the total change in the percentage of ministers – including the prime minister – gained and lost by each party in the government from one cabinet to the next, and then dividing by two:

$$GV_t = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n |M_{i,t} - M_{i,t-1}|}{2}$$

$$0 \leq VG_t \leq 100$$

Where (n) is the total number of ministers of each party in two consecutive cabinets and (Mi,t) is the percentage of the ministers (including prime ministers) which was obtained by party (i) at cabinet (t).

The last index of political instability '*Access to Government*' is essential to measure the renovation of cabinets through new political parties. It measures the opportunity of all political parties that have never been in office, and it can be determined through the Index of Openness (IO), i.e., the below formula, which weights the extent to which the process of cabinet alternation engages the new – previously non-governing – political parties to the office, and is calculated by “dividing the number of new governing parties by the total number of governing parties in each period of partisan government change” (Casal Bertoa and Mair, 2010: 11). This study considers name changes and mergers of two parties as old parties, the parties rose from splits as new parties, but those parties that are deliberated successors of previous parties as old parties.

$$GO_t = \frac{Nt}{\sum Nt + Ot}$$

$$0 \leq GO_t \leq 100$$

Where (Nt) is the number of new parties in the election (t), (Ot) is the number of old parties in the election (t).

Examining the second sub-variable, the *Quality of Electoral Institutions* is also essential to demonstrate how lack of some fundamental institutions, and electoral organs, in addition to the politicized and patronage relationship in electoral and

governmental policies has affected the fluidity of the KRI's party system. This sub-variable is operationalized through mechanism chain of path-dependency of stratification of institutional malfunctions in the following aspects of Kurdish electoral and the focus will be on two issues; first the structural institutions, which emphasize '*Lack of Fundamental Institutions*', '*Biased Electoral Institution*', '*Retire Government Institutions and Policies*'. The second issue is quality of electoral procedures, which highlights '*Electoral Manipulation and Frauds*'.

This study's contribution to the literature of party system institutionalization is precisely through last independent variable of the first hypothesis, i.e., the **Foreign Influences**, as the impending need to review and study this variable lies in its being neglected as a causal-type factor for party system fluidity in the literature of party system institutionalization. Apparently some of the core sub-variables that are employed here have also been introduced by other scholars under different categories and dimensions elsewhere. This variable is profoundly analyzed qualitatively and is operationalized through two sub-variables; (3.1), *Relational Legacies of Kurdish Parties*; (3.2), *Clientelism and Personalism of Party Leadership by Mainwaring and Scully (1995)*.

The '*Relational Legacies*' is investigated in two different timespans; during the struggle era until the uprising of 1991, and Kurdish parties' relational legacies after 1991. This, firstly, is oriented to determine the consequence of those pressures on political polarization in the Kurdish party system; incumbent parties vs. the oppositions from one side and corrupted elites vs. reformists on the other hand. Additionally, their influence on dividing the Kurdish parties into regional blocs; i.e., Turkey (the Sunni bloc) vs. Iran (the Shi'a bloc). Iran as a player supports Shi'as in Iraq to succeed in their model of governing, Turkey as a supporter of Sunni and Turcoman forces in affluent oil areas of Kirkuk and Mosul, where constitute the areas of dispute between the Iraqi regime and Kurdish national forces according to new Iraqi Constitution.

The foreign subsidies and patronage business influence are also highlighted as another sources of fluidity of Kurdish political parties and party system. In addition, Personalism and corruption are highlighted as two consequences of business relations political parties' developed in the KRI, and are stimulated by the social and institutional structures of Kurdish politics, which apparently play crucial roles in internal parties' organization fluidity and destabilization of the IKR's party system. Finally, the second and third hypotheses of this study can be tested through operationalization of variables addressed in the first hypothesis.

2.4. Data

This dissertation draws on an extensive field investigation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Specifically, I spent more than a half of my study period in the Kurdistan Region, which constitutes this study's focus; besides the vast personal information, I have on KRI's political parties. During the five trips to IKR between the years 2014-2016, I was able to gather almost all the information regarding the people needed to be interviewed and the convenience data required in this study and in constructing a scientific understanding of the factors that have fostered the non-institutionalization. Furthermore, I closely observed the IKR's political parties in the three levels of competency; national, sub-national (regional), and local to understand their interactions and sustainability. I also focused on the constitutional and electoral rules and their impact on political procedures and outcomes, especially within political parties and their shares in the KRP and the KRG. I closely paid attention to political parties' internal maneuvering, their relationships with international entities, particularly with neighboring countries. Therefore, even though the fieldwork was outlined and specific, i.e. not very problematic, yet it presented its challenges.

Due to the political and institutional instability in Iraq, and the problems between the central government and the Kurdistan Region, the arrangement of electoral institutions is dispersed. This diversity mandates reliance on several resources to obtain the overall of electoral turnouts. Therefore this study accessed both textual

and numerical electoral data for national and local elections on the following website: www.ihec.iq, the official website of IHEC: the High Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq. Additionally, it also relied on the data of KRP elections: the Kurdistan Region's Parliament, on their official website: www.perleman.org.

The formation and path dependency of party development splits, mergers of political parties, corruption, decision-making processes, clientelism and nepotism, market monopolization, and party relations with international actors, all are enhanced by narratives and the interviews conducted with thirty-three participants, in addition to the scholarly discourses on Kurdish culture and politics.

Another source used in this study includes the findings of data surveys and process tracing reports on internal and external issues of KRI. The reports of Crises Group, and those surveys conducted by each of IRI: the International Republican Institute (www.iri.org), and NDI: the International Democratic Institute (www.ndi.org), which are considered as the two most reliable political institutions that initiated to gather data on political economy and political sociology of Kurdish behavior through opinion-poll-surveys regarding many issues of this study's interest.

Moreover, a total of forty-seven people were contacted to be interviewed, but only thirty- three actually replied to the eighteen semi-structured questions (Appendix I), thus illustrating a more than 70% response rate. Among these interviewees, seven individuals were academics, and political analyzers living in exile, and responded through different methods, while the rest contributed through face-to-face engagement. It was important to see political parties from different perspectives and positions therefore, I conducted three interviews with ex-federal deputies, four with vice presidents of effective parties, seven with KR deputies including the current KRP Spokesman and vice president, nine with party leaders who are at the time not holding elected positions, one with a

minister, one with an NGO leader, one with a political association's co-president, seven with academics and two with senior political analyzers (Appendix II). The interviewees were asked thirteen to eighteen, main in-depth semi-structured questions according to their expertise. Nonetheless, some of the interviewees offered more profound information and the interviews, therefore, varied in length from thirty-seven minutes to two hours and twenty minutes; however, most lasted around one hour.

CHAPTER THREE: AN INTRODUCTION TO KURDISTAN AND KURDISH POLITICS

Developing the discussion on the party system of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq requires a demographic, economic, and geographical understanding. Equally, the narrative-historical path of political development is necessary to draw the conditions in which political parties emerged and endured. In fact, nationalism plays a significant role in Kurdish politics. Wadie Jwaideh (2006) acknowledges the role of nationalism in the Kurdish question and in the “*political and psychological*” of Kurdish people. The national uproar that has prevailed in Iraq, after the army’s coup d’état to remove the monarch system in 1958, must be taken seriously in academic discourses. This can be attributed to its root penetration in the history of Kurdish politics and nationalist movement and for being considered the milestone shaping the notion of Kurdish political parties in Iraq.

The second breakthrough which constructed the emergence of pluralism in the shadow party system of revolutionary parties, appeared post the collapse of the 1974 revolution, which underpinned the revival and emergence of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and several other revolutionary parties, respectively. However, the real party system formation emerged after the withdrawal of the Baathist regime from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in 1991, when considerably free elections, despite of the irregularities, were conducted and accordingly a two-party system came into existence. The last landmark that the party system witnessed was in 2005, after the fall of Baathist regime, when a multi-party system emerged after the entrance of Islamic parties and the dissolution of the 7% thresholds before the political parties, and later, the Change Movement emerged, and altered the polity to an extreme pluralism in 2009.

This chapter aims to display a brief historical, geographical, economic and political overview of Kurdish people in the countries, where they are divided as

regards a precise focus on the history of Southern Kurdistan's (Iraqi Kurdistan) political parties, and party system.

This chapter is subdivided into two main sections. In the first section, geography, demography, language and the religious atmosphere of Kurds is reviewed, followed by sub-sections of social and political economy. The second section is dedicated to the modern political history of Southern Kurdistan in the context of nationalism and the concept of political parties. The focus will be on two ideological party types: One type emerged from Islamic view of politics and originated from initiatives of some Iraqi Arab-Islamic scholars who studied in Al-Azhar and later transferred to the KRI. The other ideological-type notion focuses on the secular and nationalist organizations that completely allied with the establishment of the first Kurdish political party, i.e., the KDP of Iraq in 1946. And through a chain of fragmentations and merges, several other parties have emerged.

3.1. Geography, Economy, and Structural Divisions

3.1.1. Kurdish Language

Scholars disagree over the history of Kurds and the geography of Kurdistan. A broad range of scholars trace the origin of Kurds to Indo-European speaking people who migrated to the area of their current inhabitation around the third millennium B.C.E. (Gunter, 2008; Jwaideh, 2006).³ However, the recent scholars emphasize the relation between Kurdish DNA and Jewish genetic in confirming that their existence dates back to the fifth millennium, around 4,500 years B.C.E. (Hennerbichler, 2012). It has been observed that the Kurds, and their language is different from the rest of the Middle Eastern people, i.e., Arabic, Turkish, and Indo-European languages –Pashtu, Urdu– (Gunter, 2008, Jwaideh, 2006). Due to

³ Bengio (2012) traces it back to the first millennium

the geopolitics of their territory, it was battlefields for several different groups and conquerors in the earliest time, **who each left behind a pale trace.** Therefore, diverse physical and cultural features of the Kurds can be seen; notwithstanding, they all consider themselves Kurds, as Anderson (1991) describes their identity as those who consider themselves Kurds. Correspondingly, Kurds do not have a single language and a single script of writing, rather, they speak at least four primary distinct dialects and each has several sub-dialects, in addition to the three main scripts; *Latin Script* is used by the Kurmanji and Zazaki. *Cyrillic Script* by the Kurds in Armenia and the former Soviet Union, while the *Arabic/Persian* alphabet is used by the Soranis and Goranis (Shafei Kurd, (1378)⁴; Yildiz, 2004; Bruinessen, 1992; Stansfield, 2003; Hassani and Medjedovic, 2016). The largest spoken dialect 'Northern Kurmanji' is the dialect of north and northwest of the territory considered Kurdistan, i.e., Turkey and Syria parts, in addition to the Kurds of Armenia and the former Soviet Union.⁵ It is also spoken by those living in the northern parts of Iran down to the *Greater Zab River* in Iraq (mainly those who reside in Duhok province of KRI and areas of dispute of Mosul).⁶

The other dominant dialect is Middle Kurmanji (Sorani), which is used in the areas located to the south of the *Greater Zab River*, i.e., *Sulaimaniyah, Erbil, and Kirkuk*, and by Iranian Kurds living in Sanandaj, Mokrian, and the Kurdistan province in Iran. Kalhurri and Machu are also considered two sub-dialects of Sorani and are used by Kurds in the cities of Ilam, Sanandaj, Kermanshah in Iran, Kifri and Khanaqin in Iraq and is called Southern Kurmanji in some resources.⁷ The Kurds belonging to these urban areas understand these two leading dialects, while the people from remote areas find it difficult to comprehend these languages, which are yet not as complex as a foreign language. Zazaki is the spoken dialect in northwestern Kurdistan, namely north and west of Diyarbakir in

⁴ Is an Iranian/Jalali Calendar used in Iran and the year of the book refers to 1999 in Gregorian calendar

⁵ It is also a spoken dialect of Ezidi Kurdish of Georgia and the Lebanon Kurdish (the author).

⁶ In Iraq, it is called Bahdinani instead of Kurmanji (the author).

⁷ Bruinessen (1992) separated Laki and Lurri from Sorani; however, Hennerbichler (2012) arranged them in one group.

Turkey, while Gurani is the spoken dialect in various areas of Iran and Iraqi parts of Kurdistan.⁸ Appendix III illustrates these dialects and their geographical strengths.

The diversity of the dialects and the un-systematized alphabet of the Kurdish language are a result of the political and cultural pressures by the surrounding groups and nations. Hence, in addition to morphological differences one can observe several phonological and philological differences, yet the language has survived and developed in both spoken and written forms. The Sorani dialect, in fact, has gained much sophistication due to the political formality it acquired throughout the history, primary for being the official language of many publications issued in Britain era in the Sulaimaniyah in the 1920s, and then the official language of the dissolved republic of Mahabad (1945), finally for being the official language of the current Kurdistan Region of Iraq since 1991 (Stansfield, 2003).

3.1.2. Geography

It is not feasible to identify Kurdistan as a recognized state because neither international nor internal boundaries of its parts are defined. The term '*Kurdistan*' as a recognizable territory was first used in the political literature of the Ottoman Empire when *Sultan Saandjar* in the twelfth century created a geographical entity (*Seljuk: province*) with this name that expanded from Azerbaijan to Luristan (Bengio, 2012). Zaki Beg (1936: 66) defined Kurdistan as "*the land of the Kurds*" and referred to the *Seljuk* founded by the mentioned Sultan as it expanded across five modern countries: Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, the word '*Kurd*' can be traced to centuries before the use of the '*Kurdistan*'.

Based on the phonological connections there is an agreement among scholars

⁸ They also called Horami or Hawrami (the author).

that, the current Kurds and the *Kardoukhai* people mentioned by *Xenophon* in his *Anabasis* in 3000 years B.C. are connected (Jwaideh, 2006). In addition, several other scholars have cited this word from the literature of Islamic history and the Ottomans. Nevertheless, the first conceptualization of ‘Kurds and Kurdistan’ was by *Bitlisi* in his *Sharafnama* (1596), which was about the same era when these two words acquired common usage among people (Yildiz, 2004; Kaya, 2012).

Historically, the array of land that Kurdistan has been embedding has fluctuated frequently, and there are many different borders described by scholars, some exaggerated while others, for some unclear reasons, ignored it. This study follows Jwaideh (2006)⁹, who traces the boundary of the Kurdistan as shown in the Appendix IV, with the following description:

“Beginning from the Kurd Dagh, the boundary curves in northeasterly direction along the eastern edges of the Ammanus and the anti-Taurus mountain ranges, passing close to Marash and thence to Malatya, and along the western bank of the Euphrates. It continues to the north and then swing sharply to the east, along the great loop formed by Kara Su (western Euphrates) embracing the Dersim highlands. From here, it extends along the upper reaches of the Kara Su (river), passing in the vicinity of Erzerum. At this point it sweeps toward the north frontier, passing along Mount Alogouze in Arminia. It then swerves sharply to the south of Erivan to include Nakhchivan in Arminia, from which point it stretches to the south, passing east of Koi, and running along the western shore of Lake Urmiya, to include Slamas, Urmia, and Ushnu. South of this lake it veers slightly to the east passing beyond Miyanduab and thence to Bijar. It continues southward to Kangavar, cutting across the upper reaches of the Qizil Uzun River. From here, it swings to the southwest in a wide arc to include Kirmanshah, ending at Manish Kuh on the northern border of Luristan. From this point,

⁹ He was a Christian-Arabic Iraqi from Basra who served in Iraqi Kurdistan for many years and tried to be reasonable in his description. Meanwhile, Bruinessen (1992) also accredited his work, therefore despite the details he wrote about Kurdistan boundary, this study sees it the most reliable one.

the boundary moves along the inner rim of crescent in a northwesterly direction, passing near Iraq-Persian frontier at Khanaqin to include the moves of Zohab and Mahidasht. It then crosses the Diyala River near Qazi Ribat and moves in a north – northwesterly direction, passing close to Kifri, Kirkuk, and crossing along Lesser Zab at Altun Kopri. From here, it swerves toward the west to include the Qarachoq Mountain, and the Arbil Plain, crossing the Greater Zab at Eski Kelek and moving along the southern edge of Jabal Maqlun to Dohuk, and thence to Simayl. It then crosses the Tigris and moves southward and then northward, passing close to Faishkhabur to include the Sinjar Mountain. It then moves westward, passing through the Abdin and the Karaj Dagh, and moves close to the Turco-Syrian frontier in a westerly direction, passing near Mardin, Viranshahar, Urfa, and Kilis, ending at Kurd Dagh" (Jwaidah, 2006: 3-4).

The geography of Kurdistan Region of Iraq is complex and has been the primary problem between Kurds and successive Iraqi regimes including the democratic system that emerged post Saddam Husain's overthrow. According to (Article 53-A) of the interim constitution of 2004 "*Kurdistan Regional Government is recognized as the government of those areas were it administered before 19 March 2003 in the governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala and Nineveh [..]*". Thus, the entire areas of the three provinces of Sulaimaniyah, Duhok, Erbil, some other districts and sub-districts such as Akre, Atrush, Mariba, Shekhan, and Kalak in Nineveh, a part of Khanaqin and Kifri in Diyala, Kalar, and Chamchamal in Kirkuk are administrated by Kurds and considered the KRI territory (Uthman, 2010; Khalid, 2012).¹⁰

¹⁰ According to Khalid (2012: 89-104), 3,907 from the total of 14,442 square kilometers of disputed areas of Nayinava province were under KRG. In Kirkuk, a demography change of the city and political and ethnicity corrections changed the map of the city in 1968 to an Arab majority city by 1991, through detaching districts and sub-districts from the city to other surrounding towns such as attaching Tuz to Salahadin, Chamchamal, to Sulaimaniyah, Kifri, and Kalar to Diyala. The Badra, Jasan, and Qoratu from Wasit (Koot) Province to Sulaimanyiah, and finally Khanaqin, Jalawla, Sa'adia, Miqdadia, and Mandali from Diyala province are considered areas of conflict.

However, the areas that both the central and regional governments claim their territories that constitutes the disputed areas, which are mentioned in both (Article 58)¹¹ of the Interim and (Article 140)¹² of the Permanent Constitutions of Iraq. Accordingly, the Kurds claim 18.5% of the total Iraqi territory (see Table 3.1) as is identified in (Article 2.1) in the draft of Kurdistan Region's constitution: *"The Iraqi Kurdistan Region is a geographical historical entity consisting of Dohuk governorate with its existing administrative borders, Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyh, Erbil,*

¹¹ (A), "The Iraqi Transitional Government, and especially the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other relevant bodies, shall act expeditiously to take measures to remedy the injustices caused by the previous regime's practices in altering the demographic character of certain regions, including Kirkuk, by deporting and expelling individuals from their places of residence, forcing migration in and out of the region, settling individuals alien to the region, depriving the inhabitants of work. To remedy this injustice, the Iraqi Transitional Government shall take the following steps:

- (1) With regard to residents who were deported, expelled, or who emigrated; it shall, in accordance with the statute of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other measures within the law, within a reasonable period of time, restore the residents to their homes and property, or, where this is unfeasible, shall provide just compensation.
 - (2) With regard to the individuals newly introduced to specific regions and territories, it shall act in accordance with Article 10 of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission statute to ensure that such individuals may be resettled, may receive compensation from the state, may receive new land from the state near their residence in the governorate from which they came, or may receive compensation for the cost of moving to such areas.
 - (3) With regard to persons deprived of employment or other means of support in order to force migration out of their regions and territories, it shall promote new employment opportunities in the regions and territories.
 - (4) With regard to nationality correction, it shall repeal all relevant decrees and shall permit affected persons the right to determine their own national identity and ethnic affiliation free from coercion and duress.
- (B) The previous regime also manipulated and changed administrative boundaries for political ends. The Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government shall make recommendations to the National Assembly on remedying these unjust changes in the permanent constitution. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree unanimously on a set of recommendations, it shall unanimously appoint a neutral arbitrator to examine the issue and make recommendations. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree on an arbitrator, it shall request the Secretary General of the United Nations to appoint a distinguished international person to be the arbitrator.
- (C) The permanent resolution of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, shall be deferred until after these measures are completed, a fair and transparent census has been conducted and the permanent constitution has been ratified. This resolution shall be consistent with the principle of justice, taking into account the will of the people of those territories. See (O'Leary and Batman 200

¹² Article 140: First: The executive authority shall undertake the necessary steps to complete the implementation of the requirements of all subparagraphs of Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law. Second: The responsibility placed upon the executive branch of the Iraqi Transitional Government stipulated in Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law shall extend and continue to the executive authority elected in accordance with this Constitution, provided that it accomplishes completely (normalization and census and concludes with a referendum in Kirkuk and other disputed territories to determine the will of their citizens), by a date not to exceed the 31st of December 2007.

and districts of 'Aqrah, Shaikhan, Sinjar, Talkaif, Qaraqush, and townshipsh of Zamar, Ba'asheeqa, and Aski Kalak from Nineveh province, districts of Khanaqeen and Mandali from Diyala province with its administrative boarder before 1968”.

Table 3.1: Kurdistan Region’s Territory According to Administration Units¹³

Administraion Unit	Percentage Area from KR Area	Percentage area of the province
Duhok	11.7	100
Erbil	18.0	100
Sulaimaniyah	14.0	100
Kirkuk	26.1	100
Nayinava	15.3	34.4
Khanaqin/ Diyala	4.9	53.6
Bldrwwz/Diyala	5.5	
Badra/ Wasit	4.5	21.3
Total	100	18.5 of Iraqi territory

Source: Khalid (2012: 99-100)

3.1.3. Economy and Resources

Kurdistan has several rich agricultural characteristics, and thus, commonly the Kurdish people are engaged in livestock farming and agrarian production such as cereals (75%), legumes (16%), industrial (6%), oilseeds (2%), and tuber crops (1%) (Ghafur, 2005). In the past, the area has suffered from widespread deforestation campaigns held by ruling regimes for political reasons; therefore, precise devastation and environmental destructions are widely evident. Hydrocarbon products are also concentrated in the Kurdish lands especially in the areas of disputes, and have emerged as a continuing and primary source of conflict over oil manipulation and revenues between Kurds and the ruling regimes (Table 3.2). Other minerals such as chrome, copper, iron, coal, and lignite have

¹³ The Salahadin, province also has several sub-districts, yet no academic data could support this claim despite the fact that Hamrin Mountain, which crosses Kirkuk, Diyala, and Salahadin provinces, is the claimed natural border by the KRG officials. See (Bengio, 2014: 95).

also been founded in the area. Finally, both the Euphrates and Tigris rivers are spawned in Kurdistan and run through Kurdish land from the northern part to the western and southern parts. In addition to the impact they have on energy productions, these two rivers offer another source of conflicts (Yildiz, 2004).

Table 3.2 Ruling Government Policies in Crude Oil Productions in Kurdish Areas Comparison to Non-Kurdish parts

Year	Iraq (Barrel/per day) In 1000		Iran (Barrel/per day) In 1000		Syria (Barrel/per day) In 1000	
	Arabic	Kurdish	Persian	Kurdish	Arabic	Kurdish
1987	792.6	897.4			24.8	205.2
1988	1046.8	1253.2	729.6	1579.4	27.6	228.4
1989	1260.7	150.3	710	1534.7	36.7	330.3
1990	1358.7	225.7	885.2	1916.2	41.9	346.1
1991	132.7	237.9	1062.2	2296.9	51.6	426.4
1992	199.3	292.1	1091.8	2363.2	56	262
1993	210.1	318.6	1082.7	2342.7	59.9	494.6
1994	257.9	292.1	1138.5	2464.5	62.3	512
1995	281.4	318.6	1141.4	2470.6	65	540
1996	1.270	305.9	1156.1	2508.9	62.3	514.7
1997	953.4	609.1	1147.9	2484.8	61.6	508.4

Source: Adapted from Qadir (2008: 83-89)

3.1.4. Structural Divisions

There are various religious-divisions among Kurdish people. The mainstream divisions amongst Kurdish before Islam Conquests possibly were Zoroastrians, in addition to pagans, Jewish, and Christians who still prevail among Kurds (Jwaideh, 2006; Leezenberg 2011). Unlike the other regions conquered by Islam, Kurdish conversion to Islam was found to be very slow. Only by the thirteenth century, this process was considered accomplished. However, *Bitlisi* (1596) admitted to having groups and tribes showing adherence to their own original religions as against Islam by the time he wrote the *Sharafname* (Jwaideh, 2006). Currently, most Kurds considered orthodox Sunni Muslims who follow the Shafi'i rite, while other neighboring Muslim nations, like Turkish and Arabs

follow the Hanafi rite (Jwaidah, 2006; Bruinessen, 1992).

In the past, Sunni Kurds had shown affiliation to the Sufism network of *Qadri* and *Naqshbandi* and this trend of affiliation affected the political and social mobilization of the last century's rebellions and national movements. However, this trend is less visible now due to the urbanization process in both Turkey and Iraq and the continual increase of literacy rate, yet according to Leezenberg (2011), this tendency was endured at least until 1990 in Iraq. Shi'a division also has penetrated in Kurdish society in some areas around Kirmanshah, Khorasan, Khanaqeen; additionally, most of those Shi'a Kurds are Luri, Laki and Kalhur speakers who adhere to this sect and embrace the Twelver Shi'ism, which is the principal rite of Shi'a of Iran. Bruinessen (1992) believes that the religious affiliation of those groups of Kurds is stronger than their nationalism tendencies, yet, after the revolution of the 1970s and the suppression and displacement campaigns of the Baathist regime in Iraq, many have joined the Kurdish rebellion parties and under the nationalism believes fought for their inherent rights.

The Kurdish people are not limited to only these two orthodox sects of Islam; there are various other orthodox and heterodox religions such as Christians, Jewish, Ezidi, Ahl-Alhaq, Elevi (Qizlbash) and Sarlis (Leezenberg, 2011; Bruinessen, 1992; Jwaideh, 2006). The Jewish expelling started in Iran, Iraq, and Syria in the 1930s, and by the time the Israel state in 1948 was established, almost all the Jews were forcefully made to flee from Iraq. In 1951 all of their possessions were seized by state laws, however in Iran, this was accomplished by the time the Islamic revolution had succeeded (1979) (Bruinessen, 1992). Kurdistan was a nest of many Christians and other ethnoreligious groups such as Suryanis in the Turkey part of Kurdistan, Assyrians in the Hakkari and very north of Iraqi Kurdistan and the Armenian in various parts of Kurdistan. Linguistically, the first two groups speak Aramaic and Arabic while the last has its own Arminian language and they follow different rites of Christianity; Jacobite, Nestorian and the Gregorian church, respectively. Nevertheless, these groups were exposed to massacres and dynamic conversion process to Islam by states

and their apparatuses (Bruinessen, 1992).

The dominant heterodox group of Kurds is the Elevis, in northwestern and west of Kurdistan, and they are usually considered a rite of Shi'as; nevertheless, those of Dersim are very far from Islam and mostly speak Zazaki. There is also non-Elavis Zazaki and Kurmanji speaking Elevis in Turkey. The Ahl-el Haqq '*People of the Truth*' or as they are called Kakai or Hawari in Iraq and Yarisani in Iran, are settled in southern and southeast of Kurdistan around east and west of Kermanshah. They mainly are neighboring the Shi'a Kurds in the areas of Lorestan and the southern regions of Kirkuk in the south of Kurdistan and Iraq. The third heterodox religion is the Ezidi, which has been called '*dell-worshippers*.' This religion is considered to be the original religion of the Kurds, and their followers are Kurmanji speakers. Due to the massacres and subjugation they faced, hordes of Ezidi left and immigrated to other places or converted to Christianity. However, there are Ezidis who converted to Islam too and they are concentrated in the mountains "*southwest of Mosul, astride the Iraqi-Syrian border) and the Shaikhan district (east of Mosul), where the important sanctuary of Shaikh Adi is located*" (Bruinessen, 1992:24). They are also seen in the Caucasus and had inhabited the area after their persecutions in the 1830s and 1840s.

Martin Van Bruinessen (1992: 14) acknowledges the identity issue of Kurds under the apparatus of those regimes; and states in a country like Turkey in 1955, the Kurd population included individuals who were "*only those who do not speak Turkish at all, but only Kurdish.*" The state from one side cohesively blocked all the opportunities for non-Turkish speakers, and from the other side whoever could speak a little Turkish was wrested from their national and cultural identities. In censuses conducted a year later, he argues, there was "*no mention of Kurdish at all.*" Based on the population growth rate and some other evidence, Bruinessen estimates that in 1975, Kurds had constituted 19% of the total population of Turkey, and 23% of total Iraqi population according to the Iraqi censuses of 1922-1924 and 1935. In Iran, statistics from 1956 and 1966 reveal

that the Kurds were not counted separately but by mentioning Sunnis percentage of 10%, which is connected tightly to the Kurds. However, most of the provinces of Kermanshah, Ilam, and Khorasan are Shi'a Kurds, yet they are considered Persian. Several scholars such as Lucian Rambout (1947), Elphinston and Zeidner (1949), estimate that in Iran Kurds constituted around one fifth or one-sixth less of population than the Kurds residing in Turkey (Jwaideh, 2006); thus, they may be computed as around 14% of the total population of Iran. Syrian Kurds, on the other hand, in almost all literature of Syrian population census were considered to constitute 8.5% population. Lastly, the official account of Russian Kurds is 100,000 as per 1975 census (Bruinssesn, 1992). Correspondingly, Table (3.3) illustrates population growth for each part of Kurdistan, from the first formal census in Iraq in 1927 to the last one in 1990, which covered Kurdish area.

Table 3.3: Kurdish Population Growth 1927-1990 in All Parts of Kurdistan (in Million)*

Year	North	Year	South	Year	East	Year	Wes
1927	2,144	1927	0,814	1956	3,563	1960	0,423
1935	3,035	1935	1,005	1966	4,626	1970	0,493
1940	3,201	1947	1,383	1976	6,258	1981	0,634
1945	3,300	1957	1,822	1986	9,200		
1950	3,760	1965	2,217				
1955	4,412	1977	3,303				
1960	5,080	1987	4,360				
1965	5,824						
1970	6,786						
1975	7,779						
1980	8,619						
1985	9,864						
1990	10,960						

Source: Adapted from Ghafur (2005: 153, 155, 156, and 158)

* Due to the mass displacement and unavailability of formal census in Iraqi part after the uprising of 1991, the author included only the Kurds population growth up to 1990.

3.2. Modern Political History of the Kurds

Historically, Kurdistan has witnessed two great divisions. The first division was after the Chaldiran confrontation (1514), between the Ottoman Empire and

Safavid ending with the Zahaw Treaty (1639); according to which the boundaries of the two empires were fixed.¹⁴ A part of the Kurdish territories was attached to Safavid Empire (Kurdistan of Iran), while the most significant portion stayed within the Ottomans' authorities until its abolishment as the loots of IWW in (1916).

The Sykes-Picot Treaty (1920) resulted in the second division when the spoils of war were divided among the winners, namely Britain and France (Mella, 2005).¹⁵ New states were accordingly shaped through combining different territories belonging to different cultures and ethnic groups. Specifically, Kurdistan was divided into three new parts, wherein the major part remained within modern Turkey; the smallest part was attached to Syria under France. And the southern part with the other two *Vilayets* (states) of Baghdad and Basra of fragmented Ottoman Empire were glued within a new political structure called Iraq (Mella, 2005; Al-Samar, 2012; McDowall, 1996). The Sykes-Picot Treaty and the disappointment from fulfilling the Severe Treaty in addition to the Fourteen Points of World Peace by Woodrow Wilson paved the way for the emergence of Kurdish revolutions and national movements.

Like many other nations, after the Severe Treaty, the Kurds would have been able to establish a nation-state; nevertheless, due to Turkey's vehement rejection and the Lausanne Treaty, this in fact, remained a dream. Therefore, political mobilization, and struggles for national identity within those states to which they were divided upon rapidly increased (McDowall, 1996; Gunter, 2008). The Kurdish quest for independence started decades before the establishment of political parties, the latter emerged only after the establishment of the monarchy system in Iraq, and this is true for all the parts of Kurdistan (Chapter four).

¹⁴ The Zahaw Treaty is also known as Zuhab and the Zahav Treaty.

¹⁵ The arrangement of Sykes-Picot included Russia's leverage too, yet due to some agreement between the winners of IWW, British managed to control those areas of Russia (McDowall, 1996).

Over the course of about thirty years of dispersion among small political group, which is discussed extensively in next chapter, the Kurdish politics in Iraq virtually became synonymous with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). This was the first nationwide catch-all party that was established in 1946 by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, and later became a generator for almost all the other secular parties that emerged in the KRI. Simultaneously, since the 1940s, clandestine groups have maneuvered Islamic-based activities. The emergence of Islamic ideological parties in Iraqi Kurdistan manifested several decades after the leftists. It was only in 1984 when the first Islamic Kurdish party was established; nevertheless, they never had a fundamental role in Kurdish Politics in the struggle era until the uprising of 1991. To understand the nature of these parties, their relationships with one another, and with the surrounding and international forces, the path dependent of each political party's development, their legacies, ideological stands, historical landmarks; the current study discusses the splits and remerges through two sections: One highlights the non-religious catch-all parties bloc, and the other the religious parties bloc.

3.3. Emergence of Non-Religious and Catch-All Parties (1946-2016)

Following the establishment of the Communist Party of Iraq in the 1930s, among Kurdish intellectuals the socialism and leftist beliefs spread, and become an inspiring notion for Kurdish nationalistic goals. Nevertheless, the secularism stand in Kurdish political parties never was achievable as the notion was inseparable from national ideological views in Iraq's political atmosphere. Moreover, the cultural effects have also hindered them in maintaining pure secularism, and especially real secular goals are missing, despite the leftist bases of most of the parties from this bloc.¹⁶ Instead, they try to fulfill the ambitions of their affiliates, who are a combination of secular, traditional and moderate religious adherents; and therefore their objectives rather have become nationalistic catch-all parties oriented around national dependency of Kurdistan.

¹⁶ Interview conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, September 0th, 2016, Sulaimani.

Indeed, nationalism and leftist views became two intertwined goals for these types of parties due to their adaptation to the political environment, experienced by them in their early years. It is believed that the first nationwide Kurdish party, Kurdistan Democratic Party, is the cornerstone to this parties' bloc, as it has undergone several challenging conditions in early years. It was founded in an atmosphere, wherein the party president was compulsorily exiled to Russia, for more than a decade. Meanwhile, the party was run by a leadership council with a singular common motivation of Kurdish rights. The ideology of the party was unclear and reflected tribal-traditional religious and intellectual-leftist views, and thus each view tried to draw the party towards their own interests. The continuing suppressions, chasing, imprisonments and executions campaigns by the Iraqi regime against activists caused leadership shortcomings and severe internal difficulties within the party. In addition to the political instability experienced by the party, especially frequent coups d'état in Iraq, and armed conflicts after 1961 affected the structural coherence and values of the party. Diagram (3.3) visualizes the splits and divisions of main Kurdistan Region's secular political parties from (1937-2009).

3.3.1. Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)

The KDP defines itself regarding its organization as a patriotic and a democratic party formed by a group of passionate comrades, who share similar goals and believe in the party's organization and platform. Their party's principal purpose is progress "*through strategic planning, based on Barzani's legacy*"; the legacy of Barzani needs a profound investigation developed in the following chapter.¹⁷ The history of this party, in fact, is fraught with ideological ambiguity and internal fractionalization over power, and the internal organization of the party and testimony of ideological goals whether serve Kurdish mass and national interests or tribal chieftains.

¹⁷ See Kurdistan Democratic Party Constitution and Bylaws of 13th Congress from December 11-18, 2010, Article 1, Internal Affairs, Section 1, Some Basic Definitions, page 65.

When the Barzani brothers surrendered to the Iraqi forces after the collapse of the revolutions (1933-1943), Mullah Mustafa Barzani was held under house arrest in (Sulaimaniya) until he escaped to Iran-Mahabad with the support of the *Rezgarzy-Shorish* groups (chapter four); after his reaching out to them for this purpose while he was under arrest.¹⁸

Essentially, the idea of having an independent financial support for his 3000 paramilitaries residing in the Republic of Mahabad motivated Mullah Mustafa to establish a political party, especially after the deterioration of his relationship with *Qazi Mohammed*, the president of the Republic (McDowall, 1996; Stansfield, 2003; Lortz, 2005; Al- Khirsan, 2001). Thus, Qazi Mohammed strongly refused the foundation of this political institution, however, in February 1946, Mulla Mustafa through Hamza Abdulla, a prominent member of Shorish grouping, sent two letters to Iraq. He addressed one letter to the Kurdish officials in the Iraqi Government, for negotiation with the Iraqi authorities to issue him a pardon in order to return to Iraq. The second letter was to the tribal chieftains, and intellectuals of Rzgary, and Shorish, seeking their support for his notion of establishing the 'Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party'.¹⁹ Despite leftist affiliations and the broad understanding of political context beyond the tribal desires of chieftains, most members of *Shorish* and *Rizgari* accepted the idea of having a political party that gathers all the intellectual and tribal forces beneath one roof (Stansfield, 2003; McDowall, 1996).

The Iraqi government, on the other hand, was restricting the political activities of

¹⁸ Sulaimaniyah; Sulaimaniya; Slemani, and Sulaimani are all interchangeably used for the same city.

¹⁹ Al-Khirsan in his seminal book attributes the foundation of KDP to Shorish and Rizgari. According to him the leaders of these two political bodies in Kurdistan of Iraq sent Hamza Abdulla to Mahabad to discuss with Mustafa Barazani the opportunity of the foundation of a political party similar to KDP-Iran in Iraq. The reason they sent after Mullah Mustafa was to invest his national reputation in the new already planned party. This suggests that the idea of establishing KDP was not Mustafa Barzani's, but rather they asked him to become the president of the party symbiotically. Later it turned out Barzani's tribal affiliation aborted the opportunity of gathering those initial founders within the party's framework (Al-Khirsan, 2001: 51).

the latter two national-based organizations and consequently, imprisonments and apprehensions against their clandestine members were increasing, which raised the pertinent need to unify these groups. Despite the dislikes of some prominent members for Mullah Mustafa's tribal leadership skills, they welcomed the idea. Thus, *Shorish* and *Rizgari* dissolved themselves, and individuals not willing to continue under Mullah Mustafa's command either joined the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), to establish later the Kurdish wing of the party, or Hizb Al-Taharrur Al-Watani (the National Liberation Party/Iraq), which was less antagonized by Baghdad (McDowall, 1996; Stansfield, 2003; Al-Khirsan, 2001)

The withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, and the weaknesses of Muhabad Republic in fighting the Iranian army, in fact, encountered the Republic a fatal fate; as this further fostered the need of KDP-Iraq. On August 16th, 1946 the first congress of the KDP-Iraq was held in Baghdad without the presence of Mullah Mustafa. While 90% of the 32 co-founders were from *Rizgari* and *Shorish*, nevertheless, it embraced a weak national, and economic program as McDowall (1996: 296) describes; "[it] failed to give its programme either social or economic content - largely for fear of offending tribal chiefs and landlords. The influence of the chiefs and landlords, for example, the Dizais of Arbil, hung like a cloud over the party and created a serious obstacle to social and economic change".

Unlike McDowall, Al-Khirsan (2001) stresses three distinct social groups amongst the party from the very beginning. The tribal stream led by Mustafa Barzani himself, leftists who were those previous *Shorish* members participated in establishing the KDP, and the nationalistic intellectuals led by Ibrahim Ahmad²⁰, and joined the party after the collapse of the Mahabad Republic. Also, the party was founded on both military and political grounds and had four officers

²⁰ A leftist and nationalistic intellectual who participated in all political and national activities of Iraqi Kurds of his era and was editor in chief of *Gelawej Journal*. In fact, Ahmad preferred to stay in KDP-Iran as the party's representative in Sulaimaniya until it was banned.

as co-founders who were later executed by the Iraqi regime for disloyalty.²¹ The party's organization was based on two bodies of decision-making: a politburo and central council, the first constituted of five members elected from amongst the sixteen leaders of the elected Central Council. Despite the tribal tendencies of the party's president, the leftists and nationalists were controlling the leadership council since the second congress of 1951. Especially, after the collapse of the Mahabad Republic, other forces and individuals who were skeptical about Mullah Mustafa's leadership capability, and rather willed to serve under Qazi Muhammad's command, have accepted the KDP-Iraq as the only unified tribune for the new era of Kurdish political activities. Hence, Ibrahim Ahmad, like many other followers of Qazi, attended the KDP-Iraq, and shortly he was elected the Secretary-General of the party's second congress. This was, in fact, a knockdown to Mullah Mustafa, who was still in exile in the Soviet Union and remained there until 1958 (McDowall, 1996).

In addition to the name change of the party from the '*Kurdish*' Democratic Party to '*Kurdistan*' Democratic Party as an attempt to target other non-Kurdish ethnicities residing in the Iraqi Kurdistan, the third congress also changed the name of the party's official journal from *Rizgari* to *Khabati Kurdistan* (Struggle for Kurdistan). The most important alteration in the KDP in that era was the adoption of leftist ideology and the declaration of economic reforms, including land reforms, right recognition of peasants, farmers and labors (McDowall, 1996; Stansfield, 2003). Thus, the tribalism tendency of the first Congress was substituted by a more organized and issue-based strategy in the third congress under Ibrahim Ahmad's leadership, who enthusiastically worked among students, and intellectuals, attempting to structuralize the party in accordance with the modern notion of political parties.

Furthermore, under Ahmad's leadership, the party established a good relationship

²¹ Those four officers were Major Ezat Abdul Aziz, Captain Mustafa Khoshnaw, Lieutenant Khairallah Abdulkarim, and Lieutenant Mohammed Mahmud Al Qudsi.

with the ICP, especially with those of *Rizgari* and *Shorish* who by the time of KDP-Iraq's foundation decided to join the ICP. On his release from prison, Hamza Abdulla joined the party in the fourth congress (1956), and the rest of the Kurdish activists including those who entered the ICP, decided to return to the only Kurdish platform, the KDP.²² Therefore, the party experienced another name change and became "The United Kurdistan Democratic Party," (U-KDP). Simultaneously, the elected politburo members were "Ibrahim Ahmed, Jalal Talabani (later became the latter's' son in law and established PUK in 1975), Omar Mustafa, Nuri Shawais and Ali Abdullah", who later engaged in a long history of antagonism with the party's president (Stanfield, 2003; McDowall, 1996; Al-Khirsan, 2001).

Eventually, these leftist tendencies in the leadership council following the third and fourth congresses of the party and the political unrest of the 1950s resulting from socioeconomic trends, influenced those who were struggling against *Aghas* (tribal chieftains) and *Sheikhs* (nobles and descendants of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam), to gather around the KDP, and in return, KDP adopted responsive strategies to public demands and represented the social mass. However, the fall of the monarchy system and the revolution of July 14th, 1958 by the Free Officers paved the way for Mullah Mustafa's return to Kurdistan and accordingly, a new phase of political maintenance ensued.²³

Soon after the coup's announcement, both the politburo and Mullah Mustafa pledged to grant it their support. Consequently, a friendly relationship grew between Abdulkarim Qasim, the new president of Iraq and Barzani, in the early phase. As a result, Qasim released all Kurdish political prisoners including

²² He was the reliable person who Mullah Mustafa sent his letters with to the tribal and intellectual leaders asking their supports for establishing KDP-Iraq, however, due to the Kurdish problems with the Iraqi government, he was arrested with Ibrahim Ahmad, yet Ahmad released several years earlier to him.

²³ Free Officers are those officers who conducted the coup in Iraq and demolished the monarchy system.

Ahmad Barzani, Mullah Mustafa's older brother. He canceled the siege and the curfew on Kurdish area by the Monarch system. Furthermore, under Qasim's authority for the first time in Kurdish history, Kurdish rights were admitted in *Article Three* of the interim constitution "*Arabs and Kurds are sharing this country and their national rights guaranteed within national unity.*" In return, the KDP's army supported the Iraqi government in control of strikes in Kirkuk and Mosul. The KDP officially became certified as a legal, political party in February 1960 and fourteen different Kurdish publications were admitted including *Khabat*, the KDP's official organ (Guntar, 1992; Barrak, 1989, Al-Khirsan, 2001).

Yet this only continued for a short time, as with time, the relationship between these two ethnical based political entities deteriorated. Al-Samar (2012) attributes the decline of Qasim-Barzani relations to several reasons: The tribal background of Mullah Mustafa contrasted the trends of normal party configurations. Also, their goal differences, i.e., Mulla Mustafa's national aim differed from Iraq's unity of Qasim, in addition to seeing himself as the leader of all Kurds not only of Iraqi Kurds, which was not accepted internationally according to Qasim's standards. Meanwhile, Qasim considered all the oppositions of the previous monarch system as instruments for supporting his newfound experience. Accordingly, these attitudes of Mullah Mustafa were seen as challenges to his authority, especially after his rapid attempts to defeat all the tribes that were strengthening their relationships with the Iraqi regime taking cover of Barzani's power, such as Surchi, Harki, and Zebari. The Qasim's efforts, furthermore, to bridge relations with those abovementioned anti-Barzani tribes of Kurds from one side and to make balance between leftist and Arab nationalists and *Nasirists* from the other side, pushed Barzani to move against his will (chapter four).

The deterioration of Barzani-Qasim relations in 1961 resulted in a long-standing revolution against the following Iraqi governments and also concurrently affected divisions within the party. Barzani purposely eliminated the party from socialism belief and supported the unrests, which were manifested with some tribal leaders

maneuvering against agrarian reform. On the other hand, some politburo members, who were displeased with these changes eventually led to the party split. In fact, random airstrikes on Kurdish villages, shortage of food sources and food sanctions were implemented by the Iraqi government to enfold the uprising. This also turned the KDP into a guerrilla party in contrast to a party founded for civil and democratic achievements. Thus, in response to Iraq regime's operations, the military wing of the party started to launch rebellion activities, while the political arm concentrated on gathering support from within and outside of Iraq.

In addition to the ideological, and structural differences between the Politburo and Barzani, another factor that stimulated the division within the party was the latter's recommencement of negotiations after the second military coup in Iraq. Qasim's system was demolished in February 1963, and a short-lived Baathist regime was established, consequently, a droopy agreement between Mushir Abdulsalam Arif, the new president of Iraq, and Barzani, in personal capacity than as the spokesman of the KDP was signed. This led to further frustration and disappointment within the KDP, for that, if the previous government of Qasim had guaranteed the Kurds to be seen as a partner, in the Barzani's agreement with Arif neither the self-administration of Kurdish area nor the word 'Kurdistan' had been mentioned. This was a breaking point for nationalistic leaders within the KDP to refuse the Barzani-Arifs' agreement and his leadership style. Accordingly, the internal conditions of the KDP witnessed further turbulences,

"On one side, Ahmad, Talabani and the KDP intelligentsia asserted an ideological position evolved over the previous 20 years. On the other, Mulla Mustafa was able to rally the conservatives, the tribal and religious leaders of Kurdistan. For these, it was a contest between the religious and the secular, the primordial and the nationalist, tradition versus atheistic Marxism" (McDowall, 1996: 316).

These political tensions led Barzani's army to attack the Mawat-base of KDP-politburo and imposed the leaders to either leave Kurdistan of Iraq or fight against

them, and they chose to flee to Iran. Later, under the command of Masoud Barzani, and through arms, the party was cleansed from all members with connections to the politburo leaders (Chapter four). Masoud Barzani in his book 'Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement' validates that "*On July 12th, 1964 we headed to the Sarsyan village, the Barzani peshmergas in Soran settled in their points and according to an accurate plan we cleansed and liberated those areas from all species of politburo...*" (Gawheri, 2014: 155).

Additionally, Iraqi political instability had supported the KDP's internal instability in several ways. The frequent coups and alteration of power in Iraq enhanced the KDP factions to find new resources of support from newcomers against one another. When the Baathist retained power in 1968, Ahmad Hassan Baker and Saddam Husain, the Iraqi president and deputy, consecutively, tried to resolve the Kurdish question through new rounds of negotiation with the KDP. Barzani's hostility to the old politburo members reached a level, unlike previous times when demarcation of the Kurdistan's border and autonomy were his focus, this time, and his foremost demand was the annihilation of Ahmad-Talabani's KDP through curtailing their support (Amin, 1997; Gawhari, 2014; Stansfield, 2003; McDowall, 1996). Therefore, Iraqi government's experiences with the KDP, from one side, and the KDP's strong relationship with Iran from the other side, cumulatively, drove the Iraqi incumbent Baathist party to initiate necessary steps, including restraining supplies from Ahmad-Jalal Talabani's group, in order to cease the Barzani-Iran relationship, and internally resolve the Kurdish problem. After Barzani successfully reached his aim, an agreement between both was announced on 11/3/1970. Desperately, the Ahmad- Talabani's KDP had to remerge into Barzani's KDP, and hence they were reintegrated for several years until the emergence of the PUK after the collapse of the September revolution (Amin, 1997; McDowall, 1996; Gawhari, 2014).

In addition to autonomy, educational and cultural rights, the main Kurdish disagreements with Iraqi governments throughout the revolution era in Iraq were Kirkuk and the territories now called 'Areas of Disputes'. Despite all the

promises made by the Baathists to the Kurds and the KDP, the negotiations and the declaration of 1970, like many other previous attempts, reached a deadlock in 1974, and hence once again an armed struggle between Iraq and the KDP ensued. The mass had supported leadership to mobilize the revolution forward against the Iraqi regime. One of the most prominent manifestations of these calls was the participation of thousands of citizens from the workers, peasants, students of Sulaymaniyah University and their professors in the revolution. Nevertheless, due to the Algeria Treaty (6/3/1975) between Iran and Iraq, Iran slashed all financial and logistical supplies from the KDP. Hence, in 25/3/1975, Barzani announced a truce and abandon of arms, and resultantly, the revolution collapsed. In fact, by the time of collapse, Kurdish had sixty thousand trained Peshmarga (those who face death) and another forty-three thousand tribal paramilitaries (Gawhari, 2014; McDowall, 1996; Stansfield, 2003; Waisy, 2015; Murad, 2014).²⁴

The first phase of the KDP ended with Barzani's seeking asylum in Iran and immigration of more than ten thousand families with him to Iran. Accordingly, the KDP disappeared from the Iraqi political scene until 1978, and several other parties emerged. The most important among them is the PUK (the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan by Jalal Talabani), however, short-lived and small parties emerged too, such as PASOK (the Kurdistan Liberal Democratic Party), the KDP-Preparatory Committee by Mahmoud Othman. Later, the KDP itself also was reborn (Amin, 1997; Abdulla, 2008; McDowall, 1996). After the establishment of the PUK in 1/6/1975 and launch of guerrilla activities in 1976, Masoud Barzani, Idris Barazani, Sami Abdulrahman and some other leaders decided to revive the KDP. They first introduced the Provisional Leadership of the KDP (PL- KDP) in Europe in August 1976, however, due to the Algeria Agreement between Iraq and Iran, they were unable to launch any activity until after the Islamic Revolution of

²⁴ Some of the authors state that there were 50, 000 tribal and another 50,000 trained Peshmargas; however, this research follows Amin (1997) (who was a co-founder of PUK and by the time of collapse was a pro-Politburo young leader). He has been considered a Kurdish political historian focuses on the discourses of Kurdish revolutions. In all the cases, by the time of collapse, Barzani was the commander of 100,000 paramilitaries.

1979 in Iran. They, nevertheless, managed to hold the party's first congress after the collapse of revolution in an Iranian city, the Urmia, in 1979 to focus on their possibilities in re- launching struggles against the Baathists. They also elected Masoud Barzani as the president of the party, after the death of his father in the U.S.A during the same year.

Later, they fought the PUK and Iraqi government with conjoined forces. They attacked first, for being established by Jalal Talabani, who was considered an adversary leader throughout the internal struggles of the KDP (1964-1970), and second for the betrayal they experienced after the 1970s declaration (Al-Khirsan, 2001; Amin, 1997; Gawhari, 2014). The Barzani hatred for the Talabani was inherited by his sons and the new KDP generations as well. The KDP fought the PUK brutally within Turkey's land before returning to Iraq in 1976 and 1977, and killed the majority of recently established PUK cells in the areas, which were considered the KDP region. The Hakari massacre of 1978 was considered the bitterest rivalry between the two warring parties and an excellent example of the loathing the KDP had for the PUK. Among 800 PUK fighters, only seven survived; the rest either were killed by the PL-KDP or they surrendered to the Iraqi regime (McDowall, 1996; Amin, 1997).

After a long history of antagonism, the PUK and the KDP eventually decided to establish a unified Kurdish platform in 1988, especially after the '*Anfal*' genocide campaign of 1987-1988 by the Baathist regime against Kurdish villages and rural areas, which ultimately resulted in the death of 182,000 Kurds. Furthermore, chemical weapons were used against Halabja, Balisan, Askar, Goptapa, and many other towns and villages by the Iraqi regime. Thus, the peace road between these two foes in 1986 paved the way for the establishment of the Kurdistan Front, which, in fact, was the political body shadowing the plans of the great uprising of 1991, and the founding elections in 1992.²⁵

²⁵ It was Iran's ambition to aggregate all the Iraqi Kurdish forces under one umbrella to use them against the Iraqi regime especially after the long First Gulf War between the two countries. Ultimately, Mam Jalal and Idris Barzani reached an agreement to which

While most of the other parties constituted allied lists, KDP individually ran for the founding elections of 1992 and won 44.51 of the total votes and in alliance with the PUK formed the founding cabinet (Chapter five). Due to their lack of experience in governing and the legacy of antagonism, they soon were involved in a series of civil wars. The most catastrophic and longest one was during 1996-1998. The civil wars led to an establishment of two-controlled zones and accordingly Iraqi Kurdistan was divided into two political domains with separate governments and institutional organs (Chapter five). Later, after the Washington Agreement of 1998 and the U.S. attempts to resolve the political conflicts in KRI, the Parliament of Kurdistan eventually held a unified session on October 2002 and accordingly several laws were issued for political normalization and integration of the two separated areas (Stansfield, 2003).

Additionally, the KDP also has experienced several merges with other small parties such as the Kurdistan Socialist Party (KSP), the Kurdistan People Democratic Party (KPDP), and the PASOK, which all dissolved themselves within the KDP in 1993. Though, the KSP left the KDP shortly, and the other two remained in the KDP as a unified body since then (Amin, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001; McDowall, 1996).

Currently, the KDP is the dominant party of the Kurdistan region and had won 38

accordingly the fire ceased announced. The Iraqi regime took this attempt destructively and considered the mutual help between Kurdish parties and Iran to be great treasons; therefore, he started vicious campaigns against the Kurds especially in the areas of struggle, on the frontier of Iran-Iraq. Eventually, 5000 villages were destroyed, and, around 182,000 civilians were killed. In addition to the mass urbanization in the Kurdish areas which changed the political economy of the Kurds and the demography of many Kurdish areas, especially those which were considered oil-rich areas (Gawhari, 2014; Gunter, 1992). Kurdish political parties hopelessly decided to gather under such circumstances and seek revenge. With the support of Iran, and in addition to the Communist Party of Iraq ICP-CC and the Assyrian Democratic Movement, among all Kurdish revolutionary parties unless for Toilers and Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (the first for being banned by HSK, and the second for refusing to join) the Kurdistan Front in 2/5/1988 was established, i.e., only after six weeks after the massacre of *Halabja*. Later in 1990 the Toilers also joined and accordingly all the revolutionary and secular parties of Iraqi Kurdistan gathered under one umbrella called the Kurdistan Front. This study uses both the Kurdistan Front and the Front of Kurdistan interchangeably.

seats in the elections of 2013. Despite its centralism and tribal tendencies, it is considered as the most solidified party in the KRI, because, following the collapse of 1974, it has never experienced any splits or strong internal factions, or even legislative fractionalization. It conducts thirteen party congresses while Masoud Barzani continues to be the party president since 1979.

Finally, after Mustafa Barzani's refutation of socialist ideology in the party's fifth Congress, they readopted it in the ninth Congress once they announced the PL-KDP in 1979. They also adopted autonomy for Kurdistan and democracy for Iraq as the party's goal. Nonetheless, in 1992 with the PUK, following the uprising and the founding elections, they altered autonomy to federalism as a unique solution for the Kurdish problem in Iraq. And once again this party's goal changed to independence for Kurdistan in July 2014 and accordingly conflicts with the Iraqi regime were initiated.

3.3.2. Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)

For several years the parties, which had not joined the KDP in 1964, had harbored the desire to establish a new party. However, the political conditions were not conducive to this idea until the collapse of the September revolution, which opened the way for them. Primarily, the declaration of abandoning arms was not an easy decision to be made by the nationalists who after the negotiation failure with Baghdad believed this as the only available possibility. Therefore, they took advantage of the political vacuum left behind by the KDP to take action. Meanwhile, those secret groups that manifested under the supervision of the previous politburo grouping, after the KDP split in 1964, were still inside Iraq and did not flee with the KDP to Iran. Rather they had survived the collapse and initiated reorganizing their cells.

The regime's brutal operations, including the random bombardment of the city of Kaladiza and the University of Sulaymani on 24 April 1974, in which dozens of students and university professors were killed, encouraged young people and university students to support a new mobilization under the Kurdish nationalism.

Thus, when Jalal Talabani, the KDP's former representative to Syria, during the first two months of the collapse announced the PUK as an alternative party to take on the responsibility of struggle for Kurdish rights, thousands of young and nationalists prepared to support the party. According to Adil Murad (2014), one of the PUK co-founders, the Iranian authorities obliged Kurdish leaders who sought asylum there, with the purpose to return to Iraq or stop political activities against Iraqi regime within Iranian territory. Therefore regional conditions pushed Jalal Talabani, Dr. Fuad Masoum, Mr. Abdul Razzaq Mirza, and himself to discuss the foundation of the new party with simple financial means in Damascus on May 25th 1997. A few days later another meeting was held in Berlin, which included Nushirwan Mustafa Amin, the co-founder of the current Gorran Movement, Mrs. Hero, Jalal Talabani's wife and a current PUK politburo member, Latif Rashid, Hero's brother in law, Omar Sheikh Mose, a Syrian Kurd living in exile and around two dozens of other Kurdish figures. They increased the number of founding members to seven and entitled three personalities namely, Dr. Kamal Fuad, Dr. Omar Sheikh Mose, and Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin to run the party from Syria; and accordingly, the party's establishing statement of purpose was published five-six days later.²⁶

Sheikh Mose (2016) emphasizes that the party's name was chosen during the meeting in Berlin and motivated by the notion of continuation and rejuvenation of the Kurdish People's struggle for autonomy and national rights.²⁷ In alignment, Murad (2014) stresses the aim was to project a strong message of their continued stance against the Iraqi regime and Saddam's provocative statement "*it may be possible for a palm tree to grow on the top of my head, but another Kurdish struggle would never be re-commenced*".²⁸

Adapting a notion from "Organization of Palestine Liberation", the PUK took the

²⁶ See an interview conducted with him by Silvan Saido on June, 3rd, 2014, for Aletihad newspaper, retrieved from http://www.pukmedia.com/AR_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33907

²⁷ Phon interview conducted with him in Valencia in November 5th, 2016.

²⁸ See an interview conducted with him by Silvan Saido on June, 3rd, 2014, for Aletihad newspaper, retrieved from http://www.pukmedia.com/AR_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33907

form of a semi-front party, and was constituted of several other organizations with shared visions. In the early months, it gathered those clandestine organizations and military activists that sought independence and Kurdish rights.²⁹ Thus, one year after its declaration, the military units were organized to restart the insurgent undertakings. According to Assasard (2016), the purpose of military struggle was to achieve the goals that the previous revolution had failed to accomplish; *“due to the undemocratic regime of Iraq, there was no opportunity to contest publically, so there was no choice for democratic manifestation unless turning back to the classic way of Kurdish military confrontations”*.³⁰ This semi-front arrangement constituted three elements; first, units that were organized by the co-founders from those Kurds who had fled to Syria and were sent back to Kurdistan. Second, there was a leftist clandestine organization established in 1970 inside Kurdistan called the "Marxist-Leninist Group of Kurdistan", later it reshaped in "Komele i Renjderan; Kurdistan Plodder Group", and was popular in the areas of Sulaimani, Kirkuk, and later expanded to Erbil too. Third, a combination of tens of Jalali and Malayi elites who founded Bzutnewe “Democratic Socialism Movement of Kurdistan” following the collapse of the revolution of 1974, and was led by (Salih Usifi).³¹ Based on their diverse ideological backgrounds, these three groupings contained three different perspectives on partisanship. They managed to work together until 1980, thereafter; the first and the third group integrated and altered the PUK to a more advanced and coherent structure. Later in 1989 the second group also dissolved itself within the PUK, and transmuted the PUK from a semi-front to an absolute political party with one political leadership and one structural organ.³²

Komele: The Plodder Group of Kurdistan (PGK)

This grouping was an offshoot of the politburo’s framework after the split of 1964, especially after the helps they received from Iraqi regime, which, in turn,

²⁹ Interview conducted with Farid Assasard, Sulaimani, on October 6th, 2016.

³⁰ The previous source

³¹ Jalali stands for those who affiliated to the politburo group and particularly to Mam Jalal Talabani, while Malayi refers to those who associated to Mullah Mustafa Barzani

³² Interview conducted with Mr. Farid Assasard October 6th, 2016, Sulaimani.

eased their conditions to begin intellectual, and media activities following their return from Iran. The Baathist regime formally recognized *Rizgari* a publication of the KDP-politburo in 1968.³³ *Rizgari* became a platform for stimulating the young leaders who opposed the politburo's plan to launch an armed conflict with Barzani and the way to which they handled the party's internal problems in 1964. They published articles to gather young people subscribing to their ideology, aiming to become the alternative and the third way of conducting Kurdish politics, in compromise with the other two conflicting wings (Amin, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001; Omar, 2002).

Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin (1997: 98), the editor-in-chief of *Rizgari* back then and later the Komele president highlights their purpose "*we worked for founding a new political paradigm differ from those of both politburo and Barzani's models of partisanship, also different from the Iraqi two wings of Communist party. Therefore, we profoundly worked in preparation for such party, and we succeeded*".³⁴ They initiated by founding a cadre faction, which was focused on political education within the previous politburo's KDP. The prerequisite membership condition was elaborating and understanding discourses presented in the literature of socialism, Marxism, and Kurdish history. Amin (1997: 194) further emphasizes the importance of education was to avoid the popular double moral trends of other parties "*someone cannot be an honest man in public life, while a thief in his private one.*"

In addition to the party's internal motivations, several external factors inspired the design and construct of this group. The ideological streams of China-Soviet

³³ A publication issued by former KDP-politburo in 1968. They named it after the *Rizgari* grouping that dissolved itself in the KDP in 1945.

³⁴ External and internal factors had divided Iraqi Communist party onto two wings; one was the ICP-CL which kept a different ideological orientation focused on its independence from Soviet control and gave priority to Iraqi Arab national questions. They adopted a more anti-Soviet opinion and developed wider relations with China. Meanwhile, the other known as the ICP-Central Committee (CC), involved primarily to "*the "old guard" and their allies*" in addition to adherence to the USSR and the CPSU as their sponsors (Ismael, 2008: 314).

communism and Mao Zedong's ideology affected this group, especially their belief in existence of socioeconomic similarities between China and Kurdistan, in fact, encouraged them to see the improved practicality of Zedong's Communism Model for their political conditions. In addition to the impacts of Palestine leftists, this group was also inspired by Sazmani Enqilabi Tuda, a splinter party of the Irani Kurdish party that was under the influence of China's model. Thus, three different streams were constructed under the platform of Komele, and each led by Jalal Talabani, Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin, and Shehab Sheikh Noori, respectively, and have been clandestinely proceeding activities since 1970. The unification of the wings of the KDP in 1970, had led them to integrate into the revolution, yet, after the collapse, they did not follow the mainstream of disarmament; instead, they prepared for reviving the revolution. Thus, Jalal Talabani's call was enough for the new leadership to become an establishing pillar to the PUK and soon it integrated into the demands of the new round of Kurdish political mobilization (Abdulla, 2008; Stansfield, 2003).

This group constituted the majority of the PUK forces in both the clandestine organizations in the cities and the military forces, especially after the Hakari tragedy of Bzutnewe in 1978. It held only three congresses, the first and second were in 1981, and 1982. While, the party's name changed from the 'Marxist Leninist Group of Kurdistan' to the 'Plodder Group of Kurdistan' in the first, in the second, the issues remained limited to the political boundary of insurgent activities; i.e., whether they should expand to Iraqi nationwide or only manifest in Kurdistan Region. The majority voted for Iraqi Kurdistan as the area of the party's domain. Furthermore, in both congresses, Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin was elected the president, and six leaders were nominated in each to represent the party in the leadership council of the PUK. The most important decisions of the second congress of Komele 1982 were manifesting a change in the composition of the party's cells to a 'Rosary' arrangement in order to protect the members from being divulged. Furthermore, it modified the structure of the party to which accordingly Komele became the most solidified pillar of the PUK (Amin, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001). The third congress in 1989, was ceremonial,

which as such dissolved itself within the PUK, and thus the latter transformed from a semi-front to a more consolidated political party.

The ideological differentiation that mostly emphasized the charismatic personalities within Komala was one of distinctive elements that originated from its first congress and stretched to the PUK in a way, which later drove the latter to several divisions. On the margins of the first and second conferences, three tendencies emerged in this regard. First, the political prisoners' faction, those who spent a period of time in Iraqi prisons and after being released joined the struggle. This faction presented ideological differences from the other leaders of Komala; essentially they believed Komele should follow the martyred leader Khala Shahab, who was executed after being captured in Iran with a group of his comrades and were handed over to Iraq according to the Algeria Agreement. In addition to considering themselves as more deserving of the party positions than those who did not experience imprisonment. The other leaders, on the other hand, were keen to adopt the values of martyr Aram, who was killed in Qaradakh during his successful attempt to revive the Komele in 1975, after the first generation leaders of this group, was arrested by the Iraqi government.

The second trend led by Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin considered themselves the successors of martyr Aram's line and viewed Jalal Talabani, as the representative of Kurdish national liberation movement. The third line was a group of Marxist leaders who tried to expand their Marxism view to the whole Iraq. However, this view failed to gather support in the second conference of Komele 1982, when the conference decided to take only the areas included in the Kurdistan political boundary of their activities. Accumulated disagreements about this point and the first point discussed here, drove some of the leading personalities to separate from Komele in 1985 and establish Alai Shorish "Ensign of the Revolution." Their most well known leader was Mala Bakhtiar, the current head of the executive board of the PUK. Later they united with the Toilers party, however after 1991

they remerged to the PUK in two phases within the same year.³⁵

Bzutnewe: Socialism Movement of Kurdistan

Some of the military leaders who were not willing to surrender after the collapse of the September Revolution 1975 decided to establish the 'Democratic Socialist Movement of Kurdistan'. However, after they were criticized for their weapon-friendly tendencies while social democrats were against using weapons in settling conflicts, they decided to alter the name to Bzutnewe 'Socialism Movement of Kurdistan'.³⁶ They became another pillar of the PUK, in the same year of their establishment, but they did not launch any armed confrontation until 1976. Likewise Komele, Bzutnewe leaders were mostly those leftists of the KDP who had supported the politburo disagreements to Mullah Mustafa's leadership in 1964 and had thus been expelled to Iran. Yet, they were not as educated as the Komele, and their most prominent leaders were Ali Askari, Salih Usifi, and Rasul Mamand. The first with two of his fellow leaders was executed by the PL-KDP in 1978 in the well-known Hakari Massacre, while the second was assassinated in Baghdad in 1981 for his affiliation to Bzutnewe (Al-Khirsan, 2001).

Bzwtnewe, in the beginning, was an effort made by Salih Usifi, Omer Dababa, Resul Mamend, Ali Askari, and many other tribal and middle-class leaders, who represented religious, tribal, and rural social groups and sought Kurdish rights. In fact, it can be considered a complementing element to Komele for being a moderate grouping that gathered relatively less educated tribal and middle-class activists to join Komele or had no interest in Marxist ideology, yet were ready to take part in the Kurdish struggle against the Iraqi regime.³⁷

Khirsan (2001) stresses two main differences between Komele and Bzwtnewe as

³⁵ Presently is the executive of PUK's politburo

³⁶ Interview conducted with Farid Assasar, Sulaimani, October 6th, 2016.

³⁷ Previous source

two founding groups of the PUK: first, most of the members of Komele were enthusiastic young members who embraced Marxism grounded from Chinese paradigm, which was not socially known and had no strong bases for manifestation in the KRI. The villagers who considered the fundamental elements of the revolution, on the other hand, were predominantly religious, conservative, and presented tribal tendencies. Therefore, they were careful in dealing with Komele's tendency of leftism, while they also adored Bzutnewe for social figures, chieftains, and elderly members that thereby gained respect and obedience. Second, war tactic was another point of distinction between the two streams. Komele adopted the attack and escaped strategy, the guerrilla war, through small units of 5-10 members as it was practiced in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Meanwhile, Bzutnewe followed the old fighting strategy of the September Revolution. These differences between the two groupings made the Komele sometimes accuse the Bzutnewe of bourgeois tendencies. Yet the relationships between them were characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. Eventually, Komele was denoted for its well-organized structure than Bzutnewe, while the latter was known for its popularity among villagers and it subsequently embedded the PUK strongly in the coming years in areas liberated from Iraqi regime before resolving itself.

Likewise Komele, Bzutnewe experienced a division, in its early years. In Nawroz 1979 a major part separated and unified with the Preparatory Committee of the KDP that was led by Mahmoud Othman to establish *HSK* "Socialist Party of Kurdistan." Accordingly, two groups manifested under the name of *Socialism*, one remained in the PUK, which was a symbolic faction, with a small number of elements, while the vast majority separated and constituted mostly of the military leaders. To establish equilibrium as regards Komele within PUK, the remaining faction of Bzutnewe decided to integrate into a new political entity with the General Line in 1980, and they called themselves Yeketi Shorishgeran "Revolutionist Union." Thus, from 1980 onward PUK stood on two pillars, i.e., Shorishgeran and Komele, wherein each had their own political organization and armed wing.

Heli Gishti: General line

The activists, who decided to follow neither of the two mentioned groupings above, i.e., the Komele or Bzutnewe, gathered under Heli Gishti 'General Line'. However, it became a problematic issue in the early years for the PUK, attributing to the lack of ideology, organization and clandestine cells in urban areas similar to the other two wings. Rather, it was a military configuration, which depended on individuals with the willingness to hold arms and fight for Kurdistan without any ideological tendency. After the division in Bzutnewe, Heli Gishti with the remaining faction of the latter integrated into Yeketi Shorshgeran (Revolutionists Union) and emerged as a new entity in 1980.

In the beginning, Jalal Talabani was elected their president, but Komele members skeptically raised complaints by asking whether Talabani can maintain a balance between these two subgroups while he occupies presidency positions of both the PUK, as well as of its one sub-group? To lull this skepticism, Dr. Fuad Ma'sum, the current President of Iraq, was elected the president of Shorishgeran, while Talabani himself, despite many other changes in the party, remained the president of the semi-front PUK up to his death.³⁸ In 1989, both the Plodder Group and Revolutionists Union decided to dissolve themselves in the PUK, nevertheless, the critical conditions in Kurdistan, impeded this integration until 1992 when the first Congress of the PUK was held (Amin, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001; McDowall, 1996).

Assasard (2016) argues that the PUK's literature cannot be separated from the Marxist- leftist in spite of its nationalistic view. Throughout the struggle era, the party tried to gather other ideological stands aligning with leftist nationalists, and socialists, however, *"the collapse of the two-polled world and the decay of socialism affected PUK's thought dramatically. It remained a leftist party but*

³⁸ Jalal Talabani died after five years of suffrage from heart strike, in October 2017.

stayed away from prevailing communist view as it used to do so".³⁹ The party embodied socialist and democratic views in their first congress in 1992, and they developed these views, until the second congress in 2001, when they adopted social democracy and thus the party became an observatory and later a permanent member in Social International organization (SI). In recent years, the PUK president served the deputy of the Social International for two years, while he occupied the presidential position of Iraq for two regular and the interim terms. In 2012, a heart attack took him away from the political scene, yet his family considered him irreplaceable until he passed away in 2017.

