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## Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

### The Massacres Commemorated in Iraqi Turkmen Culture and Political Discourse

*Irak Türkmen Kültüründe ve Siyasi Söylemlerinde Katliamların Anılması*

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#### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

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#### ÖZ

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun yıkılmasından sonra Irak Türkmenleri Irak'taki otoritelerini kaybetti. Irak hükümetleri yıllarca Irak Türkmenlerini göz ardı etti ve bu doğrultuda politikalarını oluşturdu. Irak Kralı I. Faysal Irak Türkmenlerini, Irak devletine ve politikasına karşı tehdit olarak gördü. Bu nedenle Irak Türkmenleri Irak devleti tarafından defalarca katliamlara maruz kaldı. Her katliam Irak Türkmenlerini derinden etkiledi, özellikle de edebiyatlarını, tarihlerini ve hatıralarını. Bu nedenle, teorik bir kavram olarak kolektif bellek, Iraklı Türkmenlerin uğradığı katliamların etkilerini ve hafızalarındaki yeri anlamamıza yardımcı olmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Irak Türkmenlerine 1924-1991 yılları arası yapılan katliamların Irak Türkmenleri üzerindeki tarihi, edebiyatı, şiiri, öyküleri vb. üzerindeki etkilerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada öne çıkan Irak Türkmenlerinin şiir, hikâye gibi eserleri ve bu alanda yazılan kitaplar döküman analizi yöntemiyle ele alınacaktır.

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#### ABSTRACT

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Iraqi Turkmen lost their influence over the authority of Iraq. For years, the Iraq government formed its policy based on ignoring and eliminating the Iraqi Turkmen because the first of king of Iraq who was King Faysal I, saw the Turks as a threat to his state and policy. Therefore, the Iraqi Turkmen faced many times massacres by the Iraqi state. Each massacre has deeply influenced Iraqi Turkmen, especially, influenced their literature, history and memories of their life. Hence, as a theoretical concept collective memory helps us to understand how Iraqi Turkmen images of the massacres and its influence in their memory. In this study will be analysed the impact of these massacres between 1924 and 1991, on Iraqi Turkmen on their history, literature, poem, stories and so on. In this study, the prominent works of Iraqi Turkmen such as poems and stories and the books written in this field will be discussed with the method of document analysis.

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## Introduction

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire Iraqi Turkmen lost their influence over the authority of Iraq. For years, the Iraq government formed its policy based on ignoring and eliminating the Iraqi Turkmen because the Iraq government thought they were part of Turkey and were following Turkey's policy on Iraq. In fact, Iraqi Turkmen have a broad background in Iraq's history. When the Turks came to Iraq in 760(A.C), they administered until the end of World War I. Especially during the Ottoman Empire, Iraqi Turkmen played an essential role in Iraq (Al-Hirmizi, 2008). After the Ottoman Empire lost Iraq, Iraqi Turkmen became second-class citizens. King Faysal who was the first king of Iraq, did not want to share his authority and he saw the Turks as a threat to his state, and his policy continued until 2012.

Iraqi Turkmen were exposed to the same assimilation policy, and massacres as the 1924 Kirkuk massacre, the 1946 Gavurdagi Massacre, the Kirkuk massacre of 1959<sup>1</sup> and the 1990 Altinkopru Massacre by the Iraqi state. Each massacre has deeply influenced Iraqi Turkmen, and they have faced adaptation problems. The 1959 Kirkuk massacre, especially, influenced their literature, history and memories of their life (Al-Hirmizi, 2005). Hence, Iraqi Turkmen have worked hard to continue their activities in both cultural and political fields. They gave great importance to teaching Turkish and resisted pressure to protect their culture. In addition, after the massacres and during the reign of Saddam Hussain who applied an assimilation policy towards Iraqi Turks, they lived under adverse conditions. Hence, to understand the impact of these massacres on Iraqi Turks, memory is important as a theoretical concept. Memoria is the main concept of our relationship with the past, our existence over time (Olick, Vinitzky & Levy, 2011, p.17-20). The theoretical concept of collective memory enables us to understand how images of the past can contribute to the creation of conflict. Obviously, collective memory is essential to create a sense of national belonging such as identity. Also, the collective memory of the past conflict and suffering can lead to new conflicts and new human rights violations by attracting the same regions to violence and revenge (Dragovic-Sosa, 2010, p.29). Collective memory has a unique role apparently during the unpredictable conflict or process. In this essay, I will analyse the impact of these massacres on Iraqi Turkmen on their history, literature, poem, stories and so on. Furthermore, an additional aim of this study is to show the political and cultural discourse in its policies. As I explained briefly above, memory theory and tools will be used.