Despite the dissolution of the PUK's wings in 1992, the party still characterizes with platforms of pluralism and incoherency. The old arms in the party gathered and created new factions under various tendencies, mostly focusing on personalism, favoritism, and patronage relations based on neo-tribalism inclinations. Another division occurred in 2007 and led to the emergence of an establishment, the Gorran in 2009, yet, the self-interest factions were still arranging themselves within this party under different slogans and petitions.

This party dropped to the third position of strength after the Change Movement caused split in it, and it only won eighteen KRP seats in the last elections in 2013. In fact, following the third congress of 2010, and despite the declaration of social democratic views (as stated in the party's bylaws) the patronage tendencies propelled the party to a more kinship orientation, especially after the illness of the party's president.⁴⁰ Several interest-based factions occurred within the party, in fact, one led by Hero Ibrahim Ahmad, Talabani's wife, who gathered several Talabani's and Ahmadi's around herself (Chapter four). Another group was led by Kosrat Rasul, the deputy of the party, who has appointed one of his sons to the PUK leadership council in the third party's congress and his other son a minister of the eighth cabinet. While the third faction was led by Barham Salih, which is

³⁹ Interview conducted with Fareed Assassard; Sumlaimania, October 6th, 2016.

⁴⁰ See the party's general principles in

http://www.pukmedia.com/en/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=5041

less kinship based faction, focusing on personalistic interests through appointing positions based on their loyalty to him.⁴¹

3.3.3. Socialist Party of Kurdistan (KSP; HSK)

Today it is considered one of the most tribal-based parties employing revolutionary precepts for self-interest. It was established from the unification of two groupings, i.e., the Preparatory Committee of the KDP led by Mahmoud Othman, who had not followed Barzani's declaration of hand over arms in 1974, and the subgroup split from Bzutnewe in March of 1979. Later in 1979, they established the United Socialist Party of Kurdistan, which was directed by a team of leaders consisting of Rasul Mamand, Mahmoud Othman, and Tahir Ali Wali Beg. The president of the party was Rasul Mamand who took the position following the assassination of Salih Usifi in Baghdad in 1981.

Amin (1997) argues that Rasul Mamand and his fellows were displeased with Jalal Talabani's leadership skills and his decision-making manner. They criticized him for being individualistic, impatient and inattentive about the teamwork promises that essentially founded the PUK. Primarily, they believed that Komele was more favorable than Bzutnewe to Mam Jalal.⁴² Their accusation highlighted Mam Jalal's bias in distributing financial and logistical support, while Komele was an extremist and atheist group, which disrespected nobles and Kurdish social structures and religions. Another factor for their split was to build a third line between the two warring parties, the PUK and the PDK that had started confrontation following the announcement of PL-KDP. They believed their group might become a balance that may motivate revolutionists and minimize the impact of the two warring parties on the Kurdish movement in Iraq.

⁴¹ The last faction has separated from the party and currently organized a separate list for the coming nation elections, yet is beyond this study's focus.

⁴² Jalal Talabani from his early involvement in politics has been known by Mam Jalal, and this became his agnomen even when they separated from the KDP, his followers were called Jalali after his first name.

Also, the inspiration followed the initiations made by the KDP-Iran, and their president Qasimlu, who promised to build a bridge between them and the Iraqi regime. Moreover, they believed the continuation of negotiations with Iraqi government might dwindle the Kurdish political desperation. The *Socialism* leadership was convinced of chances to achieve a diplomatic resolution of the problems without turning to weapons, while the other two pillars of the PUK were confident that the Iraqi regime would not respect Kurdish rights. And therefore, they separated from the PUK to join the Preparatory Committee of KDP to establish the Kurdistan Socialist Party. Soon after its announcement, the party rapidly expanded in some areas of the PUK; namely Shahrazur and Kaladze.

In fact, the antagonism between the PUK and the KDP paved the way before this party to grow, and particularly the pressures from both Iraqi and Iran governments, did not leave alternatives for those revolutionary parties save seeking negotiation with either government. Therefore, the mediation of Qasimlu, the former president of KDP-Iran, between this party and Iraqi regime enabled the party to be seen the third way and, boosted their reputation among activists. However, only after two months, they decided to pull back unitarily due to the betrayal of Iraqi government, which had led to the assassination of their president. And therefore, the party decided to turn back to the classic way of struggling (Amin, 1997). According to Al-Khirsan (2001), in the first congress of the party in 1981, two clear factions were observed. One considered the Marxist leftist, and was led by Rasul Mamand and supported by Qadir Aziz, who later split and established the *Toilers Party*. The other recognized a rightest faction, which was led by Mahmoud Othman, who later served as MP in Iraqi Parliament representing the KDP for several terms. Thereby, they changed the name to the Socialist Party of Kurdistan-Iraq (KSP) and adopted Marxist philosophy as the core ideology of the party.

The party had a brutal experience with both the KDP and the PUK. While it was involved in several armed conflicts with the PUK, especially after leaving the

(JWQD Front)⁴³, and joining the (JUD Front)⁴⁴, the PUK as a reaction seized the KSP's supplies, which the Front was receiving from Libya and Syria. The KDP also bombarded their main offices in 1985, which, led to the internal petition among cadres to demand revision of their agreements with the KDP and the JUD, and settle their disputes with the PUK. Accordingly, the leadership decided to cease fire with the PUK. The KSP interred the Kurdistan Front in 1988 and participated in the preparation of the uprising of 1991 (Al-Khirsan, 2001).

After the Kurdistan Front decided on the conduction of the founding elections, the KDP, through Nechirvan Barzani, communicated Rasul Mamend to establish an allied list with the KSP. Meanwhile, the PUK also communed Mohammed Haji Mahmoud, a prominent politburo member of the KSP back then and the current president of the party, for the same reason. Eventually, HSK refused both proposals and allied with another small party; *PASOK*, together they formed *Yakgirtin List of Kurdistan* 'Unification of Kurdistan'. Refusing the proposal was enough for the KDP to maltreat the HSK; mainly they were skeptic of the PUK's

⁴³ Syria supported Iraqi opposition to establish a front against the Baathists of Iraq. The Kurdish parties for this purpose were the PUK, and the HSK while Iraqi Arab parties were pro Syrian Baathist wing of Iraqi Baathist party, Arabic Socialism Movement, ICP, Socialist Party of Iraq, Public Army organization for liberating Iraq, and independent personalities who altogether founded the JWQD the "National Democratic Front of Iraq" in Damascus 12/11/1980.

⁴⁴ When the KDP discovered that the JWQD Front had communicated with some Kurdish parties, especially after one of the ICP wings played an evil role in pushing the KDP for establishing a new front. Thus, only after two weeks, in 28/11/1980 the JWD "National Democratic Front" was established by the KDP in Razhan-Iran and started to gather help for the Kurdish struggle from Iran, and became an alternative to the JWQD. Eventually, the JWQD became a short-lived front. Dr. Mahmoud Osman, who represented the HSK, signed the JWQD's agreement, later the Mamand's wing of the HSK refused the pact and decided to join the JWD. Hence, the PUK aggressively sought revenge from each of the ICP and the HSK. Bloody combat between the PUK and each of those two parties, individually and with the JWD occurred. Hence, another round of civil war between the PUK and a front led by the KDP had relaunched. Gradually, many other Kurdish and Iraq parties joined the JWD; the *PASOK* in May 1982, *Parti Gal* in 1984, and some other Iraqi parties also took part. Therefore, it became one big front gathered almost all Iraqi Sunni and Kurdish parties except for the PUK, a wing of the Communist Party and the pro-Syrian Baathist wing of Iraq. The JWD lasted until 1986. In fact, due to the internal problems between the constituting parties, especially between the KDP and the HSK, and the former's armory attacks on the latter, the HSK was encouraged to reconsider their engagement to the JWD. It was supported by the party's internal demand, and as a result, they decided to normalize their relationship with the PUK. The indifference among those founding elements increased to an extent the JWD eventually had also dissolved in 1986 (Gewheri, 2014; Al-Khirsan, 2001)

proposal being accepted by the HSK.

Hence, to damage the Yekgirtin list and the HSK's image, the KDP distributed the HSK's blue flag with their yellow flag as a part of their electoral campaign. This led the *Yekgirtin* to lose the elections and failure to meet the threshold 7%. And despite their extensive contribution to the Kurdish struggle against Iraqi regimes, the KSP dramatically vanished and correspondingly several internal issues surfaced, wherein, the most important was the split between the two old factions, leftist and rightist. The leftist faction held the second congress and accordingly they decided to remerge into the PUK in 1992, while the rightist wing had evolved in October of 1993 and announced a new HSK under Mohammed Haji Mahmoud's leadership. With the PASOK and *Party Gal*, the KSP decided to constitute a new party with the same name of their list *Yekgirtin*. Shortly they integrated into the KDP, however, the latter's failure to meet the integration requirements as requested by the KSP, made it impossible even though the three presidents of *Yekgirtin* sub-parties became members of the KDP's politburo (Al-Khirsan, 2001).

The KDP's intolerance to the withdrawal of the HSK drove the former to attack the latter in Erbil and other areas under their control. The KSP-KDP civil war lasted several months. Later when the PUK-KDP civil wars were triggered, the KSP helped the KDP families, who lived under the PUK authority to move into safe areas. This initiative helped in normalization of the relations between the two parties. In return, the KSP received financial support from the KDP for their loyalty in political issues of the KDP's concern.

This party has witnessed several name changes and fractioning. The last name change was in the second congress of the new HSK in November 1994 when it became Socialist Democratic Party of Kurdistan, with the removal of 'Iraq' from the party's name. They adopted a socialist democratic philosophy instead of Marxist-Leninist ideology, yet it does not present any intersect with this

ideology.⁴⁵ Since 1994, Mohammed Haji Mahmoud is the president of the party, and his brother Abdulla is the executive of the politburo, in addition to the only parliamentary seat of the party, which he occupies irreplaceably.

3.3.4. Kurdistan Socialist Party/Kurdistan Democratic Liberation Party (PASOK)

Unlike most of the other parties that originated from the KDP, this party was coined from a nationalistic grouping established by some educated elites calling themselves *KAJIK* 'Liberation, Revival and Union of Kurds Association' in April 1959, and remained a clandestine grouping alongside the organizations of the September Revolution (Nabaz, 2015). Later, some of their leaders became prominent military profiles of the revolution such as Mohammed Harsin and Fatah Agha; however, it gradually integrated into the revolution and became inactive until after 1975, when they changed the name to *PASOK* (the Kurdistan Socialist Party) led by Jalal Hussein Kilsh. The primary associates of this party were trained military figures of the Iraqi forces, who voluntarily left the Iraqi army and joined the Kurdish struggle throughout the September Revolution and the new revolution after 1976 (Al-Khirsan, 2001).

While the other parties' concentrated on semi-autonomy as a national right at the beginning of their struggles and gradually adopted federalism, and independence, this party's goals from the very beginning were independence for Kurdistan and justice for the people. Its structural organization was constituted of two-leadership groupings; one directed the national struggle and the other targeted regional countries with Kurdish population. Jamal Nabaz (2015), a co-founder, argues that by the time they decided to establish the *KAJIK*, no Kurdish party was struggling for the Kurdish nation. Both the KDP and the Communists were too busy with the Soviet's policy in supporting Abdulkarim Qasim, the Iraqi first president of the republic. When the communist system followed the collapse of the monarchy, all

⁴⁵ Interview conducted with Rebwar karim Mahmoud, Slemani, September 20th, 2016

parties that manifested in that era, were, in fact, trying to secure Qasim's approval. And it was only the *KAJIK*, which raised the petitions of independence of Kurdistan and reformation of feudalism and classism, being experienced by the Kurdish society.

Amin (1997) emphasizes on the commendable military skills of this group, so much so that several attempts were made by the PUK to convince them to join the party as its fourth pillar, especially as their area of activity overlapped the PUK's area. The PUK's goal, according to Amin (1997: 209), was to gather all those small forces that had common aims to construct a robust Kurdish force against the regime having the fifth strong army in the world, yet it was difficult to achieve. *"We tried many times to integrate them in our semi-front party equally as Bzutnewe, Heli Gshti, and Komele, but they refused and even considered our offer sarcastically hilarious."* The PASOK held their first congress in September 1991, thereof; they dissolved the regional leadership and decided to limit their struggles only to Iraqi Kurdistan. They altered the name of the party to 'Kurdistan Democratic Liberation Party' and remained the only party in Iraqi Kurdistan to struggle for separation and self-determination right for Kurds until they engaged with the *Yekgirtin* party, and later dissolved themselves in the KDP in 1993.

3.3.5. Party Gal: Kurdistan Popular Democratic Party (KPDP)

This party was established as a personal reaction of Sami Abdulrahman to the internal and external problems of the KDP. After the disagreement escalation between secular intellectual members of the newly revived KDP and the tribal and patronage tendencies of Barzan's sons, Abdulrahman separated from the KDP. He revived the KDP following the collapse of 1975 and became the secretary of PL-KDP, a position that he maintained until 1979. He occupied a ministerial position in Baghdad after Azar's agreement in 1970 and considered himself a political expert. Thus it was expected from him to see himself as more qualified than Barzani's sons as regards leading the party. According to McDowall (1996: 346), there were several factors, which motivated Sami Abdulrahman and his followers to dissociate from the KDP,

“[They] dissatisfied with the traditionalism implicit in Barzani leadership and its supporters, by the close ties forged by Idris [Barzani] with the Khomeini regime and by the serious clashes with the KDPI which was seeking autonomy from Tehran. As a result of these ties, the KDP was now largely engaged in defeating the KDPI inside Iran on Tehran's behalf. Furthermore, Idris ran the Parastin, the secret police who monitored everyone, including Sami and his Politburo colleagues. Sami knew that if he remained inside the KDP, he was destined to remain the servant of the Barzanis. In due course he and fellow dissidents seceded, to form the Kurdistan Popular Democratic Party (KPDP) in 1981”.

Abdulrahman and his fellows had not elected themselves in the KDP's ninth congress in 1979. They left the party and traveled to Europe to gather support for their intended party. Eventually, they held the *Party Gel's* first congress in July 1981. Later, they went to Syria to commence activities in Kurdistan of Iraq. However, they faced the KDP's obstacles in Bahdinan, where they were planning to manifest. Thus, the tensions between them remained until the *KPDP* left the JWQD Front and joined the JUD Front in 1984, to which as such the KDP gave them a space to embrace activities in Bahdinan and obligated them in return to leave the Sorani area for the KDP.

Party Gel held only two congresses, the party's establishment congress in 1981, and the second congress was held in Azerbaijan-Iran in 1989. After the failure they experienced in the elections of 1992, with the KSP, they established *Yekgirtin* (Unification). Later they joined the KDP, and hence this Marxist nationalist party that struggled for the establishment of the nation-state of Kurds, and considered themselves the inheritors of PL-KDP, vanished from the political scene for good (Al-Khirsan, 2001). Abdulrahman, who served many positions within the KDP and the KRG, was killed in a bomb explosion in 2002 by Islamic terrorist groups of Ansar al Islam in Erbil. He was the KDP's politburo member; therefore, following the kinship tendency of Kurdish parties his daughter was appointed to the KDP leadership following her fathers' assassination

and currently functions as the KRG representative to the USA.

3.3.6. Zehmetkeshan: Toilers Party of Kurdistan (KTP)

The leftist party believes in Marxist-Leninist socialism and the dialectical link between national and class struggles. The right of self-determination for the Kurdish nation, establishment of a multi-party system, civil society, democracy and the rule of law in Kurdistan constitute the goals of this party. After Rasul Mamand became the president of the KSP; in addition to the faction led by Mahmoud Othman, another subgrouping started to communicate the organizations of the KSP clandestinely. Their foremost concerns included Mamand's style of leadership, the superiority of military wing's manifestation within the party, the ideological conflicts between socialism and the position of tribalism. Above all, Mamand established relations with the Iranian Islamic regime and strongly believed that the latter confronts the party's principles and beliefs. Therefore, Qadir Aziz, who was a politburo member, and some of his fellows, took the delay of the party's congress as an opportunity to criticize Mamand sharply, and hence they established the Socialist Party of Kurdistan-Revolutionary Wing in 1985 after the internal conflict reached a point at which it was impossible to glue the party.

It is considered as the first party founded in the struggle era without military personalities in Kurdistan region, and before the uprising it only had held one *conference* in 1988, according to which they changed the name to the Toilers of Kurdistan (Al-Khirsan, 2001). The Toilers were a small-educated group without friends, and due to their internal problems with the mother party, they did not have a chance to become a member in the Kurdistan Front in 1988; however, they attended it later in 1990. Their first congress took place in 1992, where they united with *Alai Shorish*, another grouping led by Mala Bakhtiar and split from *Komele-PUK*.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Interview conducted with Mr. Farid Assasard in Sulaimani 6/10/2016

Unlike other small parties that miscalculated the electoral threshold of the 1992 elections, the *Toilers* consciously decided to ally with the PUK, and accordingly won three seats. Some months following elections, Talabani announced a declaration for unifying all the leftists and socialist-based parties of Kurdistan to which he was targeting *Alai Shorish* and the Toilers. Thus, *Alai Shorish* decided to remerge and integrate with the PUK in 1993, while it took more than three and a half decades for the Toilers achieve that pace.

Despite being a small party, the Toilers like many other parties were involved in civil war primarily in the Bahdinan area, where the KDP gained control over their city-quarter offices and killed some of their cadres. They later expelled the Toilers from the areas under their control, and eventually, neither party could manifest activity in the KDP areas. After the Toilers experienced a division in 2009, the majority of the party decided to freeze the party's chairman Qadir Aziz, who had been functioning as the party's chairman since 1985. The latter decided to establish another party called *Ainda* (the future), yet it joined the PUK in 2016 and dissolved his taxi party, and became a politburo of the PUK. The second fraction acquired back the party's name through court verdict in 2010, although in 2016 this party also was divided, wherein, one part remained a small taxi party while the other integrated within the PUK too.⁴⁷

3.3.7. Gorran: Change Movement

Unlike the previous leftist and ideological-based parties that manifested in Kurdish political arena prior to the great uprising of 1991, Gorran was established as a non- ideological, reformist and parliamentary party in 2009 by a group of separationists from the PUK led by Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin, the former deputy general. Apparently this party was a consequence of the shortcoming of the government, and the failure of the *KDP and the PUK in governing the KRI*: *“the huge amount of criticism made by the population, the political elites and*

⁴⁷ See <http://www.basnews.com/index.php/so/news/24701>;
<http://www.xendan.org/detailnews.aspx?jicare=8732&babet=1&relat=2031>

intellectuals were enough reasons for thinking of founding a new party."⁴⁸ After several unsuccessful attempts within the PUK by Amin, the reformist faction was inspired to seek a different mechanism for decision-making. Primarily, the weak strategy of the PUK for solving the KRI problems, in addition to the difficulties of internal democracy, party administration, and power distribution within the party escalated to a dangerous at which the practical differences between the PUK and the KDP barely could be noticed.⁴⁹

Before Gorran's emergence, in October 2008, a reformist movement calling themselves RAK 'Movement for Democratic Alteration' emerged within the PUK. It aimed to tackle and point out the weaknesses of the party, and subsequently cure them. However, the personalistic tendency of party's decision-making authorized a special committee in order to expel those involved in that movement. Thus, no choices were left for the members dismissed from the PUK except for founding a new party. Gorran, therefore, was grounded on the PUK's constituencies who followed those reformist members, in addition to the other parties' associates and anti-corruption independents, whom raised their voices against misuses of public resources by incumbent parties.⁵⁰

According to Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq (2016), Gorran's strength stands on four pillars.⁵¹ In addition to PUK's ground division, the mass discontent and public dissatisfaction that, in fact, was demonstrated in the years before Gorran's establishment such as in Halabja and Sulaimani in 2005 and 2006 consecutively, the public pleas for welfare, transparency and the institutionalization of KR's political system are also considered albeit as dominant sources of the movement. Kurdish enlightened thinkers and intellectuals such as the *Rahand* group, independent media channels influenced the new generation to generate critical ways of thinking; thus, they played quiet but dramatic roles in raising public

⁴⁸ Interview conducted with Mr. Shorish Mustafa Rasul, known as Shorish Haji in Gorran's central office in Sulaimani, September 27th, 2016.

⁴⁹ Previous source.

⁵⁰ Previous source.

⁵¹ Interview conducted with Dr. Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq in Sulaimaniya October 8th, 2016.

awareness and consciousness.⁵²

Above all, the social movements such as the Referendum, the Until When Movement, civil society organizations, and social media activities also supported the expansion of liberated thought, especially in focusing on transparency, democracy, and human rights meaning and how they pave the way for fair elections. Thus, Gorran is a new model of partisanship in the Kurdistan region and is distinguished from other parties through several landmarks -the most important include their vision, adaptation to the KRI's political environment, and ideology.

While the visions of the pre-1991 parties were based on nationalistic, and Marxist views and focused on national independence and Kurdish rights, alternatively, Gorran's vision was grounded on fairness and systemness. Mohammed Tofiq Rahim (2016) highlights their party's focus on good governance and institutionalization of Kurdistan's political system. According to Rahim, Kurdistan region needs a better governing mechanism, i.e., transparency, improvement of the economy by expanding the private sector and creating job opportunities. Prosperity to Gorran does not only depend on the oil and tariff revenues; there are other sectors like agriculture, animal farming, and animal industries, in addition to the small businesses need be revived too. *"It is very awkward we see in this country we import even milk, and dairy products from Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran. What if we reconstruct the villages, stimulate the cultivation, make agrarian reforms, and improve animal farming to make the people have other sources of living than government?"* Apparently, institutional thinking of governance and economic reforms are two main goals of this party, based on which, they have designed their political development and eventually welfares plans.⁵³

Furthermore, Gorran's purpose is to maintain justice and fairness of public

⁵² Previous Source

⁵³ Interview conducted with Mr. Mohammed Tofiq, in Sulaimaniya on October 5th, 2016.

resources' distribution, changing the political system to a democratic system grounded on the distribution of power and peaceful power alteration. Unlike other political parties that turn to arm for settling their conflicts, Gorran was established, as a civil, political mobilization based on the capacity of political pressures, not the armed wing, hence it is another distinguishing landmark compared to previous parties. It is true that the IUK earlier to Gorran was established as a civil party devoid of an armed wing, but Gorran's case differs from the IUK, in that, the co-founders of Gorran are considered either as the co-founder of the PUK, or prominent members who participated in almost all the phases that the PUK has experienced, they even participated in the KDP revolutions. They separated from the PUK due to the inability of the latter in adapting to new mechanisms for pursuing civilized goals followed by the democratic era of Kurdish politics. Hence it is a disarmed party aims institutionalization of the political system, unifying military forces under the Kurdish national force, and pluralistic electoral competition.⁵⁴

Gorran has gained the status of an alternative to incumbent secular and Islamic parties with struggle era legacies. It targets individuals infuriated by the performance of previous parties. It has, in fact, marked a path for the youth to gain political visibility and gathered members from both secular and religious blocs in their leadership. Unlike traditional parties, those individuals who never have participated in struggle activities, or those who have not descended from the nobles of struggle era have rather found opportunity in Gorran. Sadiq (2016) attributes their popularity among the youth generation to three factors; instead of adherence to any specific ideology, they emphasize building a critical view, thereby institutionalizing the political process and economy administration. However, the agitated nature of their leadership and traditional society, like Kurdistan region, wherein the legacy and socioeconomic statutes are still accountable for political achievements, in fact, might hinder their further

⁵⁴ Interviews conducted with Ali Hama Salih, a KRP member of Gorran, and Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq in Sulaimanya September 30th, and October 8th, 2016 consecutively.

development, yet it is too soon to decide.⁵⁵

The party ran for the elections of 2009 and 2013 and won 25 and 24 seats, consecutively. Based on the consensual governments, they occupied both the deputy of the Iraqi parliament after the national elections of 2014 and the KRP's spokesman after the regional elections of 2013. However, likewise other parties, for two consecutive party's internal polls, Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin remained the president until his death.⁵⁶ The executive chamber that was adopted in their last internal election, as the highest executive body of the party, shall be constituted of seven members including the party's chairman, however still has not been structured.⁵⁷ The party has two decision-making bodies: (i) the General Council, which constitutes of sixty appointed members, of mainly experienced politicians and academics, who design the overall party's goals and find mechanisms to fulfill these goals. Furthermore, it rather functions as a consultancy body, which evaluates other organ's performances and prepares them for elections, while the other, National Council, is the supreme decision making organ constitute of 100 elected leadership members, who are representing nationwide branches of the party between two respective party's internal elections.⁵⁸

3.3.8. Shiu'i: Communist Party of Iraqi Kurdistan (KICP)

The development of modern and newly emergent working class in recently established industries such as railway and the developing oil sectors in the major cities of the latterly found state, has paved the way for the advent of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) in 1934. On the other hand, the political vacuum in Kurdistan region before the emergence of the KDP and the localized nature of

⁵⁵ Interview conducted with Yusif Mohammed Sadiq, The KRP spokesman, October 8th, 2016

⁵⁶ Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin passed away while he still was occupying the party's president position in May 2017.

⁵⁷ Following the death of the president of the party, this structure was elected and became the supreme executive organ of the Change Movement.

⁵⁸ See Gorran's internal constitution, 2013, sections 8 and 9, pages 42-54

each of *Hiwa*, *Rizgary* and *Shorish*, in addition to the demise of *Barzani* and *Sheikh Mahmoud's* revolutions, altogether opened the way before the communists to play crucial roles among the Kurds who adhered to the leftist ideology. Furthermore, the ICP's claims for Kurdish right in autonomy and self- rule further eased their expansion (Ismael, 2008).

According to Ismael (2008) owing to the repressions and prosecutions of the regime, the apparatus derived communist leadership fell in the hands of inexperienced young leaders who mostly came from the Kurdish branch of the party. Many Kurdish pioneers played leadership roles in the early age of the ICP, such as Bahadin Nuri, who was a dropout high school student, became the president of the party in 1949, after the execution of the party's previous president (Fahd). Other Kurds (Karim Ahmad, and Aziz Mohammed) followed Nuri to take over the Secretary-General and politburo executive roles of the party. Later, when the KDP demanded the dissolution of the ICP-Kurdish branch in 1957, many communist Kurdish left the ICP to join the KDP.

The Kurds stayed strongly associated with the communist leadership, even though the leftist nature of the majority of the Kurdish rebellion parties hindered the communist grassroots to expand and gain strength as it was in the ICP's leadership. Ismael (2008) attributes this to the central committee's decision for considering the Kurdish branch a substitutive of the party's leadership in the case of banning the party, or any unexpected political conditions that may occur in Baghdad, and the corresponding fate of the leaders. Especially after the fall of Qasim in 1962, the communist activists were destructively targeted by Nasrists, nationalists, and Baathists, therefore an alternative leadership was necessary.

One of the dilemmas this party suffered from is the distance between the decision makers and the grassroots populations. The remote leadership resulted in fractionalization within the party. While most of the Central Committee's members lived in Eastern Europe, the organs were suffering from internal problems, frustration, and suppression that they were receiving from the regime's

apparatus. Thus, the internal leadership decided to create a faction to reorganize the party and prepare for the second congress.⁵⁹ By 1967 the antipathy between these two wings escalated to the level of division, and the Central Leadership, i.e., those who were leading this movement held a conference in which they accused the party's Central Committee. They declared Arabization of communism ideology and condemned the agreement between the Baathist and Soviet Union. Eventually, they announced autonomy from international communism led by Moscow and portrayed themselves as the legitimate legatees of Fahd's Communist party.⁶⁰

When the new politburo executive of Communist-CL asked for Barzani's help, who advised them to fold the two wings of the party and attempt returning to the international communism platform, instead of relying on the KDP. After the emergence of the PUK, this faction supported the PUK and the JWQD Front while the Communist-CC leaned to the KDP and their JWD Front (Ismael, 2008). On the other hand, due to close links with international communism, the Communist-CC praised the Baathist coup in 1968 and expected their common ideological bases to ease their integration. But soon they faced a traumatic relationship with the dominant Iraqi party, after another round of suppression exercised by the Baathist against them, they fled to the mountains and sought help from the PUK to settle and begun armed conflicts against the Baathists. Later, their ideological preferences and close relations with the Soviet Union gathered them with the KDP, around the same table, and thus they left the PUK leading Front (Amin, 1997; Ismael, 2008).

Both Communist wings were Iraqi-based parties until 1979, when the Communist-CC's Kurdish branch held their first conference, especially after Aziz Muhammad, a Kurdish leader, took the control over the party. Thus, the fear from

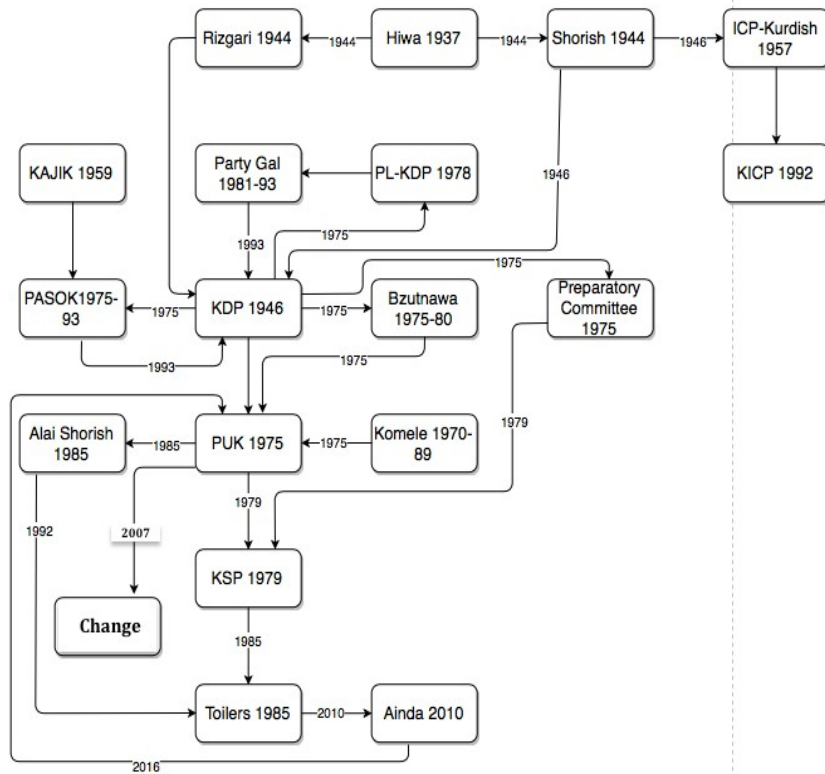
⁵⁹ This party held only three congresses from 1934-75.

⁶⁰ Usif Salman Usif known as Comrade Fahd was the co-founder of the communist party and the leader of the first party cells in Nasiriyah. He became the Secretary-General of ICP 1941-49. See the party's official webpage <http://www.iraqicp.com>

leftist-nationalistic-based parties in their main operative field of the Kurdistan region pushed them to separate the Kurdish branch. Nevertheless, despite its historical legacy, the party has remained a cadre party than a mass, or a catch-all party that can gather leftist Kurdish around their visionary aims. When the Kurdistan Front was established in 1988, both branches of the Communist party took parts. And after the uprising of 1991, the Iraqi Communist-CC held their fifth congress and declared the need for a Kurdistan Communist party. Thus, the Kurdish- based communist party emerged. They altered Leninist philosophy to a socialist democratic and adopted it in both Iraqi and Kurdistan region parties (Ismael, 2008).

The Kurdistan Communist Party has played a peripheral role in the Kurdish society, especially after KRI went through four years of civil war and divided domain areas between the PUK and the KDP. It remained a small grouping focused on pressure-based activities, targeting the two ruling parties to maintain peace and reconciliation. Even though they participated in the elections of 1992 with some independents, they only gathered 2.17% of the votes. In the elections of 2005, 2009 and 2013 they won one seat respectively.

Diagram 3.3: Kurdish Non-Religious and Secular Political Parties in Iraq (1937-2016)



Source: Own drawing from the literature presented in section 3.3

3.4. Islamic Political Parties in Kurdistan Region

The revival of political Islam and the Islamic Brotherhood notion in Iraq and Kurdistan Region dates back to the years following the IIWW, when the Pan Islamic notion struggle against Zionism was announced, post the emergence of Israel. Accordingly, some Islamic associations and groupings were founded in Iraq, such as Islamic Morals 1946, and Muslim Brotherhood Group 1946, which

later was introduced to Iraqi Kurdistan by Mahmoud Sawaff.⁶¹ Those pilgrims who met Hassan Banna in 1946 also communed some Islamic scholars and started to deliver various Islamic aligned ideologies to Iraqi Kurdistan from other cities of Iraq (Romano, 2007).

Throughout those years, Sawaff, who was the founder of the Islamic Brotherhood Group, had successfully expanded his group within Iraq, until 1954, when he met Mullah Osman Abdul-Aziz with some other Kurdish Islamic scholars in Halabja. The latter became the president of the Brotherhoods of Kurdistan in 1955 and is considered the founder of the first Islamic based political organization in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1979. After the latter started to expand and become salient in Kurdish society, the Mullahs, especially those who were members of the '*Kurdistan Religious Men Association*' rejected leftist ideologies and encouraged the Islamic youth to attack the communists and leftists.⁶² Accordingly, a fight between the two blocs in Halabja ensued, and consequently, several people were wounded, and one killed (Qadir, 2014).

By taking advantages of political and legal permissiveness endured by Iraqi republican regime after the fall of the Monarch system, an Iraqi Islamic party was established in 1960, and the Kurdish branch of the party was led by Osman Abdulaziz. Although, only after one year, this party was banned as several other emerged, and legalized political parties including the KDP, Iraqi Islamists, and Brotherhood became targeted by the regime. Eventually, likewise other political entities, it became a clandestine organization, striving for the law of Sharia against the communist regime of Abdulkarim Qasim. The military coups and frequent alteration of the systems emerged as obstacles before the ideological and some of the ethnic-based parties to maintain democratic activity. The failed coup by some military figures and fragments of the banned Islamic party in 1971

⁶¹ Mahmoud Sawaff was from Mosul, and one of the graduates of Azhar who was influenced by Brotherhood ideology.

⁶² Kurdistan Religious Men Association was a non-political organization based in Sulaimaniah in 1958.

increased the repression and threats and resulted in executions of 96 members of this clandestine group, while the rest fled to Gulf countries.

Nevertheless, this is considered a turning point for Kurdish Islamic Brotherhood towards becoming more nationalistic than being a part of international Islamic Brotherhood movement, which believed Islam as the best way of living and the identity of unification. During the previous three decades, some political and economic differences occurred between the Arabic and Kurdish leadership of this tendency, which mainly focused on the way of distributing the *Zakat (Alms)* that was gathered from Kurdish members, but was not distributed on poor Kurdish adherents of the organization. Additionally, the central Brotherhood and the Iraqi Brotherhood were criticized by the Kurdish Islamists for their two-faced morals in their relations with different Iraqi regimes, and their ambiguous stand on Kurdish Issues in Iraq (Qadir, 2014).

The notion of nationalism, therefore, started to gain roots in the Kurdish Islamic Brotherhood branch. Subsequently, in addition to the Hassan Banna and Sayyid Qutb's ideological sources, several other references were adopted by each of those Kurdish scholars who affiliated to the dissolved Islamic party of Iraq, and elaborated different sources of Jihad, in addition to the mechanisms for achieving the jihadist goals. Correspondingly, despite the fact that the *Kurdayatti* (Kurdishness) and use of Kurdish language in analyzing Quran verses were considered great sins in the earlier platforms, the new streams of Islamic groups integrated Islamism and the demands for Kurdish national rights, and issued several *Fatwas* (advisory opinions) against the Baathist regime in the national language of Kurdish, than the Arabic. The following sections discuss the fundamentals and the historical legacy of those three different Islamic parties that have been grounded in Iraqi Kurdistan's political arena since 1987, when the first Islamic Kurdish party was established, the diagram 3.4 visualizes their family tree.

3.4.1. Islamic Movement of Kurdistan-Iraq (IMK)

The dissolution of the Islamic party of Iraq in 1961 by Qasim did not disappoint the Islamic Kurdish scholars; rather, those Kurdish who concentrated on Islamic educating and morals, and initiated several Islamic organizations. Nevertheless, their diversity in opinion had resulted in becoming scattered among different Islamic streams and pivots. Qadir (2014) accredits this diversity to several exogenous factors related to the boost of Islamic notion in some neighboring and regional states like Iran, Afghanistan, and Egypt. He believes the first gulf war, and a crucial endogenous factor such as the absence of Islamic views in Kurdish national movement that was initiated since 1937 by leftists and nationalists had motivated Islamic activists to adopt it as a political ideology for empower straggling.

Despite the diversity of political and armed Islamic organizations, they amalgamated to find their own Islamic parties in 1987 and beyond. The first group was originated by the “*Union of Muslim Scholars of Kurdistan*”.⁶³ This group educated their members on Islamic morals and sharia law throughout the years after the ban of the Islamic party in 1961, primarily after their escape to Iran in 1982. They, from very early, divided into two wings; one supported international Muslim Brotherhood, while the other localized Islamic views and enhanced the Islamification of Kurdish society with national homogeneity characteristics (Romano, 2007). As the result, the ‘Islamic Relations Movement’ (1984) was established, and Sheikh Mohamed Barzinji appointed as its president. It considered a geographic-based party in the district of Halabja, and among those displaced Kurdish who followed the KDP after the collapse, and had been affected by the Islamic revolution. This group neither tended to apply sharia laws nor to establish an armed wing in its first years.

Due to the administrative lacunae and deficiency of partisanship, the Quran

⁶³ It was a non-political Sunni based organization, interview conducted with Mohammed Hakim October 6th, 2016 in Sulaimanyia.

analysis from different perspectives, and the growing conflicts between the old Brotherhood members and the new generation who had the affinity to armed involvement against the Iraqi regime, especially from those who came back from fighting against Soviets in Afghanistan, Islamism adopted several channels for mobilization (Romano, 2007). These differences resulted in two factions within the movement, one led by Salahadin Bahadin, the current president of the IUK, which called themselves Line One. The segment included those brotherhood members who took advice and guidance from the global brotherhood organization and separated gradually adopting a different path toward Islamism. While the other faction was the Islamist Kurds that was led by Mullah Sadiq Abdul-Aziz and had administrated more independently from the International Brotherhood Organizations, and pan-Arabism; they called themselves Line Two.⁶⁴ However, they were still considered the most influential faction of brotherhoods in Iraqi Kurdistan. Later, the top leaders of this faction escaped to Iran (1986), and managed to communicate the Islamic Relation (Qadir, 2014).

Before fleeing to Iran, Mullah Sadiq, the leading personality of the Line Two, signed a treaty with the (Al-Raye) grouping around 1985. Accordingly, Mullah Osman Abdul Aziz, Mullah Sadiq's older brother, was appointed the president of the Islamic-Kurdish Brotherhood and Mullah Sadiq remained the executive. Hence, once again the Kurdish brotherhood became a part of the Iraqi central brotherhood organization. However, only after a year some of the clandestine members separated and eventually were arrested by the Iraqi regime. Consequently, Mullah Sadiq Abdul Aziz and some of his followers fled to Iran, yet, he still chose to stay away from armed activities. The second congress of the party, which was held in the same year, elected Abdul Latif Wazhaiy, and an armed wing justified to be established under the name (Quran's Army).⁶⁵ Apparently, several reasons enhanced the military-based activities, the most important was the escape of Mullah Osman to Iran after the Halabja uprisings, and their call for struggle against Iraqi regime in their declaration of 1987 as

⁶⁴ Interview conducted with Soran Omar, Sulaimani, September 29th, 2016.

⁶⁵ The first party's president was Mohammed Barzinji

exiled Islamic Mullahs in Iran.⁶⁶ By the time Mullah Osman arrived, they had elected him the president and changed the name of the party and the armed forces to 'Islamic Movement of Kurdistan', (IMK) and 'Islamic Army' consecutively.

This party is considered the only Islamic party as regards armed struggle before 1991. It only held two congresses in that era, and in both Mullah Osman was elected as the party's president. Meanwhile, the politburo members, the party's tactics and policies, and the power distribution between the president and the leadership had witnessed many alterations. Nevertheless, likewise all the other Kurdish revolutionary parties, and despite the allegiance to Shura principles of Islamic sharia, that emphasizes collective decision and accountability, the party failed to achieve these ideologies, which eventually resulted in several divisions within the party.

In the general elections of 1992 for the KRP, with other Islamic streams including the Islamic Brotherhoods, and independent Islamic personalities, and under one Islamic list, they won 5.5% of the votes; nevertheless, it was not enough to pass the threshold. Their president Osman Abdul Aziz also ran for the presidency of the Kurdish Liberation Movement and gathered poor percentage in comparison to other candidates of the PUK and the KDP. Thus, they could not share the first parliamentary term, however, during the civil wars between the dominance parties, they participated in both of the fragmented governments of the KDP and the PUK separately, in each with two portfolios, which was an excellent compromise to recover the electoral failure. Later, in the elections of 2005, they won two seats, however, in the following elections they won only one seat.

There are two main reasons weakened this party, which mainly emphasize the internal organization of the party: its involvement in the civil war, and its frequent divisions. The party was involved in civil wars with PUK all over the region in

⁶⁶ Interview conducted with Soran Omar in Sulaimanya, September 29th, 2016.

1994, and later in 1997, after the invasion of Erbil by the Iraqi army as a reply to a call of the KDP, the IMK took the KDP's side and fought against the PUK in Halabja. It was a sharp swipe in the spine of this party, especially as their geographical strength was under the PUK's zone. The confidence was lost between the two parties, and accordingly a chain of restrictions by PUK was implemented against them.

Moreover, this party experienced several divisions; in 1992 Sadiq Abdul-Aziz's wing – the Islamic Brotherhood affiliated wing – separated from the Islamic Movement and called themselves Al-Nahdha 'Islamic Uprising Movement'.⁶⁷ They remerged with IMK in 1999 and formed a new party called (Islamic Unity). The reason behind unifying the two brothers' parties was family reunion than political achievements. The internal conflicts between Mullah Ali Abdul Aziz's wing, who took power after his older brother, Osman, and the faction moved by Mullah Ali Bapir, who considered themselves less extreme and had more nationalistic allegations, reached their peak after this unity.⁶⁸ In fact, these two parties' legacy was different. One was descended from brotherhoods and had not shown any affinity to armed activities, while the other rooted from jihadist activities, was involved in armed conflicts, and participated in the rebellion struggles against the Iraqi regime. However, Sadiq's wing merged in his brother's party to check the balance in his favor and prevented Mullah Ali Bapir from controlling the party.

Experts agree that the internal conflicts and disagreements within the IMK emerged from the separatists' concerns regarding the party's internal democracy and future strategic planning, and the mechanisms to boost public activities solidified internal party's organization on civil bases than militaries. In contrast, the other fragments objected and did not pay attention to the increasing al-Qaida irregularities within their organs, *"We were observing Al-Qaida sneaking to our forces particularly from Soran's Force, which later founded 'Ansar Al Islam' and*

⁶⁷ Interview conducted with Soran Omar, September 29th, 2016, Sulaimani.

⁶⁸ Interview conducted with Mohhamed Hakim, in Sulaimaniya October 6th, 2016

'Jund Al Islam.'"⁶⁹

Despite the willingness of Mullah Sadiq, his followers had switched position and preferred Mullah Ali Bapir's faction, and accordingly, Mullah Ali Abdul Aziz lost the presidency position. Abdul Aziz with no intentions to leave, rather, sought for equilibrium between the two wings. He proposed the appointment of several other members to the leadership council without an election and in favor of his faction, but Bapir refused. This de jure remained until 2001 when the 'Islamic Group of Kurdistan, the IGK' was announced by Mullah Ali Bapir, shortly after he and his followers left Islamic Unity.⁷⁰ Consequently, Islamic Unity retained their old name, Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, and both brothers remained in their own family-running party. Mullah Ali Abdul Aziz continued as the chairman while his brother Sadiq served the deputy of the party.

The second fragmentation in the IMK was a chain of divisions, which transpired during and after the merge discussed above. The separatists were aiming to find more radical movements such as Hamas, and the Second Force of Soran. The former grouping splintered in 1997 when the IMK with the mediation of Iran reached an agreement with the PUK after clashes continued for several months. They were those Jihadist Kurdish veterans who participated in the Afghanistan-Soviet war and returned to Kurdistan Region after the uprising of 1991. They considered collaboration with secular forces, like the PUK, against their religious views; especially they criticized their own party for refraining from imposing sharia laws in areas under their control (Romano, 2007).

⁶⁹ Ansar al-Islam was a radical Islamist group of Iraqi Kurds and Arabs who had vowed to establish an independent Islamic state in Iraq. The group was formed in December 2001, and on the fall of 2003, a statement was issued calling all jihadists in Iraq to unite under the name Ansar al-Sunnah. Since then, the likelihood is that AI has posted all claims of attack under the name AS. AI is closely allied with al-Qa'ida and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's group, Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn in Iraq. Some members of AI trained in al-Qa'ida camps in Afghanistan and the group provided Safe Haven to al-Qa'ida fighters before Operation Iraqi Freedom. Since OIF, AI has become one of the leading groups engaged in anti-Coalition attacks in Iraq and has developed a robust propaganda campaign" (Security Department of USA, Terrorist Groups, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/45323.pdf>) and interview conducted with Mohammed Hakim, Sulaimaniya, October 6th, 2016

⁷⁰ Interview conducted with Mr. Soran Omar in Sulaimaniyah 28/9/2016.

The second radical grouping, “Second Force of Soran” split from the IMK, following the IGK separation. They were those Islamic militants, who had been trained for guerrilla wars and were settled in several villages and towns on the border of Iran like Khalifan, Soran and Erbil, the capital of the KRI, under the KDP authority. Because of the pressures imposed on them by the KDP, they fled those areas and settled in Biara, a town on the border of Iran under the PUK control, and called themselves Second Force of Soran. Both the IMK and the IGK tried to entice them; *“whatever fraction this military unites decided to join would be the stronger”*.⁷¹ However, Second Force of Soran remained unbiased and decided to become another independent faction, and adopted a ‘Wahhabi’ interpretation of Quran.⁷² Some sources declared that the ‘Islamic Unity’ was unaware of this forces’ recent-established links with Turkish Hezbollah, Taliban of Afghanistan, and Al-Qaida, *“They surreptitiously were trained by Al-Qaida in Afghanistan and led by Abu Abdullah Al Shafee, later it was revealed he acquired his leadership skills from Afghanistan”*.⁷³

A few months following the convergence of ‘ Hamas’ and ‘Tawhid’ in ‘Islamic Unity Front’ in 2001, Second Force of Soran also joined them and all in unison formed the extreme and radical jihadist force the ‘Jund al Islam’. At the end of the same year, Mullah Krekar’s ‘Reformist Group’, which also separated from the IMK joined this recently established group and altered the name to ‘Ansar al-Islam’. They continued in the areas of Biara and Sargat until it was dislodged from those areas by Americans troops and the ruling Kurdish forces in 2003

⁷¹ Interview conducted with Soran Omar, September 29th, 2016, Sulaimani.

⁷² “Wahhabism” is a puritanical form of Sunni Islam and is practiced in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, although it is much less rigidly enforced in the latter. The word “Wahhabi” is derived from the name of a Muslim scholar, Muhammad bin Abd al Wahhab, who lived in the Arabian peninsula during the eighteenth century (1703-1791). Today, the term “Wahhabism” is broadly applied outside of the Arabian peninsula to refer to a Sunni Islamic movement that seeks to purify Islam of any innovations or practices that deviate from the seventh-century teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions” (Blanchard, 2008: CRS-1).

⁷³ Interviews conducted with Mr. Mohhamed Hakim, and Mr. Soran Omar separately in Sulaimaniya, October 6th, and September 29th, 2016.

(Romano, 2007).

3.4.2. Islamic Union of Kurdistan (IUK)

The uprising of 1991 offered the exiled people and those who left the KRI, including the Islamic Brotherhood, an opportunity to return and participate in rebuilding the political structure. The high ranking Muslim Kurds who had settled in Iran in the mid-1980s, and commenced the first phase of brotherhood strategy amongst those settled in diaspora camps, came back to take advantage from the new political conditions accompanied the uprising. According to Romano (2007), Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood launched their Islamic strategy in three phases; 'Establishment or Indoctrination' is the stage where recruiting and educating activists have been proceeded to familiarize the Muslim Brotherhood's mission. 'Formation or Expansion' is the second stage, where they expanded their circles and tried to engage and organize their supporters. In this stage, they targeted university students, trade unions, public services and the military through delivering charity, clinic, schools and social services to ensure and strengthen their penetration in the targeted peoples' consciousness. The third stage, 'Implementation, and Direct Actions'; is the final stage where they took over the power using legal or without legal means. It seems the uprising of 1991 in the KRI opened the way before the second and third stages to be achieved by those returning groups, while the first phase already was fulfilled in the struggle era.

This party's 'Indoctrination' dates back to the time when Salahadin Bahadin, the current president of the IUK, with twenty of his followers, who had not joined Islamic Relations of Kurdistan, decided to establish a group called 'Ansar Al-Islam in Halabja'.⁷⁴ Only after one year, they renamed the group 'Islamic Brotherhood' to amalgamate all Brotherhood fragments survived the Baathist regimes' suppressions following ban of 'Islamic Party' in 1961. It commenced

⁷⁴ This Ansar-Al-Islam is different from that of 2001, which split from the IMK.

Islamic calls in 1985, especially after Bahadin's visit to the Arab Emirates for asking financial supports from Iraqi Islamic Brotherhoods, who fled the country after the regime's persecutions in 1961. He delivered a message from them to Abdul-Aziz brothers confirming they are against military confrontation with the Iraqi regime "*they must not think of armed struggle against Iraqi regime*" which is considered the turning point for a cold war between those two Islamic groupings (Qadir, 2014: 35).

However, Islamic Brotherhood stayed clandestine and had not prospered until after 1993, when the issuance of 'The Political Parties' and 'NGOs' laws was stipulated by the founding National Assembly. The two bills concentrated on the organization of Kurdish society and developing democracy through allowing other political forces represent various interest groups, and accordingly had an opportunity to organize publically. Thus the Islamic Brotherhood in the beginning established some charity and educational organizations until 6/2/1994 when they amalgamated those subordinate groups and announced the Islamic Union of Kurdistan, the IUK.⁷⁵

The second stage, the 'Expansion' was covered with charity activities delivering support to needy people, by taking advantages of severe economic conditions, which followed the uprising. Before their legal foundation, several underground cells were managed to survive the struggle era that structured amongst teenagers and parents of those children who were receiving alms or were educated and trained by those clandestine groups. The charity groups were mostly supported by Islamic international relief organizations. They were teaching children in private and organized schools with Islamic values and morals according to Hassan Banna and Said Qutb's philosophies, and purposely targeted those who were optimally skillful to fulfill their missions. Thus, unlike the other Islamic parties of Iraqi Kurdistan, Islamic Union of Kurdistan, achieved their third stage at the time of its legal establishment in 1994 (Leezenberg, 2001).

⁷⁵ Interview with Abu-Bakr Haladini, Sulaimanyia, September 26th, 2016.

This party has never been involved in armed conflicts and is considered the first legitimate and civil, political party that does not have a military wing, and was founded upon the KRP's legislation.⁷⁶ They define themselves as an educational and reformist group that believes in Islam as the program of life. In the sixth congress, they dramatically changed their stands from internationalist Islamism to a nationalistic Islamic party calls for Iraqi Kurdistan's independence. Abu Bakir Haladni (2016) accredits the adoption of the strategic goal of statehood building of the Kurds in Southern Kurdistan (Iraqi Kurdistan) to the failure of other political forms that the Kurdish have had experienced throughout the last century,

"We believe that this is a decent pace toward the peoples' satisfaction. We have experienced in the past autonomy and Federalism, and could not fulfill the people's need. Therefore we believe we have to build the Kurdish state on four pillars; the internal building of the statehood; collaboration with Baghdad; explanation to the regional countries that this is not threatening their interests; and finally, supports and immunity from the international community."

The Islamic Union of Kurdistan has never been involved in civil wars; however, at the early age, it experienced harassment from both ruling parties. The hostility of the KDP escalated by the time they decided to run for the national elections of 2005 separately from the Kurdistan Alliance list, a platform for all ethnic-division political parties competed in the KRI. Consequently, their primary offices were burned in areas under the KDP control and resulted in the killing of nineteen members. This party won ten seats in the last elections of 2013 (chapter four).

3.4.3. Islamic Group of Kurdistan (IGK)

This is the youngest Islamic Kurdish political party, which was established in

⁷⁶ Interview with Abu-Bakr Ali (Kawani), Sulaimanyia September 28th, 2016.

accordance with the political parties law in the KRI and following the split that occurred within the IMK. After the majority of those old brotherhoods, who held Wahhabi views within the former disintegrated Islamic Unity inclined to Mullah Ali Bapir, they altogether founded the Islamic Group of Kurdistan in 31/5/2001. According to Romano (2007), despite their Wahhabi thoughts, they have shown more patience and cautiousness and identify themselves a non-violent Salafi movement integrated Islamic view and nationalistic goals to establish a Kurdish state based on the law of Sharia. Notwithstanding, the party's ideology is not restricted to only one Islamic methodology; rather the IGK is a party grounded on multi Islamic thoughts originated from the **exegetics of the Quran and attempts made by their leader Ali Bapir**. They call themselves a Kurdistan-based party with an Islamic reference that has chosen to adopt a localized paradigm for Islamic invitations, and it prefers ideological autonomy than subordinating to any Islamic state, or international Islamic groups.⁷⁷

Apparently, there are several branches of Islamist view; the Saudi line, for example, is divided into Madkhali Salafist, Scientific Salafist, and Jihadist Salafist; and there is also a Brotherhood, which has many paradigms and schools; Tunisian, Turrabi (Hassan Turrbai from Sudan), Egyptian, and Said Qutb. Each Islamic movement follows one of these schools including the Islamic Union and the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan. However, the IGK has its differentiated characteristics, and therefore experts agree they marched on a more local and nationalistic view of Islamic goals. However, Hakim (2016) emphasizes the reason inspired combining these national and religious elements is their own leader's capability of handling and integrating both sentiments in one unified objective;

"Mullah Ali Bapir's philosophy is original and authentic; therefore we adopt it as the theoretical framework of our party. He is a capable Islamic scholar for writing exegetics, and memorization of Quran. He speaks fluent Arabic and has written eight volumes on 'How To Understand

⁷⁷ The IGK's Bylaw of 2015, General Principles, Article 2, page 9.

Quran From The God's Verses' and thus, it is normal for us to see him a scholar and a leader simultaneously".⁷⁸

The early years of this party was escorted by internal conflicts and international community's skepticism of their reliability, as regards their involvement in the escalation of extremism in the MENA. The antagonistic relations with their mother party also affected the party's internal organization and integrity, especially as they continued for several years and was fueled by the general understanding of terrorism. Additionally, the PUK's multiple confrontations with Islamic forces resided in their area had further damaged this party's reputation and limited their capacity for expansion. The third PUK's war against Jund Al-Islam and Ansar Al-Islam, in neighboring areas of the IGK's dominion, further had increased the traumas between the PUK and all Islamic based parties scattered in that area. Therefore, the IGK leaders decided to rescue the party from terrorism accusation put forward by both Kurdish parties and Americans by abandoning arms and moving the party's central offices to Bitwen Vale.⁷⁹

However, securing their future needed integrating into democratic practicing, of which they still had no experience. The USA indictments and raids targeted this party's assets and caused damages to both their reputation and structure. It seems that the attitudes and appearances of the IGK members resembled those of al-Qaida. According to Soran Omar (2016), when Colin Paul, the Secretary of States, stressed the existence of chemical weapon factory in Sargad (i.e., the area where these extremist groups had settled), the IGK became certain it was no longer safe to stay next to this group. But most of the Sargad was under the IGK's control, and the USA's goal was to legitimize their invasion of Iraq. Therefore the party decided to keep itself aloof from any involvement, *"yet it was impossible, the president of the party; the seigneur, and around 600 activists have been arrested in that process and imprisoned for twenty-two months by the USA. Surprisingly the seigneur released from jail to become a member of Iraqi*

⁷⁸ Interview with Mohammed Hakim, Sulaimaniya October 6th, 2016

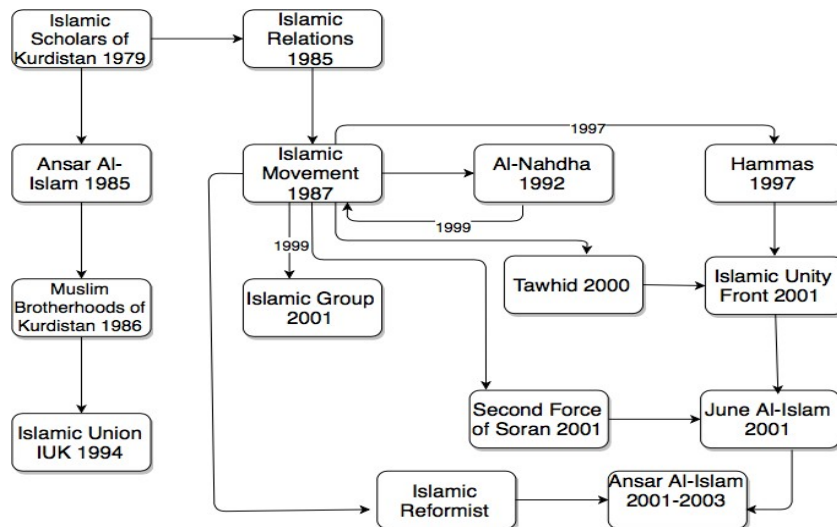
⁷⁹ Interview conducted with Mr. Soran Omar in Sulaimania, September 29th, 2016.

Seemingly, the international pressures primarily from the U.S. forced them to abandon their military wing in 2003 as well as the IMK and forced the party to adapt further democratic means. Nevertheless, the attitude alteration was apparent only after their party president was released following the arrests he experienced under the terrorism codes in 2003. Thus they started to participate in democratic life, and shared the KRP with six seats, while they won three electoral seats in the Iraqi parliament. In some points, it can be seen that they are in conflict with civil society, especially in those related to women rights, individual liberations, and the application of Sharia laws (Mofidi, 2016). Nonetheless, the democratic constitution of Iraq and the electoral rules and regulations imposed them to adopt many internal dynamics that are in disharmony with some schools of interpretation of Quran.

Their electoral strength mainly comes from Halabja, Sulaimani, and Erbil, while they are weak in Duhok and Zakho. They won six seats in each of the elections of 2005, and 2013, yet they ran with several other political parties in an allied list in the elections of 2009 and altogether won only 13 seats (chapter five).

Diagram 3.4: Kurdish Islamic Political Parties in the KRI (1985-2016)

⁸⁰ Previous source.



Source: Own drawing from the literature presented in section 3.4 of this chapter

3.5. Conclusion

Based on the literature presented in this chapter, Kurdish people generally are known for being the largest nation without a state and are divided over four countries in different phases - each as a settlement made between their lands conquests. Kurdistan, the potential Kurdish state is a rich area in both topology and natural resources; therefore the unrests, which occurred in their territory mostly were consequences of a power struggle between those saw it as a potentially appealing market for generating wealth. The political history of the Kurds mainly reflects revolutions for national rights, and dates back to about two century ago; however, the history of political parties is new. It only started around the 1940s, of last century.

The social and political cleavages, especially crosscutting cleavages such as linguistic, geographical, ideological, and socioeconomic positions reflected on these political parties and inspired them to become platforms of different interests and social forces. The legacy of partisanship in Kurdish society is very recent, comparison to other countries and states followed the third wave of democracy;

therefore Kurdish parties characterized with short- living parties emerged from fragmentations and splits of mother parties; namely the KDP, and later the PUK. Furthermore, the tribalism and chieftain's power played fundamental roles in most of the struggle era parties and became a fueling dynamic for emerging conflicts between party leaders, and eventually, many splinters found their ways to establish interest based parties oriented around their co-founder's private interests. Nevertheless, this tendency has been stimulated by clientelism and patronage in the democratization phase, and eventually, none of the Kurdish political parties did have a chance to consolidate internal party's organizations and control the trendy personalism characterizing their decision-making. Perhaps, following this introductory chapter, we have a clear view as to which structural and institutional factor is more efficient to be discussed in the coming analytical chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR: STRUCTURAL EFFECTS

Lipset and Rokkan social cleavage theory (1967) emphasizes four classical socio-structural cleavages for political mobilization in Europe, yet in an investigative capacity, someone can apply them in other regions and in-depth study cases to review whether those four divisions exert the same influence that they had in Western Europe. Apparently, neither capital vs. labor, urban vs. rural or state vs. mosque cleavages was salient in Kurdistan region and has never been significant sources of political mobilization.⁸¹ At least not until 2009 when the Gorran movement started to emphasize the inequity of economic distribution as one of the political system malfunctionings, yet, not as the core factor for mobilization. Therefore this chapter discusses several other relevant variables, such as structural variables related to racial, and ethnicity, territorial, linguistic and religious motivations.⁸²

In fact, contemporary research on ethnic parties has opposed the prevailing understanding of ethnicity as one of the leading factors that explain the alignment of voters in many states and regions. Nevertheless, Lindberg, Morrison (2007), Fridy (2007), Erdman (2007), Norris and Mates (2003), and Cheesemean and Ford (2007) point out the close relationship between ethnicity and voting behavior in developing states. Mozaffar et al. (2003) emphasize the importance of ethnopolitical dispersion and geographical location of ethnic groups in the emergence of political parties. Ozbudun (2013), Sayari and Ezmier (2002), Gunes-Ayata and Ayata (2002), Horzog (2011), stress the social cleavage's – ethnicity, racial, religious, sectarian line and linguistic – influence on party system polarization and fragmentation in Turkey. These factors may also be the primary causal variables for the interpretation of formation parties and voting behavior, and the lack of institutionalization in the context of the sub-party

⁸¹ Phone interview with Mohammed Shareef, Valencia, January 7th, 2018

⁸² Phone interviews conducted with Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq, Shiekh Latif Shiekh Mustafa, Seevan Saeed, and Mohammed Shareef, Valencia, January 5th, 6th, and 7th, 2018, respectively.

system in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

According to Erdman (2007), when political elites invest social conflicts and express these issues through political parties within emerging political institutions, divisions may occur permanently in those party systems, and therefore the more the fragmentations are, the more significant is their role in shaping the polity. Besides, electoral behavior cannot be explained by only one variable, and perhaps other institutional and economic conditions are relevant too; nevertheless, they are beyond this chapter's aim.

Nationalism, linguistic and ethnic-based cleavages have not directly been included in the Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model. However, they might form the salient aspiration for political mobilization in Kurdish society and can be fitted in the context of core versus periphery of the two-abovementioned scholars. These cleavages highlight the state's cultural dominance in those heterogeneous societies where various ethnic groups exist. Thus, within the context of the theory introduced by Lipset-Rokkan (1967: 13), these cleavages might be expressed as the 'territorial opposition' under the conditions of general suffrage "*the commitment to the locality and its dominant culture.*" And can be utilized as one of the social cleavages that stimulate the political mobilization and emergence of political parties (Erdmann, 2007).

Furthermore, it looks like political culture such as that related to the tribalism (Ross and Mohammadpur, 2016; Kennedy 2015), territorial concentration and, to a lesser degree, the religious views have played variable roles in political mobilization throughout the history of Iraq (Bruinessen, 2002; 1992). Apparently and based on Huntington's (1965:394) definition "*The process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability*" the tribalism in Kurdish political structure has emerged as an institutionalized informal institution. It may have an extended history, which dates back even to before the establishment of Iraq. The religious cleavage, nevertheless, might have had less influence on emergence, and proliferation of Kurdish parties at least until 1991.

The territorial concentration, on the other hand, has become a salient variable since the demise of September revolution; however, these two cleavages' role has become more significant in the context of Kurdish party system following the sub-national (regional) elections of 1992 and national elections of (2005), respectively.⁸³

This chapter aims to elaborate on the influence of the social cleavages on Kurdish political mobilization and the emergence of political parties and the KRI party system. Furthermore, through underscoring their role in the voting behavior in the context of both Iraqi and Kurdish parties, it aims to highlight the path dependency of some cleavages like nationalism and ethnic cleavage, tribalism, and the geographical focus of political parties. The nationalism and ethnic cleavage mainly accentuate the historical path dependence of Kurdish parties, supported by Chandra's (2011) qualitative in-depth technical analysis for ethnicity character of political parties. Three of Chandra's (2011) qualitative gauges; party's name, explicit messages and political group's national electoral turnouts have been employed to determine how these tendencies aftermath have affected constructions of Kurdish parties and then the polity. Tribalism, similar to nationalism, has been measured by qualitative data from semi-structured interviews supported by the political parties' bylaws and political programs. An in-depth investigation has been developed to highlight the relationship between linguistic, religious, and territorial aspects of tribalism and the impact of traditional and neo-tribalism on fractionalization, personalism escalation and weakening internal organization of Kurdish parties and eventually party system fluidity. Finally, geographical concentration of Kurdish parties has been measured by Jones and Mainwaring's (2003) index for parties and party systems' nationalization score, which is a good gauge for measuring political parties rootedness (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995) and autonomy (Meleshevech, 2007).

⁸³ Interviews conducted with Abubakir Haladni, and Sarwar Abdulrahman Omar, Sulaimani, September 26th and October 6th, 2016.

4.1. Nationalism

Scholars agree the nationalist sentiment in Kurdish imagination has boosted following the re-organization of Ottoman territories based on Wilson's principles of territorial nation-states and the straightforward engagement of the Western powers (Kaya, 2012). They also agree that this sentiment has increased the political and ideological impetus in the Kurdish areas. In the context of this study, I treat nationalism and ethnicity as two intertwined and interchangeable sociopolitical ideologies that emphasize the cultural resembling of their advocates. Based on Chandra's (2011: 151 and 154) definition, an ethnic party is that "*champions the particular interests of one ethnic category or set of categories*" and an ethnic group is that "*comprises individuals with a sense of sharing identity.*" While identity categories based on "*the region, religion, sect, language family, language, dialect, caste, clan, tribe or nationality of one's parents or ancestors, or one's own physical features.*"

According to Eriksen (1991: 265), it is very likely during political tensions that nationalists and ethnicists underline their cultural differences against their adversaries. Furthermore, political movements usually are assumed to present both nationalist and ethnic characters, therefore "*unsuccessful nationalisms tend to become transformed into ethnicities whose members reside more or less uncomfortably under the aegis of a state which they do not identify with their own nationality or ethnic category.*" Nationalism involves, thus, the ideological validation of a state, actual or hypothetical. Therefore, it is very likely that sometimes ethnicity is interpreted as a form of static nationalism, which might eventually, or temporary, become noticeable nationalism.

In multi-ethnic, and culturally diversified states, ethnicity may lead to conflicts between some ethnicities or between them and the government, and eventually these conflicts transfer to nationalism or nationhood promotions. The political system that is controlled by dominant ethnic has been observed to typically prefer encompassed organization, demonstrating incompatibility with collaborating

action along ethnic lines, and thus conflicts between dominant ethnic (representing the state) and others would be inevitable. Therefore, based on Breuilly's (1993) classification, it is more likely that Kurdish territorial based nationalism aims to attain the state power or use it, in order to benefit the Kurdish people (Kaya, 2012). And despite the fragmentation of Kurdish nationalism among diverse political groups, the territory has become the unifying force and the core identification, according to which the political believes and goals have been set.

Scholars agree the revolution of Sheikh Obeidullah Nahari (1880) was the first cornerstone of Kurdish nationalism and modern political mobilization (Guida, 2006; Gunter, 2008; Klein, 2015; Sorensen, 2008; McDouall, 1996). However, salient mobilization toward nationalism began with cultural and social movements in the last decade of nineteenth century. The first bilingual book (Kurmanji-Turki) was launched in Cairo by the sons of Badrakhan and was entitled "Kurdistan" (1898). It aimed to motivate the Kurdish tribes and the sheikhs to unite and advance national speeches. Later, it became the platform for several intellectual Kurds in Geneva, London and Folkestone. Simultaneously, many political and cultural organizations under the Ottomans were established and in fact, petitioned for some cultural reformation. Kurdistan Ta'ali wa Taraqi Jamiyati (The Society for the Rise and Progress of Kurdistan), for example, was founded by a group of intellectual Kurds in Istanbul, demanding language rights and educational reforms. Similar Kurdish groups were established in Diyarbakir, Bitlis, Mosul, and Baghdad. Additionally, cultural groupings such as Teavun we Teraki Gazetesi (Kurdish Mutual Aid and Progress Gazette), Hitavi Kurd (Kurdish Sun) and Hivi-ya Kurd Jamiyati (Kurdish Hope Society), were overtaken by political activities and encouraged Kurdish society to become politically active. Nevertheless, none could hit the target as the Khoybun did after the collapse of Ottomans (McDowall, 1996).

Khoybun (Independence) was a political organization founded in Syria by a group of immigrated Kurds to France in 1927. Mainly, they were former military

personnel who had served in the Ottoman forces and aimed inspiring people to struggle against the Turks.⁸⁴ Later it expanded to become the base of all platforms of Kurdish nationalism inside the divided parts and outside of Kurdistan, especially in Paris and Cairo. This movement gathered Kurdish leaders from around the world and called for political activities, which later became the roots for almost all the nationalistic military struggles, especially of Syrian and Turkey's Kurds. Nonetheless, by the time of the IWW, it was restricted by the French government for anti-Turks activities (Jwaidah, 2006; Gunter, 2008; McDowall, 1996; Durham, 2010).⁸⁵

Earlier to Khoybun formation, the political situation in Iraqi Kurdistan was thrilling. There were at least nine political-nationalist groupings, and one nationalist-Islamist based groupings, demanding Kurdish independence and the fulfillment of the Sevres Treaty (Fatih, 2012). The mobilization was under Sheikh Mahmoud, who was confirmed as Hukmdar (Governor) of Sulaimaniyah division by Wilson on 1st December 1918 and initiated protest against the British performance in the Kurdish area. This rebellion was projected as a teaching to the other Kurdish tribes that it was possible to confront the British; and consequently, many other tribes in Erbil and other parts of Iraqi Kurdistan had stirred. Abruptly, many major tribes of Kirkuk, Sulaimaniya, Halabja, Rewanduz, Pishder, Barzan, Zepar, and Kifri rose up against the British, and by October 1922 almost all the districts and sub-districts of Kurdistan of Iraq joined the revolt. They left no choice to British other than recalling Sheikh Mahmoud from his detention in Kuwait and reappointing him as the president of Kurdish Council.⁸⁶ The latter was a council established by British from Kurdish activists and nobles who were petitioning for fundamental Kurdish rights within Iraq. Shortly, without the British permission, and with the support of many other tribal leaders and non-tribal educated professionals who refused Arab rules, Sheikh Mahmoud decided

⁸⁴ According to McDowall (1996: 2003), the Kurdish exiles who founded the Khoybun Movement had conducted their first meeting in Lebanon, not in Syria

⁸⁵ Also known as the Kurd Taraqi was Ta'awunJamiyati, the Kurdish Society for Progress and Mutual Aid (McDowall, 1996).

⁸⁶ Sheikh Mahmoud has been arrested and exiled forcefully to Kuwait after the rebel of 1919 (Yildiz, 2004)

to declare the Kurdistan Kingdom and appointed himself the King of Kurdistan. Eventually, this became a severe issue requiring specific British attention for at least until 1927 in the recently established Iraq (McDowall, 1996; Yildiz, 2004).⁸⁷ In addition to the continuing revolutions, the cultural activities were supporting the rootedness of Kurdish national identity, primarily through the political publication in Kurdish-Sorani language entitled Peshkawtin (Progress). The Progress was first established in (1919) with the provision of the British after the termination of the first revolt of Sheikh Mahmoud (McDowall, 1996; Salih, 2016). It looks like the Kurdish nationalism in this era was initiated by some nationalists with diverse backgrounds, whether descending from tribes, noble, educated families or intellectual Kurdish of Khoybun and Peshkawtn's activists.

There are many indigenous, and exogenous causal variables that mobilized Kurdish of Iraq toward national movement and eventually to the emergence of a national political party. Specifically - the detention of Sheikh Mahmoud for the second time in 1927; the continuing airstrikes by the government of Iraq with the assistance of the British army against the Sulaimaniyah public marches of 6/9/1930, which highlighted Kurdish rights in Iraq and release of Sheikh Mahmoud from detention. The Barzanis' three consecutive revolutions during (1933-1943) in the extreme north of the newly founded Iraq further mobilized the Kurds. Additionally, the rise of intellectuals and non-tribal groups who increasingly developed the awareness for the national rights of Kurds after the revival of cultural activities in the Kurdish language through diversified newspapers and periodical publications. The establishment of the Communist party as an opposition to the nobles and tribal ruling that was increasingly affecting the government of Iraq during the monarch system; the secular movements against Sufism and Mullah's schoolings altogether had shaped a new political atmosphere revealing, to some extent, a better-organized mobilization toward the establishment of a nationwide party. Nonetheless, it only was fulfilled

⁸⁷ He was placed under detention until his death in 1956 (Yildiz, 2004)

after the collapse of the Mahabad Republic, and the ban of Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDP-Iran) under Qazi Muhammad's leadership (see chapter three).⁸⁸

On the other hand, Iraq, as a recent monarchy state was established in 1921 and according to the San Remo Conference (1920), it was administrated under the British mandate until 1932; nonetheless, Britain still advanced considerable extent of power until the popular revolution of 1958, and the collapse of Monarchy system. The main reason for establishing this fragmented and fragile state was to extend a hope to protect Mesopotamia from Russia and Turkey's threats (Ahmad, 2012). The country was formed from an amalgamation of three incongruent provinces of the collapsed Ottoman Empire (Ahmad, 2010). The very north provinces' structural composition was determined by the majority of pro-nationalist moderate Sunni Kurds, with a small percentage of Shia nationalist Kurds dwelled along the borderline between Diyala and Baghdad provinces. Additionally, the Turkmen, and Arabs who mostly were also Sunnis and inhabited only in Mosul and Kirkuk districts side by side the Kurds and Christians. The other two districts of Sulaimani and Erbil, to a remarkable extent, were both homogeneous concerning religion and ethnicity and comprised of Kurdish – only a small percentage of Turkmen and Christians were living in Erbil. (Table 4.1) shows the ethno-religious divisions of the Mosul Vilayet during the League nation's final decision of annexing it to Iraq.

Table 4.1: League of Nation's Ethno-religious Data of Mosul Vilayet (1925)

District	Kurds	Turks	Arabs	Christians	Jewish	Total
Sulaimaniyah	189,900	0	75	0	1,550	191,525
Erbil	170,650	2,780	11,700	3,900	2,750	191,780
Kirkuk	47,000	26,100	35,650	2,400	0	111,650
Mosul	114,200	9,750	119,500	55,000	7,550	306,000

⁸⁸ The Mahabad Republic was a short-lived self-rule Kurdish republic established in the city of Mahabad/Iran in 1945 by Qazi Mohammad.

Total	522,250	38,630	166,925	61,300	11,850	800,955
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Source: Dundar (2012); adapted from League of Nations, *Question of Frontier between Turkey and Iraq. A Report Submitted to the Council by a commission instituted by the Council Resolution of September 30, 1924* (Geneva: League of Nations: C.400. 1925, VII. no. 142, pp. 76–77).

Meanwhile, the significant components of Baghdad province were Sunni Arabs, with a considerable percentage of Shia Arabs, who were yet not strong enough to fabricate ethnoreligious conflicts, and a small portion of each of Shia Kurds, and Turkmen, in addition to other ethnoreligious groups like Jewish and Christians. The Basra province, on the other hand, was more homogenous than the other two previous provinces and the vast majority of people were Shia Arabs with a small portion of Sunni Arabs.

Perhaps the geographical position and ethnically homogeneous aspect had prevented the latter two provinces from internal unrests, yet the ethnoreligious asymmetry of Mosul's province delayed annexation and it was only after 1926 that the British finally decided to join it to the rest of Iraq (Ahmad, 2010). In the first place, this was to diminish the Shia dominance and to ally Sunni Kurdish and Arabs on ideological base, though, the Kurds by preference have been motivated by national aspiration than religious and sectarian lines therefore this was evidently proved as a challenging goal to achieve (Weinstock, 2005).⁸⁹

It looks like, King Faisal, the first Iraqi King, understood that within the confines of this structural mosaic, political maintenance is difficult to be drawn, and after twelve years of ruling, still, he was grieving the persistence of religious, ethnic, and tribal identities over loyalty to the state. The sectarian conflicts in the early years devastated him in a way he could not hide it,

“There is still - and I say this with a heart full of sorrow - no Iraqi people but unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any

⁸⁹ See the map presented in (Appendix V) to visualize the ethnoreligious distribution in Iraq.

patriotic idea, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil, prone to anarchy, and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatsoever, and we want...to mold a nation out of these masses? He who understands the difficulty of molding...a nation under such circumstances must recognize the effort necessary for such an achievement” (Weinstock, 2005: 13).

The Kurdish struggle for national rights, especially educational rights in the native tongue, under the British and monarch system, had escalated to a level abstaining some democratic rights like participating in general elections, and the national affairs of Iraq. Britain was keen to legitimize monarchy system and provide international recognition to the recently established state of Iraq. According to San Remo treaty, Iraq should have obtained independence from British mandate within a political condition maintaining the capability of protecting national sovereignty; however Kurdish refused to take part with the objective to force the government to fulfill the promises it had made some years ago. Ostensibly, keeping the Arabic language as the official language for education and administrative affairs in Kurdish speaking regions, despite the commitment by the then-prime minister Abd- Al-Muhsin As-sa'dun to take the Kurdish language as the second official language for educational and judicial purposes in the Kurdish cities of Iraq, greatly disappointed the Kurds (Ahmad, 2012). Furthermore, the continuing demands of some Kurdish nationalists for a local autonomy administrated by Kurdish personnel under the Britain authority escalated the anger of the Kurdish people. As a retort, they decided to abstain from the poll and demonstrate against British in Sulaimaniya city in 1930-31, which was followed by another unrest in Barzan under Sheikh Ahmad's leadership 1931-32 (Ahmad, 2012; Jalil 1917).

If Khoybun (1927) was a platform that gathered the Kurdish from Syria and Turkey for military struggles against Turkey, *Hiva* or *Hiwa* (The Hope) was a new tribune established in (1935) for Kurdish political and non-military activities

in Iraq and Iran. *Hiva* played a crucial role in the foundation of *Party Azadixwazi Kurdistan* (the Kurdistan Liberation Party) in Mokrian-Iran in 1939, which later dissolved and some of its activists initiated another political grouping, *Komeley Jianewey Kurdistan* (the Kurdistan Revival Association) in (1943). The latter become the cornerstone of KDP-Iran and the Mahabad Republic (Nabaz, 1985; Jalil et al., 2012). *Hiva* also stimulated the last two of the three Barzan revolutions during (1932-33; 1935-36; 1943-45) to become nationalistic movements than being only tribal uprisings for chieftains' interests in Iraq. However, due to the conditions followed by the termination of the revolts and the issues between pro-Soviet and pro-British leaders of *Hiva*, this platform proved ineffective in becoming the political body that would have unified all ideological and nationalistic-based groups of Kurdish society. Eventually, it split around the end of 1944 into several other political organizations; the most remarkable was Party Rizgary Kurd (the Kurdish Liberation Party), in 1945 (Kaya, 2012; McDowall, 1996; Durham, 2010). The Rizgari Kurd party was formed from those former *Hiwa* activists who chose to support the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and were well-known for their publication *Shorish* (The Revolution).

Even though similar to *Hiwa*, *Rizgary* was a short-lived party; it proved to be more magnetizing as regards its popularity among intellectuals and educated people and Kurdish students attending Arabic Universities of Iraq. In fact, by the time *Hiwa* was dissolved, it proved to be only a political tribute than a real party, since it never had a program and a decree to be seen as a political party, yet *Rizgary* had its labels and principals. It strived for the unification of Kurdish people and Kurdistan, besides, it formally appealed to the UN in (1946) for Kurdish self-determination. Thus, *Rezgary* can be considered the rootedness of the first involvement of the Iraqi Kurds in political parties that initiated from leftist views and precisely from those nationalist Kurds who worked in the Iraqi Communist party (1934). Before the *Rezgari* foundation, the Iraqi communist party: ICP gained about 35% of its strength from Kurdish people and mostly from

those who originated from Sulaimanyiah (McDowall, 1996).⁹⁰

In addition to the cultural and political tensions discussed above, some exogenous factors had fostered attempts for emerging a nationalist party. The establishment of the Monarchy System in Iraq (1921) under the mandate of Britain and linking the Kurdish areas of Mosul Vilayet to it without sanctioning the Kurdish rights to their own nation-state, as it was announced in Sevres Treaty (1920) constituted the core factor. Simultaneously, Kurdish nationalism widely presented the 'Maunsell Map' to support their ethnic territorial right of Kurdish area, expand their noble heritage of lands, and benefit from Wilson's nation-right principles. They presented this map at the Peace Conference of Paris (1918-19) to declare Kurdish right of independence in those areas covered in the map (Kaya, 2012). However, the instability of the Kurdish independence and its probable impact in influencing adverse economic, political and geostrategic conditions of the region provoked the British to disregard Kurdish national demands (Ibid). Which altogether drove the Kurds to emerge as a nationalistic revolutionary party and initiation of armed conflicts in the mid of 1940s. Especially after it was ascertained that none of the states, wherein the Kurdish people had been divided, would confirm Kurdish national rights abidance against those declared by Wilson's principles, and Sevres Treaty.

Furthermore, severe economic and social deterioration during the IWW also showed apparent support of nationalism proliferation. The Iraqi government was not willing to supply the Kurdish regions with sufficient food sources. Poverty and plague spread in the Kurdistan Region rapidly due to the international economic crises and the pressures imposed by the Iraqi government on the area for their political mobilizations. Namely, the quadrupling of goods prices in Kurdish regions compared to the other Iraqi parts, the Arabification strategy

⁹⁰ In addition to Hiwa, Rizgary, and Shorish, there was also Yeketi Tekoshin: United Struggle that by the time of his detention in Sulaimanyia Mustafa Barzani communicated them to see their willingness of helping his cause in Barzan.

developed by the government through gathering the administrative and governmental powers in the hands of Arab personalities who were operating almost all the government units in Kurdistan. Ignoring the education and agricultural aspects in the suburbs of Kurdish cities, in a way by (1945), there were only two high schools and thirty elementary schools in those areas, while the official language for schooling was still Arabic. Farming was interrupted due to Iraq-British air strikes, and villagers no longer had felt safe in their own homelands, and therefore urbanization wave and immigration from Kurdish villages to the towns and urban areas dramatically increased (Jalil et al., 2012). The Barzan revolts in the extreme north of Iraqi Kurdistan, tribal leaders' custody under Iraqi regime in Sulaimaniyah all together provoked Kurdish intellectuals to support nationalism sentiment and unify the diversification in one national political party representing the Kurdish quest within Iraq.

The KDP, thus, in addition to the Barzani's personal ambitions (Chapter Three), was a consequence of amalgamation of the fragmented attempts for fundamental rights of Kurdish people within Iraq, which the Kurdish nationalism repetitively failed to achieve. To be seen as an accountable and legitimate representative for pursuing the reciprocal benefits, unifying Kurdish demands and addressing strong personalities to delegate the Kurds of Iraq was, in fact, an inspiring idea to attract Iraqi government. Especially both British and Iraqi delegations often had accused Kurdish nationalists of being disbanded, and not presenting a concrete demand (McDowall, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001).

The major ethnic-based problem between the KDP and the first Iraqi Republic were the attempts made by Arab Nationalism to take Iraq into United Arab Republics. Achieving this goal would become absolute evidence to their claims regarding the Kurdish identity as an extension of Arabs' or their image as occupiers of Arab lands (McDowall, 1997; Al- Khirsan 2001; Kaya, 2012). The KDP had limited choices - whether they should support the Qasim's government to unify Iraq and promote Iraqi identity, or to support the attempts of joining Iraq with a larger Arab nationalist unity. The KDP decided to support Qasim

considering the extent to which Qasim openly dealt with the Kurdish quest for autonomy and inherent national rights. Qasim promised permanent inclusion of Kurdish autonomy in the constitution to be polled. Meanwhile, the Arab nationalist had seen Kurdish as the biggest hindrance to their aims, and thus, the tension between these two ethnical-based elites was salient. Eventually, it led Qasim to strip Arif, the government deputy general, from power, who was representing the Nasserist pro-Arab nationalist group in Iraq supported by Egyptian president Jamal Abdul Nasir, a well-known nationalist pan Arabism personality. Qasim motivated Barzani to change Ibrahim Ahmad, the KDP's Secretary General, who tried to develop Kurdish nationalism by developing links with Arif through his good relationship with Nasir. Ahmad's understanding of nationalism was way beyond the narrow tribal interpretation of Barzani and believed that the Kurds and Arabs could share Iraqi benefits by developing democracy and tolerance (McDowall, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001).

Kurdish nationalism took a different path following the international conspiracy, known as Algeria Treaty, between Iraq, Iran and the U.S.A., to control the revolution (Chapter Six), and settle the problems between the two Middle East countries concerning demarcation of land and water boundaries (Waisy, 2015c). It somewhat became a universal sentiment among almost all Kurdish residents in Iraq and increased rapidly, consequently supporting the emergence of many nationalistic based parties (Chapter Three).⁹¹

The culture of tribalism and divided Kurdish society among these new political organizations played significant roles in enhancing political parties' connections to specific geography and territories in the coming years (Amin, 1997; McDowall, 1997). Nevertheless, the genocide campaigns and chemical weapons use by Iraqi regime once more motivated Kurdish nationalism to unify under the Front of Kurdistan in 1987 until 1992, thenceforward the latter became the

⁹¹ Interview conducted with Sarwar Abdulrahman, Sulaimani, October 6th, 2016.

supreme power for national electoral conduction in the KRI, until it was resolved and substituted by the KRP.

Hence, it can be inferred that in these parties' explicit messages, which proliferated after (1975) until the founding elections of the KRI (1992), they had not only emphasized the Kurdish ethnic rights, but the right of autonomy of Kurdistan region (Table 4.2). This demand, in fact, has a territorial dimension targeting other ethnic groups than only Kurds and amalgamates their party aims within Iraqi territory than for the Kurdish nation-state. Nevertheless, the Kurdish nation-state has been the implicit goal of any Kurdish party in the four parts of Kurdistan. Furthermore, during the founding elections of the KRP in 1992, the dominant and competing parties adopted federalism for the KRI and democracy for Iraq, acknowledging their hope of 'Independence of Kurdistan'. Following the democratization process of Iraq, and Iraqi national elections, Kurdish political parties, explicitly showed their connection to nationalism sentiment through allying in one Kurdish national list for the first two elections of January and December 2005, where, no Arab personality was nominated in the list.⁹² Later in the elections of 2010, the two dominant ruling parties still competed together in one coalition list; however, in 2014 they separately ran for the elections.

Scholars agree that separate lists have not affected Kurdish unity in the Iraqi national representative house. All Kurdish parliamentary fractions were still acting as one national unit supporting Kurdish constitutional rights until 2017, when the referendum, unilaterally, was initiated by the KDP, and PUK. Apparently, this affected Kurdish unity and fragmented it into anti and pro-referendum fractions; nevertheless, this is beyond this study's focus, therefore, and it should be left to the prospective studies.⁹³ The following two sub-sections will be dedicated to empirical evidence of ethnic-based nature of Kurdish parties

⁹² See data presented by official website of the KRP, retrieved from <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/#>

⁹³ Interview conducted with Yusuf Mohammad Sadiq, October 8th, 2016.

that earned a seat in one of the national elections of Iraq through applying the Chandra's (2011) ethnicity measurements, first, party's name, and explicit messages; second, ethnopolitical division's national electoral turnouts.

Table 4.2: Kurdish Demand in The Context of The Fragile Iraqi Governments

Year	Mode of political System Alteration	President	Prime Minister	Ideology	Kurdish Political Demands
1921-32	Monarchy-Mandate	Faisal I	13 cabinets	/	Nation-State/Autonomy under Britain
1932-58	Monarchy	Faisal I/ Ghazi I/ Faisal II	39 cabinets/ Mostly Military Governments	/	Cultural Rights/Autonomy
1958-63	Revolution	Mohammed Najib	Abdul-Karim Qasim	Pro-Socialism	Autonomy (Mosul Vilayet)
1963/Feb.- 1963/Nov.	Coup	Abdul-Salam Arif	Ahmad Hassan Bakr	Nasserist, Ba'athist, Arab Nationalist	Autonomy for Kurdistan/Electoral Parliamentary System for Iraq
1963-66	Coup	Abdul-Salam Arif	Tahir Yahia/Arif Abd Al-Razzaq/Abdulrahman Bazzaz	Nasserist, Arab Nationalist	Autonomy/Economic Share
1966-68	Assassination	Abdul-Rahman Arif	Abdul-Rahman Arif/ Naji Talib/ Tahir Yahia	Socialism-Ba'athism Pan-	Autonomy
1968-79	Coup	Ahmad Hassan Bakr	Become presidential (9) cabinet under 'Bakr'	Ba'thism Arab-Nationalist Democracy for	Autonomy for Kurdistan and occurred
1979-2003	Coup	Saddam Hussien	Until/ 1991 Presidential Autonomy/ later (2), cabinets since 1991 Federalism for three cabinets comprised, under Saadun Hamadi/Mohamad Hamza. Ahmad Hussein/ Since 1994 presidential under Saddam Husain (2) cabinet changes	Ba'athist Extreme Arab Nationalist Iraq	Kurdistan and Democracy for
2003-04	International Invasion	Coalition Provisional	20 Interim Leaders	/	Federalism

		Authority			
2004-05	Coalition Provisional Authority	Ghazi Al-Yawar	Ayad Alawi /		Federalism
2005-06	Coalition Provisional Authority	Jalal Talabani	Ibrahim Al-Jaafari /		Federalism
2006-10	General Election	Jalal Talabani	Nuri Al-Maliki	Moderate	Constitutional
2010-14	General Election	Jalal Talabani	Nuri Al-Maliki	Moderate	Constitutional
2014-present	General Election	Fuad Masum	Haidar Abadi	Moderate	Constitutional

Source: McDowall (2005: 287-368); Ghareeb (2004: 337-383); http://archive.ipu.org/Parline/reports/2151_E.htm; Mohammed (2010) retrieved from <http://www.almadasupplements.com/news.php?action=view&id=785#sthash.HxZBRjRe.dpbs>

4.1.1. Ethnic Characteristic of Kurdish Parties

Despite the differentiation of views among scholars of political parties, whether an ethnic party is a party that takes the racial identity as a subset of ethnic identity. Or nationalistic parties is a party that describes individuals with a sense of shared identity, or expand on this notion to include other ethnicities, like linguistic-divisions, territorial- concentrated groups, etc., we only present two opinions here and accordingly build up our measurements. According to Ishiyama and Breuning (1998: 4), an ethno-political party is *"an organization that purports to represent a particular ethnic group and seeks political power to impinge on the relative power or position of ethnic groups."* Nonetheless, Donald Horowitz (1985: 299) argues that ethnic parties *"can comprise of more than one ethnic group."* The combination of these two views might offer the best fitting definition to the territorial-based nationalist Kurdish parties. The inability to mobilize other ethnic categories despite the inclusion policies of Kurdish parties toward them might be the best understanding why this study does not describe Kurdish parties to be multi-ethnic, as it has been discussed and supported with statistical evidence in the following sections.

The KDP, and PUK, in the struggle era, had both also nested Christians, and Assyrians members. According to McDowall (2004), Assyrians had worked within the Kurdish national movement since the 1960s, and only in 1979, they established their first political party. The most famous peshmerga commander was an Assyrian woman, Margaret George Malik, who was killed in 1966. Later many Christian-Assyrian figures like Sarkis Aghajan Mamendo, the KRG Finance and Economy Minister from 1999 to October 2009, and Deputy Prime Minister from 2004 to 2006. Georgis Shlemon, the Deputy Governor of Dohuk during 2006-2009, and Franso Hariri, a member of leadership council have been involved with this party since the 1960s.⁹⁴ The PUK also embedded many Christians and Ezidis and nominated them for leadership councils and diplomatic missions such as Albert Esa, a Christian Ambassador to Denmark, Jamil Abdal, and Adil Nasir, two Ezidi ministers in the PUK-KRG governments during 1996-2004.⁹⁵ Furthermore, having Assyrian, Christians and Ezidi leaders in these two parties leadership councils and the establishment of an Arab center within the structural organization of the PUK might serve as best examples to explain the territorial dimension of Kurdish parties, than multi-ethnic one. Because the core of a multiethnic party is the extent to which a party can mobilize the ethnicities that are prearranged in its target for the electoral processes (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2000), however, this is not the case in Kurdish parties.

Throughout the elections, irrespective their conduction, during the 'Safe Haven' or later during democratic Iraq, in all national, regional, and local levels, neither Kurdish party could mobilize other groups than the Kurds, and barely could gather electoral supports from them.⁹⁶ Probably this is because of the minority

⁹⁴ Franso Hariri was assassinated by Islamic terrorists in 2001 and was a senior Assyrian member of the KDP since the 1960s. See Kurdistan Regional Government UK Representation, retrieved from http://cabinet.gov.krd/uploads/documents/Status_Christians_Kurdistan_Region_Dec_09_2009_12_22_h16m26s16.pdf

⁹⁵ Interview conducted with Farid Assasard, October 6th, 2016, Sulaimani.

⁹⁶ According to Seevan Saeed, during the Safe Haven they had five reserved seats, and later eleven, so it is logical to conclude that they have not voted for any Kurdish party, and amalgamated around their own political parties than Kurdish ones. Phone Interview conducted with him, Valencia, January 5th, 2018.

group's reserved seats in these elections; therefore in this context, it does not support multi-ethnic character. And to avoid misunderstanding, it is crucial to highlight that the two words 'nationalist' and 'ethnic' are used interchangeably. Since nationalism ideology concerns territorial dimension of Kurdish politics, we discussed it above, and based on the fact that Kurdistan includes other ethnopolitical groups as well, it is typical on the individual capacity, members of those divisions join Kurdish parties and find a space aligned with their own interests.

Chandra (2011) emphasizes several mechanisms to validate the racial orientation of a political party, and the most perspicuous is the party's name - whether it includes the name of the ethnicity it targets and the explicit ethnic-nature of electoral campaign messages. For the interest of this study, only the political parties that have managed to survive and compete at least in the Iraqi national elections of 2005 are covered, yet those that did not have a chance to partake in the polls are excluded from these measurements.

Emphasizing the parties' names whether it is connected with the interest of a specific ethnic group, the 'Kurd' as an ethnic dimensioned word was only used in the KDP's name in early years, and it was changed soon following the third congress in 1953. Apparently, they changed the name attributing too the possible exclusion feeling of other ethnic and religious groups, "*the Kurdistan region's political and ethnic mosaic, preferable to a more open party covers rights of other ethnopolitical groups.*"⁹⁷ Furthermore, they aimed to diminish the racial prejudice they were experiencing in Iraq. Therefore it was fundamental for them not to take the same path as some Iraqi ethnic parties.⁹⁸ This claim was explicitly supported by the party's bylaw; article 14 stating *that "to guarantee national, cultural, and administrative rights for Turkmen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Syriacs, and Arminians."*

⁹⁷ Interview conducted with to Mahmoud Mohammed, Erbil, on October 4th, 2016.

⁹⁸ Interview conducted with Hawrami Erbil, October 4th, 2016.

It can be concluded from this allegation that the KRI parties have targeted not only the Kurds but also other ethnic groups. Having 'Kurdistan' than 'Kurdish' or 'Kurds' in their names may refer to the inherited land of the Kurd, which also is an inclusion word for all the region's inhabitants. Nevertheless, it may be a precise indicator of their ethnic bases (Table 4.3), because Kurdistan is a potential state and does not exist in reality, and in the the context of Kurdish politics, the Kurds were always referred to a nation without a state. Therefore despite the fact that the explicit message of the names may not justify the parties' ethnic characters, but implicitly refer to the land, every single individual of Kurds believe is them (McDowall, 2004; Kaya, 2012; Shorish, 2012; Gunter, 2008).

In fact, each of Kurdish political parties, have explicit texture emphasizing those groups who live in the areas claimed to be Kurdistan Region of Iraq (Table 4.3). This is true for the parties that have been emerged during the self-rule period and following democratic Iraq as well. Furthermore, if the other parties before 2003 included the word Kurdistan in their names, the Change movement became an issue-based party and concentrated on legal and economic rights of those who reside in Kurdistan. Even though the party still emphasizes on the national rights of the Kurds and other minority groups in Iraq, this has not taken their attention away from the nationalistic goal as emphasized clearly in their political program (2013: 19) *"the national right of Kurdish people for self-determination, including independence is a supreme aim of the Gorran Movement"*.⁹⁹

Chandra (2011) argues that the explicit message can be **determined through the repetitive and overtly appeals for a specific ethnic category that the parties show in their platforms and may include the party's flags, clothing, and connection to ethnically tribal and religious leaders. Furthermore, he emphasizes the conveying**

⁹⁹ There is an explicit text in the forward paragraph of the second part of the political program of the Gorran Movement addressing all ethnopolitical groups as following; "Gorran Movement is established on the loyalty to Kurdistan State. Being a Kurdistani citizen is a universal identity gather all who reside in this region, whatever and ethnopolitical division they are belong too" (Political Program of Gorran Movement, 2013: 18).

of party's political message, whether the party is taking the interest of the preferable ethnic category is central to its appeals, or the political statements of the party favor the benefits of an ethnic group, or prominent leaders attitude toward precise ethnic division, especially during the electoral campaigns. Perhaps these ethnical characteristics as presented in (Table 4.3) show the extent to which each party is connected to the Kurdistan (as a potential state), what are their goals and how they define themselves.

Table 4.3: Territorial Nationalism of Kurdistan Region Parties Following 1975

Political Party's Name	Definition	Territorial Base	Nationalistic Goal
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan	It is a socialist democratic party, striving to establish peace, freedom, democracy, citizenship, human rights, and self-determination. It believes in culture of equity and tolerance	Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Dispute area, and diaspora Kurds	Self-determination
Democratic Party of Kurdistan	Patriotic and democratic party based on the fundamental commitment to human rights, individual freedom, and national rights of Kurds and other nations with regard to self-determination. It believes in a democracy originated from national Kurdish liberation movement along with the legacy of Mustafa Barzani's patriotic experience	Not Explicitly mentioned	Constitutional rights of Kurdish in Iraq, Demarcation of Kurdistan's boundary, defend Kurdish national and patriotic Rights
Islamic Union of Kurdistan	A reformist nationalist party aims to institutionalize a	Kurdistan-Iraq	Constitutionalizing the political life in the KRI, constitutional rights of Kurds in

Kurdistan	developed society and fair Authority		Iraq, retain the disputed area declared by article 140. Supporting Kurdish quest of other parts of Kurdistan.
Islamic Group of Kurdistan/Iraq	Islamic party aims to fulfill Islam's program in Iraq and Kurdistan and the legitimate national rights	KRI and Iraq	Paving the road to independence, institutionalizing political system, Supporting Kurdish quest of other parts of Kurdistan.
The Change Party	A political party has a juridical personality constitutes of all volunteering citizens who believe in bylaw and political program of the party	KRI and Iraqi Federal territory	Border demarcation of the KRI, Constitutional rights, institutionalizing political system. Organizing military force, enhancing judiciary power, and establishing the federal council to review disputes between regional and national Government

Source: Adapted from current bylaws of the political parties that won at least a seat in the Iraqi national elections of 2005, for the PUK's see https://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=5041

Finally, it can be understood that these parties have expanded only in the areas of dispute and that these parties' explicit messages in the electoral campaigns are Kurdish constitutional rights, concurrent to the account the rights of other ethnic and religious categories residing in the Kurdistan Region. Similar to the non-religious parties, the religious and Islamic parties have not abandoned the nationalist sentiment in the democratic era and have not only strived for the Islamic rule of sharia. They intentionally adopted the Islamic state of Kurdistan, as their end, which has a nationalistic dimension as much as an Islamic dimension. Ali Bapir, the Commander of the Faithful of the IGK, in his publications, and speeches frequently highlight "why there is Pakistan, Afghanistan but Kurdistan is not allowed to exist?"¹⁰⁰ The best classification for Kurdish parties might be what has been presented in (Table 4.4), which to some

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Mohammad Hakim, October 6th, 2016.

extent positions the Kurdish parties on the ideological spectrum, regarding leftist rightist, ethnic, and issue orientations.¹⁰¹

Table 4.4: The Ideological Inclination of The Major KRI's Political Parties (1992-2016)

Political Party Ideological Inclination	
KDP	Central-Right (tribal), Nationalist
PUK	Center-Left (currently in transition to tribalism), Nationalist
Gorran	Non-Ideological Reformist, Nationalist
IUK	Religious Nationalist
IGK	Religious Nationalist

Source: Based on a phone Interview conducted with Dr. Mohammad Shareef Valencia, January, 7th, 2018 and a face to face interview with Professor Saman Fawzi Sulaimani, September 18th, 2016.

4.1.2. Kurdish Voting Behavior in Iraqi National Elections

Empirical information about Iraqi society is extremely limited (Dodge, 2006). The Iraqi regime during the 1970s and 1980s was reluctant to release data regarding the population, and later due to the gulf wars and separation tendency of the Kurds, only estimated data was released. According to Doge (2006) the international approximation for Iraq's 2003 population were 25.9 million people, growing to 27.1 million in 2004, and later escalating to 39.1 in 2017. The most controversial statistics are those that describe the ethnic and religious divisions. Throughout Iraq's history, no evidence support realistic data concerning this issue and all have tended to be built on estimates. Table (4.1) above provides League of Nations' estimation in 1925; the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), also based on the last data by Iraqi regime in 1987, released several other estimated data in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s including that of 2017. The previous data puts the Arab population at 75-80% and the Kurds at 15- 20%, and others, namely

¹⁰¹ Phone Interview conducted with Dr. Mohammad Shareef Valencia, January 2018 and Professor Saman Fawzi Sulaimani, September 18th, 2016.

(Turkmen, Yezidi, Shabak, Kaka'i, Bedouin, Romas, Assyrian, Circassian, Sabaeon- Mandaean, and Persian) at 5%. Furthermore, it estimates Shia Arabs at 60-65% and the Sunnis, including the majority of the Kurds, at 32-37%, with an emphasis that 95-98% of Iraqi population is Muslim.¹⁰²

Within this data uncertainty, it might not be easy for a researcher to measure the cultural and ethnic diversity. Nonetheless, some scholars like Fearon, and Alesina and her fellows have made some attempts. Fearon (2003) scored Iraq's ethnic and cultural fractionalizations as 0.549 and 0.355 respectively. Alesina et al. (2003) conducted cross-national studies and based on data from 1983, recorded diversification of the country concerning language at 0.3694 and religion at 0.4844. The ethnic fractionalizations of the latter scholars are significantly different from that of Fearon, but still are considerably fractioned and are scored 0.3869. Furthermore there is no data supporting internal fractionalizations of the Kurdistan region of Iraq so that we can rely on to develop an academic investigation; however, the electoral turnouts may be a good source of data to accordingly infer the extent to which the society is polarized and fragmented. Based on the discussion developed above regarding the ethnic nature of Kurdish parties, this part depends on these parties' electoral turnouts to measure the extent to which Iraqi party system is polarized ethnically, and the role of Kurdish in this polarization.

The transition to democracy since 2003 under the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) and TAL (Transitional Administrative Law) and after a long history of military and the hegemonic single-party rule of Baathist led to an extreme fragmentation of the party system, and proliferation of several ethnic, and religious-based political parties. Therefore, following the year 2003 an extreme multi-party pluralism emerged and was motivated by the new democratic regime. During the CPA, three ethno-regional blocs started to shape the polarized party

¹⁰² The CIA official website, retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

system. While Arab Sunni, and Shia, are more oriented around religious divisions and sectarianism, Kurdish bloc rather has characterized towards nationalism gearing around the territory plus ethnic rights. Table (4.5) shows the ethnic and religious division within the four Iraqi previous electoral processes. The Kurdish parties including the IUK in both interim and regular elections of Council of Representative constituted a united list and won 75 of the seats while the IGK, ran separately and only won two seats, wherein the Kurdish total national voting share was 23.4%. In the national elections of 2010 the PUK and KDP still allied in one list, the list of Kurdistan, and won together 43 seats, while Gorran won 8, the IUK 4 and the IGK 2 seats, and altogether won 22.16% of the votes. The last elections of 2014 perhaps were the more fragmented elections where each Kurdish political party ran separately and showed to some extent their real strength. The seat shares were 25 for the KDP, 21 for the PUK, Change movement 9, Islamic Union 4, and Islamic Group 3. Thus the Kurdish aggregated 62 seats, which is about 18.9 of the seats and 24.37% of the total votes.

Emphasizing this trend, it can be concluded that the Kurdish participation is to some extent solidified. Running for the elections in a unified list or separately has not dramatically changed the electoral support, which may be interpreted as the diversification of political parties and may be seen by electorates as a Kurdistan internal issue that should not reflect their presence in the Iraqi parliament. Therefore the focus should be intensified on Kurdish national representations. In contrast to this trend, by observing Table (4.5), it can be inferred that both the Sunni and secular nationalist Arabs are the most fluctuated ideology followed by the Shia division. Perhaps this tendency reflects the nationalist sentiment of Sunni Arabs, which sways between sectarianism and nationalism. While Shia Arabs, are better consolidated and seems more concentrated around their ethno- sect-division.

Table 4.5: Vote Share of Ethno-political Entities, Which Won A Non-Reserved Seat In Iraqi National Elections (2005-2016)

Year	Pro Kurdish Nationalism%		Turmen %	Pro Arab Nationalism%			Kurd %	Arab %
	Secular	Religious		Shia	Secular	Sunni		
Jan. 2005	25.68 ^A	0.72	1.1	49.5	15.1	2.15	26.4	66.75
Dec. 2005	22.15 ^B	1.25	0.74	43.2	8.5	20.76	23.4	72.46
2010	18.72	3.44	C	42.37	24.72 ^C	5.25	22.16	72.34
2014	21.07	3.3	0.64	52.4	6.2	10.97	24.37	69.57

Source: <https://web.archive.org/web/20081229160418/http://ww2.epic-usa.org/Portals/1/UpdatedElectionResults.pdf>,
https://web.archive.org/web/20070927223342/http://www.ieciraq.org/final%20cand/IECI_Decision_Certified_Results_of_CoR_Elections_En.pdf, and
<http://www.ihc-iraq.com/ar/index.php/result.html>

C. Turkmen joined the secular nationalist list of al-Iraqia, led by the former PM Eyad Al-Alawi, retrieved from
http://www.bbc.com/arabic/lg/middleeast/2010/03/100305_sj_iraq_coalitions_tc_2.shtml

A. The IUK, Islamic Union of Kurdistan, joined the Allied Kurdistan List

B. The IGK, Islamic Group of Kurdistan Joined the Allied Kurdistan List

Chandra (2011) supports this allegation and emphasizes that if the majority of a specific ethnic category, to the exclusion of others, cast it in the electoral processes, then this political entity is ethnic. The ethnic polarization or diversity also has been supported by Cheseman and Ford (2007), according to which ethnic cleavage might be a salient aspiration for political mobilization and voting inclination. The ethnic-based voting can be calculated through the country's party system. Apparently, likewise in Africa and Turkey, the geographical concentration of ethnic groups play a significant role in the Iraqi electorate's voting behaviors. Thus, following Bannon, Miguel, and Posner (2004), it looks like there exists a strong relationship between ethnic fractionalization and ethnic identification of individual Kurds. The data demonstrated in (Tables 4.5 and 4.6) show that the voting behavior of Kurdish and Arabs of Iraq are concentrated in a separate part of the country, and present a linguistic, and geographical trend as well. The Kurdish parties amalgamated votes in the three Kurdish provinces of

Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok, and other four provinces known as the areas of dispute, namely, Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, and Salahadin while the rest provinces are Arabs. Appendix (V) shows the ethno-religion divisions and major tribes in Iraq.

Despite the fact that there is no absolute evidence regarding the ethnicity of voters who cast vote for the Kurdish parties in the last four provinces yet it might be substantial evidence that the Kurdish parties only have aggregated votes in those provinces where the Kurdish people have resided. Table (4.6), supports this claim through providing empirical evidence that within 18 Iraqi provinces, Kurdish political parties have been supported by massive voters only in the seven provinces of the north, while an insignificant percentage was aggregated in Baghdad, which was probably given by the Kurds who have resided there since mass dislocation, and Arabification processes.¹⁰³

The category of the north, thus, reflects ethnic preferences, while this entirely changes in the Iraqi middle and the southern provinces. In these two parts of the country, the voting behavior is not only based on ethnic, but also on the religious preferences. We rarely see people vote for Kurdish parties. The Arabic based parties are significantly preferable, although, they are divided on other choices related to Islamic sects, the Sunni and Shia. Therefore, this religious identity, besides ethnic identity is also salient variable in the non- Kurdish areas. Besides the significance of nationalism aspiration in comparison to religious, and Islamism in Kurdish society, the only sect-based ideology that operates among the Kurds is Sunni's. Nevertheless, in concentrated Arab provinces, the two Islamic sects are salient and can mobilize the Arabs significantly. The Sunni strength is concentrated in the central and central west cities right beneath the Kurdish provinces and in those areas of dispute, while the Shia is amalgamated around southern provinces, and to a lesser degree in central and reduces

¹⁰³ Interview conducted with Sheikh Latif Shiekh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016.

significantly in the areas of dispute. Appendix V is a map that exhibits the regional concentration based on Ethnicity and Islamic sects in Iraq.

Looking at the Kurdish cities electoral turnouts, none of the Arabic coalition or political party could mobilize even a small percentage of voters (Table 4.6), which is another unequivocal support to that the Kurdish voting behavior which is reflective of the ethnic and national sentiment of the Kurdishness and Kurdistan. Contrary to the Kurdish part where loyalty is to nationalism, the Arabic part's loyalty is to Arab, Iraqi nationalism, and their sectarian lines (Kirmanj, 2013).

Apparently, these ethnic and religious divisions in Iraq have hindered a multiethnic coalition representing all major division interests and running for the elections nationwide. In fact, there was a coalition based on amalgamations of the sect and ethnic divisions, led by Ayad Alawi in the last four polls, yet it has not suitably represented the Kurdish ethnic interests. In none of the elections, the Kurdish politician within these alliances could win a seat in the Kurdish area or a considerable vote (see Table 4.6 for example). Therefore those coalition outcomes rather have provided an image of an Arabic national alliance than a real Iraqi nationalism represents all ethno-regional groups.

Furthermore, this type of voting behavior reflects the people's understanding of the political composition of the country. According to the data presented by the NDI in 2014, 62% of Iraqi people believe sectarianism is a salient cleavage, and the major issue for political development, while 54% of the population of the Sunni provinces and 76% of the Northern provinces believe that the sectarian division between Shia and Sunni, is worsening. Meanwhile in overall one-third of the respondents, regardless of their ethnic, or religious backgrounds, believe "*the sectarianism is too deeply rooted in Iraqi society ever really to go away.*"¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, in the context of the KRI, the other minor ethnoreligious groups have

¹⁰⁴ A survey conducted by the NDI, January-March, 2010. Retrieved from <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/GQR-Iraq-Survey-Jan-Mar-2014.pdf>

participated in the Kurdistan lists that competed in Iraqi democratic elections in previous elections and won their reserved seats accordingly (Chapter Five).

Table 4.6: Governorates' Seat Ethno-Political Turnouts of Iraqi National Elections (2014)¹⁰⁵

Province	Seat No.	Kurd	Arab-Sunni	Arab-Shia	Pro Secular Nationalist	Turkm.	Ezidi	Shabak	Assyrian	Sabi'a
Duhok	11+1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	+1	0
Erbil	15+1	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	+1	0
Sulaimani	18	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kirkuk	12+1	8	2	0	0	2	0	0	+1	0
Mosul	31+3	8	15	3	5	0	+1	+1	+1	0
Diyala	14	2	5	5	2	0	0	0	0	0
Wassit	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salahadin	12	0	8	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Al-Anbar	15	0	13	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Baghdad	69+2	0	5	48	16	0	0	0	+1	+1
Babil	17	0	0	16	1	0	0	0	0	0
Al-Qadsiyah	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dhiqar	19	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maysan	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Muthana	7	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Najaf	12	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karbala	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Basrah	25	0	0	24	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	320+8	62	48	179	29	2	+1	+1	+5	+1

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, retrieved from <http://archive.ipu.org/parline/reports/2151.htm>, and <http://iswiraq.blogspot.com.es/2014/05/final-2014-iraqi-national-elections.html>

The (+) signifies the reserving minority group seats

(*) This coalition mostly comprises those secular Sunni Arab, with a small percentage of Shia Arab, yet are less biased to sectarianism and ethnopolitical identity, rather is a national based coalition, even though still no Kurdish has joined.

In spite of the scholars' agreement on the role the Islamic sheikhs played in Kurdish revolution and mobilizing national sentiments (Smith, 2007; and

¹⁰⁵ According to a data-show conducted by 'Institute For The Study of War,' the Iraqi major Iraqi political parties are divided into four Ethnoreligious groups, Sunni, Shia, Kurd, and secular nationalists, retrieved from, <http://iswiraq.blogspot.com.es/2014/05/final-2014-iraqi-national-elections.html>

Bruinssen, 1992), the religious voting in the KRI, unlike southern and middle parts of Iraq, still does not significantly influence the Kurdish voting behaviors. The claim as mentioned earlier might be because of the propagated idea among the secular Kurdish nationalist that has been rooted in the Kurdish imagination since the 1920s and 1930s that Ezidi religion is the only proper religion for the Kurds. This religion rooted from Zoroastrianism and was interpreted as rebellions of Kurdish against Turkish and Arab domination (Bruinssen, 2000; Leezenberg, 2001).

Despite the good relationship throughout the history, between the Kurdish nationalists of Iraq and the Iranian Islamic government, the latter's fundamental ideology has been limited and never gained notable influence among the Kurds. Even though there are Shia adherents among the Kurdish of Iraq, in the Kurdish provinces and dispute areas, still, it seems this is not the central aspiration for voting behavior. For example, the Kurdish voters in Khanaqin, a Kurdish district of Diyala province voted in all previous elections to the PUK than Shia parties; even though, religiously, they follow the Twelver Shia of Iranian Islamic government (Bruinssen, 2006). Furthermore, they have not initiated a political party represents their religious tendency; they rather empowered the PUK to win a seat from the provincial quote in each of the last two elections.¹⁰⁶

The Brotherhoods, on the other hand, inspired by Hassan Banna, and Egyptian Islamic scholars neither could mobilize the Kurdish nor Iraqi society likewise those of Egypt and Syria, and other recent Islamic states. Presumably, on the Kurdish ground, the nature of the Iraqi regimes' campaigns that were held under ethnic dominance (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967) and Arabism labels than Islamic sentiments had supported the sturdiness of Kurdish nationalism than striving for religious beliefs, and therefore, hindered the Islamic parties from emergence and later expansion. Furthermore, the Brotherhoods' political attitudes toward

¹⁰⁶ Interview conducted with Salar Mahmoud, Slemani, September 26th, 2016.

Baathist regimes in Iraq throughout 1968-2003, as we discussed in Chapter Three, might be one of the most apparent reasons why unlike Sunnis elsewhere, Iraqi and Kurdish Sunnis have not been mobilized by the Islamic Brotherhood (Leesenberg, 2001). This might explain the frequent fluctuation of the Sunni adherents between national seculars and Sunni blocs in the last four elections presented in (Table 4.5), and those of the IUK party and their advocates between nationalism and Islamic lists.

The final causal factor might be the culture of ignorance suggested by Sevan Saeed. According to Saeed, the so-called secular parties factually are the expansion of a mixture of religious and non-religious identities amalgamated from moderate and extremist Muslims, secular and even communists and atheists who have family roots and connections with these political parties. Therefore, "*it is typical for an extremist Muslim Kurd votes for the KDP, but not the IUK or the IGK in Kurdistan.*"¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, the culture of loyalty and legacy of struggle have stimulated these types of voting behaviors especially in the remote and rural areas and more particularly in Erbil, Halabja, and Duhok, which can be considered as definite symptoms for political parties' ignorance to their labels and secular programs.¹⁰⁸ Therefore the Kurdish connection to religion is more likely to be a reassertion of the traditional Islamic values and practices than being a fundamental political contestation (Leezenberg, 2001), as is the case in Arabic and other Islamic cultures elsewhere. Perhaps this ambiguity about political parties' ideological positions, and their ignorance of party programs facilitated the tribal, oligarchic class and other social force interests to intervene in party decisions (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2008).

The Islamic parties, on the other hand, are recurrently accused of supporting ideas serving other regions and states than a notion for Kurdification of Islamism and religion independence as it was centuries ago in Christianity (Leezenberg,

¹⁰⁷ Phone interview conducted with him, January 5th, 2018, Valencia.

¹⁰⁸ Phone interview conducted with Mohammad Shareef, Valencia, January 7th, 2018.

2001). Apparently, the traditional Islamism and Sufism are rooted in the so-called secular or non-religious political parties through interconnections of parties' leadership to these orders. Talabani's family linking to Qadiri order, and Barzani's family to Naqshbandi order, in fact, roots back to nineteenth century when the nationalism sentiment started to grow under their charismatic leaders of Sheikhs and religious figures who mobilized Kurdish society against Ottoman Empire and later the British authority (Leezenberg, 2001; Bruinessen, 2000).¹⁰⁹ The rootedness of this type of Islamism ostensibly has impeded political Islamism that is represented by political Islam, and therefore their parties' emergence has not been received properly.¹¹⁰ These might be an excellent support to the data presented by the IRI in 2010 concerning 75% of the Kurdish society does not mind a political life based on religion. Though, only 16.7% of voters polled the Islamic parties in the regional elections of 2013 while on the Iraqi national elections, they never exceeded 3.5% (Chapter Five, and Table 4.5).¹¹¹

The root of Islamic Brotherhood in Iraq dates back to about the same time when the Kurdish nationalism commenced to establish the KDP yet until the fall of Baathist regime they never appeared to take any oppositional stand against the Iraqi government's apparatus, and suppression policies against the Kurds. It looks like the attempts made by the IMK in 1987 were aimed to adapt to the people's preference and later the IUK adoption of nationalism sentiments in 2012 and Kurdish right for independence in 2016 inspired by this notion. Nevertheless, by the time of the founding elections in the KRI, all the Islamic groups together could barely gather 5.5% of the total votes. Furthermore, the IUK for the interim council of the representative of 2005, and regional elections of the KRP integrated to the national Kurdistan List, while in the regional elections of 2009 and 2013, aggregated 5.4% and 9.5% of the votes. Meanwhile, in the national

¹⁰⁹ Phone interview conducted with Rebwar Fatah, November 16th, 2016, Valencia.

¹¹⁰ Phone interview with Rebwar Fatah, Valencia, November 16th, 2016.

¹¹¹ A survey conducted by the IRI, December 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20in%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region,%20December%208-15,%202010.pdf>

arena, it only gathered 1.3%, 2.12% and 2% in the elections of December 2005, 2010, and 2014. On the other hand, the IGK interchangeably with the IUK allied in the December elections (2005) with the List of Kurdistan. Nevertheless in the elections of the interim Parliament of January 2005, it gathered 0.72% of the votes and slightly increased to around 1.3% and 1.5% in 2010, and 2014 respectively. Finally, the IMK, have become a small party that could not win in the national elections any seat and won only one seat in consecutive elections of the KRP.

4.2 Tribalism and Neo-Tribalism

Tribalism is one of the leading characteristics of the Kurdish political and socio-economic dynamics.¹¹² It is the central finding of the studies developed by anthropologists, sociologists, and historians who devoted their investigations to the Kurds (Ross and Mohammadpur, 2016). According to Vali (2011), Bengio (2012) and Bruinessen (1992) Kurdish tribes are the dominant social-political structures, which have mobilized Kurdish society throughout the history. *"Usually, a tribal leader's position determined whether his tribe would oppose, join, or remain neutral toward the national movement"* (Ross and Mohammadpur, 2016: 7). Vali (2011) refuses their contribution to nationalist sentiments and rather sees them hindrance before the development of Kurdish nationalism. This allegation has also been supported by Tahiri (2007), Kaya (2012), and Qasimlu (1975), nevertheless, Bruinessen (1992) and McDowall (1997), who see tribal leaders and Sheikhs simultaneously as nationalist leaders who have motivated and stirred Kurdish society. According to Bruinessen (2002), tribesmen were able to change their ethnic identities frequently. Sometimes they were recorded as nationalistic tribes when their relationship with the central government and their particularistic interests was not appropriately recognized, while other times they became Iraqi, or held the national identity of the state over which the Kurdistan

¹¹² Interviews conducted with Barham Salih, Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, and Shiekh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani 21st, 20th, 19th, and Chnar Saad, Erbil, October, 4th, 2016, respectively.

was divided. Thus, tribalism was not entirely considered the permanent and salient source of nationalism, however, following the agrarian reform by Iraqi first republic, the entities of nationalism and tribalism became more interrelated.

This study classifies the Kurdish tribalism into two types, which still exist and playing roles in Kurdish society to various degrees. One model is an extension to the nomadic Kurdish tribes developed over time, yet not abandoning its norms, and tribal characteristics to a great extent. This type is less efficient in Kurdish politics and still is positioned in the rural areas, and practices economic, and social activities they learned throughout the history. The other is a new brand of tribalism, which comprises those nomadic tribes who were forced to leave, or voluntarily left their places and urbanized in urban areas where migrants preserved their tribal assertions. The latter type is sturdy and has played a significant role in the Kurdish politics, especially since the 1960s. Later it further developed and conveyed to a phenomenon recognized by McDowall (1997), the neo-tribalism. This trend has been reflecting the Kurdish politics and governance since the 1970s in two specific junctures; one started by the time of the revolution and was stimulated by both rebels and Iraqi regimes side by side until 1991. The other operates since the self- rule and has become a robust political culture in Kurdish political institutions including parties. Perhaps there are several relevant definitions to this latter type, the most comprehended is by McKerron (2003: 3), who define a neo-tribe as

“A group of people who have chosen to come together for a particular period of time and place, for a specific reason. The people in a traditional tribe have been born into that group of people, and those that remain in the group have retained an ascripted position and have chosen to perpetuate the ‘traditions’ of the group. These traditions have changed constantly through time, but are validated as historical for the purpose of group bonding and in reaction to changes within and without the group. The neo-tribe, on the other hand, has no

history, and the common characteristics within the group are utilised as identifications for a specific place and finite time”.

Tribalism in the context of Kurdish culture is different from that of African countries. For Kurdish *“the tribes had a well-documented existence independent of western observers”* (Bruinssen, 2002: 1). Based on Ross and Mohammadpur (2016) *Kurdish tribalism is often a mixture between the ties of kinship and those of territory.* Therefore, the definition by Richard Tapper (1983: 9) might be the most relevant to the Kurdish tribalism, *“a localized group in which kinship is the dominant idiom of the organization, and whose members consider themselves culturally distinct (in terms of customs, dialect or language, and origins).”*

Bruinssen (2002) highlights another issue related to the morphological characteristic of tribes. Reviewing the history of major Kurdish tribes, it looks like over the past four centuries these significant tribes despite alteration of political and economic conditions, found a way to survive and showed remarkable continuity over time under the same name. Therefore there might have been a significant correlation between these two social elements, yet looking to the mosaic of Kurdish society, it can not only be described under one single concept, and considerable differentiation must be made between these constructs, which mainly is described as tribal and non-tribal elements. The Kurdish tribes represented a *“patrilineal, typically endogamous segmentary tribe, [...], may constitute either a tribe or a confederation of tribal groups, and may also comprise non-descent groups, clans, or descent lineages”* (Dahlman, 2002; 276) and are mostly related and organized in a structural way supported by territorial divisions. *According to Dahlman (2002) and Bruinssen (1992), the toponymy of Kurdish society reflects the territorial division of tribes. Thus, another correlation between tribes, linguistic, and territory is highlighted,* which typically was supported earlier by the *“traditional tribal law, Islamic jurisprudence, Ottoman, and Persian feudal practices.”* (Bruinssen, 1992: 53).

On the other hand, Bruinssen (1992) and Smith (2007) emphasize the significant

role of religious figures (or the Sheikhs) with the tribal leaders having power mostly in the rural areas. Likewise tribalism, religion was a noteworthy motivation for political mobilization. Religious elites through investing their influences in nationalistic causes had hit two targets, namely, a particularistic target provides them with further privilege and political power, and the other integrates them in the national quest and make them seem as an indispensable element to the revolutions and political struggles. Bruinessen (1992: 299), supports this argument by asserting that in the context of Kurdish revolts during Ottoman and British, *"religious and nationalist loyalties cannot be separated: they coincided and were virtually identical. Nationalist sentiment arose out of or was at least stimulated by, religious feeling and primordial loyalties to the shaikhs. Nationalist loyalties, however, began to lead a life of their own, and no longer have such strong religious associations"*. Nevertheless, Kurdish tribalism is more concrete than Islamic Umma, and even this religious significance has changed following the emergence of the KDP, and the rise of socialism view in Kurdish politics, particularly after the onset of the communist party in Iraq (1934).¹¹³

Thus, tribal divisions always played a role in Kurdish politics and are considered a twin-structural factor to nationalism, which simultaneously enhances as well as obstructs the Kurdish politics. Although there were tribes that lined up with the Iraqi army against the revolutionist, during the Barzani's revolution, major tribes were the essential pillars that upheld the revolution and played a fundamental role in proliferating the Kurdish nationalism sentiment (McDowall, 1997; Kaya, 2012), nevertheless, they had a particularistic aim (Bruinessen, 2002, McDowall, 1997, Rasool, 2012). While during the monarchy era, Kurdish tribal leaders were appointed to some Iraqi political positions, which were invested for private interests of tribal leaders, during the first republic the tribal leaders, however, they did not have a chance to enjoy these types of privileges. Therefore they were

¹¹³ Interview conducted with Mahmoud Mohammed Mahmoud, Erbil, October, 4th, 2016

disappointed, dissatisfied and looked for an opportunity for vengeance. Furthermore, the stipulation of the agrarian reform law by Qasim, regarding land holding limitations and redistribution of about 12,000 million tribal-owned acres of Iraqi lands on the peasantry, had further frustrated this social class to an extent that they resorted to exploiting political tensions between the Kurds and the Iraqi government for their favor (McDowall, 1997).

Apparently substituting Ibrahim Ahmad by Hamza Abdulla, the secretary general of the KDP in 1953, led to an escalation of tribalism within this party too. Following the Iraqi revolution, in several cities like Mosul and Kirkuk riots had frustrated the order, correspondingly, Barzani, after Qasim' request for help, invited the Kurdish armed tribesmen (and some leftists) to fight against rebels who were mostly Arab nationalists. Some Arab and Christian leftists supported Barzani and Qasim as well. In Kirkuk, on the other hand, the riot was initiated by Turkmen, and both the Kurds and Communists assisted the government to retain the rule of law, yet these two events divided the Iraqi society onto two ethnic divisions. One was a pro-nationalist leftist Kurdish bloc supported by Qasim's government, the other was pro Arab nationalist fueled by Nasir and the Arab Unity. On the other hand, when Qasim blamed the communism for the brutal actions they exercised in controlling the unrests, Barzani took the opportunity to triumph over the party, for been seen Abdulla, a threat to his own leverage within the party. Perhaps, Abdulla's extreme inclination to communism pushed Barzani to base his strength on tribal leaders (Al-Khirsan, 2001).

Qasim's aim, on the other hand, was to limit communism expansion and popularity within their own horizons. As they were expanding rapidly throughout the country, representing the working class, and peasants who still had no clear vision about their own rights, in addition to the excellent relationship they had with the KDP following the appointment of Hamza Abdulla to the secretary general. Qasim saw these developments as a danger to his own position, and therefore inspired Barzani to limit their friendship with the communism, and accordingly, Barzani dismissed the leftist leaders who recently had joined the

KDP. Gradually, the KDP in that era became a tribal pro-system party against communists (ICP), Ba'athists, and Arab nationalists –Nasrists (McDowall, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001).

It looks like tribe chieftains also played a role in Barzani's decision. According to Stansfield (2003), Barzani was displeased for adopting the socialism ideology in KDP's second congress. Notably, those tribal leaders, who had followed Barzani for his tribal personality, were unable to use their influence in the party to protect their lands after the agrarian reforms. Therefore, they started to complain about socialism and blamed this view in empowering farmers to use the party for their own ends and establish a 'Farmer Union' within the party to break down the feudalism. Furthermore, during the unrest initiated by the Aghas (tribal chieftains), Barzani supported the chieftain and tribal leaders, disregarding the politburo, to show his influence nakedly to the central government. The politburo, on the other hand, considered these attempts by Barzani as deviations from party's disciplines because the party's aim was beyond the narrow interests of Agha (tribal) class (Amin, 1997).

Furthermore, Barzani's tribal disputes with some Kurdish tribes in Badinan (such as Surchi, Harki, and Zebari), and the greed to expand his leverage nationwide through recruitment of tribesmen clandestinely, had increased the problem between Barzani and the abovementioned tribes, and on the other side, with Qasim. Thus, tribalism from one side served as fuel to the nationalism invested by Barzani to glue Kurdish structural divisions under his leadership, and from the other hand, as an epidemic, which weakened through fragmentation and polarization of other chieftains. Notably, the government's bilateral supports played a significant role in inflaming conflicts between the KDP and the tribes. When the Iraqi government banned the KDP, the riots started not only in some Kurdish area but nationwide. Therefore Barzani decided to support tribal allegations against Agrarian Reform despite being beyond the KDP's goals.

Eventually, this affected the internal party's organization especially after Barzani

left Baghdad in (1960) and resided in his home-village Barzan. The party factually became a double leadership party; both the leadership groups from Baghdad and Barzan tried to triumph over the party (Stansfield, 2003; Abdulkhaliq, 2012). Barzani's sudden visit to Moscow 1960, raised Qasim's suspicious and therefore he decided to ban KDP and its publication Khabat in (23/9/1961). The politburo-Baghdad fraction had to leave the capital, and instead of Barzan, they settled in Mawat, a town located in the southeast of Sulaimaniya (Lortz, 2005). It looks like this was the first real fractionalization in the party that three years later led to a violent confrontation between them, and eventually a split to Jalaly-KDP (after Jalal Talabani, the leading personality of Politburo fraction), and Malay-KDP (after Mulla Mustafa's name).

In addition to the abovementioned disagreements, during the fourth congress, the KDP adopted autonomy for Kurdistan to be included in Iraqi constitution; which, in fact, emerged as another point of divergence among the KDP leaders, and fractionalization of the KDP politburo, and later the Kurdish society. Barzani supported this sentiment, while Ahmad, saw it a danger to Kurdish national struggle. Following this fragmentation, the KDP could not ever re-gain the same unified entity regarding internal party organization as before. Mullah Mustafa's declaration for supporting the agha revolution, and adopting the autonomy eventually, resulted in the closure of the party and fragmented the party onto two wings.

Amin (1997: 65) argues that the Mullah Mustafa's leadership model was different from those of true party leadership. He always stressed that *"I am not the symbolic queen of England,"* referring to that he uses his power as it should be. According to Mustafa Barzani's understanding *"leading a party was the same as leading a tribe"* (Ibid). To do so, he separated the paramilitaries of Bahdinan, Akoy, Balak, etc. and other tribal forces that he had friendly relationships with, from those of the KDP's conventional forces to *"expand his power on account of the politburo's influence"* (Ibid). Internally, Barzani's unilateral decision-making especially in negotiation about the Kurdish national rights, and signing an

agreement with Iraq's new regime that tried to integrate Iraq into an Arab nationalist union, encouraged the politburo to take a stand against Mullah Mustafa. They started to gather support to convene the sixth congress and to refute the petition of Mustafa Barzani to the Iraqi government in addition to garnering the Iraqi regimes' attention to themselves as they considered themselves as the KDP's real inheritors. Mullah Mustafa, on the other hand, behind politburo, replaced the KDP's military commanders with people who were close to him which infuriated the politburo and eventually, the sixth *conference* of the party held in *Mawat* headquarter to which accordingly the conferences' final statement condemned Mullah Mustafa's unilateral negotiation with Baghdad.¹¹⁴ The separation, thus, occurred, and under the name of the KDP two groups started manifestation; one in *Mawat* led by the politburo, and the other in Qaladiza by Barzani¹¹⁵ (Barrak, 1989; McDowall, 1996; Gawhari, 2014; Amin, 1997).

In return, Barzani held the party's sixth *congress* several months later, which preferably was a demonstration of (400) tribal-non-KDP members who gathered around Barzani himself than the KDP's principles. Barzani expelled most of the old Central Council members and arrested those who affiliated to the politburo in his own congress. Several other tribal personnel was elected to constitute a new leadership board, including his own two sons; Masoud, the current KDP's

¹¹⁴ In most of the KDP literature it is mentioned as the sixth's Congress, but Nawshirwan Mustafa, who participated in the conference, in his book *Panjakan Yektr Deshkenin* (Fingers Break One Another, 1997) declares it as a party conference. He argues that the conference was to take the party members opinions regarding the excessive powers Barzani had and the agreement he signed with Baghdad that proved the minimal rights of Kurds. Three years later, in late May 1967, the Ahmad-Talabani wing held the sixth party conference in Kalar (not Mawat) adopted socialism ideology for their KDP faction again, and expelled Mullah Mustafa from the presidency of the party. Hence, according to him, the politburo-KDP expelled Barzani in May 1967, and the Barzani wing of the KDP expelled most members of the central council and politburo in July 1964. (Amin, 1997: 81 and 95).

¹¹⁵ After the airstrikes by the Iraqi army and the declaration made by Ahmad Barzani, Mullah Mustafa's older brother, in favor of Iraqi government, Barzani had to leave Barzan and settled in Qaladiza, a town located northeast of Sulaimaniya. The Politburo, after the termination of Khabat and the Party in Baghdad, on the other hand, settled in Mawat, another town of Sulaimaniya. After the airstrikes by the Iraqi army and the declaration made by Ahmad Barzani, Mullah Mustafa's older brother, in favor of Iraqi government, Barzani had to leave Barzan and settled in Qaladiza, a town located northeast of Sulaimaniya. The Politburo, after the termination of Khabat and the Party in Baghdad, on the other hand, settled in Mawat, another town of Sulaimaniya.

president, and Idris Barzani who passed away in 1987 in Karaj-Iran (McDowall, 1996; Amin, 1997; Waisy, 2015).

Thereafter, the right wing, the conservative tribal wing of the party has had the control over the party, and the nationalist-leftists, on the other hand, sought an opportunity to take revenge. The political conditions of the coming years, on the other hand still did not encourage the foundation of any other party. Meanwhile, chasing their affiliates by Barzani forces, the severe conditions they had in Iran, and the promises they were given by the Iraqi government, encouraged politburo members to return to Iraq to again manifest under the KDP name. The civil war initiated between the two factions around 1966 and severe involvement in clashes endured for almost two years, which later penetrated a deep cleavage between both the groups. Neither party eventually had enough strength to manifest all over the nation (Amin, 1997; McDowall, 1996).

The kinship and tribal affinities within the KDP reached its peak when Idris and Masoud, Mustafa Barzani's sons, were appointed to lead the two most sensitive organs of the party, i.e., the Peshmarga (Armed Forces) and the Parastin (Security Agencies) consecutively in the seventh congress (Gawhari, 2014). However, the frequent coups in Iraq following the first republic fall (Table 4.2), and the regional collaboration for containment of Kurdish unrests that lately had become a potent threat to all the regional countries with Kurds, eventually led to a mass mobilization, which gathered all Kurdish people despite their ideological beliefs, and personal antagonism including the KDP's both wings. Hence, a leadership led by politburo in the Sorani dialect regions and another by Barzani in the Bahdinani dialect regions and some other Sorani tribes became the two leading forces representing the mass, until 1970, when they merged once again (Lortiz, 2005; Stansfield, 2003; McDowall, 1997; Amin, 1997). The Algeria accord (1975), though, collapsed the September Revolution and not proliferated only the nationalist sentiment, but also supported the emergence of a new type of tribalism based on extreme loyalty rooted in Kurdish politics and reflected the political system they emerged following 1991.

In fact, following the mass urbanization, especially those enforced by the Iraqi regimes, to secure rural areas having Kurdish fighters following the commencement of the new revolution in 1975, and precisely during the genocide campaigns (1985-1988), a new type of socioeconomic class emerged. Mainly was targeting the Kurdish nationalism for been seen it treason to the national unity of Iraq, yet despite its short period, this socioeconomic class is known as "Jash," brought about another type of loyalty different from traditional tribalism, based on inducements. According to McDowall (1997: 356), a non-tribal personality could have a wide range of land only by proving his loyalty to the government and could recruit as much as retainers he could from his own town, or surrounded villagers, *"some were professionals, doctors for example, able to build their own patronage networks"*.

Given this long-term historical dimension envisioned in the Kurdish nationalism model and the comparatively short history of political parties in Kurdistan region, the nationalism and tribalism we described above have been gradually institutionalized as two identities of Kurdish political parties, especially of those emerged in the aftermath of the '1975-juncture' and following the collapse of the September revolution. While the former was motivating the emergence of new parties, the latter was penetrating their roots and becoming a challenging structural force to the Kurdish nationalism under the repressions of Iraqi Baathist apparatuses, and later to the governance and political institutions in the KRI.

The linkage established by the former leader of the KDP with tribal chieftains, helped them become the recent leaders of new parties, which was significant in promoting relationship with neo-tribal leaders. In some ways, the Kurdish revolutionary parties, in this era, depended on the tribes who mostly had affiliations with the central government and switched loyalties after the bad political conditions under the Baathist regime. McDowall (1997: 356) affirms this claim *"As a result, some jash acted as informers for their favored party and others sheltered wounded peshmergas."*

Furthermore, during the struggle era, both leading parties (the KDP and the PUK) had their own routines and personalities within their structural organizations. These recruited individuals efficiently gathered what McDowall (2004: 29) calls "*knit members, composed of chiefs with their own retinues (like the chiefs or clans).*" Mostly, these knit members were either tribal chieftains or 'jash' chiefs who could use their access to spoil the central government provisions, offered to them to create routines. The praise to their contribution following 1991 was integration into the army forces of these two parties. "*These categories bargained their loyalty in return for favors or rank within the party system*" (*ibid*). Thus, the neo-tribalism gradually has integrated into the political parties structural and organizational dimensions, and is subsequently reflected in these characteristics in daily political life and governance. They started to fulfill the interest of these groups and spoil them by abusing political, and governmental positions. Considering the institutional and foreign influence supports (we discuss them in the following two chapters), strong patronage and clientel relations have been developed between political parties and local tribes (traditional and neo-) that are geographically and linguistically aligned with each other.

Furthermore, it stimulated the fragmentation of Kurdish political parties and increased personalism, which relied on their traditional tribalism or neo-tribalism connections with the personnel of geographies of their concentration. The intensifying of these phenomena and destructing internal democracy in leadership nomination and decision- making, may be best explained by what Huntington's (1965) has called "generation age, and this trend has further escalated during the self-rule era. Section (4.3) is devoted to discussing in detail the tendency of geographically based parties, especially during the struggle era, and following 1975 to deduce the significant role of the tribes in parties' sub-nationalizations and fluidity of their polity.

The conditions after the withdrawal of Iraqi forces and administration units forced the Kurdish political parties to take immediate decision in order to establish an

emergency interim- administration until the government formation. According to Stansfield (2003:122- 123), Masoud Barzani asked the Kurdish technocrats to take responsibility in rebuilding the KRI because *"the experiences of the peshmarga centered on destroying bridges, cutting electricity and destroying roads,"* i.e., those activities that had frustrated the Iraqi regimes, not those of building a state. In the early phase of the self-rule, accordingly a good relationship was developed between party leaders and the technocrats and internal brainpower, nonetheless; soon this proved to be a failure and substituted by peshmarga figures that mainly generated their supports from tribal loyalty.

The weakness of technocracy to fill these new shortcomings, in fact, paved the way for neo- tribalism and peshmarga figures to entrench to the founding institutions. Eventually, the self-rule opened new doors supplying this type of tribalism and erratic patronage. According to Kaya (2012: 58) *"One segment of a tribe sided with the PUK and another with the KDP (some tribes even simultaneously maintained ties with Baghdad). Moreover, tribes could switch sides rather easily, if they had come to feel the other party had more to offer. Such switching sides would be the cause for the outbreak of major clashes between the PUK and the KDP"*. The (50:50) system further enlarged the social and political cleavages between the areas of strength of the two ruling parties. Neo-tribalism gathered those who found themselves loyal to one of the two confederations. This type of patronage penetrated very deep down into the street through local patronages and brokers affiliated either to the erstwhile *Jashs*, or *peshmarga* leaders who found themselves in new conditions and enjoyed the privilege of buying loyalties at low prices. Sudden millionaires and party business started to flourish despite the economic embargos and crises. Mohammed (2015: 16) asserts that both dominant parties abused the public revenue for their parties' interests and of course further fostered the commencement of civil wars:

"[The] KDP gained 85 percent of its revenue from Kurdish- Turkish border through tariff and taxation, which reached 750 million annually. Likewise, PUK reestablished Sulimanyah cigarette factory, which produced from 12,000 to

144,000 packs a day between 1991 to 1997.⁸³ Even some officials of KRG transferred treasury money to the personal accounts of politburos”.

The corruption, therefore, has become an inevitable character within the political institutions. Jobs fabrication has become synonymous for loyalty and nepotism. The use of public and government-owned vehicles to transport loyal crowds to and from party conventions, voting centers, and the use of public places, schools, hospitals for partisan conventions, evolved gradually to be considered normal and legitimate.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, use of public money as incentives to induce government employees and the lower economic class to become party members and attend conventions, mainly through the recently fabricated neo-tribalism. In fact, the public who participates in the meetings has little understanding of the reason underpinning the party activists’ collection of them, or who are the candidates running in the elections.

Thus, the Committee Members (PUK), and District Members (KDP), irrespective their education, their jobs, whether teachers, doctors, university academics, policemen, vendors, followed them blindly, and in reality they also followed the fraction leaders within their parties through a chain of brokers, presenting neo-tribe generations and loyalties.¹¹⁷ Political parties opened specific organs and bureau offices in their structure for tribal conflict resolutions and allocated a substantial amount of cash to each tribe to maintain their tribal ceremonies and remain loyal. Accordingly, many irregular cases that should have been legally trialed in the courts have been settled with the employment of tribal laws including killing, raping, marriage, land and other cultural, and social issues concerning ordinary people's daily life.¹¹⁸

These political-tribal based attitudes motivated local tribes to see the political parties they supported, their own back in crises. And hence, the tribals in

¹¹⁶ Interview with Ali Hama Salih, Slemani, September, 30th, 2016.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Zmnako Jalal, October, 8th, 2016, Slemani.