## Theoretical Background of Memory

Like everything else, memory has a history. Memoria is the main concept of our relationship with the past, our existence over time. However, this relationship could be changed effectively in ways throughout history (Olick, Vinitzky & Levy, 2011, p.18). There is a traditional view of the relationship between history and memory. The historian's aim is to write about the past for the next generation, provide knowledge to the society, and to learn from the past by example. History is 'the life of memory' as Cicero wrote in a passage. The study of memory has been a subject of relevance for more than thirty years as a form of re-interpretation to the past. It could be even an alternative supplement for studying historiography (Seth, 2019, p.32). The appearance of memory as the main word points out a dramatic change in linguistic study. The study of memory may be support for building popular and folk cultures because of increasing

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<sup>1</sup>Please click for images of the massacre

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8f3HluGXQg&ab\\_channel=T%C3%BCrkmeneleTelevizyonu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8f3HluGXQg&ab_channel=T%C3%BCrkmeneleTelevizyonu) (Access date: 12/10/2021)

scholarly interest. For years, the memory topic has been ignored by experts who study oral history, autobiography and commemorative rituals.

Where experts once spoke of folk history or popular history or oral history or public history or even myth specialists now utilise memory as a metahistorical category that subsumes all these various terms. In this means, one of the marked characteristics of memory study, there is the tendency to make quite comprehensive philosophical claims for memory in history, literature, and anthropology (Klein, 2000, p.128-29). Therefore, memory is an appropriate tool to help us to understand the world. Some people defend the opinion of a specific reading of the past, but memory can remain fluid and alive. On that occasion, convenient truths can spread; there may be different approaches towards the past for public believed (Farrugia, 2012, p.126-27).

Collective memory and making sense of history have usually played an essential role in disagreements, reconciliation, conflict, violence and human rights violation over the world. Also, the collective memory of the past conflict and suffering can lead to new conflicts and new human rights violations by attracting the same regions to violence and revenge (Dragovic-Sosa, 2010, pp.32-34). Collective memory has a special role apparently during the unpredictable conflict or process. According to Bar-Tal (2014), the beliefs of collective memory carry out the epistemic function of enlightening the condition of conflict. Collective memory has the certain property: Firstly, it does not have any aims to provide a neutral history of the past yet explains about the past that is functional and related to the society's present existence and future claims. Secondly, there are representations of collective memory, and many accurate accounts have been shared of the past. Thirdly, collective memory is based on experiencing shared feelings. That means that the social representations elicit different emotions that social members feel as individuals and as a collective. These emotions are a component of the collective feelings and serve various social functions that as literature, films, monuments, ceremonies, and so on. Hence, the feelings maintain a particular meaning to the remembered cases and facilitate their memorising.

The theoretical concept of collective memory enables us to understand how images of the past can contribute to the creation of conflict. Obviously, collective memory is essential to create a sense of national belonging such as identity. On that occasion, myths are shown up, and it establishes a link between memory and conflict. In society, myths provide heroism, hostilities, fears so on, mobilising communities for the collective aims (Dragovic-Sosa, 2010, pp.36). Also, myths lead to conflict for revenge. In this context of the conflict, some societies could have adopted different behaviour. The figure below shows us the difference between conflict situation and conflict behaviour (Olick, Vinitzky & Levy, 2011, p.305-6).

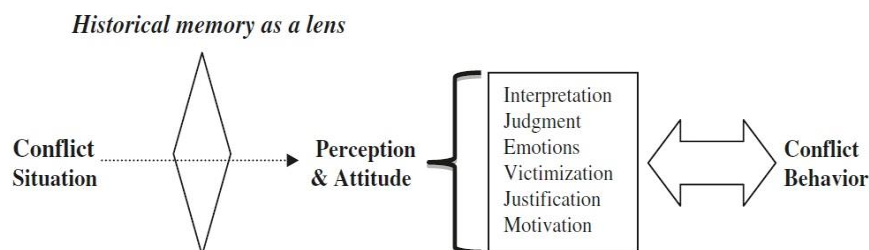


Fig. 1: Historical memory as a lens. (Wang, 2018, p. 29)