¹¹⁸ Interviews conducted with Salar Mahmoud, and Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa September 26th, and 19th, 2016, Slemani.

Kurdistan region have become exacerbated as political institutions aligned themselves with the parties and used parties as backing forces whenever they needed and vice versa (Bruinessen, 1992). They once more had exploited the rivalry among Kurdish parties to achieve their own ends. In November 1994, one of the tribes that had geographically settled in a village in the KDP area altered loyalty to the PUK. This shift was the trigger for conflict escalation and armed conflict between the two hostile parties. A severe armed confrontation occurred between two of their affiliate groups of peasants for a piece of land in a town located in PUK's zone. As a retort to the mortification made in its zone by the PDK's affiliates, the PUK ascended the capital Erbil and expelled the KDP. Consequently, the KDP resorted to Baghdad and Baath's regime to retain back Erbil.¹¹⁹ Thereafter, the two political parties had to further intensify their focus on tribes and invest their social statutes for their own parties' ends. They also adopted the neo-tribalism to the political system, first in the fragmented governments and later through both Unification and Strategic agreements following the fall of Baathist, and accordingly divided the national, regional, and local political positions between them (Chapter Five).

The aftermath of the fall of Ba'athist witnessed institutionalized patronage links between these tribes and dominant parties. Tribes, traditional and neo-, have now become the engine, which generates parties' strengths while the latter has become the fuel of their expansion and reproduction of power. Tribes can support and guarantee candidates, for local, regional, and national elections. They nominate their own candidates for ministries, and parties' leadership councils, while the loyalty of these candidates, in the first place, is for their tribes than their parties. Thus, nepotism, cronyism, and clientelism have become characteristics of Kurdish politics and are reflected in the government, parliaments, and provincial councils.¹²⁰ Barham Salih, the former PUK's vice-president who has been

¹¹⁹ The fighting broke out between KDP and PUK forces over a land dispute in the Kurdish town of Qala Dizel and the next month would spread to the Kurdish capital of Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, Dohuk. Over 400 people were killed in the month-long fighting. Most of the casualties were not civilians. <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/chronology.asp?groupId=64504>

¹²⁰ Phone interview with Mohammad Shareef, January 7th, 2018.

withdrawn from his party's political scene for about several years now, highlights the IKR political atmosphere as following,

“If you look at it the way in terms of the way it behaves, the loyalty, the bond, the network, political economy of that bond, the patronage system, political parties today are becoming neo-tribalism, and that is do one fundamental thing, the important of history, the important of geopolitics, regionalization of culture. The other things are also important, the money, the oil, has changed the politics in Kurdistan, the significance of the 100 dollars per barrel, on the top of that you have the war with ISIS, so the PUK, the KDP, The Peshmarga, the intelligent forces, anti- terrorism and whatever it is, they becoming very important internationally, they get money resources, what is going to be that; fight ISIS but in the same time they buy loyalty.”

Notwithstanding, the degree of tribalism from one party to the other presents significant differentiation. The KDP has been accused of this trend more than all the other parties. The legacy the party has acquired from Barzani family that has a long history of tribalism in Badinan has portrayed this party to be seen more conservative. A family monopolization of politics whether in formal constitutional institutions or within the KDP's instrumental position become a tendency reflecting this party's entitlement proportions. The president of the KRG (during 2005-2017) is Massoud Barzani, who is the son of the famous leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani and has been the party president since 1978. Nechirvan, his nephew, is the party's deputy general (since 2010), and the KRG's MP (since 1999). Wajy Barzani, Nechirvan's brother, Sirwan Barzani, his nephew, and Mansour, Masoud's son are all Generals in the Kurdish Peshmerga. Massoud's older son, Masrou, is a KRG's intelligence chairman and a member of the

party's politburo. In fact, Masoud Barzani's famous quote "*for your information currently we as Barzanis more than 1000 men*" explains the extent to which politics, tribalism, the Badini dialect and the KDP are connected to one another.¹²¹ However, what differentiates the PUK from the KDP is the concentration of the KDP on the Barzani family in the first place while in the PUK it is limited to the PUK, yet the recent political practices of the PUK evidence that there is no PUK without the Talabanis.

Dissimilarly, the PUK has a long history of antagonism with the tribal politics of Mullah Mustafa, yet practically it has become more leaning towards nepotism and cronyism (Kennedy, 2015). Talabani had held the party's president position since the year 1975 until his death in 2017, and Iraqi presidency (during 2005-2014). His family upholds key posts in the party's leadership and Kurdish decision-making echelons. Apparently, his marriage to the daughter of a prominent leader like Ibrahim Ahmad enabled this unified clan through the use of institution of marriage to consciously appoint family members in key positions. His son Qubad was the KRG representative to the USA since 2007 until after the elections of 2014 was made the Deputy Prime Minister of the KRG. Hero Ibrahim is a politburo member and owner of the Kurdsat, Khak, and Hewal media institutions. Bayaz Talabani, Jalal Talabani's cousin, was the KRG's Finance Minister (2006-2014). Bafel, Hero's older son with Lahur, Jalal Talabani's nephew, are the leaders of the PUK's Counter-Terrorism units and Special Intelligent forces. Mullah Baxtiar, Bafel's father-in-law, is on the PUK Politburo since 1992. Shanaz Ahmed, Hero's sister, despite not been elected in any party congress, still is the PUK's chairwoman of the international affair bureau of the party, her husband,

¹²¹ Interview conducted with Hemn Hawrami, in Salahadin, Erbil, October 4th, 2016. He refused that Barzani in his speech had addressed tribalism aspect of the KDP as an advantageous, and exempted this quote to that "nowadays the Barzani has expanded to a 1000 men, while they may not all be good people, there may have bad people among them too". Nevertheless, it sociologically speaking still has a tribal dimension of what has been discussed above and supported by Bruinessen's (1992) literature, furthermore three minutes later Barzani himself, nominated his nephew and son in law to the Deputy General of the KDP and continued to speak about his son, son in law and family for about eleven minutes of his 40 minutes speech. See the this two links; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxEseTzfc0o>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jV_L42v2wp8

Latif Rashid, was the Minister for water and irrigation for Iraq, Mohammed Saber, Hero's other brother-in-law, is Iraq's ambassador to China, and many others who are in lesser ranked positions.¹²²

The assessment of these two families' tribal style might, in fact, not give similar social structure that concern tribalism outcomes. Barzani's tribalism mainly inclines towards the traditional form for being descendants of a real tribal group, which evolved to become a political group after being integrated with other social and political sentiments such as nationalism and ethnic rights. The Barzani family is the historic lead family of confederated tribes in the northwest of the Kurdish region concentrated around the village of Barzan and the smallest KRI's province of Duhok. Therefore, the nepotism within the KDP entangles not only the Barzani family but also its traditional allies. The KDP's current members of parliament may be a good example for explaining how these tribal traditions within this party function. Among the thirty-eight KDP members of parliament, twenty-six have come from the city of Duhok, and 23 come from the area that is typically within the area of influence of the Barzani family (Kennedy, 2015). As such, the analysis of Talabani's tribalism may adopt a different path mainly known as neo-tribalism and gradually become a force based on nepotism and clientelism. It has remained a network controlling very top and chief positions but not penetrated in every single segment of the society under their control, such as that of the KDP-Barzani, rather through clientelism and patronage of neo-tribalism (explained above) it develops and sustains.

Another difference between these two parties concerns the gender issues. The Talabani family originated from a village nears the city of Kirkuk, and his wife's family, the Ahmads from Sulaimaniya. As mentioned above, there are about 30-40 Talabani, as well as Ahmad's descendants, who hold vital positions in the KR. However, unlike in the Barzanis' KDP, where only the males have the right to

¹²² Report by KurdMedia, Wednesday, January 10th, 2007. Retrieved from <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/01/10/18345489.php>

hold political and party's positions, in the PUK both Talabani women and men are involved in crucial governmental, business and partisan roles. Both spokespersons of the PUK's regional, and national parliamentary fractions are Talabani's bloodline. After President Jalal Talabani's sickness (2012), his wife, Hero Ibrahim Ahmad, analogous to 'Isabel Martinez of Peron' in Argentina (McGuire, 1995), has controlled the party and started to repel every voice of opposition to her supremacy. She has appointed several who are loyal to her family's interests, including her sons, her sisters, her nephews, and brother in laws to guaranty maintaining the prevailed conditions in favor of her family.¹²³ Therefore, by comparing these two types of tribalism, it can be inferred that the Barzani's is by heritage, while Talabani's is by power.

4.3 Geographical Polarization of the KRI Political parties and Party System

In the prevailing structural cleavages that we discussed above, in addition to the impact of a politicized electoral system (Chapter Five), and foreign patronage relations (Chapter Six), the sub-nationalization has emerged as a distinguishing character of Kurdish political parties and party system.¹²⁴ Integrating historical variable in the cultural context of a specific spatial preference may cause subordination of a party to particularism (Meleshevich, 2007). Apparently, representation of dialect and particularized geographical groups' interests inspired by tribalism and loyalty to the legacy of a clan or a family have significantly contributed towards Kurdish nationalism and stimulated specific political party to become stronger in a particular region or geographical unit than the others.¹²⁵ The Gini Coefficient gauge presented by Jones and Mainwaring (2003) is employed here to measure the influence of this sub-nationalization trend on the autonomy of political parties (Meleshevich, 2007) and their rootedness in the Kurdish society

¹²³ Report by KurdMedia, Wednesday, January 10th, 2007. Retrieved from <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/01/10/18345489.php>

¹²⁴ Interviews conducted with Ali Hama Salih, Saman Fawzi, Soran Omar, Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, in Sulaimani between September 18th to 30th, and Jaafar Emniki in Erbil, October 4th, 2016.

¹²⁵ Interview conducted with Chnar Saad, Erbil, October 4th, 2016.

(Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

Following Jones and Mainwaring (2003, 140), by **nationalized party system we mean the extent to which the effective political parties that comprise the system do not have extremely differentiated vote share from one province to other**, while a weakly nationalized or a **sub-nationalized party system** is when *“the major parties’ vote shares vary widely across provinces”*. According to the authors, Gini coefficient is a good gauge for comparing political parties over time for two reasons: first, it measures vote volatility of geographical concentrated political parties, and whether this type of volatility is a pattern all political parties follow, or there is diverging nationalization trend from one party to another. A Gini coefficient of 0 implies that a party gains equal share of the vote in every sub-national part. While a Gini coefficient of 1 denotes that the party received 100% of its strength in one sub-national part and 0% in all the rest. Following the two authors, this study subtracts the Gini coefficient from 1 to determine the Party Nationalization Score (PNS) which ranges between 0 to 1, and the higher the score is, the better is the nationalization of the party. The Party System Nationalization Score (PSNS) is a product of multiplying the PNS of parties by their shares of the valid national vote, and then by summing the product of all the parties, the score of nationalization of the polity can be calculated. In Appendix (VI), we have clarified how the scores have been determined for each political party and then the KRI party system.¹²⁶

Apparently, the Kurdish political parties are weakly nationalized parties and mostly are influential in one or two provinces, and peripheral in the others. Table (4.7) exhibits their sub-nationalization as a pattern developed from the founding

¹²⁶ Due to the coalitions, the political parties have made during the regional elections of 2005, and 2009, we only determined the nationalization score of the parties and party system for the elections of 2013. The founding elections, on the other hand, it is considerably different from that of 2013. Those three parties in the last three elections that are considered effective, have not been emerged yet, and the founding elections included some areas annexed to the so-called safe haven back then, but following 2003 they rejoined back to their former provinces in the so-called areas of disputes, therefore, their electoral outcomes are calculated separately from the current the KRI provinces.

election of 1992. The PUK and KDP, both are geographically intensified parties, the former's focus is in Sorani speaking areas that are neighboring Iran, while the latter's strength comes from Badini speaking areas, like neighboring Turkey. The capital Erbil, embraces all political parties, with are certainly differentiated but to some extent do project balanced degrees. Table (4.7) shows that the sub-nationalization score of the two dominant parties is moderately equal; while in the founding elections of 1992, the scores show a higher probability to be nationalized than in the 2013's elections. It seems the Islamic IGK is the least nationalized among all the effective Kurdish parties, the Islamic IUK, on the other hand, has showed the best nationwide party score (0.8669) in the elections of 2013.

In fact, the claim raised by Jones and Mainwaring (2003) that the large parties tend to be more nationalized than small parties, can be refuted in this case study, as no definite relationship exists between the size of a party and its nationalization trend. Our finding affirms this claim through one good example of the IUK, which has only had 9.5% of the total votes in the regional elections of 2013, still proved better nationalized than all other parties while each of the KDP with 37.8%, Gorran had 24.21%, and the PUK had 17.8 of the total votes, still they barely exist in some provinces. The traditional parties, in fact, still are equally sub-nationalized and geographically concentrated. This trend includes the Gorran movement, which comes to the second most influential political party in electoral turnouts; however second weakest nationalized party following the IGK.

Furthermore, by reviewing the party system nationalization scores it can be concluded that following more than a quarter century of democratic experience, the Kurdish party system still is considerably polarized and to a great extent static. **Apparently, the geographical concentrations of the tribes have supported this tendency and expanded this cleavage through an amalgamation of those tribes that have positioned themselves in the dominant parties' zones. The 'tribal ideology' (Bruinessen, 2002) has contributed to the design of a complex network of political maintenance supported by tendencies of personalism within political**

parties and international patronage relations (Leezenberg, 2006). Bruinessen (2002) stresses the existence of a close correlation between tribalism and dialect tendencies. The Badini tribes, such as the Dosky, Zebari, Bradosti, are more closely allied to the KDP than other, Sorani speaking, tribes like the Jaf, Hamawandi, Zangana, Jabari, Talabani, that are closely connected with the PUK, if they do not consider themselves their co-founders.

Table 4.7: Nationalization of Effective Kurdish Political parties and Party System

Political parties	PNS 2013	PNS 1992
KDP	0.698	0.7383
Gorran	0.5928	/
PUK	0.676	0.75495
IUK	0.8669	/
IGK	0.36	/
PSNS	0.6317	0.6619

Source: Self-calculated based on the official political parties' electoral results.¹²⁷

The cultural and linguistic diversity between north and south of the KRI's society has also influenced these geographical concentration propensities. According to Donovan (1990), the Northern provinces are mainly more tribal than the southern provinces in which predominantly the population is non-tribal urban. Therefore, the power maintenance scheme differentiation from one part to the other is predictable. The power in the north has habitually been running by traditional tribal chiefs of Barzani and Baradost while in the more urbanized provinces like those of the south, the political parties, than tribes, are more influential, and even tribes are more urbanized. Furthermore, the two parts portray the departure of dialect differentiation. The southern speakers use (Sorani) meanwhile the (Kurmanji) dialect is found in Bahdinan region of Iraq. It seems the Sorani dialect is the intellectual dialect of the Kurds, and therefore it also stimulated some other cultural cleavages between the two parts regarding the formal language of

¹²⁷ The three other political parties have not being emerged yet.

education and administrative concerns.¹²⁸ While, most Kurmanji speakers of Iraq see Sorani speakers as weak, arrogant and unreliable, the Sorani speakers see the Kurmanji primitive and religiously fanatics (Bruinessen, 1986). Omar (2016) argues that this expansion of cultural cleavages was not salient as it can be noticed nowadays; apparently, it is a consequence of the long hostility between the KDP and the PUK, and the division these two dominant parties have constituted for partisan dominance after 1975.¹²⁹

Practically, the effect of these cross-cutting cultural cleavages is that the Kurdish politics, whether in the institutional level or political parties structure, is still contingent on the extent to which a charismatic leader can rise above the crowd and replicate the patterns of daily life culture. Therefore, a primary cause that contributes to the weakly nationalization of Kurdish parties and hinders their progress towards expansion nationwide is the personalism politics.

Another problem is that the Kurdish nationalism is rather a matter of nationalistic individuals than being an ideology that mobilizes the crowd. Individuals have become the dynamism that motivates mobilization, and the forces demise it whenever they face their own fates. Donovan (1990: 152) attributes this pattern to "master-disciple [...] and the pervasive quest for personal influence and authority and the pervasive quest for personal influence and authority within Kurdish society." The culture supports Barzani-type leaders who build-up their leadership charisma by promoting patriotism and tribal cultural traditions. This type of leadership is a production of the tribalism sentiment, and the feeling of being superior to the others in a way seems irreplaceable. Qazzaz (1971: 186), plainly highlights this trend in Kurdish political culture in his dissertation,

"One of Kurdish nationalism's dilemmas is the fact that it has remained centered around individuals instead of an ideology. What aggravates this problem is that the one individual who wields the most

¹²⁸ Interview conducted with Sarwar Abdulrahman, Slemani, October 6th, 2016.

¹²⁹ Previous Source

influence over direction of the Kurdish nationalist movement is the one who is least ideologically oriented. In spite impressive, charismatic powers, Mulla Mustafa Barzani neither perceives the need for nor is willing or capable of constructing a single and enduring political culture".

Furthermore, the abovementioned dilemma of Kurdish politics might, in fact, offer substantiated support for the explanation as to why there is a frequent delay in political parties' Congress. In fact, throughout the Kurdish history of political parties, only one time in the IUK, the power alteration occurred in response to democratic maintenance; otherwise, the parties' presidents have remained in their positions until their graves. (Table 4.8) exhibit age of effective political parties, the number of the congress they have held, and the alteration of power if existed.

Table 4.8: Power Alteration Within Kurdish Effective Political Parties (1946-2016)

Political Parties	Foundation Year	No. Congress	Of No. Alteration	President	Cause Of Change
KDP	1946	13	2		Death
PUK	1975	3	0		/
IUK	1994	7	2		Democratic elections
IGK	2001	3	0		/
Gorran	2009	1	1		Death

Source: Political parties' bylaws and official websites; <http://www.kdp.info/p/p.aspx?p=6&l=13&s=010000&r=347>; http://www.pukmedia.com/KS_BabetiLekchu.aspx?Babet=YNK&Nawnishan=ى.ن%E2%80%8C%E2%80%8C; <http://www.yakgrtw.net/ku/kongre>; <http://komalnews.org>; <http://gorran.net>

Furthermore, unlike developed societies, weakly nationalization tendency of political parties does not stress the local issues of the provinces from which the political parties gain strength, rather the Kurdish parties have provincial group-based interests, mainly the so-called neo-tribes, kinship, and brokers who continue to develop in one province while in the other they do not. These interests, in return, have not only escalated the sub-nationalization of parties but have also brought about other cultural problems such as 'Villagism' and disregard

for national identity.¹³⁰ A doctor, a scholar, a journalist, a judge, or any educated person who is still connected to his village or sub-tribe may not punish a political party for being incapable of achieving the promises it owes the voters, nevertheless, may do so if a political leader from their village or sub-tribe fails to obtain a position within the party or party's entitlements in government.

Another possible effect is the regional patronage relationship with the neighboring countries, which we shall discuss in detail in Chapter Six. Apparently, each KRI's province that is bordering on Turkey or Iran, inclines in social and business relations towards their neighboring country. The speaking dialect between the Kurds of Iraq with each of the other two parts of Kurdistan, and the tribal segmentation that occurred as a result of demarcation of the international boundary of Iraq after San Remo Treaty (1920), have reinforced significant relation to be developed within the neighboring country, namely the KDP with Turkey, and the PUK with Iran. Consequently, the interrelation of these two Kurdish cultures supported the type of political parties which are aligned with people's preferences. For example, the IUK, an Islamic Brotherhood based party, started to manifest in Duhok, simultaneously to the AKP in the Kurdish area of Turkey. Due to the sequence constitutional bans faced by the Kurdish parties in Turkey, most of the population of Kurdish region had inclined to AKP during the 1990s and 2000s, which as a new opposition emerged and strived for fairness and democracy (Herzog, 2011). This wave expanded to Iraq and accordingly the IUK emerged and subsequently developed to become an alternative force to all other parties that the KDP coercively rejected in its domain.¹³¹ Thus, both the KDP and to a lesser degree, the IUK have become the only influential forces to mobilize people in Badinan. In the founding regional elections of 1992, all Islamic forces together could not clear the threshold and only won 5.5% of the total regional votes, and only won 1.95% of the giving votes of Duhok province. Nevertheless, after the emergence of an Islamic Brotherhood-based party, the IUK, and the political victory of the AKP within the

¹³⁰ Someone who exclusively orientate himself around the interests of his village

¹³¹ Interview conducted with Sarwar Abdulrahman, Slemani, October 6th.

last two decades in Turkey, the brotherhood relations between these two parties, in addition to other factors (Discussed in Chapter Six), helped the IUK to strengthen its position in Duhok with a good percentage that no party other than the KDP could achieve up to date. Thus, the religious interests of this party with the AKP, which concentrated on the delivery of ideological and Islamic missions, and political leverage, in fact, enabled the party to construct itself as a mobilizing force and aggregate 30.34% of its strength there.

In fact, this trend motivated political parties to stipulate biased policies and laws toward their geography of strength. The best support for this claim is the imbalanced number of seats allocated to the members of the parliamentary list representing the Duhok and Badini dialects by the KDP that excessively increases the weight of their provinces' vote shares. Furthermore, these affinities to geographical particularism have inclined the economic policies of the KRG towards favoritism. For instance, a sub-district in Duhok receives a budget several times bigger than the same size sub-district of Sulaimaniya province; this is in the first place because of the renewing loyalty the people show to the KDP, elections after elections.¹³² On the other hand, the data of the other two Sorani provinces presented in (Table 4.9), show that throughout the self-rule era, the cultural aspect and the political openness stimulated by the less tribal people have supported all the political parties, but the KDP, to grow or at least to keep their substantial presence in these two provinces. Nevertheless, the KDP's vote in this province showed a dramatic decrease to almost half the votes the party had won in the elections of 1992.

Table 4.9: Geographical Dispersion of Effective Political Parties' support (1992 & 2013)

Province	KDP		PUK		Change 2013	IUK 2013	IGK 2013
	2013	1992	2013	1992			
Sulaimaniya	12.33	21.13	66.83	70.11	70.05	45.3	56.83
Erbil	45.7	34.75	24.98	35	27.27	24.63	39.11
Duhok	41.67	38.52	7.18	3.58	2.68	30.34	4.07

¹³² Interview conducted with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 2016.

Source: the author, adapted from NDI, *Iraq Election Watch: KRG Parliamentary Elections* <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI-Iraq-Election-Watch-Ed7.pdf> and Hoff et al. (1992)

Finally, evidence suggests that due to the economic crises of 1990s in the country, tremendous numbers of families were registered as Turkmens, and Islamic associates, with the aim to become eligible for the food proportion programs. This program was installed by some Turkmen or Islamic Brotherhood organizations, which accordingly a proportion of food was distributed on needy families particularly in Duhok and Sulaimaniya, as they are homogeneous societies composed of Kurds and a very small percentage of Christians, yet barely any Turkmens dwell there. Possibly this policy aimed at increasing of the IUK leverage and Turkey's role in the region, and perhaps some KDP affiliates in Sulaimaniya switched loyalty to the IUK, especially after they proved hopelessness of being protected by the KDP during the civil wars¹³³

4.4 Key Findings and Concluding Remarks

There are several contributory findings suggested by this study to the fluidity of Kurdish party system. Apparently, physiognomy cleavage of Bartolini and Mair (1990) is not quite salient in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The likelihood is that the concerning social factors highlight nationalism, political culture, and geography, and to a lesser extent religion. The nationalism sentiment in the context of Kurdish party system has stimulated tribalism and clientelism inter- and intra-political parties' relationships. It has impeded political parties from what Huntington (1965) has called adaptability in generational age. Democratic maintenance is a prerequisite element for political development and so does the latter for institutionalization (Huntington, 1965; 68). Therefore, the institutionalization of any political institution cannot be fulfilled unless a sufficient degree of democracy and elections is pervasive, to which accordingly the degree of adaptability of that institution to the new environment is

¹³³ Interview conducted with Prof. Sarwar Abdulrahman, Sulaimani, October 6th, 2016

determined.

Furthermore, it looks like the internal parties' democracy is not a matter of concern of the Kurdish parties. The fear of reversing the achieved level of nationalism goals has always hindered Kurdish parties from holding democratic congress and the appointment of new leaders to the parties' president positions. The tribalism and Kurdish political culture have supported this tendency for the party presidents with the only hope of achieving national goals. Even in the leadership councils, these trends have hindered generational age differentiation. Despite some parties congresses deciding on new leadership, this new personnel are adoring the same tribal maneuver and resembling the same dynamics and mechanism of politics. Thus changing a set of generational age leadership by another with a fixative generational age, i.e., the co-founders- like the way they replicate themselves in Kurdish parties, is not adaptability, as is defined by Huntington (1965). Because the new chronological leadership has not descended from different organizational experience, they rather reproduce the generational age's experience despite the changes in dilemmas and crises. This tendency has been repetitively practiced in Kurdish political parties, whether in the struggle or democratic era. And eventually, it has turned them to tribal-patronage parties subordinated to generational age's (the co-founders) willings, than organizations representing different political interests, which maneuver diverse approaches to fulfill these interests.

Further, the propensities to tribal influence as an influential cultural cleavage in political parties may raise another fundamental issue related to democracy and tolerance and hence "sabotage the procedural and normative consensus on the parameters of interactions" (Herzog, 2011:48). Tribal politics apply to a tribe or confederation of tribes that often present concealed purpose. The principal aim of this type of politics is to protect the identity of the group, traditions, and interests; mainly in the underdeveloped societies they maintain control and adopt certain political ideologies such as nationalism, to control the political movement. And by doing so, they keep their tribal control, through individuals on the top of the

tribal realm, over national agenda. They further expand through uses of the national assets and resources to satisfy the family and tribal ego, while being incapable of renewing itself and adopting new ideas to stay abreast of new changes and developments. Hence it turns to undemocratic means for suppressing the people who live in its control.¹³⁴ The aftermath is that this phenomenon has affected the candidacy for political positions, and in addition, the KRG and the KRP institutions. The voters are influenced by their social, tribal, kinship, geographical and spatial relations they have. A candidate who has a bigger tribe, family, or kinship knit can win more votes than those who are not descended from such tribal relationship. These social factors have affected national identity and issues related to unified citizenship and in some cases thus stimulated the reverse of the political process, which as aftermath negatively affected the quality of government (Alesina. et al., 2003).¹³⁵

Furthermore, these tendencies affected Kurdish political parties to diverge from their own labels and democratic goals. Nominating candidates for parliamentary seats and offices based on tribalism and loyalty influenced the political parties' performance and identifications (Bartolini, 2005; Randall, 2001). Thus, instead of gathering the more likable professionals who represent diversified interest groups in order to enhance their rootedness, they rather employed different mechanisms with the aim to serve loyalty to clans and ruling families in order to guarantee their political shares and privileges.

Another finding is that all the Kurdish political parties like many other parties in the Middle East are a function of ethnicities and regions, with a lesser degree of religions (Randall, 2001). Therefore ethnicity and region are two fundamental cleavages for their determination. In fact, the non-religious political parties that emerged in struggle era are more ethnic-based than those established in democratic and self-rule age, for example, Gorran. This is an indication that the ruling and dominant parties are more nationalistic driven forces than oppositions

¹³⁴ Interview with Kirmanj Gundi, Valencia December, 6th, 2016

¹³⁵ Interview with Miss. Chnar Saad, Erbil, October 4th, 2016

(Cheeseman and Ford, 2007). In contrast, some Islamic parties, which emerged in self-rule era, such as the IUK, has eventually adopted nationalism and ethnic rights in their political programs for being seen as alien to Kurdish society. On the other hand, this nationalism sentiment has supported Kurdish political parties to become more persuasive for political mobilization and voting alignment in those areas where Kurdish people reside. Furthermore, it has played a significant role in unifying Kurdish parties and stabilizing the ethnic cleavage through constructing coalesced lists in some previous electoral processes to run for national elections as one entity.

Therefore, it can be inferred that the nationalism has affected Kurdish parties, both negatively and positively in the Iraqi political arena, in fact, it is the unifying force that glues all political differences around the nationalistic rights of people of Kurdistan, while inside Kurdistan region, nationalism has hindered the emergence of a real democratic regime. Since the dominant ruling parties have the legacy of striving for the nationalism and therefore this historical legacy is not only reflective of the political parties' internal democracy but also the overall political life of the KRI (Svasand, 1999; 2002; Basedau and Stroh, 2008; Gyimah-Boadi, 2007).¹³⁶

The findings also suggest that the Kurdish party system differs from Iraqi party system from polarization perspective. Apparently similar to Turkey, some ethno-religious cleavages may have more salient impact than others (Dinc, 2012). Therefore, and based on Fridy (2007), this study's finding suggests ethnicity as the major variable for explaining electoral outcomes of a party repetitively recorded electoral victory in a region inhabited by a single ethnic group. Following 2003, and based on the Fridy's claim, in both national electoral processes of 2005, Kurdish parties constituted the list of Kurdistan, which was a territorial-based allied list and composed of all the Kurdish and other small ethnoreligious parties of Kurdistan, and won about 97% and 91% of the Kurdish

¹³⁶ Interview conducted with Shorish Haji, Slemani, October 5th, 2016

seats in that year. In the elections of 2009, and 2014 also the two dominant nationalist parties (i.e., the PUK and KDP) won slightly more than 75% and 72.2% of the seats won by the Kurds. Thus, Kurdish party system is an ethnic-based party system, while in the context of diverse Iraqi culture, the party system polarization is based on two intertwined salient effects, one highlights the ethnic characteristic of political parties the other is the religious inclination of Arab political parties. In Kurdistan region, this is entirely different. The religious-based cleavage is considerably weak. Neither sectarianism exists, nor the religious vs. non-religious aspiration is significant in a way drives Kurdish party system to an ideological polarization based on religious particularization. Thus, the analysis of electoral behavior and party systems under the social cleavage theory by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) adopted a different dimension in the KRI's social context.

Like several other, under-developed and developing societies the party system structure of Iraq portrays social group divisions and their strong links to the geographically concentrated parties. Therefore both conflicts and voting behavior in electoral processes are geographically specific, reflecting the socio-region divisions (Cheeseman and Ford, 2007). This trend constituted a pattern, which expected the Sunni votes to be aggregated largely in the central part of the country, and the Shia votes principally located in southern part, the Kurdish from the north and even small groups like Turkmen, Ezidi, and Assyrian mostly to be gathered in the Areas of dispute, Erbil, and Baghdad.

Notwithstanding, there is another salient driving effects of Kurdish party system polarization, which is based on cultural-linguistic cleavage between Sorani and Badini. It seems the possession of the land, and cultural differences between the northern and southern Kurdish provinces, the nature of tribes, and lingual effect stimulated geographical concentration of dominant parties. Later the struggle for power within these parties stimulated the intergroup conflicts in struggle era, and civil wars, expanded to two-fragmented governments, and the federal state of the KRI. Apparently, in order to limit the antagonism between warring parties, Strategic and Unification agreements became two leading arrangements support

power division between political parties, which represent these cleavages and were stimulated by institutional and exogenous factors following the emergence of the democratic regime in Iraq. In fact, these structural aspects profoundly affected Kurdish model of governance and policy-making entrenched in all political, economic, institutional and even military policies and performance (Chapter Five).

Furthermore, they impeded political parties from becoming mass parties, and enforced their party labels to reflect their political performance. Rather, they focused on vertical segmentation of Kurdish society to embody as much as tribes and nobles to mobilize electoral support. Tribes, neo-tribes, and sheikhs become the significant elements to mobilize society through patronage and clientelistic correlation with leading personalities of political parties and nationalists which eventually affected the party system from the very top (Mainwaring, 1999). Thus, the political parties become instruments representing these social groups' interests through their chronological and generational age leaders who established strong reciprocal relations with these social segments and promote the investment of this legacy at any time they see it necessary for protecting their own family, clan, tribe, and particularistic interests, and vice versa.

A further finding of this chapter suggests the tribalism and personalism tendencies stimulated by cultural divisions also inspired engendering fractionalization of political parties in both struggle and democratic eras. Apparently, the splinter occurred within the KDP in 1964, and other political parties following 1975, especially within the PUK, and the KSP (1985)¹³⁷, which were consequences of tribal and personalism approaches followed by parties' leadership, supported by international patronage relationships (Discussed in Chapter Six). The Barzani's tribal trends thrust the intellectual nationalist leftist to manifest differently in the 1960s while Gorran following several attempts by the

¹³⁷ See chapter three

Nawshirwan Mustafa to reform the PUK and systematize political and organic structures, eventually decided to leave the party and establish Gorran as a reformist-anti corruption party. **Seemingly, in the KDP's case the division was strongly supported by dialect and territorial strength each fraction had, while in the PUK's case rather was supported by personalism, and sentiment of the charismatic leader whose legacy is significant for political party's strength and maneuver.** Thus, before the rootedness of Kurdish political parties become strongly penetrated in the society, a splinter encumbered them and accordingly significant volatility was resulted (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995). Finally, following Mainwaring (1999) this may be true that political parties and party systems in new democracies have different experience and challenges to face from those of advanced societies, but in contrast to his claim that new democracies are less affected by social cleavages, this study's finding suggests that cleavages has negative effects, and in some cases are sources of non-democratic policies. Tribal policies stimulated by charismatic leader may become decaying tools to political development and practically aid the emergence of authoritarianism, as discussed profoundly in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS

There is a general agreement among scholars that political and electoral institutions influence different criteria of party systems. These influences occur in determining and reshaping the linkage between voter and parties; alteration of party system whether in the number of parties compose the system or interparty competitions, and parties internal organizations (Maurice Duverger, 1954; Hicken and Kuhonta, 2015; Hicken, 2008; Lijphart, 2005; Sayari and Esmir, 2002; Gallagher and Mitchel, 2005; Reilly, 1997; Shugart, 2005; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005; Bielasiak, 2002). Therefore, this chapter aims to analyze the institutional influence on Kurdish political parties and party system considering the sociopolitical divisions of the society and the recent political and socio-economic cleavages (Mozaffar, 2003) stimulated by tribalism and corruption to determine accordingly (5.1) *Institutionalization of Political Institutional Design* and (5.2), *Quality of Electoral Institutions*.

5.1. Institutionalization of Political Institutional Design

Kurdistan region has undergone frequent alterations in the electoral and relative institutions and laws. The power to call elections, and declare electoral results in addition to the crises between the KRP, and the presidency of the region are issues that need profound investigations. Furthermore, concerns related to the political parties' budgetary for electoral campaigns and security of the ballots to maintain fair and clean elections motivate us to direct our focus on three fundamental laws. Therefore, the first section of this part is a chronological analysis of the frequent alteration in the political parties' law, and the electoral laws, the second part highlights the issues related to the presidential law, and the third part's focus is on the ministerial instability. While the presidential law dilemma is analyzed through an in-depth qualitative path-dependent investigation, several gauges have been used to measure the influences of other two bills. The frequent alterations of electoral laws are measured through the electoral vote and

seat share volatility for each of old, small and minority groups' ethnoreligious parties' volatilities. The ministerial instability is determined through ministerial volatility, government openness, and frequent alterations in Kurdistan region's government.

5.1.1. Frequent Alteration of Electoral Laws

Measuring the frequency of changes made in electoral laws is a good determinant of the role electoral rules play in reshaping party systems. It is related to the permissive policies resulted from alteration in district magnitude, assembly size, mechanisms of seat allocations, threshold, voting, and list formulas. This study uses old, small and minorities ethnoreligious parties volatility indices, adapted from Pederson Index for Volatility, to determine the influence of these alterations on the KRI's party system's fluidity.

Furthermore, this study considers the parties that participated in the founding elections of 1992 'Old Parties' and their volatility illustrate their deterioration extent from meeting the electorates' expectations from founding elections, which is a good indicator for measuring the rootedness of these parties. The small parties' volatility highlights the influence of the threshold cancelation on small interest forces, to become manifesting forces in the political and electoral arena. The minorities' ethnoreligious parties' volatility enables us to measure the impact of the reserved seats on the institutionalization process, which is a constant proportion of 9.9 of the KRP and probably they have more significant role than their real electoral strength.

Like many other transitional regimes, frequent electoral reforms have been made to alter the founding electoral rule of the breakaway democracy, especially after the fall of the Baathists, and under the new electoral rules of Iraq, known as TAL (Transitional Administrative Law). These amendments were enacted with two doctrines that originated from Law No. 1 of the KRP and the TAL's legal framework. To be specific, a longitudinal analysis was used in this study to trace the changes made over time to electoral and relevant laws through comparing

them to their previous adopted ones and those currently in force. There are two stages of electoral rule alterations, each hosting the implementation of several amendments to the existing rules and regulations.

The first stage started at the founding period, in which no legal electoral and institutional frameworks existed, and ended with the fall of Baathist regime and the unification agreement following the civil war between the two dominant parties. The political vacuum followed the uprising, which encouraged the revolutionary parties in this phase to seek a legal entity that could take on the responsibility of supervising and conducting elections to win people's satisfaction. To legitimize its authority, the Front of Kurdistan recognized a Supreme Electoral Committee, which was formed from existing judges and lawyers – not politicians – to be responsible for overseeing democratic elections for the National Assembly and the Leader of Kurdistan.¹³⁸ Thereafter, the committee prepared drafts of two laws: Resolutions No. 1 for the Iraqi Kurdistan National Assembly, and No. 2 for the Leader of the Kurdistan Liberation Movement and accordingly both elections simultaneously on May 19th, 1992 were held.¹³⁹ After being ratified by the founding fathers, the first law became the founding electoral law and had witnessed seven amendments reflecting the demands of dominant parties, or exogenous forces mainly imposed by the TAL, the Permanent Iraqi Constitution, and the IHEC (Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq) in the second phase.

The law declared the Kurdistan Region a single district comprising four areas (provinces) and a National Assembly composed of 105 seats, including five seats reserved for minorities' religious groups, namely the Christians.¹⁴⁰ A seat value, according to the law, was estimated at a total of 30,000 *citizens*, not eligible

¹³⁸ Front of Kurdistan was an interim small ruling council in the early months of the uprising, established in 1988 (see chapter three).

¹³⁹ These two laws were published in “Anjuman” the formal publication of the KRP in 15/9/1992. See the KRP official

website <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/Default.aspx?page=page&c=Parliament-History>

¹⁴⁰ In no article of the founding Electoral law of Kurdistan Region was the issue of reserved seats for minorities mentioned. It was only a decision taken by the Front briefly before the electoral process to add to the 100 seats of the KRP.

voters, for each.¹⁴¹ Each Iraqi Kurdistan's citizen of age 18 had the right to cast their votes in a secret direct ballot.¹⁴² Article 37 highlighted "*the electoral quotient is the outcome of the division of the total number of casted ballots by the number of the seats*", and accordingly, total votes won by each list were divided by the electoral quotient to determine the number of seats allocated to them, considering the threshold of 7%. The law also emphasized the procedure of allocation of vacant seats, to be granted to the lists that have had the highest vote remainders, respectively, and votes of failed lists, those could not pass the threshold, to be redistributed among the winning lists.

Given that, article 38 stressed the methods of list composition and seat allocation within lists candidates; the winning parties have the right to allocate the seats to the candidates using one of these methods, the order of the names on the list, selection amongst the candidates, or evaluation. Consequently, the parties were observed to put their interests before their voters' satisfaction and correspondingly decided to use the selection method rather than the other two more democratic means (Hoff et al., 1992; Faraj, 2005). Hence, a two-party system was emerged with a 50:50 seat shares for each of the KDP and the PUK (Table 5.1).

This law is considered the foundation for many other resolutions and was followed by seven amendments throughout the self-rule era. Two were made during the KDP's dominance over the KRP during the civil wars and political tensions in the years 1996 to 2002. The KDP's amendments concentrated in the first place on the quality of deputies who hold the KRP seats, and the technical issues of the KRP such as the extensions of the KRP term, regulations legitimized deputies' membership and duties in political parties and administrative organs.

¹⁴¹ The law declared seat value based on the number of citizens of the Kurdistan Region instead of those eligible citizens who had the right to vote.

¹⁴² See Articles 3 and 18.

Table 5.1: Founding National Elections (1992) of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Province	Voting Share %								
	KDP	KSP-PASOK	PUK-Toilers	KPDP	ICP	Islamic	Ind.	Tot. Invalid	Tot. Val.
Duhok	85.04	0.99	7.65	3.05	0.78	1.95	0.02	0.5	99.5
Erbil	45.3	2.64	44.17	0.63	3.3	1.16	0.01	0.61	99.39
Kirkuk	27.77	2.3	59.95	0.74	3.20	5.43	.02	0.57	99.42
Sulaimaniya	26.47	3.34	59.33	0.32	1.63	8.4	0.06	0.35	99.65
Total Actual	45.05	2.56	43.61	1.02	2.17	5.05	0.05	0.49	99.51
Total Announced	44.51		44.15						
After redistributing votes	50.22		49.78						
Turnover	87.4%								

Source: Faraj (2010: 158)

The most important is the amendment to Article 5, which entitles the KDP's politburo and leadership members to hold party positions simultaneous to their KRP memberships. "there is no conflict between the membership of the parliament and that of a political party and activities performed for a party and trade unions."¹⁴³ Later, this opened the door for members of other parties in parliament to devote their time to their parties rather than serve voters and deal with public affairs' matters.¹⁴⁴ It also led to the reification of the supremacy of political parties' politburos positions to those of the parliamentary memberships in the public consciousness. Eventually, most of the decisions were enclosed among a small number of parties' leadership and the right to discuss crucial issues accordingly was stripped from most of the other members of parliament. This was achieved in a way that the politburos of the parties became the greatest reference to the KRP's most crucial decisions and their legitimacies. Furthermore, the

¹⁴³ See Article Four of Law No. 5 (1998); the first amendment of Electoral Law No. 1 of 1992 on the KRP official website; <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/150915101618.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ See Article Four of Law No. 5 (1998); the first amendment of Electoral Law No. 1 of 1992 on the KRP official website; <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/150915101618.pdf>

parliamentary fractions were accountable to their parties, precisely to their parties' chairman and their egoistic interests, than to people who voted and elected them. Thus, the KRP became an entity strongly influenced by the politburo decisions of dominant parties. Nevertheless, this trend has changed following the elections of 2013, especially after the change occurred in the list formula, as it is discussed in the following paragraphs.¹⁴⁵

In addition to legalizing the revolutionary parties of struggle era, the Kurdistan region's Political Parties Law No. 17, 1993 also paved the way for some other religious oriented groups like Islamic Brotherhoods and a Wahhabi division to establish the IUK and the IGK in 1994, and 2001, respectively. The law facilitated registration procedures before these structural elements to develop extreme rightist political parties.

Only fifty founding members who aged no less than 25 years were required, yet the law had many shortcomings regarding the transparency and determination of parties' financial sources. Apparently due to the lack of opportunity for competing in democratic elections, these newly established parties could not make any electoral change until after the elections of 2005, when the second phase has started.

Before the second stage begins in 2005, the second amendment of the Political Party Law in 2002 underscored political parties' registration threshold. Despite the increase of founding members' threshold, which accordingly, a political party is obliged to submit information regarding 50 founding members and a further 500 signatures, yet similar to the Electoral Law, it stimulated the emergence of pluralism by dropping the age to only eighteen. In fact, still the KRI's party registration threshold is considerably small compared to those of some European

¹⁴⁵ See Article Four of Law No. 5 (1998); the first amendment of Electoral Law No. 1 of 1992 on the KRP official website; <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/150915101618.pdf>

countries like Romania declares 25000; Denmark, 19769; Portugal, 7500; Finland, 5000; Lithuania, 4000; Bulgaria, 3050 and Estonia requires 1000, (Pilet and Haute, 2012).

The most effective amendments are those followed the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime when preparations for reconstruction of Iraq and the normalization process of Kurdish politics have been initiated. In this phase, five essential amendments were made to the KRI electoral laws reflecting rules and regulations of the TAL, the Permanent Iraqi Constitution, and the IHEC. Accordingly, dynamics in structural and ideological orientations different from those of traditional political parties have emerged, and encouraged diversity in addition to further pluralism grounded on ethnoreligious, and political cleavages.

Crucial changes made to 16 articles of Election Law No. 1 under the third amendment of 2004 that have been adapted from the TAL. They included cancelation of %7 threshold, an increase of assembly size to 111 (by increasing the minority groups reversed seats from 5 to 11), a gender quota of 25%, new regulations for electoral campaigns, the organization of a voter registry, the employment of an independent committee for elections, a new mechanisms for restructuring electoral centers, a candidate list registry, and separate new seat allocation mechanisms for each of ethnoreligious and general lists. To be specific, these influences have been summarized in five main points as follows:

First, the seat allocation method inspired political parties to enlist their most popular politicians and personnel at the top of their lists in order to gather the maximum proportion of votes and to ensure who would represent their interests in the KRP with taking into consideration the gender quota, i.e. every fourth name should be that of a woman. Table (5.2) demonstrates the pluralist system emergence after the amendments made in electoral and political party laws. The gender quota gave the opportunity to women to be more enfranchised, not only in the KRP but also within the political parties' leadership councils, and in some parties, in the very law organs of their structural pyramids.

The internal structure of Kurdish political parties was manipulated by males until 2005 and only six women were appointed to the KRP seats in the 1992 elections. However, the TAL imposed a 25% quota for women. Following the stipulations of the fourth amendment in 2009, further the age condition for the candidacy of the KRP seats is reduced from 30 to 25 years old. Also, the women's participation in KRP is increased to 30%, and accordingly, both women and youth become more enfranchised. These alterations in the socioeconomic composition of candidacy policies reshaped the KRP, and consequently, the fourth term included 12.6% of those aged fewer than 30 years old while 0% in 1992. The women's share was slightly higher than the threshold, at 30.6% while in 1992 only 5.7% of the KRP were females (Sarmemi, 2014). The political parties' internal structures, on the other hand, have to adapt their party leadership-councils and bylaws to the new electoral rules and impose positive discrimination in favor of women and youth. As a consequence, the leadership council of the PUK adopted a 20% gender quota for women in the third party' congress in 2010. By snowballing this tendency, The KDP (2010), and the IGK (2015), also have declared 10% respectively while the IUK in the sixth congress of the party (2016) has fixed 25% for women.

Despite one of the straightforward and essential criticisms of Islamic ideology is advancing discrimination principles against women, these rules, for example, encouraged Islamic Kurdish parties move toward ideological and structural openness. Therefore, it is considered a central change to see a Wahhabi party declares that: *“Sisters likewise brothers have the right to become members in any structural organ of the party; the sister participation quotas should be as following: leadership council 10%; congresses and general conventions 25% in addition to the same rate for lower organs such as party city centers, and other lower party organs”*.¹⁴⁶ This drift became a pattern in all the KRI parties and eventually enforced infrastructure dynamics in parties' mentality and leadership

¹⁴⁶ The clauses 9 and 20 of Article 25 of the IGK Bylaws 2015

compositions to perceive the notion of socialization of women in politics at a more significant deal than before.¹⁴⁷

Table 5.2: The Format of the KRP Electoral Processes (1992-2016)

Elections	No. Entities		Winner		Assembly Size	Reserved seats	Threshold	List Formula
	Parties	Lists	Parties	Lists				
1992	10	7	3	2	105	5	%7	Closed
2005	25	13	14	3	111	11	/	Closed
2009	34	24	19	11	111	11	/	Closed
2013	31	31	17	31	111	11	/	Limited

Source: *Official KRP website*
<http://perleman.org/Default.aspx?page=members&c=Presidency-Member2013>, June 25th, 2017

Second, the Seventh amendment of 2013 embodied another fundamental change in the electoral list, which is considered a vital step toward limiting the political parties' interference in the KRP's decision-making. According to Articles 1 and 4 of Resolution 15 in 2013, the list formation altered from closed list to an open-limited list (Table 5.2), the electorates, accordingly, can vote for both a list and a candidate within the same list. This formula is deliberated more democratic than those of closed list and obstructed political parties to no longer enlist the loyal but detested figures, and the politburo members, in the top of their lists. Besides, it strengthened the linkage between voters and their representatives. Therefore, the KRP members have seen themselves more accountable to their electorates than previous members. By considering public opinion, the majority of the KRP members decided, thus, to refuse to ratify the forth extension of the presidential term.¹⁴⁸ In fact, due to the forth KRP term's active role in passing regulations and laws that would support the KRI's political institution's consolidation, and declining the dominance of parties politburo's influence in the KRP, the KDP's politburo decided to dissolve the consensus which accordingly the forth KRP sovereign posts was allocated. Through blocking the KRP's spokesman to inter

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Kharaman Mohammed Jaff conducted in Sulaimania, October 1st, 2016

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq, October 8th, 2016

the capital Erbil, they managed in 2015 to interrupt the KRP onto two fragmented policy-makings, one led by the real KRP spokesman from Sulaimaniyah, the other by deputy general in the principal office of the KRP in Erbil under the KDP's control.¹⁴⁹

Third, in addition to the mentioned alterations, once more the supreme electoral committee that was designated by the KRP for the elections of 2005 and 2009 was substituted by the IHEC in accordance with Article 2. Yet, the new law in 2014 replaced the former committee with a permanent Kurdistan High Committee for Elections and Referendum. Conceivably, the frequent changes of the electoral laws and regulations, the institution, which takes the responsibility of holding elections, and implementing the electoral ordinances, are matters to the people's general understanding (Bielasiak, 2002). Furthermore, institution staffs' interpretations of those new regulations and electoral policies may have confused the Kurdish electorates especially if the electoral institutions' staff represents political parties' interests than being neutral experts and professionals.¹⁵⁰ Finally, the frequent replacement of electoral committee also hindered elections in the KRI to be regularly maintained, according to the scheduled scheme. Sometimes several months before the terminus of a KRP term, the committee was changed, and thus the new appointed committee could not be able to prepare for the next process abidance to the schedule. Accordingly, months have been extended to the KRP, and the KRG terms, which is in the first place inarguable evidence to the dominant party's KRP fraction's support to the delay and prevailing the state quo.

Fourth, the Political Parties Law entitled the KRG executives to use the public treasury to support political parties; however it did not regulate the mechanism whereby the subsidies should be arranged accordingly. In fact, before 2014, and as presented in (Table 5.3), the prime minister had an open hand to support whatever party adhered to his, and his party's policies even if they did not have

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimania, September 30th, 2016

¹⁵⁰ Interview conducted with Zmnako Jalal, October 8th, 2016

any KRP seat. Some small parties that had only one KRP seat, such as the Communist party, earned about the same amount as that of the Change Movement with 24 seats. Later, the Law of Political Parties' Funding in 2014 has established a legal and to some extent fair framework for this purpose.

The new law is a decent initiation to prevent the government from further intrusive in the internal affairs of political parties, as personalism and loyalty-driven relationships played significant roles in the amount of subsidy and to whom in the (x) party it should be allocated. Notwithstanding, the new law also differentiates between the traditional parties and newly emerged parties in the amount of fund that depends on the party's legacy and age, in addition to the weight each carries in the KRP. Furthermore, it legalizes funding those parties that in previous elections won a vote-rate equivalent to only 40% of that needed for a single seat. Hence, periphery parties that did never have a KRP seat also benefit from public budget, but still, neither rule has regulated the political parties' sources of other funds, and the limit of money that should be invested in electoral campaigns.

Table 5.3: The KRG Monthly Funds to Political Parties Before the Amendments (April 2014)*

Political Parties	Monthly Funds in Iraqi Dinars	KRP Seats 2009	KRP Seats 2013
Kurdistan Democratic Party	4 billion 800 million	30	38
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan	4 billion 800 million	29	18
Gorran Movement	600 million	25	24
Communist Party in Kurdistan	580 million	1	1
Islamic Union of Kurdistan	450 million	6	10
Labour Efforts of Kurdistan **	400 million	1	1
Social-Democrat of Kurdistan	350 million	2	1
Islamic Movement of Kurdistan	80 million	2	1
Labour and Effort Labour Party in Kurdistan	70 million	0	0
National Democratic Union of Kurdistan	50 million	0	0
Protective Party of Kurdistan	45 million	0	0
Democratic Protection Party of Kurdistan	45 million	0	0

Democratic Movement of Kurdistan People	30 million	0	0
Democracy Party of Kurdistan	25 million	0	0
Independent Labour Party of Kurdistan	21 million	0	0
Kurdistan			
Kurdistan Nation Party	20 million	0	0
Deliverance Party of Kurdistan	20 million	0	0
Total	12 billion, 736 million Iraqi Dinars	100	100

Source: *Kurdish Institute for Elections, Public Policy Report No. 1, May 2014, page 6 and 7*¹⁵¹

* The KRG had an unstable method of funding, each month differed from others and based on the Prime minister's mood and his party's type of relationship with other parties. ** This party's only seat acted as a unified seat with the KDP and in reality had not held any campaign in either election.

The most important influence is the permissiveness the amendments have guaranteed to the representation of new social and ethno-religious interests. A considerable alteration accordingly has occurred in both the number of parties composing the system and the ideological tendencies, especially of the cleavage representations. The electoral law alteration of 2005 increased the number of running lists to 13, which composed of 25 political parties, about 15 of which recently had emerged under the new legal conditions, and only 14 of whom won the KRP seats.¹⁵²

Possibly, similar to many other third wave democracies, new party formations in the KRI, the deterioration of old parties and party splits have inspired by electoral and political parties laws. Thus, based on Mainwaring and Scully (1995) it is one of the most common criteria for measuring the degree of institutionalization of the party system and can be determined through the total variation in party vote shares between two consecutive elections. The instability in the pattern of inter-party competition and the fragility of the links between parties and their voters

¹⁵¹ See the report in the following link: http://www.kie-ngo.org/newdesign/wenekan/192013262014_webeng.pdf

¹⁵² See Law No. 47 (2004); the third amendment of Electoral Law No. 1 of 1992 on the KRP official website; <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/250208095347.pdf>

reflects electoral volatility, whether resulting from seat or vote shares of the old and traditional parties.

Electoral laws permissiveness stimulated democratic competition and change to be made not only in the pattern of interparty relations but also in the inner dynamics and organization of ethnic and religious parties of the KRI. Tables (5.4, 5.5, and 5.6) present, the gradual emergence of new political parties, and the pattern of interparty competition among traditional political parties, and new rivals. Likewise, many other conflict-prone societies, the KRI democracy that emerged in 1991 had experienced breakdown during 1994 to 2005 as a result of civil wars of (1994 to 98). Therefore, the KRI has only conducted three consecutive elections between 2005 and 2014 without being interrupted by armed conflicts. Based on Mainwaring and Scully (1995) it can be inferred that the region has recent experience of democracy, and, as in other Middle Eastern countries, electoral culture is not very popular.¹⁵³ However, in the similar vein of many other parties of the third-wave of democracy, media and technology play remarkable roles in gathering supporters, especially for newly emerged and young political parties that recently have entered the political scene.¹⁵⁴

The Pederson Index of Volatility – the aggregate of absolute values of vote percentage differences each party had between two elections and divided into two in order to prevent double counting of the differences – is employed here to determine political parties' seat, and voting share volatility. It is also used to calculate the old parties, small parties, and ethnoreligious small group seat share volatilities as three indices significant to measure the impact the increase of reserved seats, and electoral law's permissiveness have on the emergence of short-lived small parties in addition to the shallowness of old parties rootedness.

The KRI's party system-change from a two-party system (1992) to an extreme

¹⁵³ Interview conducted with Shekh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, September 19th, 2016, Sulaimaniyah

¹⁵⁴ Interview conducted with Saman Fawzi, Sulaimani, September 18th, 2016

multi-party system (2009) succeeded only after two intense attempts. The first followed the emergence of Islamic oriented parties, the IGK, and the IUK and other after ethnoreligious parties participated in the elections of 2005. The first two managed to win 13.5% of the KRP seats together, and according to Robert Dahl's (1966) model, they changed the polity to a (3.8) party system with two equally dominant parties.¹⁵⁵ In fact, throughout the civil wars, and the de facto state, the Islamic groups publicly and clandestinely started to develop their bases (chapter three).

Taking advantage of the KRP's resolution No. (17) of Political Parties in 1993, the Islamic-based IUK party was established in 1994, and it soon began to gather support from the public. Later, when the IGK emerged in 2001, it also played a significant role in collecting Wahhabis Muslims who were unpleasant to the policies of the two dominant parties. These parties did not have a chance to fulfill their supporters' ambitions until the nascent democratic system began to function after the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Furthermore, the political openness followed the fall of the Baathist regime in Iraq, and the normalization of conditions after the unified government paved the way for a cluster of ethnoreligious parties representing minor groups to emerge (Table 5.5). More than a dozen of Turkmen, Assyrian, Armenian and Christian parties rose throughout the decade (2003-2013), and for the purpose of this study, only those that won at least a parliamentary seat have been cited. Most of these parties were fortunate to win one or two seats after the minority-reserved seats

¹⁵⁵ Laasko and Taagepera (1979) introduced a mathematical formula to compute effective numbers of a party's manifest in a system, which is the best measurement to compute the changeability of a party polity. The effective number of parties is measured by squaring each party's share of the vote (or of seats), summing the squares, and dividing one by this sum (Mainwaring, 1998):

$$N = 1 / \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2$$

While N is the effective number of parties, those parties won at least two KRP seats, and pi is the share of seats of each party. For example, the elections of 1992 showed a 2.4 party system, while the number of effective parties changed to 3.8 in the elections of 2005.

were increased to eleven. There is a common agreement among Kurdish political elites that the increase of the reserved seats in the previous elections has served the KDP interests rather than those groups themselves.¹⁵⁶ The population strength of these groups being located in the dominant geography of the KDP has supported the latter to practice a containment policy against them. Emphasizing the KDP's long history of hostility and intolerance in the past towards those parties growing in their political domain (chapter three), it has become predictable that those parties have subordinated to the KDP's decisions, and do not have clear strategy toward their own groups' interests.

Table 5.4: The *KRI* Political Parties Vote and Seat Shares (1992-2016)

Time	Founding Year	Party Voting and Seat Shares							
		1992		2005*		2009		2013	
		Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote
KDP	1946	47.6	44.51	36	32.7 ^b	27	29.3 ^c	34.23	37.79
PUK	1975	44.76	44.15 ^a	34.23	35.69 ^b	26.1	28.34 ^c	16.22	17.80
IUK	1994	/	/	8.1	7.75	5.4	5.9 ^d	9	9.49
IGK	2001	/	/	5.4	4.31	3.6	3.93 ^d	5.4	6.01
Change	2009	/	/	/	/	22.52	23.72	21.62	24.21
IKCP	1992	0	2.17 ^{***}	2.7	2.87 ^b	0.9	0.82 ^{**}	0.9	0.6
KSDP	1979	0	2.56	1.8	1.72 ^b	1.8	1.97 ^d	0.9	0.63
KTP	1985	2.86	(a)	0.9	0.86	0	0	0.9	0.44
Future	2009	/	/	/	/	0.9	0.98 ^d	0	/
IMK	1987	0	5.05	/	Abstained	1.8	1.45	0.9	1.2
KPDP	1981	0	1.02	/	/	/	/	/	/

Source: Adapted from official website of the *KRP*, <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/#>, the *IHEC*, <http://www.ihec.iq/kr/>, and Hoff et al. (1992)

The parties marked with (a) allied in a list called (Toilers and PUK), those marked with (b) in the DPAK list, those with (c) allied in the Kurdistan list, and finally those marked with (d) were on Reform and Service list.

The parties marked with (a) allied in a list called (Toilers and PUK), those marked with (b) in the DPAK list, those with (c) allied in the Kurdistan list, and finally those marked with (d) were on Reform and Service list.

* The vote shares of all parties except for the IGK and the KTP in the elections of 2005 were calculated from the seat shares that they won on the DPAK list, which won 89.55% of the votes. Unlike Mainwaring (1998: 15), who treats the parties of a formal alliance as a combination of the allied parties, i.e. the volatility was calculated by "comparing their combined share in the last elections in which they participated separately with their share in current elections".

I have adopted another method to determine each party's electoral share on an allied list, by taking the electoral share equivalent to the electoral seat share each party won on an allied list. For example the KDP gained 40 seats out of 93 seats, of their allied least in the elections of 2005, and before calculating the KDP's vote share, we

¹⁵⁶ Phone interview conducted with Seevan Saeed, Valencia, January 5th, 2018.

subtracted the mean of the vote shares of the ethnoreligious minority groups from the total turnout of the list in order to calculate the value of each unreserved seats of the list. ** The whole list composed of five small parties including the IKCP, and together won 0.82, however, the previous elections IKCP won three seats, and the following one also won a seat, so we assumed that those votes were IKCP's vote, taking into the account other four parties were short-lived parties only run for that elections. *** The ICP (the Iraqi Communist party) established in 1930's and the Kurdish branch of the party started to maneuver in the 50's of last century, yet the communist party of Iraqi Kurdistan, the IKCP, consider itself the heritor to the former Kurdish branch of ICP, therefore it considered an old party, even though it was established following the elections in 30/6/1993, yet the ICP by the time of founding elections were operating actively in the KRI (see chapter three).

Table 5.5: Ethnoreligious parties Seat Shares in Kurdistan Region Parliament (1992-2016)

Political Parties	Years of Emerging	Seat and Vote Shares in %							
		1992		2005		2009		2013	
		Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote
Turkmen Democratic Party TDM	2004	/	/	3.6	/	2.7	0.99	0	0.05
Assyrian Democratic Movement ADM	1979	3.81	0.67	1.8	/	1.8	0.3	1.8	0.32
Kurdistan United Christians KUC	1991	0.95	0.28	0	/	/	/	/	/
Bet Nabrain Democratic Party BNDR	1974	/	/	0.9	/	/	/	/	/
Chaldean Cultural Society CCS	2002	/	/	0.9	/	/	/	/	/
Chaldean Democratic United Party	2003	/	/	0.9	/	/	/	/	/
Sons of Mesopotamia	2013	/	/	0	/	/	/	0.9	0.056
Turkmen Democratic	2004	/	/	0	/	/	/	1.8	0.26
Turkmen Chang and Renewal	2003	/	/	0	/	/	/	0.9	0.09
Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council CSAPC	2007	/	/	/	/	2.7	0.58	1.8	0.29
Erbil Turkmen	2007	/	/	/	/	0.9	0.21	0.9	0.09
Iraqi Turkmen Front	1995	/	/	0	/	0.9	0.38	0.9	0.08
Independent Arminian Personalities	/	/	/	/	/	0.9	0.22	0.9	0.02
								6	
Ezidians	/	/	/	1.8	/	/	/	0	/
Aggregate of Minority Shares		4.76	0.95	9.9	/	9.9	2.68	9.9	1.26

Source: Dougherty and Ghareeb (2013), <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/#> and <http://www.ihcc.ir/ky/>

Thus, a political transformation and notable electoral volatility observed led to an extremely competitive multi-party system. In fact, the old parties' volatility, which is the rate of change the traditional parties have witnessed between two consecutive electoral processes, is a salient indicator for measuring the extent to which these parties have deeply rooted in KRI's society and how much their links to their constituencies are strong. This index escalates if the voters decided to punish the old parties for their incapability of fulfilling their promises (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

Based on the data to hand we see that the vote shares of the two old and dominant Kurdish parties (the KDP and the PUK) had fallen from 44.51% and 44.15% in the founding elections to 32.7% and 35.69% respectively in 2005. They further dropped to 29.3% and 28.34% in the third KRP elections of 2009. However, in the fourth elections, the PUK's vote share fell dramatically to 17.8%, yet surprisingly, the KDP's percentage increased to 37.79% (Table 5.4). Thus, the PUK lost about 58.9% of its electoral strength during the last 21 years, whereas the KDP had only lost about 15.4%, and it still plays a dominant role in Kurdistan's political arena. Consequently, the electoral volatility of the old parties participated in the founding elections became 15.25% in the elections of 2005, later dropped to 10.82 % in 2009, it remained at about the same rate 10.92%, however, in the elections of 2013 (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Electoral Volatility of the Kurdistan Region's Party System (1992-2016)

Elections	Votes' Volatility %				
		Total	Old Parties	Small Old Parties	Ethno-Religious
2005	17.25	24.33	15.25	4.18	4.6
2009	22.14	30.18	10.82	2.25	5.4
2013	15.43	16.33	10.02	1.35	2.7
Mean	18.27	23.61	12.03	2.59	4.23

Source: Based on the data in Tables (5.4 and 5.5).

Stressing the bitter division the PUK faced before the previous election and the internal disagreements and fractionalization can be accredited to the blames and punishment it received for the second presidential term's extension shortly before the electoral campaigns. In fact, internal fragmentation within this party resulted by the elections of 2009, when the vice president of the party decided to control the mass fraud attempts have been planned by his own party. Therefore, he publically announced that his party should respect the peoples' choices. The PUK, as a consequence, had to be more transparent in voting counts and this

affected the party's turnout dramatically.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the increase in the KDP votes probably was not a result of realignment, as is the case in most of the other electoral processes of democratic states. The systematic mass frauds conducted in the KDP region and other methods of buying votes, using threats and intimidating voters in addition to running for elections separately than with a fragmented party like the PUK, may all have contributed to the increase of the KDP's vote share (see following sections).

The disproportionality of the vote shares vs. the seat shares and their volatilities probably are resulted from minority parties, the impact of the old small parties legacies, the electoral rules, and institutions. For example, due to the legacies of familiarity and pattern of patronage and relationships advanced in interparty relationships some of the small old parties have frequently entered coalition lists with dominant parties. And, due to the abidance these small parties demonstrate to the dominant parties' policies, each has earned a seat or two in the elections following 2005 respectively.¹⁵⁸

On the other hand, the threshold of founding electoral laws and the two-party system that was practically prevailed at least until 2009 had affected the other emerging parties in 2005 despite the party system change in elections of 2005.¹⁵⁹ For example, the IUK could not separate itself from the unified DPAK list due to the riddle and ambiguity that had accompanied this party since its emergence, and probably it hindered its further expansion (Bruinessen, 2000). The question that always asked is whether the political independence of the Kurds is more important for this party, or the international Islamic Brotherhoods and its goals. Possibly, to avoid being deprived of the economic and political spoils of the new Iraq, and in order to eliminate this distrustful image that reflected its political

¹⁵⁷ Interview conducted with Narmin Othman, Slemani, October 1st, 2016

¹⁵⁸ For example, the KTP in 1992 with the PUK; the KSDP, the IKCP, the KTP, in 2005 with both dominant parties formed a unified list; and the Future and the KSDP with the IUK and the IGK's Service and Reform list in the 2009 elections

¹⁵⁹ It is true that in 2005 the party system was changed to a multi-party system, but the dominant parties have monopolized Kurdistan's political life just as before

personality and partisanship in people's imagination, it decided to join the allied list.

Furthermore, the seat allocation rules and the district magnitude policy provided an opportunity for some small parties to aggregate their vote shares nationwide and win a seat, in addition to the increase in the reserved seats to 9.9% of KRP's total seats. In fact, if we compare the minority vote shares to their seat shares it can be concluded that they only gain 0.95%, 2.68%, and 1.26% of the electoral turnouts of the elections of 1992, 2009 and 2013, while the mean of their seat share volatility reaches 4.23%, and occupy 9.9% of the KRP total seats (Table 5.7), which is considerably higher than their voting share strength.

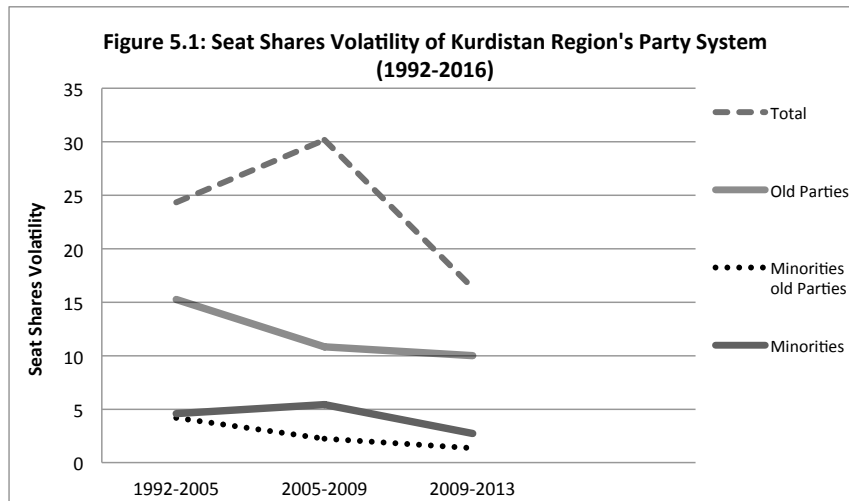
This is to some extent showed an invisibility but effective volatility in the Kurdistan Region's party system. They considered pro-system parties support the KRP decisions in favor of the KDP, and accordingly, the latter can challenge the anti-system parties on pivotal issues with only a small vote share percentage, but a decisive percentage of seat share.¹⁶⁰ Finally, a comparison between the seat volatility of old small and old dominant parties shows that the old small parties make 2.59 % of the total old parties volatility, which is about a quarter of the mean seat volatility of the old parties' 12%. This is also a good indicator of how the small parties and minority ethnoreligious parties making a significant level of system volatility, despite being seen as weak forces in decision-making, this can further be noticed in ministerial volatility we discuss it in (section 5.1.3). Figure (5.1) illustrates the volatility of old, ethnoreligious minorities (old and new) parties based on data presented in Table 5.6.

¹⁶⁰ It was quite difficult to conclude the aggregate vote these parties have collected in elections of 2005, yet the other mentioned three electoral aggregation shares explain the extend to which they are problematic to the seat share volatility.

Table 5.7: Reserved Seats of Ethnoreligious Groups According to Their Vote Shares

Province	Number of Votes					
	ADM	DC	KAD	KCU	Invalid	Total
Duhok	5,555	181	241	1,841	59	7,877
Erbil	900	374	1,855	880	29	4,011
Kirkuk	5	0	0	0	0	5
Sulaimaniya	83	9	38	36	0	166
Total	6,543	537	2,134	2,757	88	12,059
%	54.26	4.45	17.70	22.86	0.73	100

Source: Hoff et al. (1992: 29)



5.1.2. The Presidency Dilemma

Since the elections of the Leader of the Kurdistan Liberation Movement of 1992, this position and the power attributed to it have appeared to be the matter of conflicts among some traditional and new Kurdish parties. After the process of unification and the agreements between the previously warring parties, the presidency law was issued by the KRP in 2005. However, the emergence of the Kurdistan Front ratified the Law No. 2, to which accordingly the executive

branch consisted of the Council of Ministers and the President to whom the Law attributed the title: “The Leader of the Kurdistan Liberation Movement”.¹⁶¹

The resolution declared each presidential term to be four years and stipulated the responsibilities and duties, in addition to the privileges and incentives of the Leader who would win an absolute majority of the votes in a general, secret and free election.¹⁶² Perhaps the most significant articles were Article 13, according to which the power assigned to the prime minister enabled him/her to replace the Leader of the Kurdish Liberation Movement when he proved to be absent from his duties. And Article 14 permitted for the Speaker of the KRP to occupy the leader’s position temporarily for whatever reason, as it is vacant until a new leader is elected within two months. Thus, the leader’s position, despite having been elected in public, was a ceremonial position rather than one of holding absolute power as it is in the presidential systems. Four Kurdish party leaders ran for the position, however, none of them could win the absolute majority of the votes (Table 5.8). In fact, in the very early days after the elections, and before the declaration of results, tensions escalated between the PUK and the KDP. To avoid further conflicts and due to all political parties’ call off for the position, the second round of elections for the Leader was postponed indefinitely, and never was conducted (Stansfield, 2003; McDowall, 2007; Resool, 2012).

Table 5.8: Results of the Elections for The Leader (1992)

Competitor	Votes	%
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¹⁶¹ This law was annulled and was substituted by the Presidency of the Kurdistan Region’s resolution 1 of 2005.

¹⁶² According to that Law, the essential duties of the Leader are: he/she should be a Kurd living in the territory of the Kurdistan Region and no younger than 40 years old. The duties concentrated both internal issues and foreign affairs (Article 1); commanding all Kurdish armed peshmerga units in Iraqi Kurdistan (Article 12); the ability to invite the KRP to hold ordinary and extraordinary sessions (Article 10.1); sanctioning agreements validated and confirmed by the KRP (Article 10.2); enacting laws and regulations confirmed by the KRP (Article 10.3); announcing the proceedings for the elections of the KRP during a fifteen-day period before the end of the final session; giving orders for the establishment of the executive authority of the KRG through the KRP (Article 11.1) and many other minor responsibilities.

Masoud Barzani	466,819	47.51
Jalal Talabani	441,507	44.93
Mahmoud Osman	23,309	2.37
Osman Abdul-Aziz	38,965	3.97
Invalid	12,049	1.22
Total	982,649	100
Turnover	88.37	

Source: Hoff et al. (1992: 29)

Thus, it became an elapsed post until the unification phase started. The secret agreement Barzani and Talabani had signed in December 2004, obliged the PUK to accept Barzani as the president of the KRI. The other parties, on the other hand, either lacked parliamentary skills, and experience as they recently had entered the KRP, or, similar to the PUK, did not mind the system change and the extent of power the law delegated to the KR's president. Thereafter, the restricted power of the president, the highest executive authority in the Kurdistan Region, and the legitimacy he earned from the general election, in addition to the legacy of his party and family, gradually became obstacles to political and party system development.

Following the Washington Agreement (1998) between the two major Kurdish parties, and the USA's attempts to unify the Iraqi forces, a new phase of political conditions commenced in the Kurdistan Region, and the fall of the Baathist regime in Iraq (2003) became a springboard for salient alteration of Kurdish politics.¹⁶³ The unification phase (2002-2006) began with a unified session of parliament after the breakdown succeeded the civil war and resulted in the establishment of a broad-based unified cabinet, extended to 28 ministerial portfolios in addition to another fourteen state-ministerial positions.

Attempts at unification brought a dignified settlement, leading to a 'Strategic Agreement' in December 2004 between the two parties extending over the following decade (Appendix VII).¹⁶⁴ Administrative unification began with

¹⁶³ See Appendix (IX) for reading Washington Agreement.

¹⁶⁴ It was a 10-year agreement, signed between Barzani and Talabani. The content of the agreement was not published until 2013 yet its implied guarantee of a peaceful evenness in

service ministries under an appointee prime minister of the KDP and a PUK appointee as the KRP speaker. Later, another agreement called the “Unification Agreement” (Appendix VIII) in December 2006 was signed between the two parties to achieve further development in the integration process of the rest of the administrative units except for *Peshmarga, the Economy, the Treasury, and the Internal Affairs* ministries. They also developed a united list including most of the smaller Kurdish political parties for the Iraqi national elections in January and December 2005. Nevertheless, the Erbil and Sulaimaniya administrations continued to function separately, the former under the KDP and the latter under the PUK.

‘Strategic Agreement’ on the other hand, has divided the four-year governing periods equally between these two parties and appointed Barzani the president of the KRI while guaranteeing support to Talabani for the Iraqi presidency. Furthermore, it promised the KRP spokesman for the PUK, and the position of the PM for the KDP in the first round, and reversed the roles in the following rounds in sequence. The two parties have emphasized federalism in Iraq to secure the Kurdish rights and their parties’ positions in the Iraqi politics (Mohammed, 2015; Sinantorunu, 2013). In fact, the last agreement further stirred the public and exposed the need for a strong opposition that was absent from the KR’s political arena at the time. Therefore, it is generally agreed that the emergence of the Change Movement in 2009 was a consequence of the political monopolization by the two ruling parties proved to be observed after these agreements.¹⁶⁵

The agreements, in fact, were signed in ambiguous conditions; the KDP prevented the newly elected KRP members from holding their first convention for more than five months after the elections of January 30th, 2005. The two leaders, Barzani and Talabani, had secretly signed a pact in 2004 whereby the two parties run for the Iraqi national, and the KRP elections in one unified list and

power-sharing, and later resulting in the Unification Agreement.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Sheikh Latif Shiekh Mustafa, September 19th, 2016, Sulaimaniyah.

accordingly,

“If Kurds have had earned one of the presidential or prime ministerial posts in Baghdad, the KDP supports Jalal Talabani to run for it, and in return, the PUK supports Masoud Barzani for the presidency of the KR. Additionally, each of the prime minister’s and KRP’s spokesmen positions will be allocated to the KDP and PUK interchangeably, and the second condition depends on the first one” (Amin, 2005: 4).

The KDP understood that the Iraqi presidency is a position Talabani had been dreaming of because the old ambitious he had. The former Iraqi president Saddam Husain was in that position when he signed a general pardon for all Iraqi rebels but Talabani (McDowall, 2007). So it has a political and personal significance to him, and *“he would do whatever it took to earn it”* (Amin, 2005: 4).

According to Amin (2005), the KDP increased their conditions, and in addition to the positions of President and Prime Minister, they demanded the ministries of the Intelligence Forces, Finance, and Peshmarga (Defense) for the forthcoming fifth cabinet of the KRI. They also demanded two sovereign positions of Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Iraqi government as they had been earmarked for Kurds in the consensus pact of Iraqi parties. PUK's politburo, on the other hand, refused the KDP's demands; especially the technocrats and reformists within the party thought that the PUK should not abandon a right it had earned by election. The results of provincial elections declared by the interim IHEC proved that the PUK had won at least 27,000 votes more than the KDP, which made the PUK the dominant party.

Another issue raised by the PUK politburo was the law concerning the presidential position. It seems the KDP tended to personalize the law for Barzani while the PUK politburos focused on the institutionalization of the political system. The projects for the political system prepared by the PUK and the KDP had essential differences. The PUK's project was inspired by the principles of the

parliamentary system defined in the draft of the KRI's constitution, while the KDP's scheme had altered the system to presidential and stressed that the president must be elected in general elections by the people, in addition to a broad power accorded to him.

Scholars have highlighted three crucial legal and technical issues regarding the KDP's project; the presidency period, the formula used to elect the president, and his powers (Amin, 2005). According to the KDP's project, the presidential period must be four years and renewable for another two terms, while the interim presidency of Iraq was only 12 months, and there were no absolute guarantees that Talabani would be elected the president for the following regular term. Furthermore, the president, according to their project, must be elected in general, direct, and secret ballots, which contradicted the Iraqi political system as identified in Article 36: A of the TAL:

“The National Assembly shall elect a President of the State and two Deputies. They shall form the Presidency Council, the function of which will be to represent the sovereignty of Iraq and oversee the higher affairs of the country. The election of the Presidency Council shall take place by a single list and by a two-thirds majority of the members' votes. The National Assembly has the power to remove any member of the Presidency Council of the State for incompetence or lack of integrity by a three-fourths majority of its members' votes. In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency Council, the National Assembly shall, by a vote of two-thirds of its members, elect a replacement to fill the vacancy”.

It also contradicted the Kurdistan Region's fundamental principles of a constitutional draft that was discussed in depth at the KRP's unified sessions during the year 2002 and following years. According to Article 1 of the draft,

“The Iraqi Kurdistan Region is a region within the Federal State of

Iraq. It is a democratic republic with a parliamentary political system that is based on political pluralism, the principle of separation of powers, and the peaceful transfer of power through direct, general, and periodic elections that use a secret ballot”.

Article 40 also stressed the synchronization of the Kurdistan Region with the mechanisms of the presidential elections in the Federal Republic of Iraq so there was no doubt that this would give rise to legal and constitutional controversies.

The power accorded to the president, indeed, aimed deliberately at transforming the system into a full presidential system, especially the vital government organs such as Security and Intelligence, Peshmarga, Financial Auditing, the appointing of judges, ministers, and many other crucial powers reserved for the president.

Afterwards, the timing and consolidating the national rights of Kurdish in new Iraq were not abetting. Especially Jalal Talabani's strong personality for the Iraqi presidential position following the elections of December 2005, and after been the interim president for the transitional period needed entering Baghdad in a solidified steps, therefore, raising the differences, and making hidere were not an adroit choice before the PUK.

The disagreements about the presidency projects and the aftermath internally divided the PUK's politburo into two; one group supported the KDP's scheme to be led by Talabani, the other led by Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin supporting a political structure that synchronizes with the one emerging in Iraq and confirmed in the Kurdish Constitution draft. The political conditions was in the favor of the KDP' project to succeed, and after five months of political vacuum and 12 corporate meetings between the two politburos, Talabani personally agreed to the KDP's project, and thus, the opening session of the KRP was held on June 4th, 2005.¹⁶⁶ Three days later, with small amendments, the KDP project was ratified in the KRP and following the dissolution of the Leader law of 1992, a new resolution for 'The Presidency of the Kurdistan Region' was issued. Accordingly,

¹⁶⁶ See the KRP official website: <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/101207105105.pdf>

Barzani swore in and took the presidential vow on the fourteenth of the month.¹⁶⁷ While the nationwide local electoral process for municipalities for the first time was conducted simultaneously with the KRP's direct and public elections, the presidential one took a different path.¹⁶⁸ According to the 'Strategic Agreement' the president of the KRG had to be elected in the KRP for the first term, and for the following terms in general and direct elections. Thus, parallel to the cabinet inauguration, Masoud Barzani was appointed the president of the region in the KRP.¹⁶⁹

The disagreements over the presidency law eventually stimulated the fractionalization within the PUK and following less than two years; the Nawshirwan's fraction resigned and established a social based reformist movement called Gorran. The elections of 2009 were accompanied by intense competition, and primarily because of the reformist group that registered an electoral list shortly before the electoral campaign and indirectly supported an independent scholar for the presidential position. Meanwhile, the KDP rewarded the PUK for their support and secured the implementation of the Strategic Agreement despite the split that had occurred in the party. Thus, Masoud Barzani was the only presidential candidate both dominant parties supported. He won 69.57% of the votes, while Kamal Mirawdali, the indirect candidate of the Gorran won 25.3% and the other three competitors, including Ibrahim Ahmad's son, Halo – Talabani's brother in law, won 5.5% in total (Table 5.9).

The presidential crisis is one of the core factors influencing the party system alteration and the instability manufactured in the pattern of interparty completion in the KRI. It was escorted by a political breakdown in 2013 when the PUK politburo promised the second term's extension for another two years, and in

¹⁶⁷ See the BBC link: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4092926.stm

¹⁶⁸ In 2000, other local elections for municipalities were held, but only in the PUK's zone, which covered Garmian, Koya districts, and Sulaimanya province.

¹⁶⁹ See the official KRP and Presidency websites; <http://presidency.krd/english/ndisplay.aspx?sm=oJeOd5f59dk=>; <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/Default.aspx?page=page&c=Parliament-History2005>

return guaranteed the public the appraisal of the constitutional draft and the making of necessary amendments to fit the parliamentary system. The coming years proved neither the constitutional draft's amendment nor presidential election was held (Salih, 2015).

Furthermore, the 2013 crises over this position have further polarized the Kurdish society and enlarged the gap between the oppositions, and the incumbents. In a survey by the National Democratic Institute (NDI)¹⁷⁰ Barzani was considered unfavorable by 63% and 84% of the PUK and the Gorran respondents respectively. This purports that the PUK grassroots were closer to the Gorran than those of the KDP and the PUK MPs rather represents the party's leadership interests than that of the grassroots. Additionally, despite the presidential extension made under the PUK's presidency in the KRP, only 17% of PUK interviewees approved Barzani's term extension, and 19% supported a direct election of the president.¹⁷¹

Table 5.9: Presidential Electoral Format of the Kurdistan Region in Percentage (%)

Year	System Format	Turnout	PUK	KDP	Gorran	Islamic	Others
1992	Public	88.24	44.93	47.51	/	3.97	3.99
2005	In KRP	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009	Public	72.2	/	69.60	25.30	/	5.5
2013	Extension*	-	-	-	-	-	-
2015	No legal supports	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: The author, from data in Hoff1992 and on the IHEC official website: <http://www.ihec.iq/ar/index.php/result2009.html>.

- The extension was declared by the MP's of the PUK, the KDP, the minorities, and some other small parties like the KCP, and the KSDP.

¹⁷⁰ The survey was conducted among 500 respondents from the three Kurdish provinces in August-September 2014 and entitled 'Lack Responsiveness Impact Mood.'

¹⁷¹ The last two questions of the survey are: Do you approve or disapprove of the extension of President Masoud Barzani's term? Do you want to directly elect your president or do you want Parliament to elect the president? See https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/August%202015%20Survey_NDI%20Website.pdf

Since 2015, Mr. Barzani is refusing to surrender power to the KRP Spokesman as formulated in law and being finishing his extended period. Apparently, this dilemma has a reversed aftermath of democracy, and thus another phase of the KRP fragmentation had begun. Especially after October 2015, when the tension escalated to such an extent that the KDP forces blocked the KRP Spokesman from entering the capital, Erbil. The Gorran members, including the KRP Spokesman, have taken over the Sulaimaniya branch of KRP as their base, while the deputizing parliament of the KDP acts in Erbil and therefore, no general convention has been held since then.¹⁷²

5.1.3. Government Instability

The last issue covered in this section is the government shortcomings and the effects of chronic clientelism tendency generated from rentierism of dominant incumbent parties and allegiance of small parties. From the data presented in Tables (5.10 and 5.11) it can be observed that Kurdistan Region comprised eight cabinets throughout the years 1992-2014. Conceivably, the frequent alterations occurred in the KRG also have stimulated in the KRI's party system fluidity. Therefore it is a significant straightforward gauge for measuring the extent of government instability and can be computed through the number of changes occurring in the political parties that compose the government (Mair, 2001). The changes in party compositions in the KRGs had occurred only when new cabinets have been inaugurated. By excluding the regular cabinets, i.e., those nominated after regular elections, only the second, third, fourth, and seventh cabinets are regarded as in-between election cabinets.

The first phase of the cabinet alterations (those made before the elections of 2005) are consequences of apprehension of dominant parties in each other, yet the

¹⁷² The breakdown of democracy and fragmentation of the KRP occurred between October 12th, 2015 to September 15th, 2017. See the following links <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/Default.aspx?page=article&id=23492&l=3> and <http://ekurd.net/kurdistan-parlt-speaker-prevented-2015-10-12>

fluctuation and frequent alterations followed the elections of 2005 are results of the pacts carried out between those two dominant parties.¹⁷³ The founding cabinet was a short-lived one, which remained in office only for ten months and was constituted from the parties of two winning lists of the founding elections (Table 5.10), each with seven portfolios in addition to the IKCP, the Independents, and the ADM, each with a portfolio (Stansfield, 2003).

The second cabinet resulted from the PUK politburo's dissatisfaction of their statesmen. The PUK and the KDP agreed to install a new cabinet formed from a significant share of their old personnel with only a 29.4% change, which entailed a combination of changes made by both parties. While the PUK exclusively focused on staff changes, the KDP went beyond personnel changes, transferred two portfolios to another two small parties as two partners they had recently integrated into it.

Cabinets three and four were fragmented and formed separately by the dominant parties during the civil wars. The third KDP cabinet was a short-term office (late 1996- early1999) established in the KDP zone under the former government-deputy Rozh Nuri Shawais, and comprising sixteen KDP associate ministers and a seat allocated to each of the Kar, the ADM, and the IKCP. It was inaugurated in the fragile KRP that was convened under KDP's authority and acquired a quorum through collaboration between the minorities' five KRP seats and the KDP's KRP faction (Mohammed, 2015; Stansfield, 2003; 2010). The PUK's third cabinet, on the other hand, was a complementary cabinet to Kosrat Rasul's second cabinet. Rasul accredited his government's legitimacy to his unfinished term when the invasion of Erbil by Iraqi Forces took place. Rasul's cabinet (late 1996 -2001) comprised fifteen portfolios of the PUK in addition to two ministers for the IMK, while the Conservative Party and Toilers shared, with one seat each (Table 5.10).¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Phone interviews with Mohammed Mahmoud, Erbil, October 4th, 2016 and Abdulstar Majeed, Valencia, November 12th, 2016 and Soran Omar, Sulaimani, September 29th, 2016

¹⁷⁴ The Conservative party was a taxi party based in the KDP area geographically and formed

Cabinet	Positions	Year	Kurdish Ministerial Seat Shares Including PM													Minority Ministerial Seat Shares							
			KDP	PUK	IMK	IUK	IGK	SPDK	UPK	KTP	IKCP	Gorran	Independ.	Conserv.	Kar	Ezidi	Turkmen	Assyrian	Christi an				
1 st	17	1992	7	6 ^a	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1 ^a	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
2 nd	17	1993-98	6 ^b	7 ^c	/	/	/	/	1 ^b	1 ^b	1 ^c	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1	/	
3 rd - KD	19	1996-98	16	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	1	/	/	/	1	/	/
3 rd - PUK	19	1996-2001	/	15	2	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
4 th - KDP	24	1999-2006	19	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1	/	/	/	3	/	/
4 th - PUK	22	2001-	17	/	1	/	/	/	1	1	1	1	/	/	/	/	1	1	/	/	/	/	/
5 th - Unite	42	2006-2009	16	16	/	2	/	1	1	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	2	1	1	/	/	1
6 th	21	2009-14	8	8	1	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1	/	/
7 th *	21	2014-2017	8	8	1	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1	/	/
8 th	23	2017-2018	7	6	/	3	/	2	/	/	/	/	/	5	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Source: Hama-Karim et al. (2015), Stansfield (2003; 2010) and KRG official website <http://cabinet.gov.krd/>

The cabinets marked with (*) are between elections cabinets. Those parties marked with (a, b or c), are parties interred in allied lists together based on their litters, and their ministerial shares appointed to them according to their electoral strength or as a gift offered to them by dominant parties.

During the peace negotiations between the two warring parties, the KDP inaugurated the fourth cabinet (1999-2006) under Nechiravan Barzani, the nephew and the son-in-law of the KDP's president Masoud Barzani, who had served as government's general deputy in the KDP's third cabinet. This was considered the comprehensive and longest cabinet the Kurdistan Region had experienced up to that time. It continued for six years and about six months, and

by a tribe that had been an enemy of the KDP throughout history. Tensions escalated in 1994, when they joined the PUK's bloc, after being expelled by the KDP. In return, the PUK rewarded them with a ministerial seat when they got a chance in 1996.

was composed of 24 ministerial positions, including those of the prime minister and his deputy. The KDP share comprised nineteen ministries with portfolios, three of the rest were provided for the ADM, and only one ministry was granted to the IUK.

Furthermore, throughout its longevity, it witnessed frequent changes among ministers. For example, after the terrorist attacks on the KDP's politburo in 2002, four ministers including the government deputy were martyred, and so, another four people were appointed to those positions. Another nine changes occurred at different times either among the ministers of the cabinet or from various interest groups chosen by the KDP to hold altered portfolios. Above all, two state-ministers (without portfolios) were added in the first half of the cabinet's life.

Thus, the uncle and his nephew controlled both the executive powers of the KDP-based government; Masoud Barzani was an acting president of the KDP region, and his nephew took control over government power.

The last government of this phase is the PUK's fourth cabinet, which was also longer than other former cabinets. The inauguration took place only several days before the PUK's second party congress that convened after about a decade in 20th January 2001, and long years of Kosrat Rasul's governance. This cabinet proved to be the most unstable cabinet concerning ministerial alterations. It undertook eighteen minister changes including the prime minister and the deputy, yet neither formal inaugurations nor cabinet name change was operated. After Barham Salih, the prime minister was assigned to another government office in Baghdad's in the rebuilding process of Iraq, Omer Fatah was chosen as an acting prime minister and 'chargé d'affaires' of the government in June 2004, until the national unity government was formed in May 2006. Table (5.11) presents the format of the Kurdistan Regional governments.

Table 5.11: The Format of the Kurdistan Region Governments

Cabinet	Format	PM	No. Parties	No. New Parties	Size	New Parties Shares	Cabinet Age	Negotiation Period
First	Founding	Fuad Masum	6	/	17	/	10 months	44 days
Second	Between Elections	Kosrat Rasul	6	2	17	2	3 yrs & 2 mths.	/
Third KDP	Between Elections	Roj Nuri Shawais	4	1	19	1	3 yrs & 3 Mths	/
Third PUK	Between Elections	Kosrat Rasul	4	2	19	2	4 yrs & 3 mths	/
Fourth KDP	Between Elections	Nechirvan Barzani	4	2	24	2	6 yrs & 5 mths	/
Fourth PUK*	Between Elections	Barham Salih/ Omer Fatah	6	3	22	3	3 yrs & 6 mths; 2 yrs (complimentary)	/
Fifth**	After Elections	Nechirvan Barzani	10	5	42	8	3 yrs & 5 mths	15 months
Sixth	After Elections	Barham Salih	7	0	21	0	2 yrs & 6 Mths	/
Seventh	Between Elections	Nechirvan Barzani	7	0	21	0	1 yr & 9 mths	94 days
Eighth	After Elections	Nechirvan Barzani	5	1	23	4	From 18/6/2014	9 mths & 3 days

Source: Adapted from HamaKarim et al. 2015 and the KRG official website <http://cabinet.gov.krd/>

* After Barham Salih was nominated for Minister of Planning in the Iraqi Interim Government, Omer Fatah was nominated to hold the complimentary Prime Minister position until the unified government was constituted.

** The fragmented cabinets (three and four) are excluded from calculations of the number, due to their fragmented nature.

Following the fall of the Baathist regime in 2003, the Kurds entered Iraq's national politics on an equal footing with Arabs (regardless of their ideological diversity; Sunni and Shia), and supported by the U.S., and welcomed by other opposition parties. It was inevitable for the Kurds to have essential roles in reconstructing Iraq. This was motivated by the notion of federalism that was adapted as a new goal for both of the dominant parties to be stipulated in the new constitution and to share Iraqi politics, including sovereign positions, with a good percentage (Mohammed, 2013; Hassan, 2015). Meanwhile, the legal guarantee,

whether expanded from the TAL or later the Article 117 of the Iraq's Constitutional draft conferred the KRI a broad authority to change the laws and operate its legislative, administrative and budgetary authorities and declare the Kurdistan region a federal territory of Iraq. "This Constitution, upon coming into force, shall recognize the region of Kurdistan, along with its existing authorities, as a federal region".¹⁷⁵

This inspired the Kurdish parties to keenly conduct the second regional elections in 2005 and ambitiously participate in the reconstruction process of the new Iraq. Thus, unifying Kurds, putting their disagreements behind was something on which both ruling political parties eagerly worked. Despite the formation of the government taking more than a year and three months from the declaration of electoral results, finally, a comprehensive broad-based government comprising 42 ministerial positions including 28 portfolios, and other state-ministers was inaugurated in 2006 and lasted only for about three years and three months.¹⁷⁶ The two dominant parties gathered all the small political powers contributed in the electoral process and won at least two seats in the KRP, around the government for the following reasons:

First, to mute the dissatisfactions that rose among intellectuals and political elites, especially following the emergence of independent newspapers and media platforms.¹⁷⁷ In fact, Awene and Hawlati as two groups of intellectuals openly criticizing the governing methodology of the two dominant parties. Furthermore, the access the other political parties had established to media and broadcasts provided the people with new sources of information, which was something the ruling parties had to deal with carefully. The uprisings in some towns and districts in 2006 demanding basic necessities of life, and the improvement of public services, were mainly influenced by the new channels of information. Probably this led to the first spark of public opinion that was not synchronized with the

¹⁷⁵ Later this draft became the permanent constitution See Iraqi constitution https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq_2005.pdf?lang=en

¹⁷⁶ The rest positions were state- ministerial without portfolios.

¹⁷⁷ Interview conducted with Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq October 8th, 2016, Sulaimani.

performance and achievements of the ruling parties; hence the inclusion of non-ethnoreligious and ethnoreligious small parties by the ruling parties in the fifth cabinet was inevitable, to show national unity and reduce the recent political agitations.¹⁷⁸

The second goal of the broad-based cabinet was to encounter the changes in the Iraqi political arena, with a unified body and steady legs, especially the international and internal guaranties to Kurdish stand in Iraq, inflicted them to gather as much as Kurdish forces around these new political conditions. And finally, to legitimize their unification, especially, plans were placed for another bilateral agreement for the Kurdish gains in Iraq, and how they should be balanced with the Kurdistan Region's political shares of these two parties. Therefore dominant parties needed to establish the so-called national accord, at least until the implementation of the pacts they already have signed.¹⁷⁹

If the fifth broad-based cabinet was a transitional cabinet aiming at the preparation for further political integrity in the KRI, the sixth cabinet formed a better-institutionalized structure both politically and economically, and to some extent fulfilled the previous cabinet's aspirations. Under Barham Salih and in response to the Unification Agreement, it was established of twenty-one portfolios distributed between the PUK and the KDP equally including three ministerial portfolios allocated to the IMK, the IKCP, and the Ethnoreligious minorities respectively. This cabinet was the first cabinet in which the public services and a minimal welfare package were implemented in addition to some unsuccessful attempts to separate the government from the politburos of dominant parties (Khalil, 2016). Moreover, the cabinet size was reduced to twenty one positions, with a program targeting reforms in many governmental aspects such as reconstruction, transparency, reform, unifying institutions, regulation of public spending, participation of youth and women in political life and many other

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Yusus Mohammed Sadiq, Sulaimani, October 8th, 2016

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa and Rebwar Karim Sulaimaniyah, September 19th, and 20th, 2016 respectively

aspects that related to the relationship of [the KRG] with the outside world.¹⁸⁰

The seventh cabinet was only an alteration in office roles between the PUK and the KDP according to their pact, however, like former cabinets, the personnel changes occurred on a great scale too. Some ministers, yet, such as the Interior, Oil, and Gas, remained in office for four cabinets, including this one and subsequent ones. The cabinet was inaugurated in parliament without being a consequence of elections and without a contribution of opposition groups in the confidence debate (Table 5.10 and 5.11).

Finally, the eighth cabinet received a vote of confidence from the KRP, after nine months of negotiation among political parties following the elections of 2013, in June 2014.¹⁸¹ If the previous cabinet had only been composed of the KDP and the PUK (with three small parties), the eighth cabinet was another broad-based government, but this time derived from the effective parties of the KRP, including a ministerial portfolio for the ethnoreligious parties (Table 5.11). Thus, the active opposition that was shaped and supported by the street had joined the governmental design, yet for a short period.

The instability of the 8th cabinet was obvious from the early days. It faced much unrest in 2015, and due to the intolerance and stubbornness of the KDP in handing in the presidential power after the termination of the two-year extension, it further frustrated the KR's political atmosphere. The aftermath was the expulsion of the KRP spokesman from Erbil, the capital of Kurdistan, and the four ministers the Gorran had in the consensus government had also expelled. The tensions between these two parties led to further political instability and fluidity in the KR's party system and eventually breakdown the KRP.

Building on the data presented in (Table 5.11) above, and the discussion

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Mr. Barham Salih, the PM of the KRI's six's cabinet, in Sulaimanyia, September 21st, 2016.

¹⁸¹ See the KRG official website, <http://cabinet.gov.krd/p/p.aspx?l=12&p=228>

advanced above it is apparent that none of the former unified governments had lasted the entire period of the cabinet. They were mostly either altered by a new cabinet or dismissed for the political instability resulting from the antagonism among the parties. Hurdles blocked the negotiation of the parties, or they took so long negotiating over government constitutions that they had to catch up with the electoral rules and run for new elections before the intended four years for a cabinet term was finished.

For example, neither was a coalition or consensus government after the elections inaugurated in the period stipulated by the Iraqi constitution code 76, i.e., a total of 15 days of the presidential nomination. Or according to the period ratified in the second code of the first amendment of presidency law No. 1 of 2005, i.e., resolution No. 2 of 2006, which stipulated 30 days as a maximum period in which the prime minister has to nominate his cabinet list and ask the KRP for the inauguration. As shown in (Table 5.11), the fifth cabinet took about 15 months, while the eighth cabinet took more than nine months to be inaugurated. Stansfield (2003:145) attributes this fragility to the dominant parties' mutual hostility and struggle over power. He further argues that only the fragmented cabinets, the partisan cabinets of the PUK and the KDP, exceeded their government lifespan and looked more stable than the others:

“Whilst, this division undoubtedly caused immense problems for the administration of the region, it resulted in a system of government which was able to operate more effectively, if not more efficiently, than the previous 50:50 government. It is apparent that the initial system of coalition government adopted after the elections of 1992 promoted a system of governance dominated by two competing parties, effectively resulting in a moribund governmental process. The separating of these two unconciliatory parties promulgated the development of a divided system of government, which, while being cumbersome and highly overstaffed, proved to be a more successful system and one which promoted political stability in the short term”.

On the other hand, the alterations in the KRGs are characterized by a different set of political parties that comprise the cabinets. No government was changed entirely or inaugurated from the same line-up of political parties of the previous offices (Tables 5.10 and 5.11). For example, the former four cabinets before the fall of the Baathist regime and the fifth cabinet of unification were engaged in changes in positions allocated to the small parties. The fifth government was an aggregation of all the political parties that had two seats or more in the KRP. Hence, no political party that emerged before 2006 left to be called a new rival in the forthcoming cabinets. Only in 2009 when the Gorran emerged, another alteration by a new party was made when it shared the government formation with four ministerial seats, and thus the government alteration rate was 17.4%.

Three critical issues to be highlighted here as factors provoked the instability of the Kurdistan party system and the governments' performance are the alterations that occurred within party-shares, the adorability of some ministerial personnel despite the frequent cabinet alterations and changes made in the cabinet size. For example in the second cabinet, the KSDP and the UPK (Unification Party of Kurdistan) shared a seat each from the KDP's total share. The seventh complimentary cabinet was constituted from the same political parties of the sixth. While they were supposed to only change the sovereign positions, about 48% of the personalities occupied ministerial positions, including the PM and the Vice president of the KRG, were replaced by different people from the same political parties but with different roles in government aggregation; four ministerial changes made by the KDP, five by the PUK and one by the ADM, even though the parties, and their shares, remained the same (Hama-Karim, 2015). The fluctuation of the cabinet sizes to some extent have kept the major parties dominant and the small parties insignificant, in addition to eliminating the chance of instituting a real opposition and maintenance of the core of democracy, and discouraging electorate participation in electoral processes. Furthermore, in most of the cabinet changes the president of the region, the Prime Minister, the ministers of Peshmarga, Interior Affairs, Planning, Economy and Treasury,

Security Agencies, Natural Resources and International Affairs the same personnel remained but the rest of the members of the cabinets were changed.

Finally, the most unusual issue is the three types of ministers in the KRG. The real ministers are those occupy portfolios, the state-ministers, those without portfolios, and the shadow ministers, those administrators hold ministerial positions regarding salary but run other government organs. The last type mostly is inaugurated by dominant parties, have equal vote like others in the decision-making of the government. The consensus government, therefore, became a mean serving the interests of the dominant parties than a tool generates good governance.¹⁸²

The second gauge used here is the IGA, the Index of Government Volatility, which is an index adopted from the Pederson Index of Volatility for Ministerial Volatility (see chapter two). The outcome of this index either is wholesale alteration – where the change is greater than 75%. No alteration – where IGA scored 0 change or less than 25% – or partial alteration – i.e., mixed alteration score between 25% and 75% – (Mair, 2001; Bertoa, and Mair, 2010).

In fact, none of the KRGs has experienced a wholesale alteration, for the two dominant parties being always taking the lion's shares together following the Unification agreement, or separately during the civil war of governments. Thus, the peripheral parties were continuously invited by these dominant parties, in order to participate in the new composite cabinet or were provided each with a ministerial position from the dominant parties' own shares. The spoils of the offices, on the other hand, and the prestige they could experience kept these small parties subordinated to the dominant parties and thus motivated them renewing their loyalties.

For the sake of this study, the fragmented third, and fourth cabinets, those of civil

¹⁸² Interview with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, Sulaimani, September 20th, 2016

war, and the seventh cabinet that resulted from partisan switching of roles of the two dominant parties are excluded. Accordingly, and as is displayed in (Tables 5.10, and 5.13), the former dominant parties remained in the offices while other small or effective parties participate in consensual or coalition governments. Thus, the government volatility of gradually increased from 17.64% to 34.52% later to 59.56%, and finally, it decreased to 36.96% in the eighth cabinet (see Figure 5.2).

Table 5.12: Ministerial Instability in The KRGs (1992-2016) in (%)

Cabinets	Openness	New Parties' Weight	IGA
Second*	33.33	11.76	17.64
Fifth**	50	16.66	34.52
Sixth	28.57	4.76	59.56
Eighth	20	17.39	36.96
Mean	32.98	12.64	37.17

Source: Data presented in Table 5.10

* *The political parties of the founding cabinet were all new; so it is excluded from the measurements.*

** *Third and fourth cabinets were fragmented, and seventh was a role-switching cabinet. Therefore they also have been excluded from calculation*

The ruling parties purpose in adopting new policies regarding interparty competitions and their party relations with the opposition parties bloc from one side, and within incumbent parties bloc on the other, are probably to contain these forces and thrust them to decay. They broadened the bases of the fifth and eighth cabinets to include effective opposition parties under the name of 'Government of National Unity,' for being decisive for stirring the society against them. Accordingly, almost the entire opposition parties have participated at least in one of the cabinets with the two dominant parties, however this did not decrease the demands for reform within the KRG especially after the establishment of the sixth cabinet in 2009 and beyond.

Furthermore, the Arab Spring inspired the opposition manifestation in addition to the increase of antagonism between party blocs, and escalation of polarization in

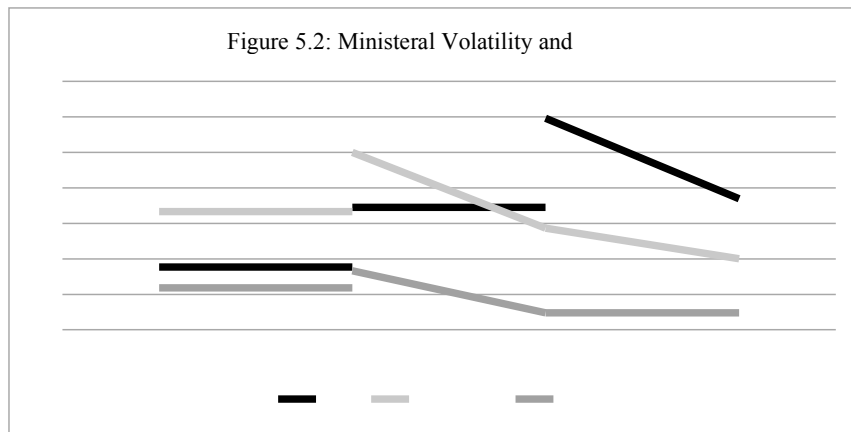
the Kurdistan region's society. Eventually, the anti-corruption protests and demands for reform and dissolution of the sixth and, later the seventh cabinets, replacing them with a technocrat-based cabinet that capable of fighting corruption, became a part of the people's daily demands. And despite the three-opposition-party participation in the eighth cabinet, these issues remained unresolved.

The eighth cabinet, on the other hand, is a mixed alteration, since 39.13% of the ministerial positions were taken by former opposition parties. The three opposition parties; the Gorran Movement, the IUK and the IGK, escorted the protests followed the Arab Spring; nevertheless, this pattern continued even after they participated in the formation of eighth's cabinet according to their electoral shares. These new incumbents were acting like opposition to the government rather than being a part of it. Due to the anemic responsiveness the prime minister shows to the agendas of these new parties, and the impediments he made in front of their government projects regarding the reformation they suggested in the Economy and the Treasury, Peshmarga, and several service ministries they occupied, patently criticized the government they still comprised.¹⁸³

Additionally, their parliamentary fraction proved incapability of preventing the KR's presidential extension for third term, in 2013, so the disorder in the government and the KRP eventually led to a new form of dilemmas. This time it was not only political but also legal, and later in 2015, it was followed by an economic crisis too. Eventually, dissatisfactions among intellectuals and political observers raised criticizing for vague representations these parties have offered and questioning whether they are oppositions or incumbents, because a party cannot mobilize the street against a government it took a fundamental part of its formation.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Interview conducted with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 2016.

¹⁸⁴ Phone Interview conducted with Seevan Saeed, Valencia, December 19th, 2016.



Source: Adapted from Table 5.12

In conclusion, it is crucial to underscore that, despite the declines in the PUK's vote shares from 28.2% in 2009 to 17.80% in 2013, the strong military and intelligence forces and the inter-party relationship it has with the KDP still enables this party to be considered the second dominant party in the KRG. Another issue to be highlighted is that the combination of the sixth cabinet (2009) was very similar to the founding cabinet of 1992 in the share volume both dominant parties had together, 76%. Nevertheless, the pattern of interparty competitions between these two parties in the recent cabinet is complimentary, while with the other effective parties is antagonistic, though it was vice versa in the founding cabinet of 1992.

Therefore Kurdistan region's high Ministerial Volatility is a good indicator of the fragility of the party system as all the alterations that occurred in the KRGs were partial. In fact, unlike the two-party system of stable and consensual democracies, characterized by a single party government which assumed to "enhance the accountability, alteration in government and moderate, centre-seeking competition" (Mair, 1997: 200), the Kurdistan Region's two-party system, like multiparty systems elsewhere, throughout the years 1992-2016 required coalition

governments.¹⁸⁵ This typically has not supported complete alteration in governments and prevented the voters from directly influencing the formation of the governments. Rather, the two dominant parties according to their moods and interests had distributed un-sovereign ministerial seats to the parties parallel to their main policy lines. As the minority seats could help one of the political parties without any great effort to establish a majoritarian government, the two-party system could be enhanced to attain further stability. Apparently, the changes in interparty completions have not been fairly reflecting the government alteration. Furthermore, despite the revision of the number of parties constitute the government; still, the virtue of the capability of the dominant party is not signifying radical changes that suit electoral changes, and government formula is still a polarized pluralism government. Thus, another point can be added to the causes provoke the inchoateness of KRI's polity, is the power – which may not necessarily originate from voters or from electoral changes – that can play a crucial role in destabilizing the party system. Therefore the party system stability is a function of a broader institutional order in which it nested than only the number of political parties and their frequent alterations. Since, if the related institutions are institutionalized or systematized, then the party system is more likely to be institutionalized too (Mair, 2001).

The Index of Openness (IO) is the final index employed here measures the openness of governments to entail new political parties. It is merely the extent to which the political parties forming a coalition government are asymmetric, i.e. the extent to which the political parties constitute a cabinet differs from those of the cabinet preceding it, and is the total number of parties that have never been in office, divided by the total number of governing parties in a single cabinet (Mair, 2001; Mair and Casal Bertoa, 2010). Thus, any party that has the opportunity of a ministerial position for the first time is considered a new party. However, if the same party acquired another chance to participate in whatever following cabinet it

¹⁸⁵ As the minority seats could help one of the political parties without any great effort to establish a majority government, the two-party system could be enhanced to attain further stability.

might be, it is not considered a new party in the second instance.

The data in (Table 5.12) underlines the weight of new parties in each cabinet. The second column shows that the fifth cabinet was an opener than the other offices with 50%. It was two and a half times more open than the eighth cabinet. However when the weight of the positions occupied by the new parties is calculated, it can be inferred that they only have 16.66% of the total ministerial size the cabinet had, while the openness of the eighth cabinet is 20%, which resulted from the only new party of the five parties entered the government. The Change has a weight slightly greater than all the new parties of the fifth cabinet, this explains that the fragility of the interparty competition may also result from the weight the new parties have. Thus, not only the number of new parties entering the government but also their strength plays a role in the party system instability. The more they weigh, the more unstable the system is.

5.2. Quality of Political Institutions

There is a common agreement among Kurdish scholars that political institutions lack stability and effectiveness.¹⁸⁶ Mair (2001: 41) underscores the influence political institutions have on party system systemness by stating "*if party systems are to become more fluid, then it is at the level of institutions that the key explanations are most likely to be found.*" Similar to the same vein, Saman Fawzi highlights consolidation of formal institutions should be upon policies that systematize them than personnel moods, "*when the pillars of government are established, i.e., the political system comprised all the fundamental institutions like government, parliament, and legal entity, then they should be regulated according to the principles of solidified governance, not based on personal moods*".¹⁸⁷ Various factors influence these institutions. To be specific, we classified them into two groups; (5.2.1) the structural variables are those related

¹⁸⁶ Interviews conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, and Saman Fawzy in Sulaimania on September 20th, 19th, and 18th, 2016 respectively

¹⁸⁷ Interview conducted with Saman Fawzi, September 18th, 2016, Sulaimani

to the administrative and political deficiencies. These variables mainly highlight (a) lack of specific fundamental institutions for holding fair and clean elections, for example, reliable censuses and an electoral register, the constitutional law that identifies the political system; (b) biased electoral institutions and committees; (c) the interference of some government institutions through rentier policies targeting geographical and demographic aspects in favor of the ruling parties (5.2.2). The procedural variables, or 'Electoral Manipulation' on the other hand are those policies and irregularities affecting the elections in the short and the long term.

5.2.1. Quality of Relevant Structural Institutions

Lack of Fundamental Institutions

Despite the **lack of a constitution** and the controversies it has raised concerning the identification of the political system that accordingly should stipulate the power distribution among sovereign institutions, there are another two relevant institutions that hinder the fairness of KRI elections; **clean and reliable electoral register and an up to date public census**. **The absence of these two electoral organs affected the electoral results and legitimacy of the process, and also opened the door to vote tamper by dominant parties**. Furthermore, it stimulated the state quo where dominant political parties per se have supported in order to have opportunity to temper the voting register, and accordingly electoral results. **Despite the direct relationship between demography and electoral redistricting, neither the dominant parties nor the small parties favor redistricting the KRI to at least a number equal to the number of provinces comprising the KRI.**¹⁸⁸ **Apparently the per se pattern through the greatest remainder method enabled small parties to more probably win the KRP seats in one great district than redistricting the KRI into several districts. It also opened the dominant parties' hands to allocate seats to the province they favor despite the proportional vote share the party aggregate there.**¹⁸⁹

The geographical inclination towards Duhok has driven a party like the KDP to

¹⁸⁸ Interview conducted with Ali Hama Salih, September 30th, 2016 Sulaimaniya

¹⁸⁹ Interview conducted with Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq, Slemani, October 8th, 2016.

hinder redistricting of the KRI. For example, if the number of districts was four and the KRP seats were distributed among them then it is more likely for the opposition parties to win seats in the KDP's domain, and reshape the KDP's geographical strength. In other words, redistricting the KRI might alter the prevailed partisan mosaic especially for the KDP, as the dominant party, with 38 KRP seats. Table (5.13) presents the provincial voting share of each party comparison to their seat share in those provinces, and accordingly we can see that the KDP allocated about 66% of its seats to those members who originated from the smallest province of the KRI, the Duhok where the Barzan village is located, while it gains about 45.7% of its power from Erbil, yet has allocated only 26% of the seats to this province.

Table 5.13: The Proportions of KRP's Political Party Seat-shares according to the Provincial Vote Shares (2013)

(Kurdish) Effective Party	Sulaimaniya %		Erbil %		Duhok %	
	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote	Seat	Vote
KDP	7.89	12.33	26.31	45.7	65.78	41.67
PUK	64.7	66.83	35.3	24.98	0	7.18
Gorran	75	70.05	25	27.27	0	2.68
IUK	40	45.3	20	24.63	40	30.34
IGK	66.66	56.83	33.33	39.11	0	4.07

Source: The author: adapted From data on KRP official <http://perleman.org/Default.aspx?page=members&c=Presidency-Member2013> and

NDI <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI-Iraq-Election-Watch-Ed7.pdf>

Biased Electoral Institutions

Another institutional problem is the lack of an independent electoral institution to oversee electoral processes. The elections of 2005 in both the Kurdistan region and Iraq were run by a truly independent committee established by the American Administration under the TAL.¹⁹⁰ Later in 2007, the IHEC was appointed by and under the observation of the CoR 'Council of Representatives of Iraq' and is supposed to be an independent electoral authority comprising nine

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa September 19th, 2016, Sulaimaniyah.

members, eight permanent election commissioners and one Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).¹⁹¹ However it provide to be biased and politicized entity distributed along sectarian and ethnic lines of the Iraqi ethnopolitical divisions. This institution administered the 2013 and 2009 elections, however, in July 2014 a resolution was issued by the KRP to establish an Independent High Election and Referenda Committee of Kurdistan, which also composes of nine people, representing the effective political parties in the KRI, and minorities' ethnoreligious entities. Three seats including Turkmens are allotted to the KDP; the PUK occupies two seats including a seat for Christians, the Gorran also has two seats, including on for a woman, and the two other seats are for the IGK and IUK Islamic parties, respectively.¹⁹²

Looking back to the KRP founding elections of 1992, it is faultless that they were not carried out by an independent commission, nor were they processed by advanced mechanisms, leaving aftermath with considerable space for irregularities. However, the elections of 2005 were held according to regulations issued by the independent commission installed by the American Administration. Apparently the IHEC of 2005 was the only electoral institution tried to maintain electoral independence through appointing independent personalities, and avoiding the sectarian or ethnic divisions prevailing in Iraq.¹⁹³ Furthermore, neutrality was a fundamental condition required for all agents, observers, and supervisors, with American support, investments in advanced mechanism and machinery were made. Nevertheless, when power was handed over to Iraqis in 2006, this principle was changed, and the situation was reversed. Each ethnoreligios party demanded their share of the nine seats of the Commission. Eventually, each of the Sunnis and the Kurds got two seats, the Shias four, and the other minority ethnoreligious groups altogether gained one seat. Hence politicized and partisan tendencies caused the committee to lose its independence.

¹⁹¹ See <http://www.ihec.iq/en/index.php/commissioners.html>

¹⁹² See the KRP official website: <http://www.kurdistan-parliament.org/files/articles/020914010617.pdf>

¹⁹³ Interview was conducted with Judge Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa in Sulaimaniya, September 19th, 2016

Epecially settlements within the parties composing it, turning a blind eye to fraud and electoral crimes, and neglecting complaints have become regular issues. Finally, instead of achieving the goals for which the elections are held, and reducing the uncertainties, the institution became an agency representing the political parties' interests.¹⁹⁴

While the two Kurdish seats were allocated to the two dominant parties, they tried under the umbrella of their Strategic and Unification agreements, to use their political leverage for electoral manipulation and forgery. It looks like the judiciary power plays significant role in promoting frauds, as the electoral in the first place is the question of the rule of law, whether the judiciary can play an independent role or not.¹⁹⁵ The Judiciary institution in the KRG, in fact is also a politicized organ reflects the political parties policies and interests. The consequence of such political and judiciary structures and the lack of strong democratic institutions, the IHEC is divided along party lines and political lines. Therefore it becomes more likely a form of power-sharing than of establishing an independent commission, and as a result, the electoral process is very competitive, but it is also prone to manipulation and forgery. Meanwhile, *democracy* is more than just elections, while elections should be the very last process of any democracy, but “in the KRI and much of the ME have unfortunately become a way of providing democratic legitimacy to power-sharing arrangements that look democratic but are not necessarily democratic”.¹⁹⁶

The age of democracy also seems to be playing a role in the KRI's institutional weaknesses. Possibly, the KR's involvement in a chain of civil wars and the democracy breakdown in the 1990s and also economic and security tensions whether they originated from neighboring countries or the central government have affected the party system development and the political parties pattern of

¹⁹⁴ Previous source

¹⁹⁵ Interview conducted with Dr. Barham Salih at his home in Sulaimaniya, September 21st, 2016

¹⁹⁶ Previous source

interactions.¹⁹⁷ The vice president of the KRP stresses this issue, adding that:

*“It is true that it has been more than 25 years since we began practicing democratic norms, but unfortunately it has not been developed well due to civil wars, the breakdown of the administrative organs after the Iraqi regime's withdrawal and the economic and security tensions followed it. The electoral norms and culture, due to these issues have become neither the focus of political parties nor the academics, intellectuals, or civil society elites. It is an emerging model of democracy; therefore it cannot be compared with those of the established ones elsewhere”.*¹⁹⁸

Rentier Government Institutions and Policies

Randall and Svasand (2002) argue that stressing the interparty relationship is not only a factor for measuring the institutionalization of a party polity, it also concerns the relationship between the system and the state. So, it is essential for the polity to have a sufficient degree of autonomy that is not affected by the state's organs and policies. Government institutions have the ability to disturb the party system easily, whether through injustice in public subsidies it provides to political parties that the system is composed of, or interferences in the affairs of electoral institutions and electoral courts, or through the policies that affect the electoral results overall in the favor of the incumbent parties.

The government of the Kurdistan Region has not hesitated to invest in the public institutions and decisions granted to them to serve the interests of governing parties throughout the last 26 years.¹⁹⁹ The overstuffed government is the result of the policies of the two ruling parties using their administrative powers, similar

¹⁹⁷ Mr. Jaafar Emniki, the vice president of the KRP, of the KDP fraction; Mr. Hemin Hawramy, a leader in KDP, Dr. Barham Salih; precisely stressed this point in their interviews in Erbil October 5th, and Sulaimaniyah September 21st, 2016 respectively.

¹⁹⁸ Interview conducted with Jaafar Emniki in the KRP office, Erbil October 5th, 2016

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Zimmako Jalal, Sulaimani, October 8th, 2016

that of Turkey highlighted by Sayari (2012), to hire family and tribe members affiliated to them in the public sector as guarantees and rewards for their allegiances. The size of the wage and salaries and the pension payroll of the public sector is about 70% of the KRG budget, while the budget of only two ministries, those of Internal Affairs and Peshmarga, is about (56%) of that rate.²⁰⁰ The so-called “Ghost Workers” is another economic and social problem frustrate the KRI institutions. It refers to those who only have registered on payrolls but physically does not attend at any administrative office. Furthermore, the government intends to confront the opposition forces by expelling and transferring their party cadres and members to remote areas.²⁰¹ It also has effective power in supporting the ruling parties not only through public grants regulated by law but also through hiring vast numbers of the ranked and permanent cadres of the ruling parties with high government administrative posts, providing them with excellent salaries from the public budget, as Ghost Workers. At the same time, these individuals dedicate themselves to partisan, and parties’ businesses while hiding their governmental positions and wages from the public sector.²⁰²

According to the World Bank (2015), public sector employees in 2012 earned salaries at least 30% higher than those of private sector workers.²⁰³ Furthermore, through these unsustainable policies, the number of government employees increased to 680,000, which is about 11.6% of the total population of the KRI. Moreover, about 8.3% of these employees are civilians, while the international norms in the ME countries are 5% and 3.5% to 6% in low and medium income

²⁰⁰ Interview conducted with Mr. Abubakir Haladni., Sulaimani September 26th, 2016

²⁰¹ Interview conducted with Mr. Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 2016. He further asserted that more than 3,000 of the Gorran's affiliates had been fired as economic punishment for their political views and still their problems have not been solved with the government

²⁰² Interviews held with Mr. Ali Hama Salih, MP of the Change Movement, and Prof. Sarwar Abdulrahman Omar, former MP of the PUK in the KRP and current chairman of the Pay Institution in Sulaimani October 6th, 2016.

²⁰³ A report by the World Bank entitled “Kurdistan Region Of Iraq Reforming The Economy For Shared Prosperity And Protecting The Vulnerable” at the following link: http://dw-irak.com/uploads/media/Economy_Reform_of_KRG.pdf

states respectively.²⁰⁴

If the above-mentioned demographic policies has only influenced eligible electorates and created an atmosphere of a rentier state especially regarding the elites whether, in media, political, or civic organizations, the geographical targeting affects the whole population. Rentier economies possibly, fuel clientelism and nepotism and eventually undermine the fairness of party competitions (Kitschelt et al., 2010). Rent-seeking (or Rentire) usually results in declined economic efficiency through an insignificant allocation of resources and actual wealth-creation, misallocation of government revenue, and augmented income inequality (Dabla-Norris and Wade, 2011). Thus, in addition to mass public employments the disproportionality of provincial budgets policies of the KRG among the KRI's Kurdish provinces, districts, and administrative areas is obviously for motivating opposition parties' voter dealignment in those areas considered their geographical strengths.

Another institutional influence on the electoral results is the role the security and Defence (Peshmarga) forces play in tempering the electoral results.²⁰⁵ In any democratic election, the army forces should be in a neutralized distance of electoral process, so that from one side they become national forces that defend their region from external threats and, on the other hand, preventing the hegemony of military mentality interfering in public policy- making and political life.²⁰⁶ However, in the KRI's case, the weaknesses of general and electoral courts supported by the electoral institutions, enabled these two military institutions to protect the ballot boxes, electoral stations, and centers, in a way escalated the suspicions about the cleanness of electoral processes.

Furthermore, the methodology taken by the members of these two structures' vote casting is an absolute violation of the secrecy of elections. Evidences show that

²⁰⁴ See pages xx and 16 of the previous report by the World Bank

²⁰⁵ Interviews conducted with Mohammed Shareef (phone interview), Saman Fawzi, Soran Omar, Sulaimani, September 18th, 29th, 2016 respectively.

²⁰⁶ Interviews conducted with Salar Mahmoud Slemani, September 26th, 2016.

they have been asked to provide their voting card's copy to their administrators, to document their votes as a guarantee of renewing their loyalties to the ruling parties.²⁰⁷ Consequently, these two institutions are considered a threat to democracy and elections, especially when the dominant parties' votes decline these organs' commitment intensifies. Omar (2016) highlights their influence not only in electoral processes but also in escalating political crises, "*whenever their parties face a fatal problem, these armed forces interact and get involved, and hence, they further complicate the political issues.*"²⁰⁸

5.2.2. Quality of Electoral Procedures: Electoral Manipulations

Like other emerging democracies the elections in the KRI characterized by many malfunctions and irregularities due to the relaxed development of democracy and electoral cultures. Electoral fraud can be defined as "*any purposeful action taken to tamper with electoral activities and election, related materials in order to affect the results of an election, which may interfere with or thwart the will of the voters*" (Lopez- Pintor, 2010: 9). In fact, **outcome determinative fraud** pointed out by Lopez-Pointer in all the KRI electoral processes has been observed which occurs when the outcome of the elections is influenced by the rate of the fraud have been practiced.

The frauds can occur in many ways, starting from using public assets for private benefits, to altering the electoral register and declaration of results. Furthermore, a suspicious behavior may be possible evidence of electoral frauds too. Unlike the conventional understanding that the claims of fraud are usually made by losing

²⁰⁷ It is used as a pressure imposed on members of these organs by dominant parties in order to secure their votes. Furthermore, as a consequence, these members have taken photos of their (voting forms) of special electoral processes occur a day or two before general elections and publishing them in their private social media accounts (saying I have voted for X) to prove their loyalties. See <http://www.knnc.net/mob/Drejev-hawal.aspx?id=8800&LinkID=4&leguaid=> and <http://www.knnc.net/Drejev-hawal.aspx?id=8800&LinkID=4&video=True>

²⁰⁸ Interview conducted with Prof. Sarwar Abdulrahman Omar, October 6th, 2016, Sulaimaniyah

parties, in the KRI among the 33 people whom were interviewed for this study, including politicians of ruling and incumbent parties, none of them refuted the allegations of fraud practicing. They all admitted the existence of fraud and electoral forgery in the KRI electoral process. **Despite the international standards for fraud whereby an election can be deemed fraudulent, this issue may be more salient in established democracies than in those of nascent democracies, because the rule of law is stronger and the institutions are more consolidated in those states, such that any small degree of fraud or electoral manipulation may stir the media and public opinion, while in emerging democracies despite the considerable amount of forgery, the common understanding is still that elections are better to be held than not.**²⁰⁹ Besides, there are several other methods of electoral manipulation employed in the KRI in addition to the installation of electoral institutions to benefit dominant parties, the most common ones being intimidation, and vote buying.

Intimidation is used in structured levels, starting in families, tribes and then by the state. When the manipulations do not connect directly to the act of voting, the threats and terrorization are exercised, whether economic threats such as those the state institution used against opposition parties electorates through firing or transferring them to remote areas, or social threats like those exercised by families, structural tribal units and in kinship relations.²¹⁰ **Political intimidation, on the other hand, particularly relates to media censorship and intimidation of political observers and all different kinds of pressure in this category.** In the KRI, there are incidents where top journalists and editors-in-chief of honored independent media platforms were bitten, harassed and even were killed for their political views and reports that were seen in some ways affecting the reputation of dominant parties.

²⁰⁹ Most of the Kurdish scholar, and even the politicians and the MP agreed that despite the extent of frauds, holding elections are better than avoiding them. Interviews with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Rebwar Karim, Saman Fawzi, Barham Salih, and Hemn Hawrami (see the Appendix III for the interviews' dates and locations).

²¹⁰ Interview with Zimnako Jalal and Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, and October 8th, 2016 respectively.

During the time between the national elections of Iraq in 2010 and the regional elections of the KRP in 2013, Metro Center's annual reports declared more than 750 attacks on journalists including threats, harassment, beatings, detentions, intimidations, and arson. Only in 2011, after the mass protests against corruption and misuse of power, 359 incidents were recorded, decreasing to 132 and 193 in 2012 and 2013 respectively (Abdulla, 2014). Furthermore, the murder of journalists is another recent graving problem threatening the peace and tolerance aspects of Kurdish society and deteriorating the legitimacy and accountability of the ruling parties. This problem is more likely to be related to the law enforcement. While hundreds of lawsuits are filed in courts against journalists, the new Press Law ratified in the KRP in (2013), prescribes detention of journalists. It also guarantees their rights to access to government information and protect their rights in delivering fair and balanced information and data to the public, yet, despite the enactment of the new law this problem still salient in the KRI due to the government's weak procedures to enforce it (Ibid).

According to Chomani (2017), dominant Kurdish parties are tending towards authoritarianism because of their refusal to declare the actual electoral results and tamper them to their own benefit. This argument supported by Saman Fawzi (2016) too stressing that "*Looking to the current political atmosphere of the KRI, personalism tendencies may take it to a dictatorship.*"²¹¹ Nevertheless, some other observers believe that the Kurdish experience has not reversed to authoritarianism, because the political culture prevents it from doing so. Hemin Hawrami, a leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), supports his claim by explaining the mentality transformation of Kurdish parties and the increase of toleration toward one another, "*Kurdish parties do not resort to civil wars to resolve disputes as they did in the 1990s. Despite the sensitivity of problems compared with those of the 1990s, the parties still have channels for negotiation. The grassroots do not accept aggressive behavior and push for peaceful resolutions to conflicts.*"²¹² However, other scholars agree that the reason why

²¹¹ Interview conducted with Saman Fawzi, Sulaimani, September 18th, 2016.

²¹² Interview conducted with Mr. Hemin Hawrami in his office in Massif, Erbil, October 5th,

parties have not turned to weapons is for being disarmed forces and established according to legal framework prevents them from hosting military wings within their organizations, other wise they would have initiated another round of civil wars.²¹³

Another source of fraud can be found in the electoral campaigns. Dominant parties usually have exclusive access to the media and technology for propaganda for their parties, while small parties and opposition parties do not have such opportunities.²¹⁴ Therefore, deficiency of independent media platforms to provide equal opportunities to the candidates and lists to discuss their manifestos, especially during the electoral campaigns is considered a sort of fraud.²¹⁵ Media networks are linked to dominant political parties and specifically to personalities within those parties.²¹⁶ The most prominent leaders indirectly establish media outlets and allocate sufficient funds from the public treasury to serve their parties, and within the party, the wills of specific personalities.

According to Chomani (2012), there are dozens of media outlets including satellite TV stations, newspapers, news agencies, magazines, and websites in Kurdistan region. Further, under the policy of promoting private media many shadow media have been established, which either affiliated to the KDP or the PUK, and millions of dollars from public money are allocated to them with the aim of weakening the real private media discourse from one side, and attacking the opponents of the party to which they are affiliated. For example, the Rudaw Company is a shadow media affiliated to the KDP and precisely to the vice president of the party and the PM of the KRG, received U.S.\$30 million, from oil revenue for its establishment.²¹⁷

Therefore the door-to-door campaigns employed by oppositions may not be

²¹³ Phone interview conducted with Rebwar Fatah, November 16th, 2016, Valencia.

²¹⁴ Interview with Shorsh Haji, Abu Bakir Ali in Sulaimani, October 5th, and September 28th, 2016 respectively

²¹⁵ Interviews conducted with Saman Fawzi and Abubakr Haladini, Sulaimaniyah, September 18th and 26th, 2016.

²¹⁶ Interview with Saman Fawzi, Sulaimani, September 18th, 2016.

²¹⁷ Retrieved from, <https://kurdistantribune.com/nechirvan-barzanis-association-media-corruption-rudaw-company-as-example/>

instrumental method especially in the large cities and urban areas, even though it is more sociable and responsive. However due to the lack of legal frameworks to limit parties to the amount of money they may invest in campaigns, dominant parties have vast sources of cash from the public and their parties' businesses to enter every home, especially through the media and TV we discussed above. But other parties do not have sufficient funds to hold appropriate campaigns.²¹⁸ According to a survey conducted by the IRI in 2010 around 86% of the people get news from media channels, yet equal opportunity does not exist to enable the elections to be seen fair and clean.²¹⁹

Another type of fraud is when state power is used to keep eligible voters from casting their votes. This is frequently have been exercised by government officials in the KRI, when for deceitful technical issues such as electricity cuts, problems in stamps, or ballot forms occurred, and accordingly the government prevents the people from voting for hours, while they wait in queues. Later, shortly before the closing time, the polling stations are opened for voters and sometimes people do not have much time left to cast their votes or disappointedly leave the stations after being waiting for long time.²²⁰

Vote buying is another active form of fraud and forgery, especially in clientelistic and nepotistic societies like that of the KRI. Bribing a chieftain, or a noble is enough to buy the loyalty of his entire tribe or clan. This mechanism is employed by dominant Kurdish parties to strengthen their rule and domination as they arrange special budgets and have involved tribal structure into their parties. Most of the parties of the Kurdistan Region, have Bureaus of Social Relations, which function as another face of the courts where politicians act like a third party

²¹⁸ Interviews conducted with Saman Fawzi, Salar Mahmoud, Sulaimani, September 18th, and 26th, 2016 respectively.

²¹⁹ A survey conducted by Research Middle East Polls of IRI on December 8-15, 2010 entitled "Survey of Iraqi Kurdistan Public Opinion." See the survey in this link <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20i> [n%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region.%20December%208-15.%202010.pdf](http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20i)

²²⁰ Interview conducted with Rebwar Karim, and Zimmako Jalal, September 20th, and October 8th, 2016 respectively.

between two warring tribes, or intercede in resolving cultural and clan problems, supporting them with financial aids.²²¹ Hence the chieftains are the critical element, as their loyalty is significant to their tribes, primarily if the parties support them to maintain their tribal traditions and appoint their tribe members to offices and as MPs (see chapter four).

Finally, in addition to multiple votes and irregularities occurring on election days, there is a particular type of fraud in the KRI, considered a damaging factor to the elections' legitimacy. **The systematic fraud is a profound problem resulting from the absence of a reliable census and electoral registration book.**²²² According to Omar, it is about 200,000 votes and is a consequence of keeping the names of dead people and thousands of duplicate names predominantly in Erbil and Duhok.²²³ Omar discloses that the systematic fraud is significant and might have been worth around fifteen KRP seats and is exercised through several methods, first through fake identities issued by dominant and ruling parties for the immigrants of other parts of Kurdistan; second through duplications of the names, and keeping the dead people's names in the register book;

“Many people from the other parts of Kurdistan, were given Kurdistan Regions' National Identity cards to vote for a particular party, from Iran, Syria and Turkey, and we as a committee addressed by KRP for investigating this issue, field the evidences related to the subject. The amount of fraud in the electoral register is about 200, 000. For example, there are repetitive, full names, with the same addresses, and similar private information for ten or twenty-five times each. Some other names are no longer alive, for instance, they were borne in 1913, but still duplicated many times. Another issue is the

²²¹ Interview with Chnar Saad, Erbil, October 4th, 2016

²²² Interviews conducted with Sarwara Abdulrahman Omar, Ali Hama Salih, And Zimnako Jalal, Sulaimani, October 6th, and 30th, October 8th, 2016 respectively.

²²³ The BBC News asserts that 100,000 duplicated and dead people's names are in the voter registry, yet in both cases, the allegation was disregarded without investigation in the elections. The information was retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24107071>

death rate in Kurdistan; from 1991 to the date we scrutinized the death list, only 400 people were erased and considered dead, and are only the people who registered by the Forensic Medicine department. The Food Coupon is another field of fraud [...]. So what we asked in our recommendation letter is that the KRP should ask the IHCE to erase all the duplicated names, the none-Iraqi Kurdish people, and the dead people's names. All the KRP members agreed and asked the former KRP Spokesman to arrange a particular convention for that purpose yet he refused to do so for unknown reasons, while he is a PUK politburo."²²⁴

This claim has been supported by a report published by Pay Institution recently, and several organized form of electoral data forgery was presented to which accordingly about one-third of the register book of previous elections followed 2001 might consider dubious (Table 5.14). Overall, this uncertainty based on the accumulations of death names, name repetition of exiled Kurdish voters who flee the areas of disputes before the fall of Baathist and returned back following the normalization process, fake identity given to the Kurdish of other parts, and repetition in names of those of special voting (armed forces) in the public register book.

Accordingly, based on the data presented by the ministry of health, around 217,644 people died since 2001, and probably a notable percentage among them were eligible voters, yet, the registry book has not been cleaned from those who met their fate around that time span. Furthermore, 11,799 registered names are aged between 100-164 years old, which compared to the data presented by World Bank (2015) for the average age of death in Kurdistan Region and Iraq as (69.59), and the massacres occurred in the area this is too high and doubtful.²²⁵ Another

²²⁴ Interview conducted with Prof. Sarwar Abdulrahman Omar, Sulaimani, October, 6th, 2016.

²²⁵ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=IQ>

94,567 names are considered repetition in the provincial register books of each of the Kurdish provinces Duhok, Erbil, and disputed areas' book of Mosul, and Kirkuk. The special voting register book, on the other hand, embraces 184,000 voters according to the KRI's registry, while this book, according to data confirmed by relative Iraqi institutions constitutes of 179,000 names yet still mostly are repeated in the general register book. Finally, the biometric data developed by both the KRI and Iraq electoral institutions highlights 275,423 differences, which is equivalent to 13 KRP seats.

Table 5.14: Uncertainties In Register Book Of The IKR's Elections

Type of Data Uncertainty	Erbil	Duhok	Sulaimani	Total
Biometric	68,570	105,286	101,567	275,955
Age between (100-164)	3,499	2,129	6,171	11,799
Death	62,942	62,596	93,409	218,956
Overlapped Disputed-KRI	94,567		N/A	+94,567
Name repetition				
Other repetitions	88,201			88,201
Underage	60,000			60,000
Special Elections	184,000			184,000
Total				932, 955

Source: Pay Institution's Ninth Report (2017: 20-23).

This predisposition is not only affecting the electoral turnouts, but also the internal parties crises, especially those dealing with factions' weigh within parties. When the dominant faction within a party decides to allocate seats to those whom they believe are more align to their faction, they use their power within electoral institutions to increase those candidates' votes.²²⁶ According to Omar, this was practiced by the PUK in the national elections of 2014. Narmin Osman, a senior PUK politician, also highlighted another type of systematic fraud connected with result tampering, especially by increasing the electoral turnouts without reducing opposition vote shares. This is apparently the method used in 2013 in Sulaimaniya when the PUK and the Gorran were involved in violent conflicts in the main electoral center shortly after the vote counting started, and vice-

²²⁶ Interview with Narmin Osman, Rebwar Karim, and Sarwar Abdulrahman, Sulaimani, September 20th, October 1st, and 6th, 2016 respectively.

president of the PUK accordingly supported the Gorran's allegation to prevent his own party playing with the people's will.²²⁷

5.3. Key Findings And Concluding Remarks

It looks like the KRI's institutional framework is one of the core factors reshaping party systems and the psychological relations between electorates and political parties.²²⁸ The amendments made to the electoral system including electoral laws and institutions, and propagate for emerging allied lists obscured the old parties' deterioration. The old parties attempts to run in coalitional national lists with other smaller parties and later through political consensus arrangement they distributed the KRP and the KRG seats were to conceal their real size. The erosion of the two old parties, the sudden emergence of loosely structured and transient parties enhanced by permissiveness of electoral laws, and the mass shifts of electoral loyalty have all provoked the instability of the KRI's party system. Nevertheless, for some of the ideological-based parties, this erosion has been to a certain extent less efficient and static. The electorates loyal to Islamic parties unlike other parties are specific and limited, and have not undergone a rapid fall or a leap easily.²²⁹ Furthermore, due to the explicit assertion of the Quran as a fundamental base of the KR's law, real disputes on ideological bases have occurred in neither phase of political maintenance between the secular and Islamic parties.

The characteristics of some of the political institutions suggest that the fluidity and weaknesses they presented in the last 26 years damaged the opportunities of real democracy and political development to which accordingly the institutionalization may progress (Huntington, 1965). Party system institutionalization is not only a function of political parties that interact in the system; they also are reflecting the level of institutions (Mair, 2001). The fluidity

²²⁷ Interview conducted with Narmin Osman, Sulaimaniyah, October 1st, 2016

²²⁸ Interview conducted with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, September 19th, 2016, Sulaimani.

²²⁹ Interviews conducted with Abubakir Haladi, a leader and a deputy of the IUK and Soran Omar, an Islamic figure representing the IGK in the KRP in Sumlaimani, September 26th, and 29th, 2016.

of institutional framework in the KRI influenced several aspects of the party system. At least it stimulated the deterioration of some of the old parties and the emergence of new parties, and accordingly, the tie between the voters and the old parties to some degree has weakened in a way new forms of electoral behavior become exercising.

Thus, in addition to the impact, they have on the party rootedness, they also destabilizing the pattern of the political parties interactions. Some political parties are more fortunate to align electorates than others, which is in the first place a consequence of the alterations made in the electoral laws and political parties laws (Janda, 1970; Bielasiak 2002; Duverger, 1954; Lijphart, 2005; Mozaffar et al. 2003; Sayari and Esmir, 2002). Additionally, the political parties and parties' budgetary laws are significant for altering a polity, and its degree of stability. At least they encouraged the factions within some parties to become more visible and split from their mother parties eventually. Thus the institutional factor can to a great extent affects the first two intertwined dimensions introduced by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) in the contexts of the KRI party system.

Nonetheless, the old parties, including those minority parties of Christians, the Assyrian Democratic Movement ADM 1979, are apparently not as shallow as other political parties elsewhere in the democracies of the third wave. Rather, in comparison with Latvia and Estonia's old parties' mean volatility of 55.7% and 63.61% respectively for the elections between 1992 and 2003 (Meleshevich, 2007), the Kurdistan region's old parties mean volatility is 9.44%. This, in a clean and fair election, indicates to some degree the deeper rootedness the old parties have in society, the loyalty the constituencies show to these parties, and the strong relationship they have with their voters. However, it may not entirely be resulted from their rootedness strength, as is in the KRI, rather, electoral frauds and shortcomings in electoral procedures, possibly also play fundamental roles in changing electoral turnouts of these parties. As they occupy key positions in the electoral institutions; therefore it may be easy for them to alter the KRI's party system mosaic suitable to their ends.

On the other hand, despite the importance of election turnouts for legitimization and credibility of the electoral system, the integrity of the KR's electoral process is to a great extent questionable. In addition to the massive frauds and forgery we discussed above, electoral participation, in essence, is based on patron-client relationships, nepotism, and intimidation. The party programs and manifestos are not as much as matter as spoils given to voters. The people cast ballots based on loyalties originating from ties of family patronage, and historical legacies, and tribal affiliations.

Another finding is that, the role legacy of struggle plays in the voting behavior.

The tendency of the electorates' loyalty to political parties based on historical legacy indicates to some extent the rootedness the traditional parties have in the KRI society. Some electorates are keen to support their parties, and their loyalties are unchanging despite their parties' involvement in undemocratic and illegal means of ruling. In reality, a significant proportion of voters that distributed among parties follow this ignorance tendency, no matter how their parties have changed, or the extent to which they fulfill their electoral promises and campaign propaganda.²³⁰ So, whatever ensued they still vote in the next elections for the same parties. Meanwhile, disloyal voters do not exist very much in the current KRI. Apparently, the weak culture of democracy affected people to perceive political participation as spoils and inducements they are guaranteed whether for hiring their children or finding them jobs or praising them in their current offices if they decided to vote. There are areas where a certain political party is strong but others are not, yet the electorates' loyalties, by all measures, depends on the renewing loyalty of family and tribal generations to the same party over decades.

There is also evidence support that people switch their stands mainly as punishment for those parties with whom they had strong ties in the past. The findings, however suggest that the ideology is not a fundamental issue in the KR's

²³⁰ Phone interview conducted with Seevan Saeed, January 5th, 2018

system, and only two powerful Islamic parties organize their bases according to Islamic values, notwithstanding, it looks like this has not become an issue in interparty relationships. At least there is examples support this claim in KRI's political parties history. For example, coalition lists have been formed based on political issues and interests than ideological aspects; The Reform and Service list composed of four parties, namely, the IGK, the IUK, the KSP, and the KTP, while the first two parties are Islamic based, the third is tribal nationalist, and the last one is an extreme secular nationalistic party.²³¹ Also, the Democratic Patriotic Alliance list in 2005 was a platform for almost all Kurdish parties including the IUK, yet the reason why the IGK separately run for the elections was more likely related to their security conditions after been accused of having ties with international terrorist groups than ideological disagreements, however in the following election they also came abroad.

It seems institutionalization of the KRI's electoral system is another essential factor for destabilizing the interaction pattern among political parties and their rootedness (Bielasiak, 2002). The more the electoral system experiences alterations, and the more the permissiveness before newcomers is flexible, the more the change in the interparty interactions may be witnessed. Possibly, electoral system's solidification is also essential for electoral rules and political parties' legitimacy; especially in the way people perceive them (Jones, 2007). The stability of party competition, on the other hand, depends on the extent to which political behavior can be regulated by electoral rules and institutions. The frequent changes in related rules and regulations disturbed the pattern the political parties have adopted to advance the relationships they have maintained with each other in the political sphere, and with the constituencies, they have targeted. Eventually, this creates uncertainty regarding the electoral consequences (Bielasiak, 2002; Sayari and Esmir, 2002). As this uncertainty raised the problems of altering the votes to seats, and political instability appeared yet the predictability of the new government mosaic and policymakers made this

²³¹ Interviews conducted with Mohammed Shareef (a phone interview) and Rebwar Karim, Sulaimaniya, September 20th, 2016.

instability further increases in the KRI's case as the voters doubtfully see these governments' arrangements do not represent their preferences.

Therefore, frequent changes in electoral rules and institutions affect many aspects of political parties and the party systems. Cancelling the electoral threshold and fixing a small barrier for new party registration in the Political Parties Law of the Kurdistan Region, opened the door not only for changes in the number of parties operating within the system, but also the effective number of parties in the KRP, and the interparty competitions. Furthermore, lack of some other institutions such as budgetary law of political parties, general census, an independent commission for supervising elections stimulated old and dominant parties to play patriarchy role and lined up those small parties in their blocs, and using public coffers for developing their client-patron relationships. Thus some political parties became dependent on the more significant parties and lost their autonomy.

It looks like, in addition to the corruptions observed in the offices, these institutional shortcomings have opened dominant political parties hands to play with the electoral results and accordingly affect the certainty of electoral process and damage their legitimacy. The electoral process usually is held in uncertainty and conditions escorted with antagonism and displeasure. In addition to the use of public assets and money, the mass opportunities dominant parties candidates have in media and use of public offices for rally comparison to those of other parties, the considerable ambiguity regarding the registry book and supervising staff increase the dubiousness and suspicions of people. Thus, elections rather have become a mean to certify and legitimize dominant parties power than a mean for providing people excellent and preferable choices of who govern them.

Probably exogenous forces like the TAL rules and the permanent Iraqi constitution on the KR's electoral laws imposed on the KRI's electoral rules to adopt changes fulfill democracy have emerged three essential alterations in the party system, along with the representation of diverse ethnic and religious groups in the KRP and the construction of extreme pluralism, which eventually changed

the pattern of completion among political parties. The reconstruction of political parties' internal organizations and the final reshaping of the linkage between the electorates and the parties that took place in a way in which the dominant political parties had to respond to the people's preferences in the electoral list arrangements. Accordingly, instead of forming the government from the two dominant parties and those small ethno-religious groups subordinated to them, they decided to create the eighth cabinet from only the five effective parties in the KRI in a consensus government. Thus, tolerating previous oppositions in the KRG and allowing them to have access to data of how the government and its organs function were new to Kurdish politics, yet very short lived and unsuccessful attempt.

Another finding to be highlighted, is that while the change in interparty relations and the decay of old political parties are consequences of the emerging pluralism resulted from, splits, electoral permissiveness, a part of the changes of political parties' internal organizations and leadership councils are consequences of the gender quota, and the reduction of the candidacy age by law stipulated as conditions for the KRP candidacy by TAL. Thus, even extreme ideological and Islamic parties responded by amending their statutes and party labels to develop facilities for women and youth for future representation of their parties, as the laws require. Furthermore, the one large district and the list formula enhanced the geographical concentration tendency of political parties rather than encouraging their expansion to become nationwide. Even though the alteration made to the list formula of the elections in 2013 motivated political parties to nominate strong and popular semi-independent individuals in their lists, still the tribalism and nepotism of the voting behavior obstructing technocracy to become the essence of candidacy mechanism. Furthermore unlike the problems existing elsewhere, for example in the Brazilian parliament characterized by personalism tendency, rather than an existing strong relationship between parties and Brazilian parliamentarians (Mainwaring, 1999), the Kurdistan Region's case suffers from over-partisanship and polarization of the KRP and other formal institutions.

On the other hand, the personalism tendency within political parties is enhanced by presidential law and policies of the KRP and the KRG, especially those highlights the political parties' budgets. The good relational legacy some high government profiles have with figures in other parties, led the politics to be more personalistic than systematized, and thus these internal parties agents become reliable sources for negotiation with the government, and dominant parties.

Apparently, the escalation of corruption and the disputes over presidency system as two continua but not dichotomy factors have stimulated polarization in KRI's society too.²³² The tribal agreements between the two ruling and dominant parties paved the way for mobilizing the mass to a direction unfamiliar to the Kurdish politics. The problems of the two wings of the KDP in the 1960s in the era of struggle have taken on another shape and engaged the grassroots, meaning that the issue has exploded onto a broader arena and has involved electorates and party affiliates. Therefore, a divided society was an unpredictable issue for the two dominant parties, especially as they did not expect the degree of disappointment people felt for their dubious agreements. This disappointment mainly rose among thousands of people who lost family members in civil wars. Furthermore, the issues regarding democracy and credibility of government institutions, the misuse of power accorded to each of the three sovereign institutions, the use of the public purse for party interests, the weak form of governance and administrative maintenance all inspired the emerging Gorran, two become a political party and polarize the system.

In particular, there are legal bases that support the opposition proclamations regarding the KR's political system. Erkmen (2012) points out the difference between the KRI and the Iraqi system. While the Iraq constitution defines the Iraqi political system as a parliamentary system, the recent changes to the presidential law of Iraqi Kurdistan have altered the system to a political model of a French semi-presidential system (Banai, 2012). This is especially so since 2009.

²³² Interview with Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq, Sulaimanyia, October 8th, 2016

the political system of the KRI has practically changed to a semi-presidential system, and looks like the populace does not like such kinds of rulings system, particularly having experienced the long history of a presidential system and dictatorship under Saddam Hussein.

The findings concentrate the impact institutional shortcoming have on emerging new factions within the PUK after the Gorran's splinter, other parties like the KDP and the IUK have also been affected by these new patterns of partisanship.

In the presidential dilemma, the Duhok's faction of the IUK voted against their main parties' principals in favor of Barzani, while the Sulaimaniya faction voted against Barzani in favor of the Gorran's claims. The KDP encountered family-based problems between the nephew and the uncle, Nechirvan and Masoud Barzani, who each held the essential executive power of council of ministry and the region's presidential positions. These new tendencies within the parties have managed to use public money to strengthen their frameworks in three dimensions: the mass media, the military forces and partisan shares in the KRP, the KRG and the Kurdish shares in National Iraqi Parliament and government offices. Thus, the power struggle not only altered the competition among the parties but also has weakened the internal organization of the political parties and further exposed the lacking integrity and reduced the cohesion of the Kurdish political parties, especially within the PUK and the IUK.

The frauds and forgery are another two findings with a substantial impact on the electoral and political parties' legitimacy. The two dominant parties use different methods of electoral manipulation, including duplicating votes, tampering electoral results, buying electorate loyalties, and using intimidation through economic punishment for altering political views, and lately. This pattern has also been employed by factions within the political parties to increase their influence and expand their leverage inside their own parties.²³³ Thus, they try to hire those who are related to their ideology or faction line of politics in electoral institutions

²³³ Interview with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimaniyah, September 30th, 2016

and government positions. Electing Fuad Masum for the Iraqi President by the PUK's dominant faction despite the strong personality and technocratic leadership characteristics of Barham Salih in 2014 might be a good example supporting this claim.²³⁴

Moreover, the deficient and politicized tendencies of the electoral institution impeded the electoral process from being held on a regular basis. For example, if we remove the founding elections due to the breakdown of democracy, the time delay between the second and the third elections was about six months, and the third to fourth about two months, which also affected the credibility of the institutions and the formation of government to fill political vacuums after each election is made. Meanwhile, time is crucial for resolving many issues, especially in such post-civil war societies like the KRI's, where decades will be needed to develop democratic performance in order to institutionalize rules and institutions properly and political parties and party systems.

Another factor enhanced party system fluidity is the low level of barrier to new parties. Especially after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 any group found a political

²³⁴ Due to the internal conflicts occurred in the PUK following the Iraqi national elections of 2014 over who should become the Iraqi president as previously agreed upon this post was Kurdish share in sovereign Iraqi political positions, and the PUK's according to the Strategic and Unification agreement between the PUK and the KDP. It took several months until the PUK finally made the decisions regarding who should fill the post. Some suggestions made by Kurdish bloc in Iraq, asking either this problem should be resolved by the Kurdish MPs in Iraq or the PUK itself should make a decisive attempt to address one candidate among those three politburo members who were nominated themselves. Eventually, the party agreed to nominate two candidates (Barham Salih and Fuad Masum) to run for the post, and the majority of the Kurdish MPs of Iraqi Parliament voted for Masum. Apparently, Salih was not very favorable to the dominant families within the PUK, who have the final decision. Therefore the two parties parliamentary fractions, which together constituted the majority of the Kurdish parliamentary fraction in Iraq, voted for Masum, and hence he became the third president of new Iraq. See <http://www.knnc.net/Drejev-hawal.aspx?id=30245&LinkID=4&leguid>

party and win only two parliamentary seats could participate in government. In fact, there are cases where no congressional seat was required to gain a share in the government, as are the cases from the founding to the fourth cabinets. Unlike the argument of Taylor and Herman (1971) that the more fragmented the government is, the more unstable it is, it can be seen that the first cabinet was constituted only by six parties while the fifth was constituted by ten parties, yet the fifth cabinet in comparison with most of the other unified cabinets of the KRG was more stable in terms of the period it remained in office (Table 5.11). Furthermore, if the comparison was made between the fifth and eighth, it can be concluded that the fifth cabinet was more stable than the eighth. The eighth cabinet was interrupted by a decision by the PM Nechirvan Barzani, dismissed the four ministers of the Change, only 19 months after the cabinet inauguration, as a response to the attempts made by the Change emphasizing the dimensions of corruption.²³⁵ Thus, there must be other factors behind the instability of the KRGs; for example the policy tendency of the incumbent parties against the former anti-system parties or the weight of the new and the young parties in the system, and in the government structures.

Focusing on the two fragmented cabinets during the civil wars, third and fourth cabinets, and despite the deterioration in the economy and security, there is a clear indication of the better stability they enjoyed compared with the cabinets of unification. Patently, this was supported by the defragmentation in both the KRP and the KRG the KDP's case and the KRG in the PUK's cabinets. This argument was supported by Stansfield (2003) in the KR's case, and it was justified elsewhere by Taylor and Herman (1971).

Considering Blondel's (1968) definition of government, none of the founding and the second cabinet can be viewed as a government, since they were involved in several parties, which did not have parliamentary shares in the KRP. However, the Kurdish case may fit the description of government instability by Macridis

²³⁵ See the related news link <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/131020151>

(1959) that is characterized by a high rate of party numbers and constant dislocation and rearrangement to some extent of the same dominant parties. This phenomenon of “stabilizing instability” in the KRGs was provoked by and resulted from several factors; the most important is the paradox of a stable strategy of monopolization of power with unstable cabinets. The two major parties, hence, operated the KRG together, in the founding and second cabinet, then they developed a firm policy of instability through continuing antagonized relationships, and involving smaller parties in their party blocs to show a fabricated level of democracy.

In the second phase, which started in 2005, this stable policy of instability continued to advance through the Strategic and Unification Agreements. In this phase, the antagonism towards other effective parties increased whilst the two dominant parties' relations enjoyed a significant degree of integration and cooperation based on their partisan interests. In addition to the enlargement of government turnouts, they continued to hold the dominant share of government, and the key ministries. They further developed the policy of muting the anti-system parties by providing them with governmental shares corresponding their parliamentary shares, yet the virtue and power of the ministries the former opposition occupied in later cabinets do not resemble those they had when they were handled by dominant parties in previous cabinets. For example, the vibrant ministers of the Economy and Peshmarga were allocated to the Gorran in the last cabinet, yet, neither had the same power the previous ministers of the PUK had enjoyed during the earlier cabinets.

The average age of the Kurdistan Region governments is 33 months including the length of service of the fragmented cabinet, yet if only the unified cabinets were calculated the average length of service further decreases to 30 months. Although the KRP forced no cabinet to resign, they were either dismissed for political instability (civil war or dissatisfaction of political parties' politburos) or being results of partisan agreements between major governing parties with an arrangement of half an electoral term each. Throughout the eight cabinets Masoud

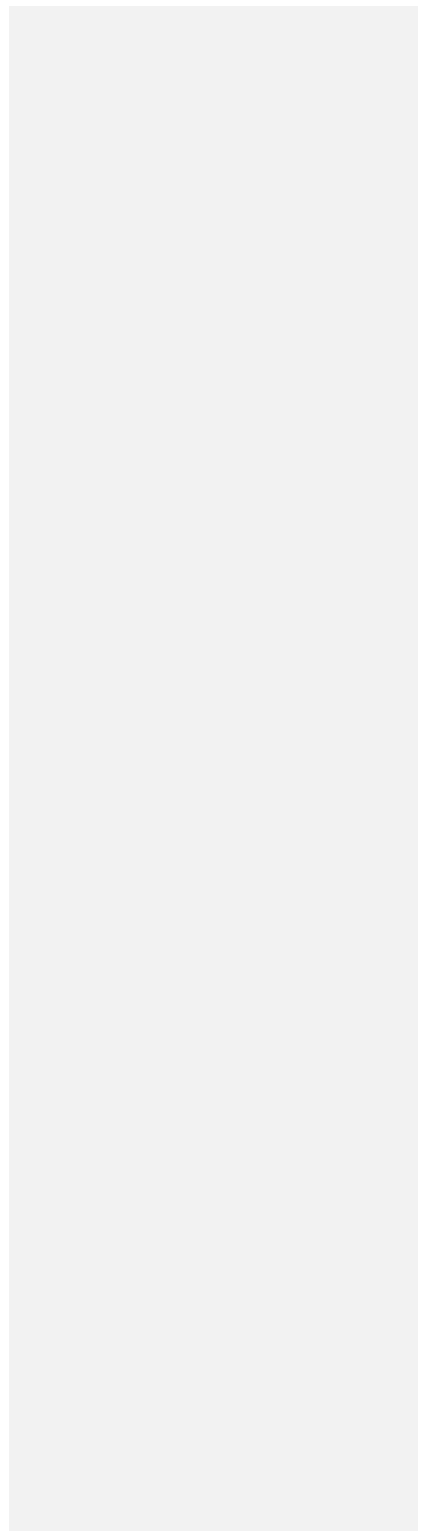
Barzani's nephew, Nechirvan, held the prime ministerial office for 16 years and three months, in addition to 3 years and three months as government-deputy. The other prime ministers who held office were Kosrat Rasul (seven years and seven months in fragmented cabinet of the PUK); Barham Salih (five years and three weeks, both unified and fragmented cabinets), Roj Nuri Shawais (three years and eleven weeks first fragmented cabinet of the KDP) and finally Fuad Masum who served in office for only 10 months of the founding government.

Finally, it looks like the KRP is not strong enough to force any cabinet to resign; rather, the distinguished point in the KRI's case with the other parliamentary and semi-presidential systems is that the government is stronger than the KRP. Some of the personalities of government are considered to be higher than the KRP. There exist many examples when the KRP asked the Prime Minister, the Minister of Natural Resources, the President of the KR, to attend the KRP sessions to answer the MPs' questions, but they show the KRP is not accountable to question them. At least, four times the minister of Natural Resources have been asked to be interrogated by the KRP members in 2015, yet neither time he attended.²³⁶ Especially after the amendments of presidential law, the executive branch acquired even more power and to an extent blocked the KRP speaker in 2015 from entering the capital, Erbil.

In sum, based on these finding it can be concluded that the institutional influence and shortcoming in the first place are consequences of exogenous and structural factors mainly supported by TAL, Iraqi new democratic constitution, and Electoral law than been internal amendments responding social and political change in Kurdish society. They also are results of the tribal mentality of political leaders reflecting the political culture of Kurdish society grounded on tribalism and neo-tribalism. It enhanced by supreme agreements signed between the two ruling

²³⁶ According to quarterly third and fifth reports of Pay Institute, within one year the KRP asked fifteen times the KRG ministers including the Prime Minister to attend the question sessions, in which four times were addressed to the minister of Natural Resources, yet he participated at neither meeting. In fact, only three ministers of who represents the former opposition bloc decided to answer the questions of the KRP members.

political parties' leaders, to control the KRI's political arena and eventually with the exogenous factors we discussed above or the legacy of international patronage relationship we explain in the following chapter. Therefore, in the first place as Hicken and Kuhonta (2015) emphasizes institutional influence is rather a consequence than being a causal factor itself, yet it plays a fundamental role in the fluidity of almost all the dimensions of the party system institutionalization introduced by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) in the context of KRI.



CHAPTER SIX: EXOGENOUS FACTORS

Very few thesis support the existence of a causal relationship between political parties fluidity and political parties international financing provided to the developing democracies especially following civil wars (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008; Mathiesen and Svasand, 2002), and trade and business relations managed by political elites (Matuszak, 2012). Furthermore, little has been written about whether there is a causal relationship between international influence and a party system institutionalization through the impact the former has on structural composition; inter parties' relationships and legitimacy of political parties operating in the system. Justifying such a hypothesis needs a profound investigation, therefore, this chapter's aim is to scrutinize the impact of exogenous variables, namely the patronage international relations – political and business – have on increasing the personalism of decision-making, and clientelism tendencies in economic and political maneuver. Also their effects on increasing the so-called neo-tribalism, the escalation of corruption, the involvement of party-owned businesses and, in time, their impact on political parties' internal fluidity, the autonomy of decision-making, and political parties legitimacy.

Unlike other sovereign states, the KRI is still struggling for independence and does not have recognized and legitimate boundaries, therefore, these conditions may facilitated the foreign pressures to have multi-faceted effects in the KRI's politics, especially on the pattern of interparty competition and political parties' internal autonomy and organization, in addition to the way they have been perceived by political elites and grassroots. Unarguably, the practice of patronage relations in politics is not a new phenomenon. It is considered a *"form of exchange relation, between patrons and clients,"* which can be witnessed in both traditional and industrial societies, whatever the political system might be, and these types of relations may occur at local, regional, national and international levels (Kopecky and Mair, 2006: 1). Through the following two sub-

variables a profound longitudinal investigation of foreign pressures whether international (the USA, and the EU), regional (Iran, Turkey, Arab World and Israel) or other exogenous from Iraq's political regimes is developed to determine their influence on Kurdish politics in different stages and time; (1) Foreign Patronage Relation Legacies between Kurdish parties and foreign entities; (2) Foreign Subsidies and Patronage Business Influences in escalating of clientelism and the personalism of party leadership.

6.1. Foreign Patronage Relation Legacies

Kurdish political parties in Iraq have a long history of relations with neighboring countries especially with Iran, Syria, Turkey and some other regional states like Libya, Egypt, Israel. In some phases these relationships were based on reciprocal benefits, while in some others escorted with antagonism, and hatred to an extent accompanied with armed conflicts, especially with the central government of Iraq as an exogenous force to the Kurdish political parties. Moreover, international powers such as the U.S.A., the Soviet Union, and the UK also played roles, yet each at a different rate and stage. Perhaps the relationship pattern was transformed according to the phase of the Kurdish struggle, and the political conditions the region was undergoing. While some of those states played ephemeral roles in one stage of political transformations, the others' have been eternal and based on their regional strengths and the amount of support or pressure they exerted.

The neighboring actors, those with Kurdish populations, are pivotal in shaping the political parties' inter-relationships, the dependency on the KRG's and political parties decision-making, especially in abiding to the regional powers and balancing the Kurdish politics. In this section, two longitudinal exogenous influences are considered in portraying outcomes of the KRI party system and the political parties. First, the Kurdish rebel parties' relations with regional and international players in the ME before the uprising of 1991, and second, their roles in reshaping the IKR's party system in the self-rule and federal state era (1991-2016).

6.1.1. The Kurdish Revolutionary Parties' Foreign Relations Before 1991

Over the course of history, it has been a doctrinal dimension in the struggle for influence in the heart of the ME between the Persian and the Ottoman Empires, which led to the occurrence of many wars and rivalry between the two empires until both collapsed in the twentieth century. Thereafter, relations between Turkey and Iran have been characterized by a long period of tolerance accompanied by caution. According to Aishun and Abdul-Karim (2017) relations took a new turn with the Turkish Republic (of Kemal Ataturk) in 1923 that coincided with the arrival of Reza Pahlavi to rule Iran. Iraq's role, and more precisely, the Kurdish region of Iraq occupied a central position between these two regional players. On the other hand, Iraq's relations with these two states were tied to political, economic, and security overpasses, however, the most important is the Kurdish file. The antagonism among these regional players and the struggle for expansion the leverage inspired involvements on security horizon, especially through one another's oppositions that later presented better examples of these type of regional interferences in one another's issues have impelling overall the regional instability.

Iraqi Kurdish-Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish-Iranian interactions entered a new phase after 2003 due to the security challenges and the excellent prospering economic opportunity following the Iraqi occupation by the U.S.A. In fact, the KRI not only shares its borders with Turkey and Iran, which may influence their ethno-Kurdish division and escalate unrest in these two states, but also the KRI geostrategic position has boosted the interventions of these two countries to the KRI's internal affairs for political and economic leverage. Iraq historically, and geographically is considered by these two states, in fact, an extension of their national security. The structural composition similarities Iraq shares with these two countries, therefore, have further intensified their impact on Iraqi politics (Mohammed, 2013).

Indeed, before the uprising of 1991, the Kurdish political parties mainly were influenced by players other than Turkey. For example, Libya, and Syria were two Arabic states interfering in Iraqi politics throughout the era of struggle against Iraqi regimes and supporting Kurdish and Sunni elements. Syria expanded its relations with the PUK

through the Iraqi Ba'athist party affiliated to Syrian Ba'athists, and for many years offered arms, political facilities like transportation, and official identification (passports) to the fugitive PUK members, while the KDP did not enjoy this kind of assistance from Syria but from Iran. Meanwhile, Libya supported all Kurdish parties despite their diversity (Amin, 1997). Perhaps, the Iranian influence is considered pivotal in this era, due to the role it played in the collapse of the Kurdish revolution following the Algeria Pact and nesting the dispersed Kurdish oppositions aftermath. Iraq has long been the nucleus of Iran's most mistrustful animosity because of ethnic, religious and political conflicts. The Iranian Shah (King) considered Baghdad a mean advancing the ambitions of the socialist Soviet Union in the Gulf region. Nevertheless, the Iraqi Kurds had also been used by Iranian King to divert away Baghdad's attention and resources from impeding the Iranian attempts of border demarcations and promote political stability enhancing Iran's position in Gulf politics (Wasiy, 2015c). On the other hand, a sizable proportion of Iraqi army, estimated 80%, was engaged in the maintenance of internal stability in Kurdish area following the failure of March Agreement between the Kurdish and Iraqi government in 1974. To reducing armament operations and normalizing the political conditions, Iraqi regime sought a swift negotiation with Iran.

The Iranian also started to feel the burden of Kurdish refugees on Iranian economic shoulder, especially around hundreds of thousands of Kurdish, following the failure of September Revolution, crowded to the so-called liberated area to expel hereafter to Iran and resided in refugee camps. Additionally, the armory and logistic expenditure provided to Kurdish rebellion cost Iran more than they were expecting. Thus they also sought a solution that strengthens their position especially in the Arab Gulf and the so-called the Shatt Al- Arab (Waisy, 2015c; Korn, 1994). On March 6th, 1975, therefore, the two countries signed the pact in Algeria and accordingly they both gained significant pluses. Meanwhile the Iraqi Kurdish KDP was the main loser, and to a lesser degree some other ethnoreligion groups, like Iranian Arabs of Ahwaz, who were supplied by Iraqi government as a revenge to Iran's help to the Kurds and Shia.

According to Waisy (2015c: 62), the reciprocal responsibilities publically announced concentrated on two points: "(1) Demarcation of land and river boundaries; (2) The exercise of stride border control and prevention of infiltration of subversives". Aftermath, within three months between (March to May), the KDP 's president announced the collapse; "It is over", and thus, the international conspiracy enhanced by personalistic decision-making tendency of the KDP leadership, derived the only Kurdish party to the failure until in 1978 once again it started to maneuver under Provisional Leadership-KDP (Korn, 1994: 7). Looking closely to the exogenous factors, it can be concluded that the fundamental juncture of Kurdish politics from a single party to a pluralism and breakdown of the KDP was a consequence of Iran and Iraqi policies in addition to the endogenous and structural causal factors highlighted in chapter four to which accordingly the internal parties fractionalization was developed (Amin, 1997; Al-Khirsan, 2001)

If the Iranian foreign policy before the Islamic revolution was to expand leverage over the Persian Gulf, and containment policy to suppress Kurdish quest, especially through mobilize the KDP against the Iraqi regime, and the Kurdish anti-system parties of Iran. Nonetheless, Iran's ambition following the revolution has further expanded to increase the Shia role in Gulf countries and the Middle East, therefore, it escalated involvement in the ME politics against Israel, and for this purpose targeted those states composed of Shia and Kurds in their structure.²³⁷ Thus, the ideological and political supremacy in the region became Iran's first goals (Barzigar, 2007). However, following the revolution, Iran's policies toward Kurdish parties of Iraq have not changed severely from those of the King. After the political involvement of the U.S.A in the Iraq-Iran's first Gulf War in the favor of Iraq, and stopping the international market's flow of arms to Iran, the latter and its ally, Syria, increased their subsidies to the Kurdish anti-Iraqi system parties as a revenge to frustrate the West's favorite partner (Amin, 1997).

The dynamics of Iranian influence on the Kurdish parties contributed to providing

²³⁷ After the Algeria Accord, Iran played a guardian role in preventing and encircling the KDP from holding attacks against Iraqi Army from Iran's territory, as it was stressed in the accord.

support to old and new emerging Kurdish rebel parties, especially after Iraq's attack on Iranian territory during the post-revolution political turmoil in Iran. Moreover, Iran in return resumed the use of the Kurdish and Shia rebels: the KDP, under the two Barzani brothers (Masoud, the current president of the KDP, and Idris, the older brother died in 1987), the recently-emerged Islamic Movement Party under Sheikh Osman Abdul Aziz and other small parties, were all engaged in the war against Baghdad (Milani, 2004).

However, given the supportive attitude of the PUK towards the Iranian Kurdish opposition and the long history of hostility of the PUK's leadership towards those of the KDP that favored by Iran, in addition to the communism tendencies of Komala, the PUK's strongest pillar, Iran's relationship with the PUK was fragile and not friendly.²³⁸

When the United States began involvement in the Iran-Iraq war in the mid-1980s, Iran expanded its influence by trying to reconcile Kurdish parties under the Front of Kurdistan and tighten the Shia and Kurdish positions against the Iraqi regime. Therefore, substantive supplies from the Iranian government were provided to almost all Kurdish and Shia parties. Similarly, Kurdish parties like many other Iraqi parties lost their autonomy and became parts of regional actors' agendas (McDowall, 2004; Stansfield, 2003; Amin, 1997). Hence Iran's role in the following decade until the uprising of 1991 rather changed to a sponsor gathering dispersed Kurdish revolutionary parties around a single goal targeting the Iraqi Government and policies through increasing their effectiveness by forming the Front of Kurdistan.

Furthermore, not only Syria and Iran were those that engaged in funding the Kurdish rebellion in the era of struggle, but also the Soviet Union, Israel, and the U.S.A. Apparently, like regional states, the non-ME actors, have a long history in influencing the KRI's politics. The role British officers and Soviet affiliates played in splitting the first political grouping, the Hiva, in 1944, even before the establishment of the KDP might be

²³⁸ Interview conducted with Farid Assasard, Sulaimani, October 6th, 2016.

considered the keystone of this type of influence (Kaya, 2012; McDowall, 1996; Durham, 2010). The Soviet Union's substantial support dates back to decades preceding the March Agreement of 1970 (Rear, 2008) and aimed at exerting pressure upon the then-Iraqi regime, with the goal of obtaining dispensations on Communist issues. The two latter countries' help followed the March Agreement when Barzani took the Shah's side, who was a decent ally to the West bloc in the cold war. Consequently, in 1973, the U.S.A. provided different types of subsidies clandestinely to the KDP through the arrangement between the CIA and the Shah of Iran to weaken the socialist Ba'athist regime in Baghdad (Neria, 2012; Hamduna, 2012). The support usually comprised arms and logistic supplies, in addition to humanitarian aid and cash. According to McDowall (2004), Israel provided the U.S.\$50,000 to Barzani to challenge the Ba'asist in 1965. However, the Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin revealed in 1980 that special-type training for the same purpose was also offered to the Kurdish fighters "*Israel had sent not only humanitarian aid but also military advisers and weapons*" (Neria, 2012: 26).

The Iraqi central government's influence, in this era, rather was focusing on a strategic aim to disrupt the Kurdish unity and their relations with foreign actors through tightening a temporal relationship with one Kurdish party to turn them against one another. Despite the influence this strategy had on Kurdish struggle, it inspired Kurdish parties to eventually line up in one national unity and fight against the political system in Baghdad, i.e., in addition to the evil game played by Iraqi governments, still Kurdish parties at this stage were anti-system parties have supreme vision highlighted alteration of the Iraqi political system, and Kurdish rights as Amin (1997:334) stressed "*Kurdistan Region will not see peace unless the mentality of Iraqi regime was changed.*"

Notwithstanding, due to the fact that those parties were rebellion entities rather than real political parties acting in democratic conditions, those influences have not affected the Kurdistan Region as a whole until after the emergence of the KRG and the two-party system, particularly during the civil wars and beyond. Thereafter, these types of regional and international interventions started to show visible consequences in Kurdish political

parties' inter-relationships. Whereby the legacy the parties shared with the regional players, their regional policies, economic interests, and security dimensions all re-designed the parties' affiliations and their leverage in the party system and political party structures in the IKR. Furthermore, the legacy Kurdish parties have with these international actors played crucial roles in internal party dynamics and the KRG's and federal Iraqi politics in both decision-making and the political parties' leadership nominations as it has been discussed in the following sections.

6.1.2. The Foreign Players' influence on the KRI's Party System After 1991

Ostensibly, the events that took place in the first years of self-rule experience are among the most significant factors leading to the political instability as well as the changes in the socio-economic structure of Kurdish society, and rise of a new generation of oligarchic class. Apparently the corruption and misuse of the increase of public treasure in addition to the prevailing political culture (Chapter Four) was also a result of the institutional shortcomings (Chapter Five). Furthermore, the traditional political parties' heritage investment in the field of relations with neighboring countries and international powers, especially in private business and political gains are to be taken into account. These conditions inspired this study to profoundly review these relations for been considered normative political references for forthcoming political conditions and fluidity of the KRI's party system in the self-rule phase.²³⁹ Therefore, this study takes on an inquiry of the interests these actors have in the IKR, and the extent to which their geopolitics and external policies affected the dynamics of the Kurdish party system and how eventually they influenced the political parties' external and internal dynamics and their subordination to these regional players.

The involvement in the second international Gulf War and mobilization of the army to Kuwait undermined the presence of Iraqi regimes' apparatus in the non-oil-producing

²³⁹ Most of the interviewees, such as Shorsh Haji, Mohammad Tofiq Rahim, Barham Salih, Mahmoud Mohammed, Rebwar Karim, Salar Mahmoud, Saman Fawzi, Soran Omar, Farid Assasard, stressed this stage's impact on the KR's political instability.

Kurdish areas. This paved the way for Kurdish rebels to moving towards those urban areas, especially, after the Front of Kurdistan with the Iranian support (1988) became the political body that amalgamated the opposition activities of the parties in rebellion, namely the KSP, the PUK, the KDP, the ICP-CC, the PASOK, the KPDP, the Toilers and the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM).²⁴⁰ The principal objectives the Front had were the downfall of Baathist regime, the establishment of a real democratic government in Iraq, and the development of a federal state for the Kurds in Iraq (Mustafa, 1988). Therefore, both Jalal Talabani (PUK) and Masoud Barzani (KDP) became the Front's co-presidents, and the other smaller parties accepted it as a platform for leading the Iraqi Kurdish and opposition movement (Gunter, 2008).

Kurdish parties' concentration in the short-term was liberating the KRI from apparatus of the Iraqi regime. Taking into the account, the second Gulf War had taken the Republic Guards, and Iraqi army attention to the south part of the country, and the northern part was almost handed to the internal police forces. This gave an inspiration that the battle would not be as brutal as previous ones. The Qasimarash meeting among the revolting parties was to establish a strategy and accordingly three scenarios were deliberated; a) either Iraq would invade Kuwait and become a supreme power in the ME; b) Allied Coalitions would attack Iraq and evict Saddam's regime from power, or c) they would promote a popular uprising. With this in mind, the Front arranged an agenda to take advantage of the anticipated circumstances (Stansfield, 2003). Nevertheless, the U.S. president's call to Iraqi to rise up against the Ba'ath's party, motivated the Front to adopt scenario (c), **to which accordingly massacre and further confrontation between those Kurds who had been conscripted in tens of thousands into the Iraqi army, and those who**

²⁴⁰ It is an ethnic Assyrian political party founded in Iraq on April 12, 1979, to fulfill the political objectives of Assyrians and in response to the oppressive ruthlessness of the Iraqi regime and its attempts to forcibly annex Assyrians from their ancient lands. The movement initiated armed struggle fronting the Iraqi regime in 1982 under the leadership of Yonadam Kanna and became a part of Kurdistan Front from its early days due to their co-existence with Kurds in some of the Kurdish territories, especially in Kirkuk and some of the areas of conflicts in Mosul. See the party's main website <http://www.zowaa.org>.

inclined towards the Iraqi regime and fought against Kurdish rebellions (the Jash), or, as Gunter (1992) put it, the Little Donkeys, should be avoided.²⁴¹

The plan was to unite Iraqi Kurdistan, reinforce the Kurdish *Peshmarga* with fugitive conscripts and *Jash* in a way the peshmarga forces would absorb those who had returned to the Kurdish revolutionary side. In such conditions, with the hope of American support and public backing, both the Kurds and Shia in the south and the north of the country upraised. The Kurdish rebels entered the cities and liberated Kurdish areas from Baathist elements, while the southern uprising was cruelly suppressed by Baathists with many Shia including leading figures, and Ayatollahs, eventually being publicly executed, (Yildiz, 2004).²⁴²

On the other hand, the Kurdish nationalist eruption on March 5th had quickly expanded to become a nationwide uprising. Within two weeks, all the Kurdish cities that are currently called the Kurdistan Region, in addition to Kirkuk, and many other current *areas of dispute* were controlled by *Peshmarga*. Three weeks later, nonetheless, the Iraqi army and the Republic Guard attacks resulted in a mass exodus. Once again millions of the Kurds fled to Iran and Turkey. The international powers and the UN entered to stop the suppression of the Iraqi regime, and eventually, the Safe Haven was built and included most of those areas currently identified within the boundary of the KRG (Yildiz, 2004; Stansfield, 2003).

²⁴¹ The US president, Jorge Bush, on several occasions in his Saturday speeches called for a nationwide uprising in Iraq to avoid massacres, for example in a speech on Voice of America on February 15th 1991 he stated that: "There is another way for the bloodshed to stop: And that is for the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people to take matters into their own hands and force Saddam Hussein, the dictator, to step aside and then comply with the United Nations' resolutions and rejoin the family of peace-loving nations". An article by Shoshana Bryen entitled "Rise Up and Die: Hilary Clinton in Aleppo February" on August 10th 2012 in American Thinker, see this link: http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/08/rise_up_and_die_hillary_clinton_on_aleppo_in_february.html#ixzz4eWYOtIar

²⁴² According to the Yildiz (2004), the Republican Guard soon after the southern uprisings savagely took back control of Basra, Najaf, and Karbala, resulting in the killing of an estimated 300,000 people in the process.

The refugee crises, particularly on the Turkish border, and the repression by the Iraqi government of its own people encouraged the UN Security Council on Third and Fifth of April to call for meetings in which Resolution 687 and 688 were adopted.²⁴³ A protected enclave was simultaneously established by the U.S. Army to construct shelter camps for the hopeless displaced people who were still living in severe wintry conditions. The 'Provide Comfort Operation' started to deliver the emergency relief subsidies (1991-1996) and construct residential camps. Gradually the Safe Haven had expanded all over the territory around 82,000 Kilometers Square of the three Kurdish provinces of Sulaimaniya, Erbil, and Duhok by September 1991 (Jaff, 2005). The U.S. and the UN prohibited Iraqi aircraft and forces from entering and flying over the North of the established 36-by-36 mile zone. Despite the fact that the so-called Safe Haven for the Kurds under the protection of the U.S. Army in the beginning, and later the UN, brought the advantage of self-rule and semi independence, later known as the KRI in both OFFP, Oil For Food Program, during (1996-2003), and democracy promotion program (2003-present), it also influenced the political parties in many ways. For example, it stimulated to a significant extent the personalism and clientelism tendencies within Kurdish parties

²⁴³ According to Resolution 688 (1991) of 5 April 1991

1. Condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish- populated areas, the consequences of which threaten international peace and security in the region;
2. Demands that Iraq, as a contribution to removing the threat to international peace and security in the region, immediately end this repression, and in the same context expresses the hope that an open dialogue will take place to ensure that the human and political rights of all Iraqi citizens are respected;
3. Insists that Iraq allow immediate access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq and make available all necessary facilities for their operations;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to pursue his humanitarian efforts in Iraq and to report forthwith, if appropriate on the basis of a further mission to the region, on the plight of the Iraqi civilian population, and in particular the Kurdish population, suffering from the repression in all its forms inflicted by the Iraqi authorities;
5. Also requests the Secretary-General to use all the resources at his disposal, including those of the relevant United Nations agencies, to address urgently the critical needs of the refugees and displaced Iraqi population;
6. Appeals to all Member States and to all humanitarian organizations to contribute to these humanitarian relief efforts;
7. Demands that Iraq co-operate with the Secretary-General to these ends;
8. Decides to remain seized of the matter. Adopted at the 2982nd meeting by ten votes to 3 (Cuba, Yemen, Zimbabwe), with two abstentions (China, India). See <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/596/24/IMG/NR059624.pdf?OpenElements>

in addition to the emergence of administrative corruption and new socioeconomic classes within Kurdish society (Natali, 2010). Furthermore, the external aids provided in the shape of social, humanitarian and development assistances and their distribution methodologies had also frustrated Kurdish society and generated various informal economy and income generations. Eventually these new forms of money making escalated corruptions in both public administrations and within political parties (see next section).

Thus, the current so-called Kurdistan region of Iraq's semi-autonomous state, the founding elections and government and the security was provided to the Kurds following the exodus, were consequences of international resolutions and leverages. Whether through the habitat and housing projects of the refugees who had settled in neighboring countries following the tensions with Iraqi central government, and were been invited to come back to their own homes. Or half a million internal displaced Kurds from those areas were taken back by Iraqi Republican Guards at the beginning of the operation, who also were housed in the camps constructed by the UN and international allies (Yildiz, 2004; McDowall, 2004; Stansfield, 2003). Or the humanitarian aids to the Safe Haven and the resolution (UNSCR 687), which brought about new forms of wealth, inequalities and patronage while still it was fueled by international leverage and Kurdish political parties support after the fall of Baathist in 2003. This had maintained a sort of interdependence of state and non-state actors in the KRI, economically international and regional investors in addition to the new political policies were developed between the KRI and other regional powers, which mainly limited between leading parties and states neighboring them (Natali, 2010).

Consequently, the new phase of negotiation launched between the Front of Kurdistan and the Ba'athist regime for the autonomy of Kurdistan, by the end of July it came to a deadlock due to the central government's demands for surrendering the Safe Haven, the closure of the Kurdish Front's radio station, and contribution to the new Iraqi cabinet. Thus, a clear line was drawn between central government and the Kurds to which

accordingly a new phase of fighting relaunched (McDowall, 2004). However, this was escorted by a new stage of Kurdish interparty relationships, differed from the hostility and armed conflicts they proceeded before the emergence of the Front, or the previous goal-oriented relationships that emphasized Kurdish liberation following the establishment of the Front. This phase demanded true competitions among civilized and legalized parties to fill the political vacuum with a legitimized entity resulted from a clean and fair electoral process.

Nonetheless, the two leaders of the Front still had differences regarding whether they should run for elections separately from Iraq or they have to continue with Baghdad. Talabani, who stressed the need for a third party to witness the negotiation with Iraq, hastily understood Saddam's negotiation style and supported his claim by the lessons he learned in the 1984 negotiations. Therefore, he sought to gather the Kurdish Front parties to discuss an alternative plan (the elections and self-rule), whilst Barzani supported further negotiation rather than continuing the war. The Kurds finally stirred the co-existence of the Iraqi army and *Peshmarga* simultaneously in the Safe Haven areas and took control of the buildings belong to the central government's special and intelligence forces, while the international powers were witnessing (McDowall, 2004).

Thereafter, Iraqi army pulled back the governmental and administrative units to behind the defensive line, cut off the Kurdish employees' salaries, and the budget from the northern administrative units. In late October, the regime further placed sanctions on Kurdistan Region in order to rouse the ordinary people against the Front parties, and blame them for the economic and political deterioration. The Front, in return, decided to run for elections and face the new phase with a democratic pace. The aftermath was an establishment of a two-party system under distance observations of international powers and pressures by Iraqi central government (McDowall, 2004; Yildiz, 2004; Stansfield, 2003; Resool, 2012). Possibly, quasi-statehood and landlocked conditions played fundamental roles in the dynamics of Kurdish politics and the KR's political parties'

affiliations to regional players (Mohammed, 2013).²⁴⁴ It is a likelihood some of the factors behind such patterns of party subordination are related to the Kurdish foreign policies arrangement to invest these powers to the advantage of the Kurds, (Zulal, 2012), while others are for private opportunism, especially following the development of economic interests and hydrocarbon exports to countries in the region, this type has escalated to a remarkable extent since 2005 (Stansfield *et al.*, 2007).

While in this phase, the Syrian, Libyan and Israeli interferences have declined, the Iranian, Turkish, to a lesser degree Islamic Brotherhood organizations, and the USA's efforts in addition to a new and late player, Saudi Arabia, have intensified in three categories, namely: economic, Islamic calls, and political leverage horizons (Manis, 2016; Khalil, 2016). Iraq's central government before 2003, on the other hand, still is mobilizing the Kurdish parties against one another similar to that of politburo fraction at the expense of the central council leadership of the KDP in the sixties of the previous century (Chapter Four). It played a key role in the power balance between the two previous warring parties and eventually the Kurdish two-party system was disintegrated when it supported the KDP in the restoration of the KRP by force and the establishment of a fragmented government after the capture of Erbil in 1996 (McDowall, 2004; Stansfield, 2003). It looks like the role of Iraq's government during this phase was graver through economic and financial pressures than the roles of the previous regimes of Iraq by providing economic supports to the KDP, to the extent that sometimes caused feelings of hatred and contempt to escalate among the Kurdish parties (Villellas, 2014). Nonetheless, following 2005, Iran has more likely played a vital role in the stands the Iraqi government takes especially under Noori Malki, the former PM of Iraq, in addition to the legal and constitutional abidance, the KRI had to follow. Most of the amendments of electoral law were enforced by the TAL, Iraqi constitution, and the alterations occurred in the Iraqi electoral law we have discussed in chapter five. In fact, the friendly

²⁴⁴ This study followed Denise Natali (2010: xxi) in defining quasi-states "are political entities that have internal but not external sovereignty and seek some form of autonomy or independence."

clandestine relationship Baghdad developed with the KDP, and the conflicts derived from the inequity of revenue distribution between the two ruling parties paved the way to Iraqi army to expand leverage following the attacks made with heavy weaponry given to the KDP by Baghdad (McDowall, 2004). On August 31st, 1996 Baath's tanks and forces conquered the KRP and Erbil, and within days Sulaimaniya as well. Therefore, the PUK had to retreat, and settle on frontiers with Iran, and thus another round of displacement started. An estimated 80,000 people were displaced from Erbil, and many fled from Sulaimaniya. The presence of Baath's regime in the region led to the withdrawal of all the international organizations as well, and more than 1500 of Iraqi opposition followers that based in Erbil were captured by Iraqi Special Forces. Consequently, about 10,000 Kurdish workers who mostly were educated capable professional youth recommended by dominant parties and hired by the U.S.A. international funding programs since 1992, and received training for international organization purposes, had evacuated to the United States. This caused further destruction in the Kurdish infrastructure development. Brain drain could easily be seen not only within political parties but also in the government and society as a whole. Aftermath, the U.S. protection strategy showed weak credibility. When the operation had achieved success, Baghdad handed Erbil back to the KDP and lifted the blockade on the KDP's area, and rewarded Barzani with a new source of revenue coming from oil trafficking from Iraq to Turkey via the Ibrahim Khalil crossing point (McDowall, 2004; Sinantorunu, 2013).

This status quo proceeded, however, until November, in which almost all the areas, except for the capital Erbil, were restored back by the PUK with Iran's support. Thus the two parties became means for expanding leverages of Iranian and Iraqi central governments. The tensions continued until December 1997 when the two party presidents corresponded with the mediations of Turkey the UK and the U.S.A to find a channel for a ceasefire and establish a secure region and to cultivate the Kurdish share of Oil-for-Food's Program of UN-SCR 688. Meanwhile, after the division occurred in the executive and parliamentary powers, both parties separately, under their own leadership, established new cabinets. However, the Court of Cassation remained unified until 1999

(Khalil, 2016).

The two fragmented fourth cabinets were the last two divided cabinets that the Kurdistan Region experienced. Ultimately, Washington intervened; Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, mediated in the peace process, and consequently, despite the KDP's accusation that the PUK was supporting the PKK, and despite the PUK's demand for an equal share of Ibrahim Khalil's crossing point revenue, the 'Washington Agreement' (Appendix IX) on September 17th, 1998 was signed between the two warring parties.²⁴⁵ The most vital condition in the agreement was real co-operation to achieve political normalization and preparation for clean, reliable elections within six months that had been postponed due to the civil wars since 1995 (Resool, 2012; McDowall, 2004; Stansfield, 2003). But, it also justified personalism tendencies of leadership of these two parties and provided them legitimacy of seizing power in parties' president's hands through confirming "The President of the KDP and the Secretary General of the PUK will meet at least every two months inside or outside Iraqi Kurdistan at mutually acceptable sites [...]".²⁴⁶

McDowall (2004) highlights six interrelating exogenous factors motivated political anxieties in the first decade of self-rule; 1) The economic dependence on the UN supports, and the embargo of the Iraqi regime on Safe Haven; 2) the escalation of the conflicts between the two ruling parties supported by Iraq and Iran, and followed by partitions of the KRG until 2003 when the Baathist regime was demolished in Iraq; 3) the use of the KRI territory by Americans aiming at the dual containment of Iraq and Iran; 4) the use of the KRI's territory by the PKK, on the other hand, was to advance nationalistic war on Turkey; 5) the escalation of Iraqi attempts to retain the KRI territories, while the interference from neighboring countries and the U.S. was partial to block those attempts; 6) Finally, the anxieties the regional countries had, for example, Turkey aimed to root out

²⁴⁵ This agreement was ratified in a unified session of the KRP on October 16th, 2002, Resolution 16.

²⁴⁶ Appendix IX.

the PKK and tried to prevent the creation of an autonomous Kurdish entity neighboring its south east border, on the other hand, Iran and Syria were frustrated by the dual containment strategy of the U.S. Therefore, it was not easy amongst such critical conditions to shrink the power struggles between the PUK and the KDP.

The Kurdish leaders tried to convince these neighboring states that the KRG would not become a threat to their securities and national integrities. Being a prominent member of the NATO, a potential member of the EU, Talabani and later Barzani have both persuaded themselves that Turkey is the key to the future of Iraqi Kurdish. Thus, unlike Iran and Iraq, where the minority groups, including Kurdish, have been subjugated and suppressed, they premised that democratic development always would be an ongoing process in Turkey, and hoped for political openness toward their own Kurdish. In addition to Iran's fragile relationship with the western bloc, it would not be a good choice for Iraqi Kurds to try to build guardianship relations with Iran or, as McDowall (2004) put it, "*annexing Iraqi Kurdistan [to it].*"

Therefore, following the uprising, in 1992 Talabani raised the question of Mosul Vilayet with the then-PM of Turkey Sleman Demirel whether they still had a claim to it, however the PM replied with a "*laugh*" (McDowall, 2005: 384). Yet the claims of Turkey following 2014 might be a good indication that Turkey still has ambitions in Mosul (Danforth, 2016).²⁴⁷ By emphasizing the attempts made by the Kurds after the fall of the Baathists, it can be inferred that the KRG's policy has tried to benefit from political limbo through developing foreign policy and strengthening international recognition (Natali, 2015). However, the geopolitical factor and the political shares the PUK has in new Iraq have magnetized this party towards Iran than to Turkey, and thus the two dominant parties have become involved with these two old rivals' policies and instead of using their

²⁴⁷ Article published by Nick Danforth, on October 23th, 2016. Retrieved from <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/23/turkeys-religious-nationalists-want-ottoman-borders-iraq-erdogan/>¹² Interview with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, Slemani, September 20th, 2016.

relationships with them in favor of the Kurds, they to a notable level lost their independence and became attached to a greater problem based on sectarianism and historical animosities.²⁴⁸

On the other hand, following the uprising, Turkey, Iran, and Syria focused on the unity of Iraqi territory and the non-establishment of any sort of political entity for the Kurds that could cause instability within their own countries and the region, especially, to prevent the so-called Kurdish Quest within their countries from constituting any kind of encouragement of the Iraqi Kurds. To achieve these goals, the three countries agreed to reject political assistance to the political establishment that was emerging in the north of Iraq (O'Connor, 2015). Turkey and Iran, in particular, have become profoundly engaged in that emerging entity in Iraqi Kurdistan in three ways:

First, escalating the paroxysms and internal problems between the rebel parties of different parts of Kurdistan to the extent of armed clashes among the Kurdish of Iraq and the Kurdish of their countries, and within Iraqi Kurdish parties themselves. The fragile international borders of Iraq-Turkey, and Iraq-Iran encouraged this type of engagement, especially with the PKK and the PJAK in addition to other Kurdish opposition groups such as the KDP-Iran and Komala-Iran (Tanchum, 2014; Milani, 2004; Eisenstadt *et al.*, 2011; Charountaki, 2012; Shial, 2012; Wehrey *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, after the establishment of the Safe Haven, Iraqi Kurdistan gradually became a protected shelter for the Kurds of other parts too. At least 14,000 Kurdish refugees from Turkey settled in the KRI; meanwhile, it also became open land for the intelligence forces of countries of the region and military activities. For example, Turkey's first incursion into the KRI was in 1991 when they attacked the PKK with the help of the KDP, and later the PUK also became involved; however, it retreated soon after (McDowall, 2004). Thus, the KDP became the most active foe of the PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan, and this antagonism was reflected in the PUK–KDP settlement after the civil wars too, when the KDP blamed the

²⁴⁸ Interview with Judge Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016

PUK for helping the PKK against them.

In fact, the KRG dependence on Turkey's border as the only outlet for delivering the relief subsidies and daily based necessities to the Kurdish market, in addition, to reap the benefits of lucrative customs, left the KRG with no choice other than accept the security agreement with Turkish government. Still the national motivations promoted their clandestine friendly relationship with the PKK, especially those with the PUK. Thus, a triangle relationship emerged among (Turkey, the KRG, and the PKK), accordingly Turkey started to engage in military incursions and bombardment to devastate the KRI villages suspected of harboring the PKK. It also established military bases under peacemaking forces to provide regional security and control of international terrorism that had bilateral missions targeting the PKK on one hand and diminishing the conflicts between the two KRI warring parties following 1994 (Natali, 2010).²⁴⁹ In fact, the KDP encountered the PKK for the third time at the beginning of the 2000s. Henceforth, it looks like one of the pillars of friendship between the KDP and Turkey is the shared economic interests and a common enemy, the PKK. This is because of the geopolitical position the KDP region has, and later developed into a multi-facet relationship. Consequently, throughout these years, the KDP allowed Turkey's troops on to Iraqi Kurdistan's territory, establishing at least eleven military bases and settling more than 3,250 militaries in the KRI territory without the permission of the Iraqi and Kurdistan Region's formal and legislature authorization.²⁵⁰

In fact, the KRP's declaration supports the Iraqi allegation inquiring the international community to stop Turkey from violating the sovereignty of Iraqi territory. However, no true action has been taken, neither by Iraqi authorities nor from the KRG officials. These

²⁴⁹ Phone interview with Seevan Saeed, Valencia, January 5th, 2018.

²⁵⁰ The Iraqi National Assembly on two different occasions rejected Turkish Non-compliance with Iraqi sovereignty and entry onto Iraqi territory without the approval of the Iraqi National Assembly I on 15/7/2008 and the other occasion on 4/10/2016, yet Turkey still breach international obligations. See <http://www.knwe.org/DirejeHewal.aspx?Cor=1&Besh=Hewal&Jimare=37725> and <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/24/world/middleeast/turkeys-push-to-join-battle-for-mosul-inflames-tension-with-iraq.html>

frustrations have also affected the internal Kurdish parties' relationships and also the KRP-Turkey relations. According to the KRP's spokesman Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq, Turkey tried to impose direct threat on the KRP and expected the KRP to subordinate to Turkey's favorite political maintenance, in addition to blaming the Change party for taking the responsibility of the recent declarations of the KRP,

“When I became the KRP spokesman, we, in the KRP, declared the Cantons’ right in North of Syria, and we also welcomed the Syrian Kurd Leader ‘Salih Muslim’, but the retaliation was Turkey's stand against the Gorran, while we have not done any misconduct against Turkey's interests, rather, this is the core of the national interests of the Kurds and do not have anything to do with escalating the conflicts with neighboring countries. However, we try hard to maintain healthy relations with them, and simultaneously protect our rights.”²⁵¹

Later in another interview he further explained that *“When the Turkish Consultant to Erbil came to deliver their country's discontent to our declaration of the Kurdish Right of North of Syria, I told them this is an internal issue, we expect you to respect our sympathy to the Kurds of Syria, as much as we respect your sympathy to Turkmen here in Iraq.”²⁵²*

Based on this declaration, it looks like Turkey's interest in Turkmen and their continuing supports apparent evidence to the KRP and other officials of Kurdistan region. In fact, these intrusions need further studies in the future, but now are beyond this study's aim. On the other hand, in the first decade of self-rule, the two Iranian Kurdish parties were forced by Iraqi Kurdish parties, especially the PUK, to renounce attacks against Iran, to

²⁵¹ Interview conducted with him exclusively for the purpose of this study in Sulaimaniya, October 8th, 2016.

²⁵² Shamsadin, Sarkawt (2017, June 26th). Yusuf Mohammed's Story: From Bodyguard to Parliamentary Spokesman. NRT Channel, retrieved from <http://www.nrttv.com/Details.aspx?Jimare=74678>

prevent potential reprisals by Iran against the KRI. However, after the establishment of the PJAK, an offshoot of the PKK in 2005, the vacuum was occupied, and the latter initiated attacks on the Iranian military. The PJAK, later, was convinced to slow down its activities and reflect their mother party's, the PKK, good relations with the PUK. Taking in to account the long, strong ties between the PUK and Iran from one hand, and the progress of these two Kurdish parties' relations, the PUK and PKK, since the 2000s, in addition to the PJAK's military base located in the PUK's geographical domain, on the other hand, motivated the PJAK to abide with the PKK's strategy, at least until 2016. However, this was not exactly the case between other Iranian Kurdish parties with the PUK. Tensions between the latter have risen on many occasions, with kidnappings and assassinations of their members in the PUK area; this is more likely to escalate. Mainly because of the considerable number of the Iranian safe houses are situated in the PUK area this may intensify the distrustfulness between these two Kurdish groups. (Pironti, 2014).²⁵³

Second, Turkey and Iran's foreign policies are also aimed at increasing the existing gap between the two main parties and with other Kurdish parties in the KRI, through attracting and establishing unbalanced friendly relations with the party that is dominant in their neighboring province. Eventually, the sense of being protected increased the dominance of each party in their area but impeded them from expanding and becoming national parties. It also raised the proxy subordination among the small political parties and lined them in the PUK and KDP blocs, i.e., in Turkey and Iran's blocs.¹⁸²⁵⁴ Similar to the same vein, Mustafa (2016) attributed this paralyzed conditions to Turkey and Iran's intervention, and assign the dominance of these two families in the KRI to these two neighboring countries intrusion,

²⁵³ According to an article by David Pollock, there are at least 700 Iranian safe houses in Sulaimaniya, see the link

<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/fikraforum/view/to-kurdistan-and-back-irans-forgotten-front>

Perhaps, the role Iran plays in the PUK area, aborted the opportunity for the Iranian Kurdish party to see it a safe place to camp; however, they settled in Koya, a district located between the PUK and KDP, and administratively belongs to Erbil.

²⁵⁴ Interview conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, Sulaimani, September 20th, 2016

“Iran ensures to have this family governing this Zone [referring to Jalal Talabani’s family]. Since when the Gorran was established by the separatist leaders, Iran asked them not to generate problems. Currently, the PUK leaders who ask for systematizing PUK under a central decision- making, Iran again asked them to keep the problems within the PUK and integrate into this family’s final decisions. Iranian Higher Supreme Reference Ayatollah Khamenei told Maliki ‘Mam Jalal [the PUK president] is a treasure for Iraqis.’ It is obvious, they reached a conclusion that this family should be in power in this part of Kurdistan, and they do it for sure for their own interests, not for Kurdish or democratic developments, if you turn to the KDP’s case, you see Turkey is playing the same role, if not greater.”²⁵⁵

In fact, Iranian influence on Islamic parties like the IGK and the IMK is not peripheral. The impact of Iran has on the policy of allocating portfolios to the IMK in the fragmented governments and in allocating two million Iraqi then-dinars as financial subsidies from the PUK’s revenue of taxes and customs gathered before the unified government might be considered explicit examples. It also played roles in the conflict resolution between factions within the same party, or the splits, which occurred inside this party such as that of 2001, that later became the IGK. Iranian officials settled the conflicts between the two wings of the IMK to an extent they forced the PUK to allocate to each part the financial aids they deserve separately.²⁵⁶

The late extraordinary relations between the KDP and the IUK are linked to the policies of Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Mahmoud (2016) argues that whether it is friendly coordination, economic openness, or whatever name they call it, the KDP and the IUK still enjoy excellent relations with Turkey. On the other hand, the development of the

²⁵⁵ Interview with Judge Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016

²⁵⁶ Interviews made with Mr. Soran Omar and Mr. Mohamad Hakim in Sulaimaniyah, September 29th, and October 6th, 2016

IUK's relations with the AKP, the incumbent party in Turkey, is based on Islamic and Muslim Brotherhood principles; therefore the IUK cannot liberate themselves from the obligation Turkey is demanding this party to abide by the KDP's policies in the KRI.²⁵⁷

Third, both countries produced another type of intervention. Under the economic agreements they try to expand their leverage over the breakaway Iraqi Kurdistan and exploited this territory for their historical conflicts (Aishun, 2017; Kane, 2011; Stansfield, 2003). Iran opened consultancies in both Erbil and Sulaimaniya, in order to be able to provide the Iraqi Shia assistance. While Turkey, in addition to the strong affiliations the Turkmen of Erbil and Kirkuk have, mobilized them to weaken the Kurdish autonomy (Riemer, 2005; Ogulzu, 2001). Turkey began angling for support in the disputed areas, including the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, to achieve its goals mobilized the Sunni minority too (Kane, 2011). This tendency escalated at a great rate after the fall of the Ba'athists, especially after the economy became the most converging factor between the KDP and the AKP (Mills, 2016; Charountaki, 2012).

Three decades ago Turkish policy had restricted the UN and the U.S.A. from legitimatizing the Safe Haven and obtain international recognition. Turkey, rather, showed its regional ambitious in Kirkuk and the Mosul, the two vibrant areas of disputes where Kurdish and Turkmen together comprised the absolute majority of their population decades ago, and the Iraqi regimes raised the Sunni identity to weaken the Kurdish claims of the two provinces and encounter the Shia influence in Iraq (Natali, 2015; Gordon and Arango, 2016; Dundar, 2012). Since then, it started carrying out different sorts of approaches and an extensive propaganda campaign to exploit the evolution of the situation towards restoring Mosul and Kirkuk, as it still considers them parts of its territory. Although the 1926 Iraq - Turkey - Britain Treaty has finally corrected the issue and recognized the current borders of Iraq, Mosul, and Kirkuk as part of Iraqi territory (Aishun and Abdul-Karim, 2017).

²⁵⁷ Interview conducted with Prof. Rebwar Karim Mahmoud September 20th, 2016

Following the adoption of federalism in Iraq, Erdogan, the current Turkish president, visited Baghdad in 2007 and exposed the extent of the denouncement the Turkish foreign policy has against Kurds when in his press conference called Barzani a tribal leader “*I met the Iraqi President and Prime Minister. I won't meet with any tribe leader... I won't meet with Barzani or anyone else*” (Charountaki, 2012: 191). Notwithstanding, only after three years, the Kurdish, namely the KDP, became a strategic ally to the AKP and Turkey, and by 2012 the relationship reached its peak.

In fact, within three years (2008 to 2011), Turkish foreign policy experienced three stages of transformation to ward the KRI. The latest was more profound and strategic, developed under Davutoglu's, Turkey's then-PM, under his famous ‘*Strategic Depth*’ policies. It concentrated on the soft powers Turkey can invest to expand leverage. Thus, using the economy as a soft power could easily lead Turkey, especially after the withdrawal of the U.S.A. in 2011, it drawn-out its involvement to Iraq to prevent Iranian further power stretching. The PUK-Iran relationship, on the other hand, has not reached this level yet. Farid Assasard, a leader of the PUK, compares their relations to that of the KDP with Turkey

“The one they have established is a strategic relationship in a way they have a mutual destiny. If something, for example, happens in Turkey, this would affect the KDP too. So, the relation reached a reciprocated fate and is based on sharing the oil and economic interests, while our relation with Iran is totally different.”²⁵⁸

Israel, additionally, kept providing the KDP with special combat and anti-terror training and logistic equipment for the intelligence forces in Erbil, which directed by Masroor Barzani, the oldest son of the KRI's president (Neriah, 2012; Wehrey *et al.*, 2010). It also established economic ties, especially in the hydrocarbon and energy sectors, and the

²⁵⁸ Interview with Farid Assasard, Sulaimaniyah, October 6th, 2016

payments were made directly to the KRG's account in Turkey, the HalkBank (Liga, 2016). This eventually enhanced the economic superiority of the KDP and made it the first player in determining the KRI's economic destiny, followed by the PUK. They together designed the hydrocarbon industry, and eventually have become almost the only resource of revenue following the economic independence policies of Nechirvan Barzani, the KRI prime minister, in 2014 (Manis, 2016; Noori, 2016).

The American involvement is rather an observatory comparison to that of Turkey and Iran, yet, it is also playing a role in remaining these two incumbents in power and escalation of the personalism tendencies especially following the Washington Agreement we discussed above. In fact, the U.S. pressures for unification had reached a significant level earlier in 2001, particularly after the September attacks on Washington DC, and the Turkish Grand National Assembly's veto against using Turkey as a base for attacking Iraq. The relationship between the two countries remained impaired for the following three years, therefore, the U.S.'s esteem for the Kurds rose accordingly (Stansfield, 2010). Thus, Kurdish parties became an indispensable element of the U.S.'s policy and the future Iraqi political alteration, especially after the Iraqi regime obstructed the Mission of the United Nations Special Commission that was sent to determine the status of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. Therefore, the Kurdish parties' reconciliation was vital for the U.S. to ease the latter's move towards overthrowing the Iraqi regime (Sinantorunu, 2013; Mohammed, 2015; Resool, 2013).

American policies in the KRI more likely have favored the KDP than other parties including the PUK. This might be because of the unfriendly relations between Iran and the U.S.A., and the leverage Iran has in Iraq, in addition to the roles Iran plays in the political dynamics inter- and intra-Iraqi entities, especially between Shias and Kurds, and more particularly between the PUK and the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC or ISCI)²⁵⁹ and the Da'wa party. However, the Jalal Talabani's diplomatic personal skills

²⁵⁹ It is a political platform established by Iraqi refugees in Iran in 1982.

maintained the equilibrium, and until his sickness in 2012 this balance was prevailed (Stansfield *et al.*, 2007).

While the Kurdish parties sought bilateral relations with the U.S.A, to overcome the psychological dread of abandonment they experienced before, the U.S. focused on a balanced relationship especially with the Sunni and Shia entities. The American Administration's efforts have inclined to Sunni, and supported the territorial integrity of Iraq and opposed any attempt for separation, especially following the invasion of Iraq 2003. This sentiment, aftermath, has been interpreted by the Kurds that America favors the Sunni rather than them. For example, American efforts at the founding elections focused on a project supporting the establishment of a balanced government preferred by the Sunni division, when they desired an Iraqi political design arranged upon a plan the Sunni, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, the dominant international friendly players, would abide by. Accordingly, the Prime Minister's position would be allocated to the Shia, the Parliament Speaker to the Kurds, and the Iraqi President's position to the Sunni, yet the Iranian plan, that was lined up with the PUK-KDP Strategic Agreement, gathered the Shia and Kurds together in one influential bloc to support the current arrangement (Bongers, 2012; Mardini, 2012; Rafaat, 2007).

Kurdish economic independence further separated these two parties from each other and drew the Kurds towards Ankara, especially as Ankara had 70% of the 12 billion American Dollar investments in the KRI in 2012 (see the following section). After the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Iraq, the gap between the U.S.A. and the KRG that the Barzanis and Talabanis embodied widened. The KDP's steps toward authoritarianism advanced, especially following the commencement of wars against ISIS in 2013 when Barzani's presidency was extended for another term of two years beyond the law. Furthermore, the political attitudes of the KDP towards oppositions, the inclination to separation and the escalation of problems with Iraqi governments, and above all the

leaning toward Turkish foreign policies targeting the Syrian Kurds and the SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces as vital friends of the U.S. armies on the ground in the international war against the ISIS) have distorted the relations between the U.S.A. and the KDP (Werz and Hoffman, 2014).

Finally, Islamic Brotherhood and Islamic sentiments also played roles in destabilizing inter Kurdish parties' relations and alteration of political mosaic in the KRI. The economic frustrations, poverty, and political instability motivated Islamic groups to gain a better influence in the region. Mainly, through social welfare assistance these groups have provided from different international sources and eventually created new rivalries between political parties and regional states, on the one hand, among Kurdish parties themselves, on the other hand. The Islamic call in Kurdistan has a long history of receiving support from the Gulf States, especially Qatar. At least it began in the first half of the 1990s when, under the guise of humanitarian and educational provisions, the Brotherhood organizations started its underground Islamic missionary activities until announced itself a party in 1994. During the years 1996–99, World Assembly of Muslim Youth, an Islamic Brotherhood based organization, spent about \$700,000 on sixty-seven projects involving Islamic missions in Dohuk and Erbil governorates.

The Iranian government also sponsored remote clinics along the border region and provided local Iraqi Kurdish doctors monthly wages, mainly offered to those who recommended by Islamic parties and organizations. Dominant parties, in return, tried to invest these subsidies in their own interest and therefore provided Islamic parties ministerial shares despite their failure in passing the electoral threshold of the founding elections of 1992. The KRG-Erbil (KDP) enticed the IUK, and the IMK and allocated two ministries namely ministry of Justice and Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs respectively in the fourth fragmented cabinets, while the PUK-Sulaimaniya government provided the same two portfolios to Islamic Unity, and the IMK in the third cabinet, and only one ministerial position to the IMK in the forth fragmented cabinet. Thus, their Islamic missions spending become regulated and also invested in favor of these two

dominant parties, yet it also provoked the political tensions between them. Only between 2000-2003 these groups had allocated 83.6 American Million dollars for constructing Islamic schools and mosques in the KDP Zone, and accordingly, their grassroots has extremely expanded. This probably frustrated the KDP, therefore they attacked their main city-office and set it fire (Natali, 2010; Hama-Karim et al., 2015).²⁶⁰

Moreover, the Saudi expansion in the KRI began directly after Barzani's visit to Saudi Arabia as the KRI's president in 2007. The aim was to develop bilateral ties between the two parties outside the Iraqi government's purviews (Soguk, 2015). Direct communication with a Kurdish leader to establishing bilateral political and diplomatic relations with the Gulf States was established accordingly. Thereafter, many Gulf States consultations were opened in Erbil, and economic, cultural and political activities began to develop (Soguk, 2015).

Leaked evidence supports the involvement of Saudi Arabia in Iraq's issues using Barzani and the IMK. Barzani's formal visit was based on an invitation from Saudi Arabia to discuss their stand against Maliki, the former PM of Iraq (Appendix X) and giving personal appreciation for Barzani's distance to Maliki. While Maliki and his supporters on many occasions had blamed Saudi Arabia for interfering in Iraqi issues, Gulf Countries, including Saudi Arabia, in return derided Maliki's government an "*Iranian Puppet*" (Gray, 2012: 29). Another document supports the financial assistance offered to the small Wahhabi-based Kurdish party, the IMK, for their goodwill in helping Saudi Arabia's political stance in Iraq, and the KRI (Appendix XI).

6.2. Feign Subsidies and Patronage Business Influences

Apparently, big foreign businesses not only control the entire KRI economy but also influence the autonomy and internal organization of political parties in addition to sustainability of political design operating since 1992 despite electoral alterations.

²⁶⁰ Information about World Assembly of Muslim Youth can be founded on their official website, <http://www.ikhwan.whoswho/en/archives/286>

Likewise, Ukrainian case, the KRI's political parties have been influenced by these emerging foreign business relations with the regional and international investors (Matuszak, 2012). Also, being a non-sovereign state and the reliance on rentier economy that depends mostly on revenue flows from oil and gas extraction, and on foreign investment in various fields of business have further weakened political parties and accordingly the party system.

Business relations between the regional state companies and localized Kurdish political parties neighboring them from early months following the uprising of 1991 have expanded.²⁶¹ According to Natali (2010) informal business relations between Turkish, Iranian merchants, and those under central government's leverage with Kurdish merchants was very salient. The Kurdish merchants mostly were closely related to the political parties controlled the crossing points, and taking ultimate advantages from the political limbo of the KRI, since smuggling goods from Fishkhapur (Ibrahim-Khalil) crossing point between the Safe Haven and Turkey border was the primary source of income generating, and sometimes it was used as the only route for INGO workers, and the KRG officials when the Turkey border was closed.

The allegation of security and territorial integrity of Iraq, the boost to the economy and termination of international sanctions on Iraq, the weak structure of the KRG institutions, and above all, the tribal nature of Kurdish society reflected in these business relations and enhanced the escalation of corruption and clientelism. In fact, the path dependence of emergence the so-called neo-tribalism depended on economic and political interests in addition to tribal relations between these socioeconomic elements, and motivated by the political and economic conditions prevailed in the KRI (Natali, 2010).

Internally, poor economic conditions after the uprising, the absence of the order of law,

²⁶¹ Interview conducted with Farid Assasard, Sulaimani, October 6th, 2016.

and political vacuum caused by the withdraw of the administrative units by the Iraqi regime generated a new socioeconomic class and later promoted the neo-tribalism, which mainly were based on clientelism that sponsored by family businesses sourced from looting, or corruption during international client-patron type of relations on two levels: first, between those international organizations and Kurdish parties, and second, between the latter and the public. The humanitarian aid to the Safe Haven and later the UNSCR 687 resolution also brought about new forms of wealth, inequalities and patronage. Natali (2010: 58) highlights the role the two political parties played in generating this type of social class: "*[the] profits were largely confined to the two main political parties, the OFFP [Oil for Food Program] helped create a more expansive class of wealthy merchants that included tribal leaders and political officials. This class of nouveaux riches became prominent apart from the traditional families, although they were still influenced by the Kurdish parties*". Thus, through emerging new business groups that thrived and established political-economic networks within political parties, the latter became an influential factor for socioeconomic alterations.

By taking advantage of the disorder followed the uprising, these groups focused mainly on smuggling daily life products, such as tires, livestock, crops, and equipment, between the two neighboring countries, the KRI and Iraq. Also looting hundreds of items of heavy equipment from government departments and sell them at low prices to Iran. Politicians of small and dominant parties on equal footings had involved in such types of fast moneymaking, each according to their power and access to available opportunities (Ibid).

According to Natali (2010), the external aid program and international guardianship conditions dispirited legal business while motivated illegal trade activities. Financial benefits emerged from extracting and redistributing resources. Market monopolization and parallel economies in currencies, goods, and services passing through the region under the humanitarian program, all to some extent became politicized between the two ruling parties. Meanwhile, the relief aid contractors were dealing with these political fragmentations and have had a major impact on the Kurdish political economy by

generating price gaps between zones and new sources of profits for entrepreneurs connected to these two dominant parties.

Moreover, following the international sanction on Iraq, the primary source of business exchanges has moved from Mosul to Zakho on the Turkish border, profiting Duhok province. This became a significant problem between the two ruling parties and a key factor for civil wars. Transport routes from Mersin in southeast Turkey have become a considerable shipment route to the Kurdistan Region, where a lucrative business has emerged for oil smuggling. During 1991-1993, the Turkish border's safeguard interpretation of the border rules showed flexibility and easiness and permitted truck drivers to keep tanks holds more than 4,000 liters to store smuggled fuel. Truck drivers received up to \$5,000 on delivery from refineries in Mosul or Kirkuk to southeast Turkey (Natali, 2010).

Encouraging externalities of aid have motivated Kurdish officials to seek alternatives for generating revenue and maintaining the economy. Instead of arranging the revenue-sharing policy between areas under political parties' control, they forced taxes, up to 15 percent of the total value of goods shipped within and through the Safe Haven boundary. The shippers had to pay a double charge, one to pass Iraqi Kurdistan and another to transport to the provinces under political parties control within the region. Personal benefits from these economic conditions overcame some Kurdish elites. The government and political parties' politicians, as well as contractors associated with international NGOs, have helped these individuals by securing lucrative contracts in their areas and gaining business benefits (Natali, 2010).

International donors and INGOs have played role in mounting personalism tendencies within political parties and instability between the two conflicting KRG parties through the inclinations to particular parties and their associated regions, and intensifying invidiousness at local levels. Within the first two years, the Kurdistan Region became mired in a destructive warfare between the KDP and PUK, splitting the KRG into two

administrations in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, *“instead of trying to bridge existing cleavages between the Kurdish parties, donor agencies, and foreign governments encouraged fragmentation. They treated Ma'soud Barzani and Jelal Talabani as individual party leaders and not part of a regional government”* (Natali, 2010: 46).

Accordingly, loyalties to the traditional elite and their political parties increased while the aid program was encouraging conflicts and alteration of the socioeconomic bases of Kurdish society. For example, it created new economic class creating wage differentials. Local people working for the UN made about 24 thousand dollars yearly, while the average teacher made less than 250 dollars (Natali, 2010). Socioeconomic divisions started to emerge between the budding and wealthy private entrepreneurs, who mostly were those capable individuals recommended by political parties to these INGO's and performing reciprocal duties between these two entities, to an extent, led to regional polarizations and sub-nationalism based on party alliances and competition for access to donor funds.

Thus, geography and stockbrokers were vital factors in this type of business. These forms of socioeconomic structures further continued after the fall of the Ba'athists in 2003. However, during the government fragmentation (1994-2002), the new political and economic policies had also developed the relations between the KRI and other regional powers. They mainly supported illicit trades between leading parties and their neighboring states. For example, the amount the KDP was making through Ibrahim Khalil's border-crossing point with Turkey was approximately \$750 million annually and mostly from the crude oil tankers smuggled to Turkey from Iraq (Natali, 2010; Stansfield, 2003).²⁶²

The International protection during 1991-2003, and the U.S.A. Policy in Iraq enhancing minorities including the Kurds, and considering the KRI, securest territory in Iraq,

²⁶² McDowall (2007: 389) estimated it a US\$ 250,000 a day

additionally, the cash flow followed the cancelation of the international sanction and downfall of Baathist regime in 2003 motivated foreign investors to jump to these newly discovered market. Only between (2001-09) the KRG helped the creation of 1,376 private industrial projects, and became a marketplace absorbing various types of goods to rebuild its infrastructure. The Sulaymaniyah governorate (PUK zone) received over US\$1 billion worth of contracts, while Erbil (KDP) provided an additional U.S.\$35 million to contractors. From (2006-09) the KRG allocated more than US\$4 billion worth of private development projects, mainly in construction, tourism, and petroleum industries where principally were managed by political parties owning companies. In, 2003 about 20 percent of the construction projects were controlled by international companies, mostly Iranian in the PUK area, and Turkish in the KDP zone.

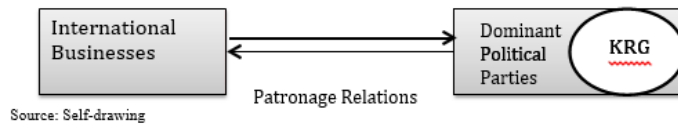
Furthermore, a lion-share of private sector investment targeted petroleum industry and construction. Thirty oil production-sharing contracts of US\$10 billion worth with European, American, and South Korean companies or in collaboration with the Kurdistan Exploration and Production Company (KEPCO) were signed by 2009. By 2014 they become forty contracts with various international oil companies, and exporting around 850,000 barrel per day by December 2015. The construction projects also targeted rehabilitating schools, constructing refineries, and providing water supplies and electricity to local populations in the Kurdistan region (Natali, 2010; 2015).²⁶³

Instead of focusing on institutional building to protect the region from farther deterioration, the tribalism, and personalism trends backed by quasi international recognition inspired the policy makers to disregard institutional consolidation and further prioritized fast-track hydrocarbon development to use it against Baghdad and gain additional political and economic leverage in Iraq, within the KRI. Thus the KRG rather became a mean to develop the two dominant parties interests. The KDP and PUK in the public imaginations, therefore, became greater than the KRG itself (Figure 6.1). In fact, the fall of the Ba'athists in Iraq moved Kurdish relations with international players on to

²⁶³ Interview with Ali Hamasalih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 20016

a new phase. It seems the dominant parties, through using the KRG envoys to different countries and other personnel who had become involved anonymously, have created an intensified linkage of relationships among party politicians, government personnel, and international brokers.²⁶⁴

Figure 6.1: The Party-KRG-International Business Relations



As a result, political development and maintenance of democracy deteriorated between 2011 and 2013 until both halted in 2013 and have begun to reverse since 2015.²⁶⁵ These defective policies have stimulated the patronage network and the size of corruption targeting public assets for private use of the PUK and KDP. It also enlarged the competition and jealousy within themselves especially for obtaining further business contracts and hiring the so-called ‘Ghost Workers’ and escalating the income of their loyal individuals. Furthermore, they start to expand leverage through establishing new lobbies in powerful states and international organizations fueled by personalism politics of the ruling families. The spending of Masrour Barzani to lobbyists in Washington D.C reached 30 million in one month for the referendum for independence they planned to hold in September 2017 (Laizer, 2017).

In the aftermath, the international patronage relationships of the two leading families with the regional actors encouraged the establishment of clan businesses. Indeed, the

²⁶⁴ Interview with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 2016

²⁶⁵ Interview with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016

economic boost following 2005 and the allocation of 17% of the Iraqi total revenue to the KRG expanded the two parties' domination in the KRI, and facilitated using governmental subsidies not only in allocating public money to their businesses, but also using communication tools that the public sector has to provide to these party businesses.

The KRG had to find sources of new businesses, methods of transactions, money laundering, and political leverage through the international patronage relations they had established with political figures worldwide. Eventually "*hijacking the humanitarian infrastructure*", *disrupting the local economy, and diverting resources and revenues to their own advantages*" became the primary focus of the ruling parties (Natali, 2010: xxiv). Thus, the political parties started to weave an extensive business network during the civil wars and transformed into clan/family business by the time of government unification. The most significant factors gathered these business groups were territory concentration, and personal relations emerged in the struggle era and expanded following the uprising of 1991, in a way these international links secured the continuation of their businesses, money transactions and in specific cases money laundering (Laizer, 2017).²⁶⁶

Table 6.1 shows the top companies that are operating in the KRI and control the markets of infrastructure, communications, media, food, medicine, oil, and tourism, to name but a few. Unlike the Tata Group of India, Kurdish party companies abuse the public revenue to favor their own parties through deadly involvement in corruption. The family brokers in the KRG and the KRP backed the family businesses, and in many cases, the KRG agents determined the tenders and government bids in favor of their patrons. According to Abdulla (2012), the mysterious death of the in custody Mayor of Sulaimaniya shows the extent to which internal parties' interest factions struggle for further gains and the extent to which government institutions are abused for these illegal gains.²⁶⁷

Furthermore, each of these companies has tens of sub-companies, each specializing in

²⁶⁶ Retrieved from <http://ekurd.net/iraqi-kurdistan-sold-2017-05-23>

²⁶⁷ Abdulla, Mufid (May 26, 2012). Nokan Group and the PUK business empire. Retrieved from <http://kurdistantribune.com/nokan-group-puk-business-empire/>

one field of business. Therefore they have easily monopolized the KRI markets. The most money generator is the hydrocarbon businesses, where corruption and smuggling are at their peaks. According to Mills (2016), the IKR has only two moderately large refiners: the Kalak, owned by KAR companies (a KDP-owned company) and can refine 100 thousand, and the Bazian, owned by the Qaiwan Group (PUK-owned company) and capable of 34 thousand barrel per day. The other 170 smaller, illegal refineries operating in the KRI are considered great sources of oil smuggling, in addition to being consequential sources of pollution, too.²⁶⁸

Table 6.1: Top Companies in The Iraqi Kurdistan and Their Party Links

Company	Party Link	Business Area
AsiaCell	PUK	Telecommunications
Korek Telecom	KDP	GSM
KAR	KDP	Oil-gas all over Iraq including the Kalak Refinery
Salahaddin Holding	KDP	Investment, plants, banking, oil and gas, hotels
Nokan Group	PUK	Multi-businesses covering almost all the fields of the market, with 33 sub-companies
Faruk Group	PUK	Active in 12 business fields including telecommunications and AsiaCell
Zagros Group	KDP	Active in 12 business fields including oil and airline businesses
Kurdistan International banks	KDP	Banking, and investments
Empire World	KDP	Real Estate
Ster Group	KDP	
Qaiwan Group	PUK	Real estate and oil businesses including the Bazian refinery
Nawroz Telecom	KDP	Telecom services
Mass Group	KDP	Electricity, cement, steel, iron, and urea
Zozik Group	PUK	Security, agriculture

Source: The author adapted the table from various sources of information including the Swiss-Kurdish Chamber of Commerce <http://skchamber.ch/?p=383> and Marcopolis <http://www.marcopolis.net/diversified-conglomerates-and-holdings-in-Kurdistan-list-of-top.htm>

²⁶⁸ A report posted by Ekurd Daily on May 18, 2015. Retrieved from <http://ekurd.net/170-illegal-refineries-in-iraqi-kurdistan-environmentalist-2015-05-18> Kurdistan-list-of-top.htm

This paradigm of ruling and doing businesses supported their party's control of the majority of their region's constituencies through incentives, vote-buying and later intimidation, as discussed in the previous chapter, in addition to creating tens of thousands of fake job opportunities using the public revenue for their payrolls. Laizer (2017) points out the influence the foreign and ruling families partnership has on deteriorating political and economic aspects of the Kurdistan region; *"the Kurdish business model does not benefit Kurdistan and its people but primarily the ruling families and their foreign partners [...] While a significant number of ordinary Kurds suffer terror and poverty, the KDP, PUK and their foreign partners control the lion's share of all business and invest millions in profits for themselves and their families"*.²⁶⁹

The black market, on the other hand, set up some years ago by Saddam Hussein's regime to work around the sanctions imposed on Iraq by the UN, and with the KDP as an intermediary and Turkey as a collaborator, this pattern became familiar in the region since then (Kiourktsoglou and Coutroubis, 2015). Just like some Latin American countries: Bolivia, Mexico, Venezuela and Columbia, the KDP has involved in inter-country oil smuggling as a method for fast making money, the KRG is also has engaged in using the Iranian and Turkish borders to smuggle oil through the PUK. However, smugglers in Latin countries are mostly called robbers, yet in the KRI they are called ruling parties or the KRG itself (Pachico, 2011).²⁷⁰

Until 2003, oil smuggling was only active at the Ibrahim Khalil/Fishkhapur crossing point (Waisy, 2015b). However, after 2004, when enormous oilfields were discovered, it became popular on Iran's border too (Eisenstadt *et al.*, 2011; Bongers, 2012/13). According to Reuters as many as thirty thousands barrels of crude oil were being smuggled from Iraqi Kurdistan to Iran's Bandar Imam Khomeini terminal on the Persian Gulf on a daily basis (Richards, 2013). The Crises Groups (2012: 11) explain the reason the KRG has sent the "surplus fuel" abroad is to have independent revenue from

²⁶⁹ Previous source

²⁷⁰ Interview conducted with Ali Hama Salih, Sulaimani, September 30th, 2016.

Baghdad, *“The KRG could be selling 100,000 b/d to the central government via KI [the Kirkuk pipe- line], but they choose not to do so. They want to truck it to Iran in order to have a revenue source independent of Baghdad”*.

Following the crises between the Iraqi government and the KRI over territorial disputes, and resources, specifically after the IKR’s economic autonomy (2013), the KAR Group built pipelines to transfer oil from Kurdish fields directly to Turkey without returning to SOMO, the State Oil Market Organization, owned by Iraqi federal government (Franks, 2014).²⁷¹ Unlike oil trades with Iran, which depended on land tankers for transporting, the pipeline to Ceyhan port in Turkey is used for carrying millions of barrels monthly, and accordingly, a huge amount of oil starts to disappear. Through a non-transparent contract lasts for the coming 50 years between the KRG and Turkey in 2014, and especially with the presence of the ISIS on the borders between Turkey and the KRI, massive amounts of corruptions have become sources of news and propaganda.

At least U.S.\$800 million reported missing from oil revenue between (July-August) of 2015, a total of U.S.\$200 millions per week.²⁷² Another 36 million barrels of oil went missing over the first six months of 2016 according to leaked documents presented by the NRT (Nalia Radio and Television). This is about 200 thousands barrel per day, which, overall, is equivalent to the U.S. \$1.2 billion.²⁷³ Furthermore, leaked documents reveal the KRG and ruling parties attempt to sell Oil fields to Turkey.²⁷⁴ As a result, the process of extracting, protecting, transporting, and storing these huge amounts of crude and refined oil, managing needs tens of differentiated and complex business holdings and enormous number of human resource experts from different fields. However, this may explain the so-called “Ghost Workers” - the huge number of people hired by the government without having to attend physically in government offices, which in addition

²⁷¹ According to a source. KAR Company is owned by Nechirvan Barzani, the PM of the KRG

²⁷² Retrieved from <http://ekurd.net/over-800-million-missing-from-oil-in-iraqi-kurdistan-2015-08-18>

²⁷³ Retrieved from <http://www.nrttv.com/en/Details.aspx?Jimare=10881> and <http://ekurd.net/billion-kurdistan-oil-missing-2016-11-19>

²⁷⁴ Retrieved from <http://ekurd.net/kurdistan-sell-oil-fields-turkey-2016-12-27>.

to escalating the tensions between the federal government of Iraq and the KRG, it frustrated political system and structural aspects of Kurdish society.

Finally, the likelihood is that the tribal structure of Kurdish society has facilitated the parties' involvement in corruption as kinship and family political businesses discussed above are increasing phenomena of Kurdish political culture. In a short period of time, the booming thousands of multi-millionaires, who mainly are unskilled or not well - educated people and use tribal fences and partisan affiliations to protect their businesses, support such explanation (Natali, 2007; 2010). Perhaps, the popular nepotism in public sector is used by political parties in order to attract voters. According to the UNODC report, clientelism and nepotism are two of the principal challenges impeding the institutionalization process in Kurdistan Regions, not only in the business and political sectors but also in the administrative and social life.

"Although a sizeable share of civil servants considers political party affiliation, family and friendship network the most important factor in recruitment in their own ministry, there are large variations between ministries. Among those ministries for which family and friendship networks are most often listed as the most important factors are the Ministry of Environment (40.7 percent), the Ministry of Planning (39.3 percent), the Ministry of Finance (33.0 percent) and the Ministry of Youth and Sport (30.2 percent) in the Federal Government and the Higher Council of Judges (26.4 percent) and the Council of Ministers (25.4 percent) in the Kurdistan Region Government... while party affiliation (21.4) comparison to the rest of Iraq (12.9)" (UNODC, 2013: 62 and 65)

However, the data presented by the IRI, International Republican Institute, suggests 91% of the participants, believed the most severe problem in the KRI is nepotism. Also, 87% of the participants distrusted the worker hiring policy and thought that political parties

have the greatest role in placing workers in government positions.²⁷⁵ Thus, nepotism and corruption become something neither the parties consider them a hindrance to political development, nor do they think of controlling them, rather, they, themselves, are their practitioners.²⁷⁶ Eventually, unlike many other societies that suffer from bottom to top corruption, in Kurdish society, corruption is a top-down problem. Meaning that the lower ranking officials are less involved in bribes than those occupying the very top institutional positions. At least the corruption-bribery only constitutes 3.7 % of the responses of the mentioned survey by comparison with Baghdad's 29.3%. This is because of that in the KRI, corruption is most significant in positions where the top leaders and politicians are. As their parties gain strength, so do their business groups, and as they discover new criteria for doing businesses, they do also find new individuals to expand their clientelist networks, which only covers a small percentage of the society. Figure (6.2) visualizes the intertwined international patronage relations' influence in the ongoing process of clientelism and family businesses.

²⁷⁵ A survey conducted by Research Middle East Polls of IRI on December 8-15, 2010 entitled "Survey of Iraqi Kurdistan Public Opinion." See the survey in this link <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20in%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region.%20December%208-15.%202010.pdf>

²⁷⁶ An interview conducted with Mr. Kamyar Sabear, 2017

Figure 6.2: The KRI International Patronage Relations' Influence on Fluidity of Party System



Source: Self-drawing

6.3. Key Findings and Concluding Remarks

This chapter has focused on the influence the foreign players and exogenous factors play in weakening Kurdish parties and destabilizing the party system. Generally, this is a new hypothesis to the party system institutionalization; it has been tested elsewhere to qualitatively measure the influence the international funds (Mathiesen and Svasand 2002), and party business groups (Matuszak, 2012) have on political parties autonomy and internal organizations. Nevertheless, a profound investigation regarding the state and non-state actors' relations in the business, political and security relations have not been scrutinized in the contexts of party systems institutionalization.

The political conditions of the KRI, especially those related to sovereignty and landlocked quasi-statehood, in addition to the struggle for independence, have generated substantial patronage relationships both the traditional and some of the new parties have developed with foreign political actors. Politically, unlike other prone and post-conflict societies that benefit from international support for democratization, and establishing

legitimate electoral and political systems (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008), Kurdistan region's quasi statehood, and lack of sovereignty encumbered the international community to involve in such type of activities, rather they adapted to the political and social culture of Kurdish society. To some extent, these organizations fueled the conflicts between political parties within the KRI and tried to use them against Iraqi regime during (1991-2003). Following the fall of Baathist regime, however, they attempted to diminish Kurdish leverage and expand Sunni's to maintain political balance in Iraq (Natali, 2010).

Furthermore, foreign financial supports may have affected electoral outcomes and undermined democracy through reducing internal parties democracy and the sufficient fund party leadership gain, which can be invested in buying internal party's services (Mathiesen and Svasand, 2002). To develop political stability, western powers, especially the U.S.A. has financially and politically supported the two ruling parties, and precisely the two ruling families to endure the inertia prevailed in the KRI. Probably, altering the political atmosphere was not preferable by those forces and due to the relational legacy they had together, seeking new forces would not serve their international goals in Iraq, thus, during the Washington Agreement, the U.S. provided the Kurdish warring parties each with a substantial financial support, and pushed them to reach an agreement on mechanisms of distributing the Ibrahim-Khalil cross point revenue. Since the early weeks of Federal State of Iraq, they also promoted Barzani, and Talabani to become two guardians of Kurdish rights and play significant roles in delivering Kurdish queries to New Iraqi regime. Later, regional countries personal and patronage relations that have been developed in the struggle era have further enhanced dominant parties stand, not only in Iraqi political arena but also within the KRI politics.

Despite the fact that the international community was aware of the extent to which political parties involved in civil wars need training and democratic rehabilitation (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008), the international aid emphasized the Kurdish society as a whole to deliver basic life goods and shelter the displaced people than enhancing democracy and political parties. No subsidies have been provided to the founding elections, and political

parties' democratic promotions. Only several informal delegations from INGO, and individuals took the responsibility to observe the electoral processes of 1992 (Hoff et al., 1992). Thus, the previous rebellion parties did not have a chance to adapt to democratic competitions according to the international standards, rather they have developed skeptical relations with relief organization's field commissioners, and to some extent these relations became means to reciprocal benefits (Natali, 2010).

On the other hand, the subsidies offered to the nationalistic or Islamic revolutionary parties were based on personal relations of the Kurdish leaders with some elements of security, intelligence, or anonymous donors during the period of the struggle. This type of subsidies, in addition to stimulating political parties to becoming militia-based groups they disturbed their infrastructures. Consequently, the war conditions, the personalism tendencies, in addition to international patronage relationships have together hindered the development of political parties' internal democracy and their interrelationships during the emergence of the party system and founding elections.

Only after the fall of Ba'athist, the international support for democratization have been provided to the KRI parties, yet these attempts easily could not weaken the political culture that have penetrated deeply in the people's imagination, and in the KRI's institutional framework. Furthermore, comparison to Iraq, the whole three provinces of the KRI have only received an amount of fund equivalent to one province of Iraq, justifying this to the KRI's far development and a need to stabilize and regulate its political development with the rest of the country (Natali, 2010). In overall, they still managed to make changes in the political arrangement and enhanced dominant parties' stands in the KRI politics.

Meanwhile, the political leaders' reliance on extreme party business and political relations with foreign players in expanding influence within their parties and exercising leverage over other smaller parties in the system has stimulated the so-called neo-tribalism and clientelism within parties and prevented internal democracy and systemness

to develop (Matuszak, 2012).²⁷⁷ Rather, the personalism tendencies in decision-making, the nepotism in appointing people to the parties' entitlements and the corruption resulting from structural and organizational deficiencies all together eventually caused the Kurdish parties lose their political independence and becoming subordinating to the policies of other forces. The leaders and combined business-political groups used political parties as tools for becoming rich and gaining power. Thus, internally, the political parties' decision-making has also become subordinated to small groups of leadership who do not have strategic political thinking; rather they shape political leverage based on buying loyalties and expanding businesses (Matuszak, 2012; Mathiesen and Svasand, 2002).²⁷⁸ The consequence of international influence on Kurdish parties is the increase of patronage tendencies within Kurdish society and particularly in the intra-structural composition of Kurdish parties. Unlike Randall (2006), who emphasizes poor economy influence on fluidity of political parties, this study's finding suggest that an easy access to money also may have the same consequence if the institutional framework is not consolidated. The emergence of new socioeconomic classes in society, the so-called 'neo-tribal' groups those who became rich and could make fast fortunes from cross-border smuggling between the KRI and neighboring countries, in addition to classifying Kurdish parties in two categories in terms of their accessibility to investing the public revenue and assets for party benefits might be an excellent evidence.

The small 'Political Kiosks' are those small parties that only rely on the funds allocated to them by one of the two dominant parties, or occasional subsidies by neighboring countries that usually given to them for beyond civil society activities, such as that of Saudi Arabia to the IMK. These payoffs typically affect their loyalties according to the amount of spoils assigned to them.²⁷⁹ Meanwhile, the 'Political Malls' are the large and dominant parties that have multi-dimensional sources of revenue, and multi-functional businesses, were managed by complex networks of patronage relationships, with

²⁷⁷ Interview with Barham Salih, Sulaimani, September 21st, 2016

²⁷⁸ Interviews conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, and Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 20th and 19th, 2016 respectively

²⁷⁹ Interview conducted with Soran Omar, Sulaimani, September 29th, 2016

substantial access to public money and human resources, they rather depend on international relations to expand these resources than taking cash and tangible payoffs.²⁸⁰

The patronage relationships with foreign players also have weakened the political parties' coherence. As much as the patronage business relationship between these international actors has increased with certain party figures and leaders, the egoistic and interest-based groups have increased their positions within the parties too; thus the fragmentation becomes inevitable.²⁸¹ There are cases, which support another type of interest groups focusing on parties' internal reforms and the institutionalization of relationships. For example, before the emergence of the Gorran Movement, it was a reformist faction within the PUK, nevertheless, nesting these types of ideas was not easy within such political framework, therefore, and struggles within these interests, family and tribal-based groups eventually led reformists to split and breakaway.

Another finding is that the major dominant parties' relations with regional powers following the invasion of Iraq relied mostly on business, and security maintenance especially between the KRI and both Iran and Turkey. These relations grounded on a weak stand of Kurdish parties and the KRG in imbalanced relationships. Therefore, the two ruling political parties to some extent are obliged to develop economic relations with these two countries, yet, the legacy of antagonism they both have toward one another, and the tendencies of personalism and “*old grudge*” have impeded them from consolidating the KRG and the KRP. Rather, they turned towards creating multi-national family businesses and involving the government in illegal trading, especially in the field of hydrocarbons.²⁸² They also transferred the ownership of some of the factories that were constructed by the former regimes to their companies and persons associated with them. They distributed commercial plots of land on their groups and holdings. Accordingly, thousands of hectares of government-owned agrarian lands were transferred

²⁸⁰ Interview conducted with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016

²⁸¹ Interview conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, September 20th, 2016.

²⁸² Interview with Soran Omar, Sulaimani, September 29th, 2016

to personnel and private companies owned by political parties.²⁸³

Eventually, the patronage relationships are practiced on two levels, international and internal. Both become correlated factors in a way: foreign patronage has foraged among the political parties' internal client-based and tribal-based relations, while the internal clientelism and nepotism have supported the increase and strength of the international one. Thus, the mechanism resembles the patron-client relationship and is composed of three elements: international players, political parties, and the tribes and neo-tribes. In this sense, the political parties have played both roles; with the foreign players, political parties have become the indispensable client, while with tribes and neo-tribes it is the patron who owns the resources and distribute them in a chain of vote and loyalty buying mechanism through party brokers, i.e., chieftains, nobles, businessmen, and politicians.

Another finding is the people's consciousness of the dramatic influences the political parties and patronage relationship have in their daily life. Public servant recruitment does not reflect a standardized policy by the KRG but is rather according to the vagaries of ministers' partisan views, and partisan affiliations; at least 54% of the participants of survey conducted in 2013 by the UNOCD considered nepotism and their partisan stands helped them to get their jobs in the public sector.²⁸⁴ This means that this tendency has become a pattern in Kurdish society and fueled by ordinary people as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that the division into clans and patron groups is to a certain extent a matter of consensus among the ruling parties including the former oppositions, mainly during the period following 2003, in which changes relating to the expansion of family business linked to Barzani and Talabani took place quite rapidly.²⁸⁵ The cooperation between the two families as partners in oil businesses has become clear and robust. Thereafter, the monopolization of hydrocarbon products strengthened these parties'

²⁸³ Interviews conducted with Rebwar Karim Mahmoud, Sulaimani, September 20th, 2016.

²⁸⁴ Pages 121- 143 present ministry by ministry percentages of staff hired without formal procedures in 2004–2011 in the KRG. However, the author calculated the mean percentage for the purposes of this dissertation

²⁸⁵ Interview conducted with Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa, Sulaimani, September 19th, 2016

positions in government and the military forces, and by the time the ISIS war begun, these two parties started to invest in the war to further strengthen their positions internally through using the revenue from oil and the robust relations they had constructed with international partners against the ISIS.

Furthermore, the international patronage relationships have also increased the Kurdish political parties' sub-nationalization entrenchment and caused them to abort the attempt at becoming nationwide parties, which eventually affected the political parties' autonomy (Meleshevich, 2007) and rootedness (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Mainwaring, 1998).

In fact, the Kurdish party system, like many others fluid party systems of Ecuador (Pachano, 2006), Columbia (Scartascini, 2010), and Thailand (Hicken, 2009), have composed of a number of parties that dominate different regions and provinces of the KRI. As geographical discord was a visible characteristic of Kurdish politics in the era of struggle, regional players took advantage of this factor to invest it in their favor.

Depending on the conflict between territorially and dialectically constructed identities, in addition to promotion of provincial businesses eventually resulting in differentiation between the two domains. The discriminatory policies regarding budget distribution and delivering services, especially following the emergence of the Gorran, and more particularly, after economic independence in 2013, have further enlarged the cultural and dialectical cleavages (Chapter Four).

Finally, the legitimacy and political reputation have also influenced by these dubious relations (Mathisen, and Svasand, 2002). The widespread corruption resulted from the distrustful business relations and the 50-year doubtful oil contract with Turkey, the hundreds of crude oil trucks journeyed to Iran on a regular basis, the giant business companies that do not have transparent sources of funds and human capacity and resources, and are owned by a circle of people working together in a triangle of political parties-government-parliament in the top positions, abusing the public assets and revenue to personal and family businesses, have affected the legitimacy and accountability of those parties, And eventually, both the legitimacy and the rootedness of old political

parties have become weak and disappointing.

To sum up, the foreign actors can play significant roles in political parties and party systems fluidity, especially in the developing societies, nascent democracies, and post-conflict societies (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008). These influences may affect political parties internal organization and support personalism within the political parties in addition to emerging authoritarianism. Furthermore, they may escalate corruption and misuse of public revenue and damage the political accountability and parties' legitimacy accordingly. They also may influence the interparty relationships, especially when new rivals try to obtain an international source of supports, while dominant or incumbents' obstacle these attempts by escalating payoffs to the foreign players to stay aligned. Finally, they have an influence on the political parties' rootedness through escalating the localization and sub-nationalization tendencies of political parties (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995) supported by business and patronage relations political parties maintain with their neighboring patrons, as is the case in the KRI.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Despite the growing scholarly interest in party system institutionalization in nascent and developing democracies, there is no study, which profoundly addresses it in Iraq and Kurdistan region if not the Arab World. Further, virtually no author has studied an in-depth investigation regarding the influence the international and foreign factors may have on party system fluidity. Therefore, this study is an effort to fill these gaps, through examination of the impacts of social and structural composition, institutional framework, and foreign influences on the Kurdish political parties and party system inchoateness.

This thesis is primarily an answer to a puzzle concerns the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's party system. It is a profound investigation to answer the questions, which highlight institutionalization process as a region that has experienced three consecutive regular elections, without being interrupted by civil wars or violent conflicts. It is measured by Freedom House as one of the most democratic regions in the Middle East-Arab World during the self-rule and presented a reasonable extent of economic performance. Therefore, it is a question why after more than twenty-five years of self-rule and a substantial level of democracy, still its party system is not institutionalized? And what stimulates this fluidity?

This dissertation was based on the premise that the fluidity of the Kurdistan Regions' party system is a consequence of institutional weaknesses, structural composition of Kurdish society and the foreign and exogenous influences by states and non-state actors. The study aimed to investigate these causal-type factors under the light of the four dimensions of the theory of party system institutionalization by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) while considering the political institutionalization by Huntington (1965; 68).

Party system institutionalization is not indispensable for democratization, so far it is one of the effective elements that facilitate it and support political parties consisting it to acquire legitimacy and become accountable to their constituencies. It also aids at more

profound understanding of the nature of political parties and their roots, the relationship they maintain and go ahead with the progressing politics. Party system institutionalization further stimulates comprehending the level of organizational structure and strength of political parties and their extent of autonomy whether from particularized interest groups, leaders, geographical tendency or exogenous forces. For these reasons, the four dimensions of Mainwaring and Scully are essential to be measured in order to understand the extent to which a polity under scrutiny is stable, and legitimate to the people.

This study employed the historical approach of neo-institutionalism to develop intense investigation of the case during the temporal of self-rule (1991-2016). The previous background of policy conditions and the relation between formal and informal institutions of Kurdistan region has been emphasized. Moreover, the path dependence of behavior of these institutional, and structural elements with each other and with individuals was investigated. The influence each of these factors has on choice preferences, in addition to the operative forces required them to choose different trajectories in different political junctures and the type of responses they made. Subsequently, the new challenges they have faced have also been examined through semi-structured interviews conducted with thirty-three experts and political elites of the field, in addition to various other previous qualitative scholarly works.

The body literature of this dissertation reviews the inchoateness of Kurdish political parties and party system along with the dramatic changes, which they have witnessed. The party system from a two-party system of the initial elections has transformed to a moderate pluralism in 2005 and later to an extreme pluralism in 2009. The two dominant parties, the KDP, and PUK hegemonic ambitions and monopolization of economic, military and political institutions impeded the party system from being institutionalized. The institutional weaknesses and attitudes of the two mentioned chief actors of Kurdish politics are supported by two primary sources. In which, the first highlights their legacy of struggle for national Kurdish rights, tribal affiliation and geographical voting behaviors of Kurdish people. The second, pays attention on the international patronage

relationships in both political and business fields they endure, especially by leading families, to protect their own benefits and authorities.

This concluding chapter is a thematic setting for the findings of this study and will be divided into three parts. The first part is a summary of the key results of the research by themes highlighting the four dimensions of Mainwaring and Scully (1995). The second part is a review of hypotheses justification and study's contribution to the theory of party system institutionalization. The concluding section is a concise discussion on the prospects for developing a more comprehensive research agenda in the forthcoming studies based on the findings and the themes of this study.

7.1. Key Findings of the Dissertation

Mainwaring and Scully (1995) introduced four measurable dimensions to determine party system institutionalization. They argue that the various degree of institutionalization level form one party system to another is a result of the scope condition where the party system develops. I conclude thematically the impact of the three causal factors: structural, institutional and foreign influence on each dimension presented by Mainwaring and Scully as follows;

Stable Pattern of Interparty Competition

The interpretation of the evidence presented in the empirical chapters four, five and six can be summarized as an element, which affirms that the instability of interparty competition within Kurdish parties is a consequence of more than a causal-type factor. Moreover, the lack of sovereignty of the KRI and the profound ethical problem the Kurdish parties have with the central governments of Iraq, and their dependence on external supports in promoting struggle against Iraqi governments have supported this instability. At least the consolidation of power that the two dominant parties, the PUK and KDP, have pushed the oppositions to gather under a splinter party from the PUK in

recent years. Therefore, throughout history, the Kurdish political parties in Iraq have experienced a type of relationship that fluctuates between cooperation and antagonism, which is supported by the abovementioned political conditions. Accordingly, fast developing new rivals and deterioration of traditional parties in addition to splits and mergers, especially during the last 26-year nascent democratic regime of the KRI have been witnessed and developed into a primary source of electoral volatility.

Other causes of electoral volatility are the institutional weaknesses, and conflicts that frequently occurred among the Kurdistan Region's parliament fractions over Presidential Law, which subsequently reversed the democratic development. In fact, the tribal structure of Kurdish society and the links of patronage that developed throughout their struggle and later during the self-rule have further escalated these institutional weaknesses in a way, that the traditional politicians who have legacies of revolution could use the political parties and institutions as tools for their own individual gains. Thus, a different type of cleavage has occurred (yet not consolidated), which originated from ideas related to economic and political reforms and generated alteration in the party system and escalated the electoral and ministerial volatilities to remarkable levels. Due to these new forces and the permissiveness of electoral laws imposed by the federal government, old and traditional parties have abruptly deteriorated. Therefore, political parties vote share and seat share volatilities and the small, ethnoreligious and old parties' seat volatilities (Tables 5.4 5.5, and 5.6), are substantial evidence of an unstable pattern of competition between political parties.

The ministerial volatility, on the other hand, is a clear evidence of the government alterations in the KRI are not subjects of electoral turnouts. The nature of the government alteration that was measured by the Openness Index, the Frequency of Change, and the Government Alteration Index and presented in section (5.1.3) underlines a considerable extent of instability in the government. Perhaps, it is a result of the political parties' consensus over government formation than subsequently, considering it a matter of electoral gains of each party, which has won the recent elections; moreover, there are

examples support, appointing government shares to some political parties did not have KRP seats.

The particularistic tendencies are another factor discussed in chapter four that has considerable influence, especially on electoral policy related to seat allocation, electoral circles, electoral centers, and the budgets of those provinces, which are controlled by the incumbent parties. It appears that the close ties Kurdish political parties have with the countries neighboring them also support this allegation. These influences inspired them to follow discrimination in seat allocation, despite the votes cast in each province. The KDP's domination of electoral and government institutions has increased the inclination and favoritism of these institutions towards the provinces, where the KDP is dominant. In some districts under the PUK authority, this tendency can be observed too. Thus, the most influential province, the capital city of Erbil, has been always represented by a fewer number of representatives in the KRP comparison to that of Duhok and Sulaimaniya, while it is the second biggest city in the KRI.

Another finding suggests, the existing causal relationships between frequency of changes in electoral and related rules, and the fluidity of KRI's party system. The frequent alteration of electoral laws and regulations have destabilized the party system due to the impact they pose on the people's understanding and interpretation of such rules and procedures. Furthermore, the permissiveness the electoral rules imposed by the TAL in 2005 opened the door for many ethnoreligious parties and eventually led to a change in the party system from a two-party system to an extreme multiparty system, which also affected the political parties' pattern of interactions.

There is also evidence suggesting a strong relationship between the quality of political and electoral institutions and electoral fraud and corruption. Despite the significant electoral volatility, the electoral turnout is considerably harmonized, which may be a product of electoral frauds and result alteration made by dominant parties, which controls electoral institutions. In addition, the mass intimidations and political punishment used against the ones who, switch loyalty, in contrast, using public coffin to incite the tribes,

nobles and those who align with dominant parties explain why the electoral turnouts are incompatible with the ratio of electoral volatility and political parties' turnouts.

Stable Roots

The inconsistency between slow institutional development and the fast political mobilization have embraced a type of corrupted system, that institutional framework could not embody those social raises and adopts their interests in the system, rather the system to some extent has becomes rigid and unable to adapt to these recent changes imposed by the electoral rules of Iraq. Thus, it can be seen that the praetorian society (Huntington, 1968: 24) have been established in the KRI, where in many aspects like progressing infrastructure and pretending modernization is achieved, yet the political development is still slow and even in some phases static if not reversed. Thus, in such atmosphere especially with the prevailing political culture of tribalism, and on Huntington's words "*amoral clanism and grupism*" tendencies supported personalism in a way the pattern of behaviors became less predictable, and political party's rootedness depended on the tribe's tendency to remain aligned with the same party lines. The pre-eminence of the tribalism over ideology and political parties' labels, and the strong ties these tribes have with territorial magnitude can be considered a generator of subordination tendencies of political parties. This affinity has not only hindered parties from overcoming the territorial cleavages but also has supported regional players to take it as a grand opportunity to place further obstacles on the way of nation-building process and subsequent nationwide party and party system-building. The findings of the social structure and exogenous influences suggests, that a strong correlation exists between tribal-dialect based factors and pressures from external players with the localization and provincialism of Iraqi Kurdish political parties.

The past antagonistic relation between the KDP and the PUK has changed to a cooperative relationship on one pole of the spectrum, while new and diverse ways of partisanship have commenced at the other pole. Thus, the disputes and disagreements regarding many issues related to the KR's party system along with electoral rules, in

addition to the institutions that should be responsible for the electoral process, have become new sources of conflicts between these recently emerged parties. The upheaval, the Gorran supported in party polity in 2009, has disclosed the crisis the old parties have had and changed the party system and the partisan blocs. If the Islamic parties earlier decided to participate in previous governments – whether because of the allegations of unifying national representation of the Kurds in Iraq, or due to their private interests for taking parts in cabinet formations, or disappointment of being compelling enough to mobilize the society against the dominant parties – the Gorran's emergence has motivated them to join a new political setting to represent unsatisfying voters. This recent issue is dramatically polarizing the society and reshaping the party system. It focuses on issues related to reform of political and economic policies and became the essence of political disagreements to an extent and in turn caused internal problems, splits, and has fractionalized some traditional political parties.

Another finding contributes to the facts, that the electoral volatility of Kurdish parties and voters' switching loyalties is a result of the historical legacy of antagonism between the two traditional parties and their fragile, tribal internal composition. Also, it is a result of the expanding clientelism and bonds of patronage between voters and political parties, and the corruption, which the dominant political parties have been practicing in public resources, throughout the period of their rule, by utilizing, an abusing power, money and institutions. These factors have eventually, caused vital shortcomings in the electoral system and generated fraudulent elections accompanied by vote buying and intimidation.

Legitimacy

The third criterion of party system institutionalization emphasizes the positive perception of citizens and organizational interests of political parties and electoral process, as well as the extent to which they regard them as the best means for governing. In fact, the support of this dimension is being built upon the elite judgment, the election turnouts, and the qualitative data, which concerns corruption and misuse of electoral and

governmental institutions. The subordination of political parties to the regional powers, the corruption and the mass use of public revenue by ruling parties and dubious relations, the politicized government and electoral institutions, along with the mass frauds in elections have decreased the confidence of people in the parties, the KRP and the KRG agents. Therefore, like many other third world countries and developing democracies (Mathisen and Svasand, 2002; Jones, 2005), the reliability of electoral and political institutions and the judiciary body in the IKR have profound problems. This is primarily considered due to the mass frauds that inspired traditional parties to become less interested in people's loyalty. They discovered new ways of maintaining their supremacy through gerrymandering, playing with electoral results, and altering the electoral register; they have become involved in electoral frauds and extreme electoral corruption. As a result, the legitimacy of political parties and electoral system become dubiously perceived by people in a way, which requires fundamental reformation in order to be established to the level congruent to the principles of democracy and rules of law.

The low confidence of the public, political and intellectual elites in political parties and their representatives, in addition to government office holders, is a consequence of the KRG's deficiency and the lack in performance these individuals and institutions have achieved in the political arena through decades of self-rule. *'Government Deficiency'* implies the government's inability to fulfill basic legal conditions of security and governing to deliver fair and adequate services to the public. The government failed to protect the people's will in the voting process. The political parties' usage of governmental directorates and units to increase leverage expanded to not only the government and the public, but also to suppress the number of opposition votes through intimidation, threats and non-democratic means to an extent of killing and kidnapping journalists and political and civil activists who try and publicize these types of problems.

Furthermore, the use of the public coffers as electoral incentives for politicizing society and declaring the failure of contesting parties has become another issue. And subsequently underscores the questions related to the legitimacy and reliability of leading

and ruling parties. Patrimonialism and nepotism in politics that have deep associations with corruption have further aggravated the query of parties' legitimacy. The clear particularistic interests of ruling families, the involvement of their clans and tribes in political issues and the growth of personalism tendencies in decision-making notably expanded especially in the individualistic exchange of favors between personalities holding positions in political parties and the government. Over time, the clientelism in the Kurdistan Region is no longer limited to only decision-making inside the political parties, but also has expanded to public services and projects, state tenders, businesses, and investments.

Jobs are still central to patronage politics in the IKR and the companies belonging to political parties are even more likely to get the maximum amount of funds from the government, the more the ruling parties' authority stretches over their zones the more nature of patronage becomes connected to neo-tribalism. Moreover, the two parties in client-patron relationships are connected in an unbalanced relationship with regional powers, and eventually, clear alignment with the policies serve these international powers' interests can be seen. The reciprocal benefits, both parties gain in such types of relationships guarantee their continuous leverage and existence.

Other findings suggest, that the politicized society in Iraqi Kurdistan is a consequence of nationalist sentiment and the antagonistic attitudes, which the two dominant parties advance against each other. Government positions, accordingly, from the extreme top to the lowest administrative units have become related to the political parties and their power to allocate the respective positions. Thus, a graduate from a university had to submit a partisan recommendation from the district center of the party that dominates the province to get a job, and eventually the proportion of people hired by the two major parties extended to 11.6% of the whole population, which is approximately 680,000 adults. Party membership has several privileges as compared to the non-members. The relatives in the neighborhood and the community activists, who deliver enough new party members, and have a greater chance of getting a job offer along with party incentives

than those who show only limited affiliation. Further, blood relationships may sometimes play a greater role, which dominates loyalty and participating in party activities. In fact, the data presented by the IRI, suggests that at least 84% of the participants of a survey conducted in the three Kurdish provinces considered corruption a serious problem, yet only 3.7% of the grassroots pay bribes according to another study by the UNODC (2013).²⁸⁶ Furthermore, the people's disappointment, especially regarding nepotism, reached 91%, political parties placing workers in government positions 87%, the unaccountability of the government 89%, and finally not implementing the law 93% are severe problems which have a direct influence on legitimacy, especially that of the ruling parties.²⁸⁷

One of the principal findings supporting the fluidity of party system is that the political parties of the KRI are not in compliance with the politicians who control the state positions. Instead, the state positions, in executive and both legitimate houses of the KRP and Iraqi Representative Council are subjects to the wills of their political parties, and within the political parties' subject to only small group of families and individuals. Thus, the KRI's formal and legitimate institutions do not have adequate power to mobilize the public and have not met the people's satisfaction. For example, according to the Pay Institution, the parliamentary fractions, may not consider the KRP as the real accountable organ, where the highest decisions related to national interests should be made, as most of the time, their representatives are absent from the KRP sessions. In the spring session of the fourth KRP term in 2015, the percentage of absentees from the KDP was 42.6%, the PUK 17.2%, the Gorran 15.1%, the IUK and the IGK 4.8% and 2.1% respectively.

Another issue Kurdish political parties have is relying on patronage relationships and

²⁸⁶ A survey conducted by Research Middle East Polls of IRI on December 8-15, 2010 entitled "Survey of Iraqi Kurdistan Public Opinion." See the survey in this link <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20in%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region.%20December%208-15.%202010.pdf>

²⁸⁷ Previous reference

bonds not only to control the internal parties' organizations and decision-making but also the electoral processes as well. The control they have over the government, legislature, and market, and the strong influence they have in the social and cultural sustainability of Kurdish society, eventually transformed the electoral process to a façade for further control and legitimatization of every aspect of Kurdish politics. Therefore, the elections are not a method for changing the government and the political policies rather it is a renewing contract for holding power by those parties. During the last two decades, for example, the prime minister was replaced only one time, which lasted for one half of a cabinet period, while his party only holds 36% of the KRP seats.

Finally, the use of public resources by incumbent parties has further escalated the electoral corruption. Due to the lack of law stipulations, the amount of money invested in electoral campaigns and since, the political parties that have greater access to the public funds, they illicitly use the resources to the extent necessary for their campaigns. Furthermore, the campaigns do not focus on the projects and promises that have not been fulfilled, they rather promote unachievable promises, so far due to the shortcomings of private and independent media channels and the weak and unpopular culture of democracy, the parties have not often been accused of accountability and take responsibility for their electoral promises.

Autonomy and Internal Organization

The territorial distribution of social groups is a crucial dimension of conflict, as well as of conflict resolutions. The correlation between territory and culture – state and nation – has not only been the goal of nation-builders, but also of those who try to block it. Unlike most European party systems that emerged after the Second World War, it looks like the Kurdish political parties have neither internal democracy nor external security and consolidated sovereignty, so the data presented in Tables (4.7, 4.8, and 4.9) and the sub-nationalization voting behavior of Kurdish constituencies can be regarded as consequences of the increase of both internal tribal and regional players' influence on

Kurdish parties.

Moreover, evidence supports that the Kurdish parties have no solid organizational structure or ideology, as is the case in the mass parties. Instead, they are a catchall mixture with populist tendencies, which suffer from corruption, clientelism, and neo-tribal organization networking. Most of the time they become cartel parties dependent on government supports and have fragile objective beliefs concerning the democracy. They propagandize ideologies and fascinate people by alluding to democracy and social democratic claims, generated from their weak structural nature and of their ruling families. Also, the social and cultural cleavages tie them to one territory and localize them to represent only the interests of one or two particularistic groups while others are excluded unintentionally.

Another issue discussed in this research regarding this criterion is the political parties' weak ideology and labels. Since, the traditional parties adopted national and patriotic sentiments in the struggle era, they seemed ethnic parties. Nevertheless, after their engagement with democratic practices, this sentiment has gradually become less effective. While traditional parties have adopted new claims and made declarations regarding the Kurdish constitutional rights in Iraq, they have also become too focused on incentives and spoils generated in Baghdad and federal governments, and the money they make from business undertakings with neighboring countries. Thus, the nationhood sentiment has become rather a commercial slogan used by traditional and ruling parties in electoral campaigns. One strong piece of evidence supports this claim, is that when more than 98% of the people of the KRI and areas of dispute in 2005's referendum cast 'yes' for departure from Iraq, the two ruling parties, still, used this result as a strong claim to gain further entitlements in the new Iraqi government rather than following the national inquiry.

The Kurdish political parties' leadership, in fact, has hindered internal parties development and democracy and embraced the autonomy of political parties to eventually only serve the goals these irreplaceable charismatic revolutionist leaders have

set up. These leaders gradually pretend to be unique revolutionary elites that were born to lead. Their moral background and patronage style of leading has not conditioned them to bargain or compromise new phases of politics, and the legacy has always pushed them to see themselves superior to others. Eventually, their egotistical behavior has prevented them from seeing anyone better than themselves to rule. Thus, strong barriers imposed for new generations, while the small percentage of the young generation still closely linked to them in a way the alteration of political methodology is difficult to achieve. Another issue is that they failed to realize civil politics and becoming professional politicians who can persevere goals in both struggle and civil and democratic eras, rather they show incapability to make attitudinal dynamics and abandon *tribal* behavior. Therefore, they expect their parties' generations of leaders to picture them as their heroes in today's political management, while their reputations have rather deteriorated and gradually marginalized, not only in society but also within their own parties.

The opportunistic groups within political parties play crucial roles in magnifying sub-nation tendencies of political parties and vice versa. The centralized local agencies and family businesses of political clans and families among and within dominant political parties have competed for the highest interest rates they can gain from their international patronage relationships and the investment they make in public assets and revenue. For this purpose, they have enlisted personalities aligned with their interests and allocated seats to those whom they believe serve the interests in the best way. Eventually, a network of client-patron relations among the three formal institutions: the KRP, the KRG, and the incumbent dominant political parties, has established and become the primary sponsor for dominant parties to feed the international patronage relationships and their dominance guarantee.

Finally, the change in the electoral rule since 2005, has possibly affected the internal political parties' organization especially regarding participation by women and youth. It forced the political parties to develop policies encouraging women's participation in their leadership councils and amending their party decrees to pave the way for women and

youth to meet internal parties' portions originating from the 30% and 25% gender quotas declared by the constitution in both national and lower houses. Nevertheless, the clientelism and tribally based political tendencies have restricted these opportunities to only the individuals who connected tightly to the presidents, or those with specific profiles within the parties.

7.2. Hypotheses Testing Results

This part is a thematic presentation of the findings of three empirical chapters dedicated to investigating the three premised causal-type factors correlate with the Mainwaring and Scully's theoretical framework for inspecting the party system institutionalization of Kurdistan Region of Iraq which is; (1) Three causal-type factors; structural, institutional, and foreign influences, provoke the fluidity of the Kurdistan Region's party system. (2) The three-abovementioned causal-type factors are interrelated. (3) The structural and foreign causal-type factors have a more effective influence on the non-institutionalization process than the institutional one.

The major findings of this study suggest that the structural composition of Kurdish society and foreign influences are two leading causal factors of Kurdish parties and party system fluidity. Despite the fundamental role the institutional weaknesses have in the party system inchoateness, it is initially a consequence of the previously mentioned two causal-type factors, but still in an interacted relationship with them. The political junctures such as civil wars, strategic and unification agreements for power-sharing between the two incumbent parties are all results of the traditional tribal and neo-tribal thinking of political arrangements (Kennedy, 2015).

The international patronage relationship especially with Turkey and Iran, besides, the confidence the Washington Agreement accorded to the charismatic leaders of these two dominant parties have stimulated tribal thinking in decision making and institutional configuration and policies. Therefore, the ministerial instability, the presidential

dilemma, the significant amount of corruption and administrative issues relating to the electoral system, biased electoral institution, and electoral frauds have been generated and supported by these two primary factors. The electoral volatility, on the other hand, especially the one related to permissiveness to ethnoreligious groups and Kurdish Islamic-based parties were consequences of electoral laws compulsorily enforced by Coalition Provincial Administration and Transitional Administration Law, and later by the permanent constitution of Iraq and IHEC. In other words, they were not initiations made by ruling incumbents and the elected KRP to adapt to the demands of Kurdish society. Rather, by seeing them as the fathers of Kurdish achievements in Iraq, and due to the legacies of relationship they have, the founders of the two dominant parties have become firmly linked to Kurdish politics and the references of Kurdish issues that the coalition forces were considering them in rebuilding new Iraq and embedding them in federal and democratic political structure. Therefore, they have become the prosecutors and speakers of Kurdish ethnic rights in Iraq, while simultaneously are expanding leverage over institutional, military and financial frameworks.

7.3. Answering Research Questions

The main two intertwined research questions invite a broader inquiry into the phenomenon of party system institutionalization, which is broader in this context, which implies are beyond regional studies. In fact, there are excellent within-region studies regarding how well or badly institutionalized party systems are and have expanded this study's knowledge of the field. But there is still a necessity for a systematic justification of why some party systems from different regions present more instability than others. Efforts in that direction have been modest, especially concerning in-depth case studies, while no effort has been concentrating the KRI and the Iraqi party systems at all. Given that, it is important to fill that gap and follow the profound explanation emphasizes the answers of the two research questions, that deliberate those elements have been introduced to the scholarship on party system institutionalization and deserve a more careful analysis amongst the echoing issues, which are still prevailing within the literature materialized in the following: Why after more than twenty-five years of self-

rule and a substantial level of democracy, still its party system not institutionalized? And what stimulates this fluidity?

To answering these questions the abovementioned three hypotheses have been premised and several indexes and technics have been employed to further justify the results this study has reached. The hypotheses justifications in the first place relied on the expert and scholar judgments and qualitative narratives that emphasized critical junctures and political conditions to which accordingly institutionalization process was hampered. Also, data from official and formal documentation in addition to previous scholarly achievements have been investigated to emphasize the overall political process in the KRI.

7.4. Implications For Future Research

This research has opened the door to many other issues, which might become sources of forthcoming study agendas. In fact, due to the thematic focus of the study on an in-depth investigation on Kurdistan Region of Iraq's party system institutionalization, it was not possible to focus on Iraqi party system institutionalization and compare it with the KRI's to conclude whether the non-statehood character of the KRI is the more influential factor promoting exogenous and foreign influences to weaken Kurdish parties or the issue of social cleavages is the prominent factor stimulating this proliferated issue that causes political instability and party system fluidity in such type of systems. The methodological limitations did not permit to include this in the study and will be an excellent puzzle to be investigated in future studies. Moreover, the good economic performance in the KRI is supposed to stimulate the stability and institutionalization process; nonetheless, this is also another unanswered question that the methodological limitation did not allow this study to cover. Still, it is a point which could be associated with further development in upcoming studies especially in a comparative investigation between the KRI and another region with lesser or the same level of economic growth, but better-institutionalized party system.

Finally, the manifesto of this study opened many venues for future studies especially to those concentrated on political culture's impact on engineering political institutions that follow revolutions and civil wars. This study is a systematic approach to an individual case study that is principally descriptive and based on the expert judgments. It emphasizes inspection of historical roots of existing institutional and individual behaviors, and to establish their patterns and consequences in party system outcomes. Perceiving the existing patterns helps the student of the individual case studies of this field to understand the dynamism of the institutions, social divisions, political culture and some exogenous influences, which are reshaping the political outcomes. To enlarge the understanding of such possible interactions, empirically an influential step would be the elevation of such type of studies, particularly in the Middle East, in order to facilitate scrutinizing the likelihood of existing political patterns, and accordingly, the possibility of comprehended cross-national studies become an achievable goal.

**Institucionalización Del Sistema De Partidos En La Región De Kurdistán De Iraq
(1991 A 2016)**

I. Análisis del Manifiesto

A pesar del creciente interés académico en la institucionalización del sistema de partidos en las democracias nacientes y en desarrollo, casi ningún estudio la aborda en profundidad en Iraq ni en la región de Kurdistán a excepción del mundo árabe; además, prácticamente ningún autor ha estudiado una investigación a fondo sobre la influencia que los factores internacionales y extranjeros pueden tener sobre la fluidez del sistema de partidos. Por lo tanto, este estudio es un esfuerzo para llenar estos vacíos a través de la examinación de los impactos de la composición social y estructural, el marco institucional, y las influencias extranjeras en los partidos políticos y la incoherencia del sistema de partidos kurdos.

Esta tesis es principalmente una respuesta a un rompecabezas sobre el sistema de partidos de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq. Es una investigación profunda para responder a las preguntas más destacadas sobre cómo el proceso de institucionalización de una región ha experimentado tres elecciones ordinarias consecutivas sin ser interrumpido por guerras civiles o conflictos violentos. Es medida por Freedom House como una de las regiones más democráticas del Medio Oriente y el mundo árabe durante el gobierno autónomo, y presentó un grado razonable de rendimiento económico. Por lo tanto, después de más de veinticinco años de gobierno autónomo y un nivel sustancial de democracia, la pregunta es: ¿Por qué su sistema de partidos aún no está institucionalizado? ¿Y qué estimula esta fluidez?

Esta disertación se basó en la hipótesis de que la fluidez del sistema de partidos de las regiones de Kurdistán es consecuencia de las debilidades institucionales, la composición estructural de la sociedad kurda y las influencias extranjeras y exógenas de los estados y actores no estatales. El estudio tuvo como objetivo investigar estos factores de tipo causal y consideró las cuatro dimensiones de la teoría de la institucionalización del sistema de

partidos de Mainwaring y Scully (1995) y tomó en cuenta la institucionalización política de Huntington (1965; 1968).

La institucionalización del sistema de partidos no es indispensable para la democratización, sin embargo, es uno de los elementos eficaces que la facilita y que respalda a los partidos políticos que la constituyen para adquirir legitimidad y rendir cuentas ante sus electores. También ayuda a obtener una comprensión más profunda de la naturaleza de los partidos políticos y su arraigo, la relación que mantienen y el avance en el progreso de la política. La institucionalización del sistema de partidos estimula aún más la comprensión del nivel de la estructura organizacional y la fuerza de los partidos políticos y su grado de autonomía, ya sea por parte de grupos de interés particulares, líderes, tendencias geográficas o fuerzas exógenas. Por estas razones, es esencial que las cuatro dimensiones de Mainwaring y Scully se midan a fin de comprender hasta qué punto una política bajo escrutinio es estable y legítima para las personas.

Este estudio empleó el enfoque histórico del neoinstitucionalismo para avanzar en la intensa investigación del caso durante el periodo de gobierno autónomo (1991 a 2016). Se hizo énfasis en la línea pasada de condiciones de política y la relación entre las instituciones formales e informales de la región de Kurdistán. Además, se investigó la dependencia de la trayectoria en cuanto al comportamiento de estos elementos institucionales y estructurales entre sí y con las personas. La influencia que cada uno de estos factores tiene en las preferencias de elección, además de las fuerzas operativas que les obligan a elegir diferentes trayectorias en diferentes coyunturas políticas y el tipo de respuestas que ofrecen, los nuevos desafíos que enfrentan también han sido examinados a través de entrevistas semiestructuradas llevadas a cabo con treinta y tres expertos y élites políticas del campo, además de varios trabajos académicos cualitativos anteriores.

La bibliografía de esta disertación analiza la incoherencia de los partidos políticos y el sistema de partidos kurdos y los cambios dramáticos que han presenciado. El sistema de partidos de un sistema bipartidista de las elecciones fundadoras se transformó en un pluralismo moderado en el 2005 y luego en un pluralismo extremo en el 2009. Los dos partidos dominantes, el KDP y la PUK, con ambiciones hegemónicas y la monopolización de las instituciones económicas, militares y políticas impidieron que el

sistema de partidos se institucionalizara. Las debilidades institucionales y las actitudes de los dos actores principales mencionados de la política kurda cuentan con el respaldo de dos fuentes principales, la primera destaca su legado de lucha por los derechos nacionales kurdos, la afiliación tribal y las conductas de votación geográfica de los kurdos. El segundo concentra las relaciones internacionales de mecenazgo en los campos políticos y comerciales que soporta, especialmente las familias líderes, para proteger sus propios beneficios y autoridades.

Este capítulo final es una configuración temática de los hallazgos de este estudio y se dividirá en tres partes. La primera parte es un resumen de los resultados principales de la investigación por temas de acuerdo con las cuatro dimensiones de Mainwaring y Scully (1995). La segunda parte es una revisión de la justificación de la hipótesis y la contribución del estudio a la teoría de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos. La sección final es un análisis conciso sobre las perspectivas para desarrollar una agenda de investigación más completa en los próximos estudios basados en los hallazgos y los temas de este estudio.

II. Hallazgos Principales de la Tesis

Mainwaring y Scully (1995) introdujeron cuatro dimensiones medibles para determinar la institucionalización del sistema de partidos. Ellos argumentan que el grado de nivel de institucionalización de un sistema de partidos a otro es el resultado de la condición de alcance donde se desarrolla el sistema de partidos. Concluyo temáticamente el impacto de los tres factores causales, a saber, la influencia estructural, institucional y extranjera en cada dimensión presentada por Mainwaring y Scully de la siguiente manera.

i. Patrón Estable de la Competencia Entre Partidos

La interpretación de la evidencia presentada en los capítulos empíricos cuatro, cinco y seis puede resumirse como el hecho de que la inestabilidad de la competencia entre partidos dentro de los partidos kurdos es consecuencia de algo más que un factor de

tipo causal. De hecho, la falta de soberanía de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq y el profundo problema de base étnica que tienen los partidos kurdos con los gobiernos centrales de Iraq, y su dependencia del apoyo externo para promover la lucha contra los gobiernos iraquíes, han respaldado esta inestabilidad. Al menos la consolidación del poder de los dos partidos dominantes, la PUK y el KDP, ha empujado a las oposiciones a reunirse en un partido disidente de la PUK en los últimos años. Por lo tanto, se puede observar que a lo largo de la historia los partidos políticos kurdos en Iraq han experimentado un tipo de relación que fluctúa entre la cooperación y el antagonismo, respaldada por las condiciones políticas mencionadas anteriormente. En consecuencia, nuevos rivales que se desarrollan rápidamente y el deterioro de los partidos tradicionales, además de divisiones y fusiones, especialmente durante el último régimen democrático naciente de 26 años de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq, han sido testigos y se han convertido en la principal fuente de volatilidad electoral.

Otras causas de la volatilidad electoral son las debilidades institucionales, y los conflictos ocurrieron con frecuencia entre las fracciones del parlamento de la región de Kurdistán sobre la Ley Presidencial, que posteriormente revirtió el desarrollo democrático. De hecho, la estructura tribal de la sociedad kurda y los vínculos de mecenazgo que se desarrollaron a lo largo de la lucha y posteriormente durante el gobierno autónomo han aumentado aún más estas debilidades institucionales de una manera que los políticos tradicionales que tienen legados de revolución podrían usar los partidos políticos y las instituciones como herramientas para sus propias ganancias individuales. Por lo tanto, se ha producido un tipo diferente de escisión (aún no consolidada) que se originó a partir de ideas relacionadas con reformas económicas y políticas y una alteración motivada del sistema de partidos y que elevó las volatilidades electorales y ministeriales a niveles notables. Debido a estas nuevas fuerzas y la permisividad de las leyes electorales impuestas por el gobierno federal, los partidos antiguos y tradicionales se deterioran abruptamente. Por lo tanto, las volatilidades del porcentaje de votos y del porcentaje de escaños de los partidos políticos y las volatilidades de escaño de los partidos pequeños, etnoreligiosos y antiguos (Cuadros 5.4, 5.5 y 5.6) son evidencia sustancial de un patrón inestable de competencia entre los partidos políticos.

La volatilidad ministerial, por otro lado, es una evidencia clara de que las alteraciones de

gobierno en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq no son asuntos de participación electoral. La naturaleza de la alteración del gobierno que fue medida por el Índice de Apertura, la Frecuencia de Cambio, y el Índice de Alteración del Gobierno y presentada en la sección 5.1.3, resalta una considerable inestabilidad en el gobierno. Tal vez es el resultado del consenso de los partidos políticos sobre la formación del gobierno más que verlo como una cuestión de ganancias electorales de cada partido que ha ganado en las recientes elecciones; especialmente hay ejemplos de apoyo para la designación de cupos gubernamentales para algunos partidos políticos que no tenían escaños en la Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán.

Las tendencias particularistas son otro factor analizado en el capítulo cuatro que tiene una influencia considerable, especialmente en la política electoral relacionada con la asignación de escaños, los círculos electorales, los centros electorales y los presupuestos para esas provincias, que son controlados por los partidos de turno. Parece que los lazos estrechos que tienen los partidos políticos kurdos con los países vecinos también apoyan este argumento. Estas influencias los inspiraron a seguir la discriminación en la asignación de escaños, a pesar de los votos emitidos en cada provincia. La dominación del KDP en las instituciones electorales y gubernamentales ha aumentado la inclinación y el favoritismo de estas instituciones hacia las provincias donde el KDP es dominante. En algunos distritos bajo la autoridad de la PUK, esta tendencia también se puede observar. Por lo tanto, la provincia más influyente, la ciudad capital de Erbil, siempre ha estado representada por una menor cantidad de representantes en comparación con el Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán respecto de Duhok y Sulaimaniya, siendo la segunda ciudad más grande en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq.

Otro hallazgo sugiere relaciones causales existentes entre la frecuencia de los cambios en las reglas electorales y las relacionadas, y la fluidez del sistema de partidos de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq. La frecuente alteración de las leyes y reglamentaciones electorales ha desestabilizado el sistema de partidos debido al impacto que tienen en la comprensión e interpretación de dichas reglas y procedimientos por parte de las personas. Además, la permisividad de las reglas electorales impuestas por TAL en el 2005 abrió la puerta a muchos partidos etnoreligiosos y eventualmente llevó a un cambio de sistema partidario, de un sistema bipartidista a un sistema multipartidista extremo, además de alterar el

patrón de interacciones de los partidos políticos.

También existe evidencia que sugiere una fuerte relación entre la calidad de las instituciones políticas y electorales, y el fraude electoral y la corrupción. A pesar de la significativa volatilidad electoral que aún existe, la participación electoral es considerablemente armónica, lo que puede ser producto de fraudes electorales y la alteración del resultado por parte de los partidos dominantes, que controlan las instituciones electorales. Además, las intimidaciones masivas y el castigo político usado contra quienes cambian la lealtad, en comparación, usando el ataúd público para incitar a las tribus, nobles y aquellos que se alinean con los partidos dominantes, explica por qué los resultados electorales son incompatibles con la tasa de volatilidad electoral y los partidos políticos.

ii. Raíces Estables

La inconsistencia entre el lento desarrollo institucional y la rápida movilización política ha adoptado un tipo de sistema corrupto al punto que el marco institucional no podría incorporar estos aumentos sociales y adoptar sus intereses en el sistema, en cambio, el sistema se vuelve rígido e incapaz de adaptarse a estos nuevos cambios impuestos por las reglas electorales de Iraq. Por lo tanto, se puede ver fácilmente que la sociedad pretoriana (Huntington, 1968: 24) se ha establecido en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq, donde en muchos aspectos, al igual que la infraestructura progresiva y la modernización simulada alcanzada, el desarrollo político aún es muy lento e incluso en algunas fases estático, si no es que revertido. Por lo tanto, en esa atmósfera, especialmente con la cultura política prevaleciente del tribalismo, y en palabras de Huntington: las tendencias de "*clanismo y grupismo amoral*" respaldaban el personalismo de una manera en que el patrón de comportamientos se hacía menos predecible, y el arraigo de los partidos políticos dependía de la tendencia de la tribu en cuanto a permanecer alineado con las mismas líneas partidarias. La preeminencia del tribalismo sobre la ideología y las etiquetas de los partidos políticos, y los fuertes lazos que estas tribus tienen con la magnitud territorial, pueden considerarse un generador de tendencias de subordinación de los partidos políticos. En particular, esta afinidad no solo ha impedido que las partes superen las divisiones territoriales, sino que también ha

apoyado a los actores regionales a considerarla como una gran oportunidad para obstaculizar el proceso de desarrollo de la nación y el posterior sistema nacional de partidos y la creación partidos. Los hallazgos de la estructura social y las influencias exógenas sugieren una fuerte correlación entre los factores basados en el dialecto tribal y las presiones de los actores externos con la localización y el provincialismo de los partidos políticos kurdos iraquíes.

La relación antagónica anterior entre el KDP y la PUK ha cambiado a una relación de cooperación en un polo del espectro, mientras que las formas nuevas y diferentes de partidismo han comenzado en el otro polo. Por lo tanto, las controversias y los desacuerdos sobre muchos asuntos relacionados con el sistema de partidos y las reglas electorales de la región de Kurdistán, además de la institución que debería ser responsable del proceso electoral, se han convertido en nuevas fuentes de conflictos entre estas partes recién surgidas. La revuelta que Gorran apoyó en la política del partido en el 2009, ha revelado la crisis que han sufrido los viejos partidos y ha cambiado el sistema de partidos y también los bloques partidarios. Si los partidos islámicos previamente decidieron participar en gobiernos anteriores –ya sea por las acusaciones de unificar la representación nacional de los kurdos en Iraq o por sus intereses privados por formar parte de formaciones de gabinete, o por la decepción de ser lo suficientemente convincente como para movilizar a la sociedad contra los partidos dominantes– el surgimiento de Gorran los ha motivado a unirse a un nuevo entorno político que representa votantes insatisfechos. Este reciente problema está polarizando dramáticamente a la sociedad y remodelando el sistema de partidos. El mismo concentra su enfoque en cuestiones relacionadas con la reforma de las normativas políticas y económicas y se convirtió en la esencia de los desacuerdos políticos que en cierta medida causaron problemas internos, y que dividieron y fraccionaron algunos partidos políticos tradicionales.

Otro hallazgo es que la volatilidad electoral de los partidos kurdos y las lealtades cambiantes de los votantes es el resultado del legado histórico de antagonismo entre los dos partidos tradicionales y su composición interna frágil y tribal. Además, es el resultado del clientelismo en expansión y los lazos de mecenazgo entre los votantes y los partidos políticos, y la corrupción que los partidos políticos dominantes han estado

practicando en recursos públicos durante su período de gobierno, ya sea mediante el abuso de poder, de dinero o de instituciones. Estos factores finalmente causaron deficiencias vitales en el sistema electoral y generaron elecciones fraudulentas acompañadas de compra de votos e intimidación.

iii. Legitimidad

El tercer criterio de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos enfatiza la percepción positiva de los ciudadanos y los intereses organizacionales de los partidos políticos y el proceso electoral, así como la medida en que los consideran el mejor medio para gobernar. De hecho, el apoyo de esta dimensión se basa en el juicio de élite, los resultados de las elecciones y los datos cualitativos que se refieren a la corrupción y el uso indebido de las instituciones electorales y gubernamentales. La subordinación de los partidos políticos a las potencias regionales, la corrupción y el uso masivo de los ingresos públicos por los partidos gobernantes y las relaciones dudosas, el gobierno y las instituciones electorales politizados, además de los fraudes masivos en las elecciones, han disminuido la confianza de las personas en los partidos, en el Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán y en los organismos gubernamentales de la región de Kurdistán. Por lo tanto, al igual que muchos otros países del tercer mundo y las democracias en desarrollo (Mathisen y Svasand, 2002; Jones, 2005), la fiabilidad de las instituciones electorales y políticas y el sistema judicial en la región de Kurdistán iraquí tienen profundos problemas. Esto se debe en primer lugar a los fraudes masivos que inspiraron a los partidos tradicionales a interesarse menos por la lealtad de las personas. Encontraron nuevas formas de mantener su supremacía a través de manipulaciones, engaños con los resultados electorales y alteraciones del registro electoral; se han involucrado en fraudes electorales y corrupción electoral extrema. Como resultado, las personas perciben la legitimidad de los partidos políticos y el sistema electoral de forma dudosa, de manera que necesita una reforma fundamental para poder desarrollarse al nivel congruente con los principios de la democracia y las normas jurídicas.

La poca confianza de las élites públicas, políticas e intelectuales en los partidos políticos y representantes de los partidos, además de los poseedores de cargos gubernamentales, es consecuencia de la deficiencia del gobierno de la región de Kurdistán y del escaso

rendimiento que estas personas e instituciones han logrado en el ámbito político en las últimas décadas de gobierno autónomo. “*Deficiencia del gobierno*” significa incapacidad del gobierno para cumplir con las condiciones legales básicas de seguridad y de gobierno, y para brindar servicios justos y adecuados a las personas. El gobierno no protegió la voluntad de las personas en el proceso de votación. El uso de los partidos políticos de las direcciones y unidades gubernamentales para aumentar la influencia se expandió no solo para el gobierno y el público, sino también para suprimir la cantidad de votos de la oposición mediante intimidación, amenazas y medios no democráticos al punto de asesinar y secuestrar periodistas y activistas políticos y civiles que intentan publicitar este tipo de problemas.

Además, el uso de las arcas públicas como incentivos electorales para politizar a la sociedad y declarar el fracaso de los partidos contendientes se ha convertido en otro problema que subraya las cuestiones relacionadas con la legitimidad y la fiabilidad de los partidos dirigentes y gobernantes. El patrimonialismo y el nepotismo en la política, con profundas asociaciones con la corrupción, ha agravado aún más la cuestión de la legitimidad de los partidos. Los claros intereses particularistas de las familias gobernantes, la participación de sus clanes y tribus en cuestiones políticas y el crecimiento de las tendencias personalistas en la toma de decisiones se ampliaron especialmente en el intercambio individualista de favores entre personalidades que ocupan cargos en los partidos políticos y el gobierno. Con el tiempo, el clientelismo en la región de Kurdistán ya no se limita a la toma de decisiones dentro de los partidos políticos, sino que también se ha expandido a servicios y proyectos públicos, licitaciones, negocios e inversiones estatales.

Los empleos siguen siendo fundamentales para la política de mecenazgo en la región de Kurdistán iraquí y las empresas pertenecen a partidos políticos que tienen más probabilidades de obtener la mayor cantidad de fondos del gobierno; cuanto más se extiende la autoridad de los partidos gobernantes sobre sus zonas, más se relaciona la naturaleza del clientelismo con el neotribalismo. Además, las dos partes en las relaciones cliente-patrocinador están conectadas en una relación desequilibrada con los poderes regionales y, con el tiempo, se puede observar un alineamiento claro con las políticas al servicio de los intereses de estos poderes internacionales. Los beneficios recíprocos que

obtienen ambas partes en este tipo de relaciones garantizan su continuo apalancamiento y existencia.

Otros hallazgos sugieren que la sociedad politizada en Kurdistán iraquí es una consecuencia del sentimiento nacionalista y de las actitudes antagónicas de los dos partidos dominantes que avanzan unos contra otros. Por lo tanto, los cargos del gobierno, desde los de mayor jerarquía hasta las unidades administrativas de menor jerarquía, se han relacionado con los partidos políticos y su poder para asignar cargos a quienes ellos deseen. De ese modo, un graduado de una universidad tuvo que presentar una recomendación partidista del centro de distrito del partido que dominaba la provincia para conseguir un empleo y, con el tiempo, la proporción de personas contratadas por los dos partidos principales se extendió al 11,6 % de la población total, que es aproximadamente 680.000 adultos. La afiliación a un partido presenta muchas ventajas que los que no son afiliados pierden. Los familiares en el vecindario y los activistas comunitarios que proveen suficientes nuevos afiliados del partido tienen mayores posibilidades de obtener ofertas de empleo e incentivos del partido que aquellos que muestran una afiliación limitada. Sin embargo, las relaciones de sangre a veces juegan un papel más importante que la lealtad y asumir actividades partidarias. De hecho, los datos presentados por el IRI sugieren que al menos el 84 % de los participantes en una encuesta realizada en las tres provincias kurdas consideran que la corrupción es un problema grave, pero solo el 3,7 % de la comunidad paga sobornos según otro estudio de la UNODC (2013).²⁸⁸ Además, la decepción de las personas, especialmente con respecto al nepotismo, alcanzó el 91 %, la colocación de trabajadores por parte de los partidos políticos en cargos gubernamentales un 87 %, la falta de responsabilidad del gobierno un 89 % y finalmente la no aplicación de la ley un 93 %, lo cuales son problemas graves que tienen influencia directa en la legitimidad, especialmente en la de los partidos gobernantes.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁸ Encuesta realizada por Research Middle East Polls del IRI que se realizó del 8 al 15 de diciembre de 2010 titulada “Encuesta sobre la opinión pública de Kurdistán iraquí”. Consulte la encuesta en el siguiente enlace: <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2011%20February%2024%20Survey%20of%20Iraqi%20Public%20Opinion%20in%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region,%20December%208-15,%202010.pdf>

²⁸⁹ Referencia anterior

Uno de los principales hallazgos que respalda la fluidez del sistema de partidos es que los partidos políticos de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq no son acatados por los políticos que controlan los cargos estatales. En cambio, los cargos estatales, tanto en las cámaras ejecutivas como en las legislativas del Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán y del Consejo de Representantes iraquíes, están sujetos a las voluntades de sus partidos políticos y, dentro de los partidos políticos, a solo un pequeño grupo de familias y personas. Por lo tanto, las instituciones formales y legítimas de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq no cuentan con el poder adecuado para movilizar al público y no satisfacen a las personas. Por ejemplo, según Pay Institution, las fracciones parlamentarias no pueden considerar al Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán como el verdadero órgano responsable donde deben tomarse las decisiones más importantes relacionadas con los intereses nacionales, ya que la mayoría de las veces sus representantes están ausentes de las sesiones de dicho Parlamento. En la sesión de primavera del cuarto periodo del Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán en 2015, el porcentaje de ausentes del KDP fue del 42,6 %, de la PUK del 17,2 %, del Gorran del 15,1 %, del IUK y del IGK del 4,8 % y 2,1 %, respectivamente.

Otro problema que tienen los partidos políticos kurdos es confiar en las relaciones de clientelismo y los bonos no solo para controlar las organizaciones de los partidos internos y la toma de decisiones, sino también los procesos electorales. El control que tienen sobre el gobierno, la legislatura y el mercado, y la fuerte influencia que tienen en la sostenibilidad social y cultural de la sociedad kurda, finalmente convirtió el proceso electoral en una fachada para un mayor control y legitimación de todos los aspectos de la política kurda. Por lo tanto, las elecciones no son un método para cambiar el gobierno y las políticas, sino que son un contrato renovador para el mantenimiento del poder por parte de esos partidos. Durante las últimas dos décadas, por ejemplo, el primer ministro fue reemplazado solo una vez, que fue durante una mitad de un período de gabinete, mientras que su partido solo cuenta con el 36 % de los escaños del Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán.

Finalmente, el uso de recursos públicos por los partidos en el poder ha aumentado aún más la corrupción electoral. Debido a la falta de legislación, se estipula que el dinero debe invertirse en campañas electorales; los partidos políticos que tienen mayor acceso a

los fondos públicos utilizan ilícitamente los recursos en la medida necesaria para sus campañas. Además, las campañas no se centran en los proyectos y las promesas que no se han cumplido, sino que promueven promesas inalcanzables, pero debido a las deficiencias de los canales de comunicación privados e independientes y la cultura de la democracia débil e impopular, no se ha reclamado a las partes, en general, que rindan cuentas y asuman la responsabilidad de sus promesas electorales.

iv. Autonomía y Organización Interna

La distribución territorial de los grupos sociales es una dimensión crucial del conflicto, así como de las resoluciones de conflictos. La correlación entre territorio y cultura (estado y nación) no solo ha sido el objetivo de los desarrolladores de la nación, sino también de quienes intentan bloquearla. A diferencia de la mayoría de los sistemas de partidos europeos que surgieron después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, los partidos políticos kurdos no tienen ni democracia interna ni seguridad externa como tampoco soberanía consolidada, por lo que los datos presentados en los Cuadros 4.7, 4.8 y 4.9 y el comportamiento electoral subnacional de los electorados kurdos pueden considerarse consecuencias del aumento de la influencia de los actores tribales internos y regionales sobre los partidos kurdos.

Además, la evidencia apoya que los partidos kurdos no cuentan con estructura organizacional ni ideología sólida, como es el caso de los partidos masivos. En cambio, son una mezcla genérica con tendencias populistas que sufre de corrupción, clientelismo y redes de organizaciones neotribales. La mayoría de las veces se convierten en partidos cártel que dependen de los respaldos del gobierno pero tienen creencias objetivas frágiles que se refieren a la democracia. Hacen propaganda de ideologías y fascinan a las personas mientras aluden a la democracia y las reivindicaciones socialdemócratas, generadas a partir de su naturaleza estructural débil y de sus familias gobernantes. Además, las divisiones sociales y culturales los vinculan a un territorio y los localizan para representar solo los intereses de uno o dos grupos particularistas, mientras que a otros los excluyen involuntariamente.

Otro tema analizado en esta investigación con respecto a este criterio es la ideología y las

etiquetas débiles de los partidos políticos. Debido a que los partidos tradicionales adoptaron sentimientos nacionales y patrióticos en la era de la lucha, parecían partidos étnicos. Sin embargo, después de su compromiso con las prácticas democráticas, este sentimiento se ha vuelto gradualmente menos eficaz. Si bien los partidos tradicionales han adoptado nuevas reivindicaciones e hicieron declaraciones sobre los derechos constitucionales kurdos en Iraq, también se han centrado demasiado en los incentivos y el botín generados en Bagdad y los gobiernos federales, y en el dinero que obtienen de las empresas con los países vecinos. Por lo tanto, el sentimiento de nación se ha convertido más bien en un lema comercial utilizado por los partidos tradicionales y los gobernantes en las campañas electorales. Una fuerte evidencia de este reclamo fue cuando más del 98 % de las personas de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq y las áreas en disputa en el referéndum del 2005 votaron que “sí” con respecto a que se fueran de Iraq, y los dos partidos gobernantes, aun, usaron este resultado como un fuerte reclamo para obtener más derechos en el nuevo gobierno iraquí antes que seguir la instrucción nacional.

El liderazgo de los partidos políticos kurdos, de hecho, ha obstaculizado el desarrollo y la democracia de los partidos internos y ha adoptado la autonomía de los partidos políticos para que eventualmente solo sirva a los objetivos que estos irremplazables líderes revolucionarios carismáticos han establecido. Estos líderes gradualmente se hacen pasar por élites revolucionarias únicas que nacieron para liderar. Su trasfondo moral y su estilo de liderazgo de mecenazgo no los ha condicionado a negociar ni a comprometerse en las nuevas fases de la política, y el legado que tienen siempre los ha impulsado a verse a sí mismo como superiores a los demás. Eventualmente, su comportamiento egoísta les ha impedido ver a alguien mejor que ellos mismos para gobernar. Por lo tanto, se imponen fuertes barreras frente a las nuevas generaciones, mientras un pequeño porcentaje de la generación joven sigue estrechamente vinculado a ellos de una manera en la que la modificación de la metodología política es difícil de lograr. Otro problema es que no lograron fomentar la política civil y se convirtieron en políticos profesionales que pueden examinar metas tanto en épocas de lucha como en épocas civiles y democráticas, más bien muestran incapacidad para mostrar dinámicas de actitud y abandonar el comportamiento *tribal*. Por lo tanto, esperan que las generaciones de líderes de sus partidos los vean como sus héroes en la gestión política de hoy en día, mientras que sus

reputaciones se han deteriorado y marginado gradualmente, no solo en la sociedad sino también dentro de sus propios partidos.

Los grupos oportunistas dentro de los partidos políticos desempeñan una función crucial en la ampliación de las tendencias subnacionales de los partidos políticos y viceversa. Los organismos locales centralizados y las empresas familiares de los clanes políticos y las familias entre y dentro de los partidos políticos dominantes han competido por las tasas de interés más elevadas que pueden obtener por parte de sus relaciones de clientelismo internacional y la inversión que realizan en activos e ingresos públicos. Para este propósito, han reclutado personalidades alineadas con sus intereses y han asignado escaños a aquellos que consideran que sirven mejor a estos intereses. Con el tiempo, una red de relaciones cliente-patrocinador entre las tres instituciones formales: el Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán, el gobierno de la región de Kurdistán y los partidos políticos predominantes, se ha establecido y convertido en el principal patrocinador de los partidos dominantes para alimentar las relaciones internacionales de mecenazgo y su garantía de dominio.

Finalmente, el cambio en la regla electoral desde el 2005 posiblemente haya afectado a la organización de los partidos políticos, especialmente con respecto a la participación de mujeres y jóvenes. Esto obligó a los partidos políticos a desarrollar políticas que fomentaran la participación de las mujeres en sus consejos de liderazgo y a enmendar sus decretos partidarios para allanar el camino a mujeres y jóvenes con el fin de cumplir con las partes internas de los partidos que se derivan del cupo de género de 30 % y 25 % declarado por la constitución en ambas cámaras nacional e baja. Sin embargo, el clientelismo y las tendencias políticas basadas en la tribu han restringido estas oportunidades a las personas conectadas estrechamente con los presidentes, o a aquellas con perfiles específicos dentro de los partidos.

III. Metodología

En este estudio de caso cualitativo, espacio-temporal y en profundidad sobre la institucionalización del sistema de partidos en el Kurdistán iraquí, se ha utilizado un enfoque de neoinstitucionalismo debido al espacio que proporciona a las estructuras que

desempeñan funciones importantes en la explicación del comportamiento político y los resultados de los procesos políticos. En particular, en esta investigación se ha llegado a la conclusión de que el enfoque histórico es la metodología mejor comprendida para alcanzar los resultados de este estudio. Esto puede deberse a varias razones: primero, la dificultad para establecer una línea divisoria clara entre este enfoque y otros del institucionalismo. El enfoque histórico en especial es un enfoque integrado en casi todos los demás métodos. Por lo tanto, las premisas de base institucional y sus adaptaciones dependientes de factores históricos a los cambios políticos y ambientales sugeridos por este enfoque han sido sustanciales para responder las preguntas de la investigación. Además, dado que este enfoque se relaciona de cerca con el desarrollo histórico de instituciones políticas vinculadas a una sociedad pero no a otras, la comprensión de la profunda relación entre las instituciones kurdas y las conductas políticas predominantes da gran relevancia a las narrativas históricas de los acontecimientos y procedimientos interrelacionados y hace que sea necesario tenerlas en cuenta.

En especial, este enfoque no pretende insistir en que las instituciones son el único factor causal en la dinámica política. En cambio, tiene en cuenta otros factores, como el socioeconómico, y el papel que desempeñan las ideas en las estructuras institucionales. Debido a esta concepción, este estudio considera que es útil explicar cómo se crean los mecanismos políticos kurdos, así como la estructura de estos mecanismos que dieron lugar a determinados resultados en el contexto de Irak y los marcos políticos de la región del Kurdistán. Además, se considera una metodología ideal para los estudios de casos debido a que rechaza la generalización de la similitud de resultados de fuerzas operativas similares. Estas fuerzas operativas se analizan en sus características ambientales y contextuales, es decir, contextos institucionales, con mayor énfasis en sus desarrollos históricos y la evolución que han seguido hasta alcanzar su estado actual. Esto se hace principalmente al subrayar la «capacidad estatal» y los «legados de políticas» para estructurar las opciones posteriores de políticas y el efecto de las líneas de políticas anteriores sobre las fuerzas de la sociedad con el objetivo de organizarse en una línea y no en otras y de desarrollar políticas de interés acordes, esto es, subsecuentes sin intención.

Además, este enfoque se consideró más sofisticado porque enfatiza las asimetrías del

poder correlacionadas con el desarrollo y la operación institucionales y la atmósfera en la que las instituciones dan a algunos grupos de interés más oportunidad de acceso al poder y a la toma de decisiones que a otros. Por último, en lugar de enfatizar el grado en que los resultados políticos satisfacen a cada individuo o grupo, se enfatiza cómo algunos grupos e individuos tienen éxito y otros no. En consecuencia, este enfoque logra conceptualizar la relación entre las instituciones formales e informales, los comportamientos individuales y las instituciones mediante análisis cualitativos de las entrevistas semiestructuradas que se realizaron a treinta y tres académicos kurdos y expertos en el campo, además de trabajos académicos previos, y una encuesta realizada por organizaciones internacionales. Se trata de una investigación que desarrolla la comprensión del problema y relaciona los acontecimientos con los efectos.

IV. Justificaciones de la Hipótesis

Esta parte es una presentación temática de los hallazgos de tres capítulos empíricos dedicados a investigar los tres factores causales argumentados que se correlacionan con el marco teórico de Mainwaring y Scully para analizar la institucionalización del sistema de partidos de la región de Kurdistán en Irak, que son: (1) tres factores de tipo causal, es decir, influencias estructurales, institucionales y extranjeras, que provocan la fluidez del sistema de partidos del Kurdistán iraquí; (2) los tres factores de tipo causal mencionados se interrelacionan; (3) los factores causales estructurales y extranjeros tienen una influencia más eficaz en el proceso de no institucionalización que en el institucional. La primera variable independiente de la primera hipótesis, los **factores estructurales**, se implementó mediante tres divisiones sociales: nacionalismo, tribalismo y concentración geográfica de los partidos kurdos. La tendencia nacionalista y étnica en la conducta de votación se analiza con una investigación cualitativa en profundidad del desarrollo normativo del nacionalismo y la aparición de partidos políticos nacionalistas dentro del período de lucha, seguida de los tres indicadores de Chandra. Los nombres de los partidos, sus mensajes explícitos y las conductas de votación étnica se emplearon para determinar hasta qué punto los partidos políticos kurdos tienen base étnica y basan su fuerza sobre factores étnicos y geográficos.

Se analizó la cultura política de tribalismo con una profunda investigación desarrollada sobre los juicios de expertos y estudios previos, en especial los logros trascendentales de los estudiosos holandeses Martin Van Bruinessen y Michiel Leezenberg y el historiador británico David McDowall, que estudian la historia y la cultura kurda desde hace décadas y cuyos hallazgos se han vuelto fuentes indispensables de casi todos los estudios kurdos de sociología y politología. Además, también se han investigado el programa y los estatutos de los partidos políticos para determinar en qué medida la cultura política focalizada del tribalismo influyó en la organización interna y las políticas de los partidos y reflejó en consecuencia la vida política general de la sociedad kurda.

La concentración geográfica de los partidos políticos se midió con un indicador introducido sobre la nacionalización de los partidos políticos por Jones y Mainwaring (2003). La nacionalización de los partidos kurdos se ha implementado mediante el *coeficiente de Gini*, un índice significativo para ponderar la nacionalización y comparar en el tiempo los partidos y sistemas de partidos en diferentes estados, provincias y comunidades. El **factor institucional** se implementó mediante dos subvariables: (2.1) *establecimiento de las instituciones políticas*; y (2.2) *calidad de las instituciones electorales*, además de una serie de índices adaptados del índice de volatilidad electoral de Pedersen para medir la inestabilidad electoral y ministerial. También se hizo hincapié en una cadena de mecanismos dependientes de factores históricos con relación a la estratificación de malos funcionamientos institucionales en los siguientes aspectos de las instituciones electorales kurdas, y se centró la atención en las instituciones estructurales con énfasis en la «falta de instituciones fundamentales», «institución electoral sesgada» y «el conjunto de instituciones y políticas gubernamentales». La segunda cuestión es la calidad de los procedimientos electorales, que destaca la «manipulación y los fraudes electorales».

Los principales hallazgos de este estudio sugieren que la composición estructural de la sociedad kurda y las influencias extranjeras son dos factores causales principales de los partidos kurdos y la fluidez del sistema de partidos. A pesar del papel fundamental que tienen las debilidades institucionales en la incoherencia del sistema de partidos, es en primer lugar una consecuencia de los dos factores de tipo causal mencionados anteriormente, pero aún en una relación interactiva con ellos. Las coyunturas políticas,

como las guerras civiles, los acuerdos estratégicos y de unificación para compartir el poder entre las dos partes en el poder, son todos resultados del pensamiento tradicional tribal y neotribal de arreglos políticos (Kennedy, 2015).

La relación de patrocinio internacional, especialmente con Turquía e Irán, además de la confianza que el Acuerdo de Washington otorgó a los líderes carismáticos de estos dos partidos dominantes, ha estimulado el pensamiento tribal en la toma de decisiones y en la configuración y las políticas institucionales. Por lo tanto, la inestabilidad ministerial, el dilema presidencial, el elevado nivel de corrupción y los problemas administrativos relacionados con el sistema electoral, la institución electoral sesgada y los fraudes electorales han sido generados y respaldados por estos dos factores principales. La volatilidad electoral, por otra parte, especialmente la relacionada con la permisividad a grupos etnoreligiosos y partidos kurdos de base islámica, fue consecuencia de las leyes electorales obligatorias impuestas por la Administración Provincial de la Coalición y la Ley de Administración Transitoria, y más tarde por la constitución permanente de Iraq y el Consorcio Internacional del Epigenoma Humano (IHEC, por sus siglas en inglés). En otras palabras, no fueron iniciaciones de los gobernantes ni del Parlamento de la región de Kurdistán elegido para adaptarse a las demandas de la sociedad kurda. Más bien, al ser vistos como los progenitores de los logros kurdos en Iraq, y debido a los legados de relación que tienen, los fundadores de los dos partidos dominantes se han vinculado firmemente a la política kurda y a las referencias de cuestiones kurdas que las fuerzas de la coalición estaban considerando en la reconstrucción de un nuevo Iraq y su integración en la estructura política federal y democrática. Por lo tanto, se han convertido en fiscales y oradores de los derechos étnicos kurdos en Iraq, al tiempo que amplían la influencia sobre los marcos institucionales, militares y financieros.

V. Respuestas a Preguntas de Investigación

Las dos principales preguntas de investigación entrelazadas invitan a una investigación más amplia sobre el fenómeno de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos (más amplia en este contexto significa más allá de los estudios regionales). De hecho, existen excelentes estudios dentro de la región sobre cuán bien o mal institucionalizados están los sistemas de partidos, y han ampliado el conocimiento de este

estudio sobre el tema. Pero todavía existe la necesidad de una justificación sistemática de por qué algunos sistemas de partidos de diferentes regiones presentan más inestabilidad que otros. Los esfuerzos en esa dirección han sido modestos, especialmente en lo que respecta a los estudios de casos en profundidad, mientras que ningún esfuerzo se ha concentrado en absoluto en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq y los sistemas del partido iraquí. Por ese motivo, es importante llenar ese vacío y seguir la explicación profunda que enfatiza las respuestas de las dos preguntas de investigación que esos elementos deliberados han introducido al estudio sobre la institucionalización del sistema de partidos y merecen un análisis más cuidadoso entre los temas que resuenan y aún prevalecen. Dentro de la bibliografía se menciona lo siguiente: ¿Por qué después de más de 25 años de gobierno autónomo y un nivel sustancial de democracia, todavía su sistema de partidos no está institucionalizado? ¿Y qué estimula esta fluidez?

Para responder a estas preguntas, las tres hipótesis mencionadas anteriormente se han basado en premisas y se han empleado una serie de índices y técnicas para justificar aún más los resultados que ha alcanzado este estudio. Las justificaciones de las hipótesis en primer lugar se basaron en los juicios de expertos y eruditos y las narraciones cualitativas que enfatizaban las coyunturas críticas y las condiciones políticas por las que, en consecuencia, se veía obstaculizado el proceso de institucionalización. También se han investigado datos de documentaciones oficiales y formales, además de logros académicos anteriores, para enfatizar el proceso político general en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq.

VI. Implicaciones Para Estudios Futuros

Esta investigación ha abierto la puerta a muchos otros problemas que podrían convertirse en fuentes de futuras agendas de estudio. De hecho, debido al enfoque temático del estudio sobre una investigación profunda de la institucionalización del sistema de partidos de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq, no fue posible centrarse en la institucionalización del sistema de partidos iraquí y compararlo con los de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq para concluir si el carácter de no categoría de estado de la región de Kurdistán de Iraq es el factor más influyente que promueve influencias exógenas y extranjeras para debilitar a los partidos kurdos o si la cuestión de las divisiones sociales es el factor prominente que estimula este problema proliferado que causa la inestabilidad

política y la fluidez del sistema de partidos en ese tipo de sistemas. Las limitaciones metodológicas no permitieron incluir esto en este estudio, pero será un excelente acierto que se investigará en futuros estudios.

Además, se supone que el buen desempeño económico en la región de Kurdistán de Iraq estimula el proceso de estabilidad e institucionalización; sin embargo, esta es también otra pregunta sin respuesta que la limitación metodológica no permitió cubrir en este estudio. Aun así, es un punto que podría asociarse con un mayor desarrollo en los próximos estudios, especialmente en una investigación comparativa entre la región de Kurdistán de Iraq y otra región con menor o el mismo nivel de crecimiento económico, pero con un sistema de partidos mejor institucionalizado.

Finalmente, el manifiesto de este estudio abrió muchos espacios para estudios futuros, especialmente para aquellos que se concentran en el impacto de la cultura política en las instituciones políticas de ingeniería que siguen a las revoluciones y las guerras civiles. Este estudio es un enfoque sistemático para un estudio de caso individual que es principalmente descriptivo y se basa en los juicios de expertos. El mismo hace hincapié en la inspección de las raíces históricas de las conductas institucionales e individuales existentes, y en establecer sus patrones y consecuencias en los resultados del sistema de partidos. La percepción de los patrones existentes ayuda al estudiante de los estudios de caso individuales de este campo en particular a entender cómo las instituciones, las divisiones sociales, la cultura política y algunas influencias exógenas están reformando los resultados políticos y lo que los hace cambiar. Para ampliar la comprensión de tales posibles interacciones, empíricamente un paso influyente sería el aumento de este tipo de estudios, particularmente en el Medio Oriente, para facilitar el escrutinio de la probabilidad de patrones políticos existentes, y en consecuencia, la posibilidad de estudios de comprensión cruzada a nivel nacional se convierte en un objetivo alcanzable.

APPENDIXES

Appendix I: The Semi-structured Interview Questions

My name is Vian Majeed Faraj, I am a PhD candidate at Faculty of Law, Political Science and Criminology- University of Valencia. My thesis analyzes the process of party system institutionalization in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. I would like to ask you a group of questions about different fields of politics such as; electoral system, electoral process, political party competitions, linkage between political development and economic development, corruption, the impact of International Pressure on Kurdish parties, the nature of political parties in decision making and etc. I believe these areas are related to the process of PSI in Kurdistan Region.

Recording and confidentiality

Before starting the interview I would like to ask your permission to record the interview electronically, as well as to take notes during our conversation. The interview will be used only for the research purposes. Please feel free to ask me to stop recording or taking notes whenever you like to say something “off the record”. If you do not like to answer a particular question, you are free to skip it. Please inform me whether you prefer to be anonymously referred to or personally and confirm you do not mind if I quoted from this interview in my dissertation. Finally can I contact you in case I have additional questions?

1. Could you tell me a little about your personal background? Your educational, professional, political career and motivations to become involved in politics.
2. How would you characterize the relationship of your organization/institution with political parties? (Only ORGANIZATION LEADERS).
3. How do you evaluate the Electoral process in Kurdistan region of Iraq, especially in terms of quality, results voters, participations, campaigns? What are the most problematic issues face these elections? [ALL]
4. How was your party founded and what were the key incentives for its establishment? Have there been any changes in the party’s aims/objectives over the years? [POLITICAL ELITES/PARTY MEMBERS ONLY]
5. Did your party have received initial support from civil society organizations or

social groups [i.e. ethnic, regional, urban, rural, religious, tribal, military, business, civic groups, trade unions]? Have patterns of support changed over the years? [POLITICAL ELITES ONLY].

6. How would you describe your political party in terms of ideology? [right, left, pragmatic, conservative, liberal, socialist, green, religious, nationalist etc.] Have there been changes in the ideological content of the party? [All]

7. How would you describe the decision making process in your political party? Systematic, personalistic, fractionalistic..etc.? [All]; FOR Journalists, ACADEMICS and NGO'S: How would you describe the decision making process in political parties?..]

8. Do you think the foreign pressures (nationally and internationally) for whatever reason ever imposed on your political party to change a particular decision or to take a particular action? And how? [FOR JOURNALISTS, ACADEMICS AND NGO'S: Do you think the foreign pressures (nationally and internationally), for whatever reason ever imposed on political parties..]

9. Electoral rules and electoral institutions are considered relevant to party system development. What would you think are the main constraints and incentives to your party in this regard [electoral formula, rules for funding, electoral institutions, rules reformation etc.]? [For JOURNALISTS, ACADEMICS and NGOs: "How relevant are electoral and party laws in shaping electoral outcomes..."]

10. How do you explain the political parties finance sources, where do you think they generate funds [State funds, foreign funding, member's quotes]?

11. What have been the main changes within the party [party splits, mergers, party switches]? [POLITICAL ELITES/PARTY MEMBERS ONLY]

12. How do you evaluate the principal campaign strategies? [POLITICAL ELITES/PARTY MEMBERS ONLY]

13. What attribute(s) and cause(s) the strength of your party in some constituencies while characterized with weaknesses in the others? Can you please describe this for me?. [for Academics what attributes and causes of political parties strength in some areas and weaknesses in others? [ALL]

14. How would you characterize your party relationship with other parties? [Informal, cooperation, antagonism, etc.] [FOR Journalists, [Academics and NGO'S: how do you characterize inter-parties relationships?] [ALL]

15. What is your reaction to the statement "political parties are the main instrument for governance", would you please explain? [All]

16. Would you believe that all parties compete in equal conditions? If not what are the main differences? [ALL]

17. Would you please give me your opinion about the following two choices; (a) a powerful leader that develops the KRI, (b) a democratic political competition? And why you have chosen this but not the other? [All]

18. What do you think about political parties involvement in corruption? Would you please give some details? [All]

Appendix II: List of Interviewees

1. **Abdul-Satar Majeed**, the current Ministry of Agriculture and a Politburo member of IGK. He is a previous peshmarga of IMK during 1987-2001, and followed Mr. Ali Bapir after he founded IGK. He held many of his party's positions from very low up to Politburo Executive member. This interview took place in November 12th, 2016 via Telephone.

2. **Abu-Bakr Omer Abdullah (Haladini)** was a Komele member for seven years in eighties, later he joined the IUK. He was a politburo member, yet after being elected for KRP in 2013, he has become the spokesman of the Islamic union's list in KRP and a member of both the internal affairs and legal committees. Simultaneously, he occupies a leadership seat of his party specializing in the party's political and public affairs. The interview took place in the KRP office in Sulaimaniya in September 26th, 2016.

3. **Abu-Bakr Ali (Kawani)** is an Islamic writer and politician who holds two M.A. degrees in Islamic studies, and political science. He involved in Islamic streams in 1981 from the and after the establishment of IUK he became a Politburo member for almost 10 years. He was a minister in the fifth cabinet of the KRG and is the writer of 'The Nationalism and the Kurdish Nationalism', 'Reform and the Islamist Reformist Ideology', and many other series books. After his failure in the elections of the presidency of IUK in 2016, he currently focuses on Political Islamism and Post Political Islamism. The interview took place in the KRP office in Sulaimaniya in September 28th, 2016.

4. **Ali Hama Salih** is a current KRP representing the Change Movement. He is a well-known young media figure and a previous member of leadership council of his party. . He is the deputy of both Natural Resources and Finance and Investment committees in KRP. The interview took place in Qaiwan City September 30th, 2016.

5. **Aram Rafaat** is Ph.D. holder in Politics and International Relations at the University of Adelaide in 2013, a university lecturer and a writer of many articles relative to the field of this study. On January 2016 and January 2017. Which date

6. **Barham Salih** was the former deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, and the former Prime Minister of the sixth KRG. Currently, he is the vice president of the PUK and the chairman of the board of trustees of the American University of Iraq. The interview took place in his home in Sulaimaniya in September 21st, 2016.

7. **Chnar Saad Abdulla**, the head of the Sandiacate buro of KDP and a member of leadership council. She is a PhD holder in Sociology at University of Salahaddin. The interview took place in her office in Erbil in October 4th, 2016.

8. **Farid Assasard** (Farid Sabir Qadir Hasan) is an intellectual leader in PUK. He joined PUK/Komele in 1978 and became the news editor of the Arabic section of PUK radio in the struggle era around 1979. He became the chairman of PUK Publishing House and later he founded the Kurdistan Center for Strategic Studies, and later in 1997 became its chairman. He has been a member in PUK's leadership council since 2001 and is involved in almost all the publishing activities of PUK. [The interview took place in his office in Sulaimaniya in October 6th, 2016.

9. **Hadi Ali**, a cofounder and the president of the Council of Political Affairs of IUK. He is originally from Halabja, therefore he was involved to most of the Islamic political activities in that city. He holds a PhD degree in Islamic Studies in UK. The interview took place in the main office of the party Erbil in October 5th, 2016.

10. **Hemn Hawrami**, A Master holder of International Relations and a member of leadership council of KDP. He is the current head of the Bureau of KDP's International relations. The interview took place in English language in Massif Salahadin/Erbil in October 5th, 2016.

11. **Jaafar Ebrahim Haji Emniki**, is the vice president of KRP of KDP and a member of KDP's politburo. He is one of the splintered members of Party Gal who left the KDP in 1981 and remerged in the KDP in 1993. Since then he held many party positions including the Election, Organization bureaus, and the Strategic Research Center. The interview conducted in the Main Buildin of KRP in October 4th, 2016.

12. **Kamyar Sabear**, is a political analyst, and writer based in Australia. He holds Master of International Relations at University of Macquarie. He focuses on Kurdish Language and Political Critique. The interview took place through Facebook Messenger.

13. **Kharaman Mohammed Jaff**, is a KRP and IUK's member of Leadership Council. She was a clandestine member of Sahwa and Brotherhood organizations since 1980s. She was the former secretary of Islamic Sisters of IUK, and IUK politburo member. The interview took place in IUK office of Sulaimaniya in October 1st, 2016.

14. **Kirmanj Gundi** is a full professor at the Department of Educational Leadership at Tennessee State University, and teaches at the graduate level (master's – doctoral programs). He was the Head of Kurdish National Congress-USA and has several publications on Kurds. The interview was conducted via Email.

15. **Mahmoud Mohammed Mahmoud** is a politburo member of KDP. His membership of KDP dates back to Eilul Revolution in the beginning of 1970s. He occupied many posts within the KDP, yet he was also a mayor of Erbil. He also was a minister of Culture in fourth cabinet. The interview took place in KDP's main politburo office in Massif in October 4th, 2016.

16. **Mohammed Hakim Jabbar** is the current IGK chief executive of the Political bureau and one of the cofounders of the party in 2001. The interview took place in his office in Sulaimaniya in 2016, October 6th.

17. **Mohammed Shareef** is a fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society (London). He has worked and is currently a lecturer in Politics and International Relations of the Middle East at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. Previously a Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Sulaimani in Iraqi Kurdistan. He is a founding member of the Board of Directors of the London Kurdish Institute. He is the

author of 'The United States, Iraq and the Kurds: Shock, Awe and Aftermath' (Routledge 2014) and co-editor with Professor Gareth Stansfield of the forthcoming book: "The Kurdish Question Revisited", which will be published by Oxford University Press in New York in early 2017. The interview was conducted via phone and other mods of interviewing.

18. **Mohammed Tofiq Rahim** is the head of international relations' chamber of Gorran's movement. He was one of the early members of PUK who joined the party 1975. He occupied many partisan and governmental positions in addition to KRP membership. Last position he occupied was the minister of Iraqi ministry of Industry, and within PUK was a politburo member, yet with his fellows resigned in 2006 to become the cofounder of Gorran Movement. [The interview took place in his office in the Change Movement's main office in Sulaimaniya in October 5th, 2016.

19. **Narmin Osman** an honored member of PUK, and a holder of eleven ministerial positions in both Iraq and Kurdistan region governments. She is a Mathematic graduate from Baghdad University. She is a former member of Plodder Group of Kurdistan until it integrated in PUK in 1991 and currently is a member of the PUK's Leadership Council. The interview took place in her home in October 1st, 2016.

20. **Omar Sheikh Mose** is a Syrian Kurd, and a cofounder of PUK in 1975. He left Syria in 1962 for undergraduate studies in International Relations at London University. After the Syrian government withdrawn his citizenship for political reasons he took Stockholm his home, and pursued studying M.A. After he left PUK in 1983, he became a researcher and a university lecturer at Stockholm University between 1973-1978 and 1986-2001. The interview was conducted by email.

21. **Rebwar Fatah**, a political analyst of ME, a PhD of Physics at University of London, living in UK, an Establisher of former English newsletters Hawkar, Zhini Nwe, and the Kurdish Media.com. He is currently the CEO of The ME consultancy. The interview took place via phone in November 16th, 2016.

22. **Rebwar Karim Mahmoud** is an adjacent professor of University of Sulaimani, and Human Development University specializing in American Role in Iraq. [The interview took place in his office Human Development University in Sulaimaniya in September 20th, 2016.

23. **Rebwar Rashed**, is a PhD holder in political science at the University of Stockholm, he also studied economy and especially been interested in feminism and religion. In addition to his achievements in translation political books regarding to the Kurdish cause he also is a writer of "Kurdistan is Not for Sale!" which is a political critique of the Kurdish politics in Southern Kurdistan in 1990's. Currently he is the co-president of the Kurdish National Congress. KNK, a Kurdish political platform based in Belgium focuses on the Kurdish issue in the four parts of Kurdistan, and the Kurds who live in diaspora. The interview conducted via Email.

24. **Salar Mahmoud** is a current MP of PUK. He is serving in KRP for two terms. He is considered one of the voices within PUK asking for reform. The interview took place in a coffee house in Sulaimaniya in September 26th, 2016.

25. **Saman Fawzi**, is a professor of University of Sulaimani and was the head of department of Political Science fore some years. He also was an MP of PUK in Iraqi Parliament. Currently is a visiting scholar in the University of Human Development. The interview took place in a coffee house in Sulaimaniya in September 18th, 2016.

26. **Sarwar Abdulrahman Omar**, is an assistant professor of History, and a former lecturer at University of Sulaimaniya. He also was an MP of PUK between 2009-2013. He currently is the CEO of Pay Institution of Education and Development and Focusing on political and Educational development, through observing and evaluating the relevant institutions of their Focus. He is the writer of the 'The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan: The Establishment and The Commence of Revolution (1975-1976) in Kurdish Language and many other articles of Political History. The interview took place in his organization that based in Sulaimaniya in October 6th, 2016.

27. **Seevan Saeed**, is a Ph.D. holder at University Exeter and also a specialist of political sociology stressing on PKK's politics, and he is the writer of 'Kurdish Politics in Turkey, From the PKK to the KCK'. The interview conducted through email and Phone. January, 5th, 2018.

28. **Sheikh Latif Sheikh Mustafa** is a scholar of constitutional law, and previously a deputy in National Iraqi Parliament (2009-2014). He was the chairman of the provincial committee of IHCE in 2005-2006 when the first democratic elections at national and provincial levels were held in Iraq, and the second experiment in the KR was conducted. Currently, he is an honored Judge directing the Juvenile Court and a university professor at faculty of Law. The interview took place in his office in Sulaimaniya Court/ New Building in September 19th, 2016.

29. **Sherko Jawdat** is the head of IUK's KRP fraction, and a member of Political Executive of his party. He is a PhD holder at University of London focusing on Good Governance in his Thesis. He is also the head of the Natural Resources and Energy Committee in KRP. The interview took place in his party's office in Sulaimaniya in October 5th, 2016.

30. **Shorish Mustafa Rasool**, (known as Shorish Haji) a PhD holder in Political Science at Exeter University, is the current Spokesman of Gorran Movement. He served as a Peshmarga for eleven years in the struggle era within PUK after he finished his university degree in 1976, and then migrated to the UK. He has a number of publications in Kurdish, Arabic, and English regarding Kurdish issues, Arabization, and nation destruction. The interview took place in the Main Gorran's office in Sulaimaniya in October 5th, 2016.

31. **Soran Omar** is an Islamic political figure in the Islamic Group of Kurdistan. He is one of the highest voices against corruptions. He represents IGK in KRP from 2013. He is the chairman of the Human Rights committee in addition to being a member of the Finance and Economy committee. He also works as a consultant for his party's president. The interview took place in the KRP office in Sulaimaniya in September 29th, 2016.

32. **Yusuf Mohammed Sadiq** is the current KRP Spokesman, born in Sulaimani, 1978. He was a political activist earlier to his KRP job. In 2010 after the establishment of Gorran, was appointed the director of Political Chamber of the Gorran Movement. In 2013 he headed Gorran's list and ran for the Kurdistan National Assembly. He earned a PhD degree in Political Science at the University of Sulaimani in 2014. The interview took place in the Main Gorran's office in Sulaimaniya in October 8th, 2016.

33. **Zmnako Jalal**, the Ececutive of the Election Chamber of the Change Movement and a member of the Leadership council of the party. A former ICSP monitor, Iraqi Civil Society Program, in Sulaimaniya and an NDI former trainer for

analyzing and elaborating Constitutions. The interview took place in theis main office in Sulaimaniya in October 8th, 2016.

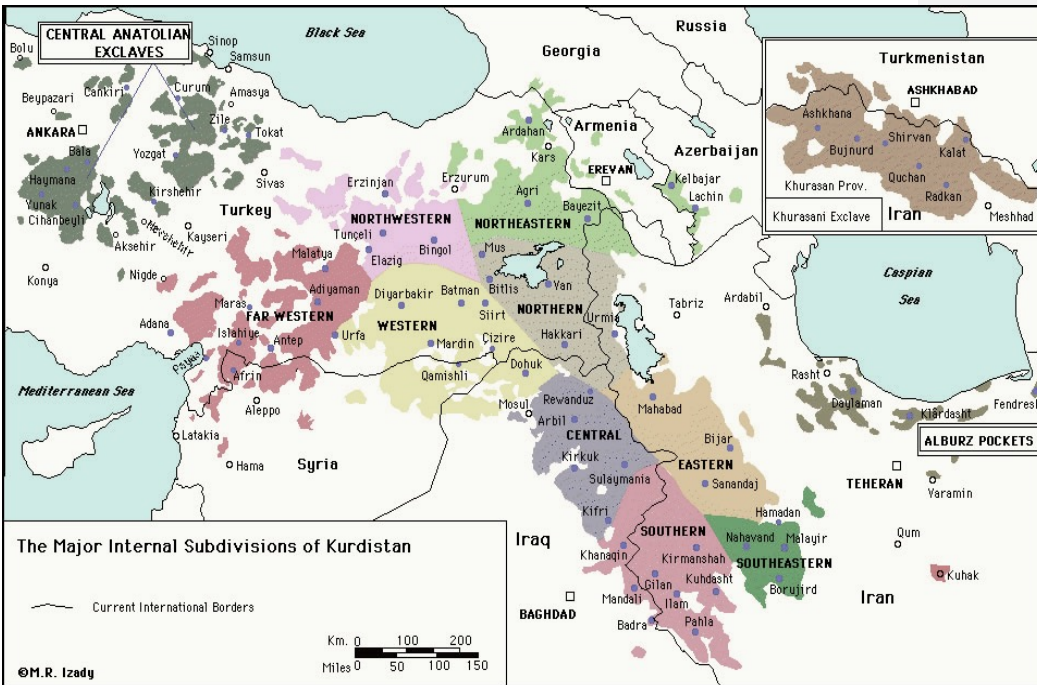
Appendix III: Current Background Home of The Native

Speaker of Kurdish Dialects



Adopted from Hennerbichler (2012: 66)

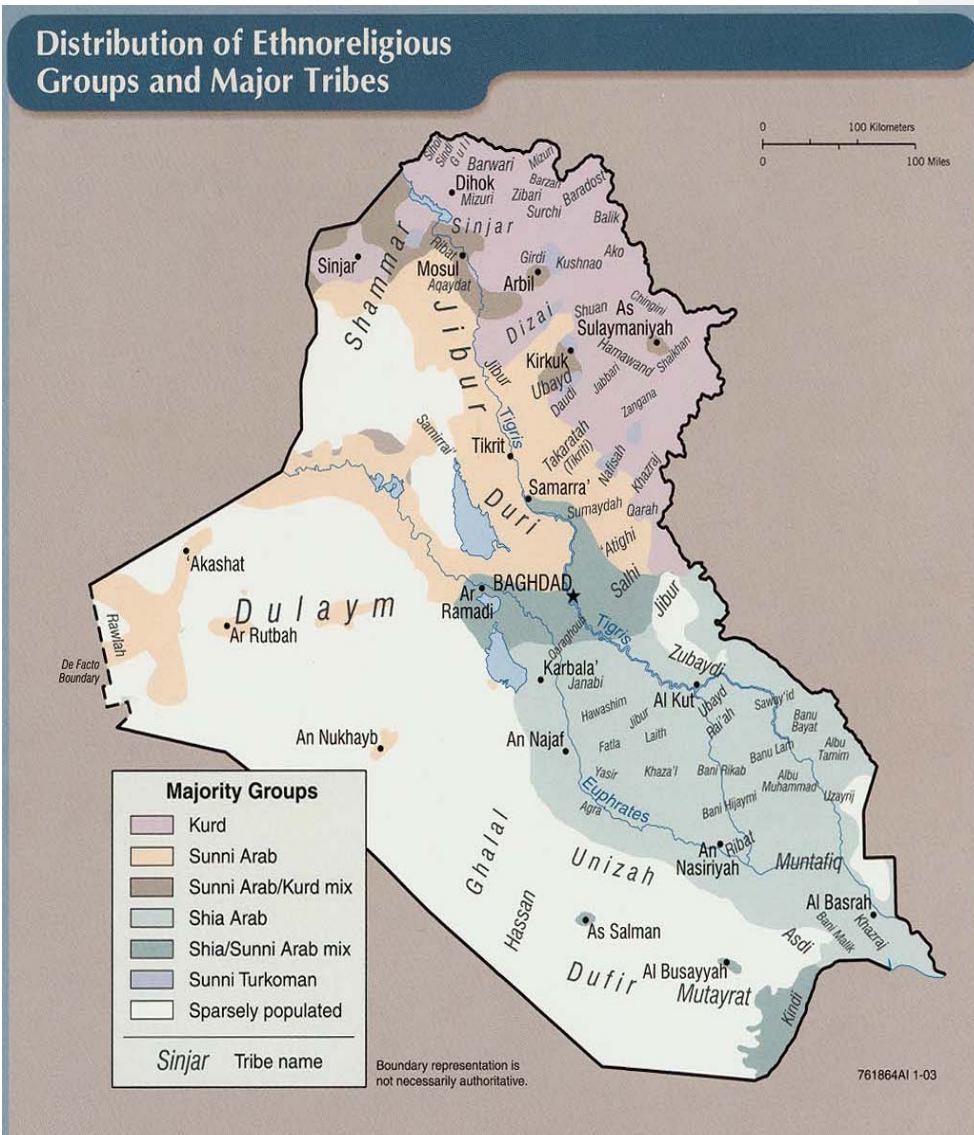
Appendix IV: The map of Great Kurdistan



Source: [http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama/map_of_kurdistan](http://www.institutkurde.org/en/kurdorama/map_of_kurdistan.php)

[tan.php](#)

Appendix V: Ethno-religion Divisions and Major Tribes In Iraq



Source: University of Texas, retrieved from <http://www.mappery.com/map-of-Iraq-Ethnoreligious-Groups-Map>

Appendix VI: Political Parties and Party System Nationalization Scores

According to Jones and Mainwaring (2003: 161 and 162) the equation used here is

$$Gi = (iY_{i+1}) - (i+1Y_i)$$

Where X_i is the cumulative proportion represented by the percentage of the valid vote won by Party X in the i th state divided by the sum of percentages won by Party X in all states; and Y_i is the cumulative proportion that the i th state represents of the total number of states or other political sub-units.

For better understanding the first table, the PUK's nationalization score, is clarified step by step. In the regional elections of 2013 the PUK won in the three provinces of the KRI, the presented percentages column 2. The shares are ordered in an ascending order from the province where the PUK won the least percentage to that which won the largest. The sum of these vote shares is (47.19) percent. In column 4, for each province, we divided the PUK's vote share in that province by 47.19 percent to determine that province's contribution to the PUK's unweighted (by population) totaled vote percentages. Column 6 gives the cumulative (in snowballing) totals for column 4.

Column 7, first row represents the product of X_i (row Duhok) in column 6) times Y_{i+1} (row Erbil in column 5), i.e. $0.12 * 0.666$ Column 7, row Erbil represents the product of row Erbil in column 6 times row Sulaimani in column 5, and so forth. The final row in column 7 is the sum of all rows in column 7. Column 8, row Duhok is the product of X_{i+1} (row Erbil in column 6) times Y_1 (row Duhok in column 5), i.e. $0.393 * 0.333$, and so on. The final row in column 8 is the sum of all rows in the column.

The Gini coefficient is calculated by subtracting the sum of column 7 from the sum of column 8. The Gini coefficient for the PUK is therefore $0.797 - 0.473 = 0.324$

The PNS for PUK = $1 - \text{Gini}$, i.e. $1 - 0.324 = 0.676$

In the similar vein we calculate the PNS for other political parties and accordingly;

KDP's PNS = 0.698

Gorran's PNS = 0.5928

IUK's PNS = 0.8669

IGK's PNS = 0.36

Finally the KRI's party system nationalization score, is calculated by this equation

$$\text{PSNS} = \sum_{i=1}^n \text{PNS}_i * V_i$$

Where V_i is the vote share of the i th party, and PNS_i is Party system nationalization score for the same party.

Hence PNS of KRI (2013) = $(0.676 * 0.178) + (0.698 * 0.3779) + (0.36 * 0.0601) + (0.8669 * 0.0949) + (0.5928 * 0.2421)$

=0.6317

PNSS (1992)= 0.4451* 0.7383 +0.4415*0.75495=0.3286+0.3333=0.6619

KDP (1992)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Suli	26.47	.25	.01434	.25	0.1434	0.0717	0.07345
Kirkuk	27.77	.25	0.1504	.50	0.2938	0.22035	0.26975
Erbil	45.3	.25	0.2454	.75	0.5394	0.5394	.75
Duhok	85.04	.25	0.4607	1	1	-	
Tot	184.58	1	1			0.83145	1.09315

1-0.2617=0.7383

The IUK, 2013

City 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Erbil	6.51	.333	.2234	.333	.2234	.1488	.1917
Suli	10.27	.333	.3524	.666	.5758	.5758	.666
Erbil	12.77	.333	.4382	1	1	-	-
Total	29.14	1	1			.7246	.8577

1-0.1331=0.8669

Gorran, 2013

City 1	2	.3	4	5	6	7	8
Duhok	2.88	.333	0.0464	.333	.0464	.0309	.1143
Erbil	18.4	0.333	.2964	.666	.3428	.3428	.6666
Suli	40.80	0.333	.6572	1	1	-	-
Total	62.08	1	1			.3737	.7809

1-0.4072=0.5928

PUK (1992)

1	2	3	4	7	6	7	8
Duhok	7.65	.25	0.0447	.25	0.0447	0.02235	0.0768
Erbil	44.17	.25	0.2627	.50	0.3074	0.23055	0.32885
Kirkuk	59.95	.25	0.3503	.75	0.6577	0.6577	0.75
Suli	59.33	.25	0.3467	1	1	-	-
Tot.	171.1	1	1			0.9106	1.15565

1-0.24505=0.75495

The PUK 2013

City, 1	2 (Party's share of vote in Province)	3 (State represents what share of all states (i.e., 1 divided by no. of states)	4 (Column 2 divided by sum of column 2 in all states)	5 (Cumulative share of states) Y_i	6 (Cumulative share of states for column 4) X_i	7 ($X_i * Y_{i+1}$)	8 ($X_{i+1} * Y_i$)
Duhok	5.67	.333	.12	.333	.12	.0799	.131
Erbil	12.9	.333	.273	.666	.393	.393	.666
Suli	28.62	.333	.597	1	1	-	-
Total	47.19	1	1			.473	.797

$1 - 0.324 = 0.676$

The KDP, 2013

City 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Suli	11.3	.333	0.087	.333	0.087	0.058	.153
Erbil	48.22	.333	.372	.666	0.459	0.459	.666
Duhok	70.24	.333	0.541	1	1	-	-
Total	129.76	1	1			0.517	0.819

$1 - 0.302 = 0.698$

The IGK 2013

City 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Duhok	1.08	.333	.068	.333	.068	.045	.16
Erbil	6.51	.333	.412	.666	.48	.48	.666
Suli	8.22	.333	.52	1	1	.525	.864
Total	15.81	1	1			1.05	1.69

$1 - 0.64 = 0.36$

پهناوی خوا

له بهر بهرژدهندی بالای نیشتمانی گهلی کوردستان و . سرخستی مهسه له بزگارخواه
په واکه پداو ، بز چه سیاندنی په کبونی ریزی گهلی کوردستان ناکو رژی نیجایی گرتگی خزی له
عیراتی دیوکراتی فیدرالدا ببینت تا مافی نه ته و بیسمان له دهستوری همیشی عیراتی و
چاره سوری کیشی که رکوک و ناوچه گانی دیکه ی ته عریب کراو بچه سپیت ، هروها بز پنه
بوونی ناسایش و نارامی له کوردستان ، سرگرده پنه هردوولا ، په کیتی نیشتمانی کوردستان و
پارنی دیوکراتی کوردستان ، پریاریان دا وزو هیزی خزیان بهم شیویه یک بهمن:

- ۱- له هلیژاردنی سرانسهری په رله مانی عیراقتا ، هردوولا به هاوکاری و هممههنگی
پنکهاته گانی نه ته و بی کوردستان ، به کوردو تورکمان و کلدان و ناشوورییه و ، له یک
لیستی هاوبه شدا گشت حزب و هیزه سیاسییه کان بگریته و ، په ریزه پکی گونجاو له سر
بنه مانی ته بایی و ریکهوتن ، خزیان ریک بهمن .
- ۲- هروها له هلیژاردنی په رله مانی کوردستان (نه نجه مانی نیشتمانی کوردستان) شدا ، نه
لایه نانه له یک لیستی هاوبه شدا به شداربی هلیژاردن بکن .
- ۳- ریکهوتن له سر شیوی دابهش بوونی پله ی په رله مانی و حکومی له عیراتی و هریمی
کوردستاندا بهم شیویه بیت:
- ا. سرژی هریمی کوردستان ، به ریز مسعود پارانی .
- ب. په کیتک له دوو مهوقعی سیادی عیراتی (سرژک کۆمار بان سرژی و وزیرانی حکومتی
عیراتی) ، بز به ریز مام جهلال .
- ج. سرژی په رله مانی کوردستان ، هفالتیک له په کیتی نیشتمانی کوردستان بیت .
- د. سرژی حکومته تی هریمی کوردستان ، هفالتیک له پارنی دیوکراتی کوردستان بیت .

بهم بز به و ههوادارین که گهلی کوردستان به کوردو تورکمان و کلدان و ناشووری و کهرت و
تویزی کۆمه لایه تی رۆشنییریه و ، پشتیوان و هاوکارمان بن له پیناوی سرخستی مهسه له ی
ره وای گه له که مان و زمان کردنی مافه گانی له فیدرالیزم و نازادی و دیوکراتی و پیشکهرتی
کۆمه لایه تیدا .
پشت به خوی مزین ، ناپنده ی گهشی مهبلله ته که مان له په کبونی وزو توانای هه سوو لایه کماندا .
مسزگر بیت .

تیسیمینی خالی (۱) د (ن) به سیکه و به ستر و دس .
سیریکه و ستر تاکه هر بیز لردی د صا کو و د نای که سو و د رلام
بسرده و ام ده تی

مسعود پارزانی
سرژی پارنی دیوکراتی
کوردستان

جهلال تاله پانی
سکرتری گشتی
په کیتی نیشتمانی کوردستان

۲۰۰۴/۱۲/۱

Source: Sbeyi official website, retrieved from <http://www.sbeyi.com/Article-24188>

Appendix VIII: Kurdistan Regional Government Unification

Agreement

The supreme interest of the people of the Kurdistan Region, today more than at any other time, requires that its citizens further unite their energies and capabilities. We face serious and delicate issues in the period ahead when the future of the Kurdistan Region will be decided as we move through the development of a democratic and federal Iraq.

We must secure and guarantee the historic achievements of our people and the realization of our full and just rights by putting in place and implementing the permanent Constitution, establishing a genuine federal and democratic Iraq; restoring Kirkuk, Khanaqin, Sinjar, Makhmour, and other Arabized areas to the embrace of the Kurdistan Region, and developing and growing the democratic experience in the Kurdistan Region with further strengthening of stability and liberty through the creation of a lasting unification of the Kurdistan Regional Government.

For these reasons, The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), on the basis of partnership, consensus and equity, agreed to the following:

1. A new post of Vice President of the Region will be established by amendment to the Law of the Presidency of the Region. The Vice President will be from the PUK and will also serve as the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Peshmerga forces of the Kurdistan Region.
2. The Prime Minister and his Deputy will be identified by the Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA) and will be charged by the President of the Kurdistan Region with forming a joint cabinet. The Prime Minister will submit the names of his cabinet to the KNA.
3. The Speaker of the KNA will be from the PUK and the Prime Minister will be from the KDP until the next election of the KNA at the end of 2007. For the next election, the KDP and PUK will participate in a joint slate as equals, and at that time the post of the Speaker of the KNA will go to the KDP and the Prime Minister will be from the PUK. This will be for two years. After that, the KDP and PUK will rotate the posts of Speaker and Prime Minister. If by the end of 2007 elections are not conducted due to delay, the posts of Speaker and Prime Minister will rotate.
4. If either of the ministerial blocs withdraws from the joint cabinet, the entire cabinet will be considered as resigned.

5. The ministerial posts will be divided as follows:
- a) The Ministers of Interior, Justice, Education, Health, Social Affairs, Religious Affairs, Water Resources, Transportation, Reconstruction, Planning, and Human Rights will be from the PUK.
 - b) The Ministers of Finance, Peshmerga Affairs, Higher Education, Agriculture, Martyrs, Culture, Electricity, Natural Resources, Municipalities, Sports and Youth, and Minister of Region for the affairs of areas outside the Region will be from the KDP.
 - c) The remaining ministries will be assigned to other parties of the Kurdistan Region.
 - d) The Ministries of Finance, Peshmerga Affairs, Justice, and Interior should unite within one year. These four ministries, until they unite, will have both a cabinet minister and a minister of the region for the affairs of the concerned ministry. Each minister will have responsibility for the part of the ministry, which is currently under his or her control.
6. The budget of 2006 will be managed as it has been decided, but the share of the budget of the Presidency of the Kurdistan Region, the KNA, the Council of Ministers, and the Judicial Council, and any other joint items from each side will be allocated equally. Afterwards, in the coming years, the Kurdistan regional budget will be prepared by the unified KRG and submitted to the KNA. After approval, the budget will be allocated to various areas according to population percentage and agreement within the unified KRG.
7. Under the auspices of the Presidency of the Kurdistan Region there will be established a Supreme Commission to institutionalize the police and security agencies of the Kurdistan Region. These united agencies will be removed from political considerations. After the unified KRG takes office in the capital of the Kurdistan Region, Erbil, a special program will be instituted for university graduates with the aim of recruiting new candidates to the security services of the governorates for the sake of unification and re-establishment of these important agencies for our people.
8. The KRG representations abroad, according to agreement of both the KDP and PUK, will be assigned by the Prime Minister and his Deputy.
9. In all the Governorates of the Kurdistan Region a joint committee will be established between the KDP and PUK to resolve issues as they may arise.
10. Both sides, KDP and PUK, will present Mr. Jalal Talabani as their candidate for the sovereign post in the Iraqi Federal Government.

January 21, 2006
Masoud Barzani, President, KDP
Jalal Talabani, Secretary General, PUK

Appendix IX: The Washington Agreement of 1998 between the KDP and PUK

Reaffirmation of previous achievements

On behalf of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), we thank Secretary Albright and the US government for facilitating a series of amicable and productive meetings here in Washington over the past several days. We appreciate their efforts in helping to bring us back together and to assist us in creating a framework for future cooperation. The meetings have been a major step forward towards a full and lasting reconciliation, which will provide new hope to the Kurds, Turkomen, and Assyrians and Chaldeans of the Iraqi Kurdistan region of Iraq.

Both parties also welcome the continuing engagement of the governments of Turkey and the United Kingdom in the peace and reconciliation process. We wish to recognize the irreplaceable role our separate consultations in Ankara and London played in making these talks a success.

In Washington, we have discussed ways to improve the regional administration of the three northern provinces and to settle long-standing political differences within the context of the Ankara Accords of October 1996. We have reached several important areas of agreement on how to implement those accords.

We affirm the territorial integrity and unity of Iraq. The three northern provinces of Dohuk, Irbil and Sulemaniyah are part of the Iraqi state. Both the KDP and the PUK unequivocally accept the recognized international boundaries of Iraq. Both parties are committed to preventing violations of the borders by terrorists or others.

Both parties will endeavor to create a united, pluralistic, and democratic Iraq that would ensure the political and human rights of Kurdish people in Iraq and of all Iraqis on a political basis decided by all the Iraqi people. Both parties aspire that Iraq be reformed on a federative basis that would maintain the nation's unity and territorial integrity. We understand that the U.S. respects such aspirations for all the Iraqi people.

Both parties condemn internal fighting and pledge to refrain from resorting to violence to settle differences or seeking outside intervention against each other. We will endeavor to bring to justice those who violate the peace, whatever their political affiliation or motivation.

Both parties also agree that Iraq must comply with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including the human rights provisions of Resolution 688. To help ensure a peaceful environment for reconciliation, we will intensify our

arrangements to respect the ceasefire, facilitate the free movement of citizens and refrain from negative press statements.

Transition phase

We have agreed to enhance the Higher Coordination Committee (HCC) to ensure that the humanitarian requirements of the people of the Iraqi Kurdistan region are met and their human and political rights are fulfilled. The decisions of the HCC will be by the unanimous consent of its members.

The HCC will prepare for a full reconciliation between the parties, including normalizing the situation in Irbil, Sulemaniyah and Dohuk; re-establishing a unified administration and assembly based on the results of the 1992 elections; providing exclusive control of all revenues to the regional administration; and organizing new regional elections.

The HCC will enhance coordination and cooperation among local public service ministries that serve the needs of the people throughout the Iraqi Kurdistan region. The parties will ensure that these ministries receive adequate revenue for their operation. The KDP acknowledges that, revenue differences will require a steady flow of funds for humanitarian services from the current KDP area to the current PUK area.

The HCC will establish a process to help repatriate everyone who had to leave their homes in the three northern provinces as a result of the prior conflict between the parties, and to restore their property or compensate them for their losses.

The HCC will ensure that both parties cooperate to prevent violations of the Turkish and Iranian borders. It will establish reasonable screening procedures to control the flow of people across these borders and prohibit the movement of terrorists. Both parties, working with the HCC, will deny sanctuary to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) throughout the Iraqi Kurdistan region. They will ensure that there are no PKK bases within this area. They will prevent the PKK from destabilizing and undermining the peace or from violating the Turkish border.

The HCC will endeavor to form an interim joint regional government within the next three months to be ratified by the regional assembly.

Unified administration

Within three months of its re-formation, the Assembly will meet at its building in Irbil, with subsequent meetings there or in Sulemaniyah or Dohuk. The members of the this interim assembly will be those individuals who were elected to the parliament in 1992.

The first meeting of the interim assembly will be within three months. After the assembly is established, it must authorize all subsequent decisions of the HCC and/or the interim regional government. The interim assembly may decide to add additional functions to the operations of the HCC, including unifying relations with the international community.

To provide a safeguard for regional elections and to help normalize the status of Irbil, Dohuk and Sulemaniyah, the HCC and the assembly may establish a joint

PUK-KDP-Turkomen-Assyrian security force. The new regional government may subsequently choose to take further measures to unify peshmerga (militia) command structures.

After the regional elections described below, the interim assembly will be replaced by a new regional assembly. This regional assembly will form a new regional government based on the voting strength of each party in the assembly.

Key agreements

When the regional government has been formed, the HCC will be dissolved automatically. The term of the regional assembly, the regional government will be three years.

Revenue sharing

Until the new interim joint regional government is established, a steady flow of funds for public service ministries will be directed from the current KDP area into the current PUK area, due to revenue differences. The HCC, in consultation with the existing ministries of taxation and finance, is responsible for the apportionment of revenues throughout the region. When the interim joint government is established, it will become responsible for the collection and distribution of all revenues.

After the election of a new regional assembly, a single Ministry of Revenue and Taxation will have exclusive responsibility for collecting all revenues, including taxes and customs duties. The funds collected will be at the disposal of the regional government for uses authorized by the regional assembly.

Status of Irbil, Dohuk and Sulemaniyah

The interim assembly and the HCC will address the normalization of Irbil, Dohuk, Sulemaniyah and other cities. The HCC may call on international mediation regarding this issue, if it deems it expedient. The status of these cities must be normalized to a sufficient degree that free and fair elections can be held.

Elections

The interim assembly and the HCC will be responsible for organizing free and fair elections for a new regional assembly, to take place no later than SIX months after the formation of the interim assembly.

The composition of the new regional assembly will be based on the best available statistical data on the population of the three northern governorates and the distribution of ethnic and religious groups there. Seats will be set aside for the Kurdish, Turkomen, and Assyrian and Chaldean communities.

If possible, the interim assembly and the HCC, working with the international community, will conduct a census of the area in order to establish an electoral register. If international assistance is not available in time, the interim assembly and the HCC will conduct a census on their own, or—making reference to

existing data – they will construct a best estimate of the population in consultation with outside experts.

The interim assembly and the HCC will also invite international election monitors to assist both in the election itself and in training local monitors.

Situation in the Iraqi Kurdistan region

UN Security Council Resolution 688 noted the severe repression of the Iraqi people, particularly the Kurdish people in Iraq. The potential for repression has not eased since 1991, when the resolution was passed. It is worth noting that in the past year the UN Special Rapporteur for Iraq reported finding strong evidence of hundreds of summary executions in Iraqi prisons and a continuation by the regime of the policy of expelling Kurds and Turkomen from Kirkuk and other cities. This policy amounts to ethnic cleansing of Iraqi Kurds and Turkomen, with their lands and property appropriated by the government for disbursement to ethnic Arabs. Many of the new arrivals participate in this scheme only because of government intimidation.

In light of this continued threat, we owe a debt of thanks to the international community for assisting with our humanitarian needs and in preventing a repeat of the tragic events of 1991 and the horrific Anfal campaigns of 1987 and 1988:

The United Nations special program of “oil-for-food” for the Iraqi Kurdistan region has eased the humanitarian condition of the people. We welcome the support of the international community for the continuation of this program, with its specific allotment to the Iraqi Kurdistan region, and hope that, in the near future, a liaison office for the region can be established at ECOSOC headquarters to better coordinate the provision of the aid. We also hope that, in the event that benefits from the “oil-for-food” program are suspended due to unilateral action by the government of Iraq, the UN will address the continuing economic needs of Iraqi Kurdistan and the plight of the people there.

The United States, the Republic of Turkey and the United Kingdom through Operation Northern Watch have helped to protect the area. We call upon them and the rest of the international community to continue to exercise vigilance to protect and secure the Iraqi Kurdish region. The many non-governmental organizations that operate in the three northern provinces have diminished our isolation and helped us in countless ways.

Future leader-to-leader meetings

The President of the KDP and the Secretary General of the PUK will meet at least every two months inside or outside Iraqi Kurdistan at mutually acceptable sites. Pending the agreement of governments, we hope to hold the first such meeting in Ankara and a subsequent meeting in London.

The Ankara meeting would include discussions on our joint resolve to eliminate terrorism by establishing stronger safeguards for Iraq’s borders. The London meeting may explore further details concerning the status of Irbil, Dohuk and Sulemaniyah, and help establish a mechanism for the conduct of free and fair elections.

September 17, 1998
Jalal Talabani
Massoud Barzani

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
Kurdistan Democratic Party

Appendix X: Leaked Document: Saudi Arabia and Barzai's Classified
Connection



Source: EKURD, retrieved from <http://ekurd.net/massud-barzani-in-wikileaks-saudi-arabia-cables-2015-06-21>

Appendix XI: Leaked Document of Saudi Arabia's Financial Support To The IMK



Source: *Iraqia New Agency*, retrieved from <http://www.iraqnewsagency.com/□□□□□□-□□-□□□□□□□□-□□□□□□□□-□□□□-□□□□□□□□/>

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