As some scholars propose, frames are established on a primary structure of beliefs, experiences and values. Powerful collective memories of past conflicts are significant sources of frames. Besides, frameworks usually exist prior to conscious processing of knowledge for make-

decision and affect subsequent individual decisions. Hence, the history of memory provides a common policy for the future with using beliefs, emotions, thinks so on. On the other hand, even though memory and history are, seldom by themselves, the direct reasons for conflict, they maintain the 'lens' by which we view and bring into focus our world; owing to this lens, distinctions are broken, and conflict is showed up. That means that the lens of historical memory contributes both the society, and the elites evaluate the present events and make the decision of future policy. Figure:1 supplies an intellectual map that characterizes the function of historical memory as a lens and its relationship with sensation and behaviour. As a result, different conceptual frames held by the groups related to a dispute form the basis on which they act (Wang, 2018, p.29-30).

On the other hand, cultural memory is important besides collective memory. Cultural legacy may be referred to as the past, and it can influence public opinion and policy (Olick, Vinitzky & Levy, 2011, p.312). Cultural memory can define as the memory that is shared except that the of formal historical discourse. Hence, films, literature, memorials, museums and other cultural products have contributed that thinking and remembering for cultural memory. Besides, cultural memory has a function in the field of negotiation, and it emphasises the cultural construction of subjectivities and senses of belonging and is among the factors that constitute collective identities. Hence, cultural memory should think together with collective memory due to its functions (Seth, 2019, p.34-35).

### **Iraqi Turkmen Have Been Massacred**

After the Ottoman Empire was demolished, Iraqi Turkmen lost their influence in Iraq authority. For years, the Iraq government formed its policy based on ignoring and eliminating the Iraqi Turkmen because the Iraq government thought that Iraqi Turkmen are from a part of Turkey, and they were following Turkey's policy on Iraq. Hence, King Faisal adopted the policy of denial towards the Iraqi Turkmen. Until 2012, the Iraq government has maintained the denial policy because of which reasons Iraqi Turkmen adopt Turkey policy.

Iraqi Turkmen have been exposed to the same assimilation policy, and massacres such as the 1924 Kirkuk massacre, the 1946 Gavurdagi Massacre and the Kirkuk massacre of 1959, the 1990 Altinkopru Massacre by the Iraq state. Each massacre has deeply influenced Iraqi Turkmen, and they have faced adaptation problems. Also, During the Saddam Hussain reign who applied assimilation policy towards Iraqi Turkmen, they lived under adverse conditions (Kayili, 2008, p.29). They want to protect their language, identity and cultures in Iraq.

### **The 1924 Kirkuk Massacre**

The Kirkuk Massacre was the first massacre of the Iraqi Turkmen since leaving Turkey. On May 4, 1924, the Teyyari (Leyv) forces under the British rule, carried out a massacre in Kirkuk. The Iraqi Turkmen were doing shopping in the bazaar, and one of the Teyyari soldiers was debating a subject with the Iraqi Turkmen. The discussion transformed into a fight between the Teyyari soldier and Iraqi Turkmen, and both sides suffered injuries. The soldiers reached their headquarters, and subsequently attacked people with their heavy weaponry. More than 100 people, mostly children and women, were killed. (Koprulu, 1996, p.36). Many Iraqi Turkmen and other ethnic groups began to protest against Britain and the Iraqi Government. The British Commissioner said that the soldiers who participated in the massacre would be punished, however, during the two years following no soldiers took any punishment from the Baghdad government. The Baghdad government forgave criminals without being punished, and it closed the investigation by covering up the incident (Saatci, 2017, p.196-97). This issue led to growing national awareness among the Iraqi Turkmen.

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### **The 1946 Gavurbag Massacre**

Workers in the oil company in Kirkuk asked their managers to improve their wages, free transport, health and working conditions. However, their demands were not accepted. The majority of the Turkmen were protesting to draw attention to the issue, and they decided to strike on July 1, 1946. In a place known as Gavurbağ Square, workers gathered every evening and performed demonstrations to express their demands. Company executives did not step back against the protests, and the issue was handed over to the police. The police detained several significant people. Workers did not accept this situation, and they reacted towards the police officers who subsequently opened fire killing many innocent people. Also, hundreds of people were wounded during this demonstration which was given the name- the Gavurbağ Massacre (Koprulu, 1996, p, 37).

### **The 1959 Kirkuk Massacre**

The pro-British policies that the Iraqi government had implemented after World War I caused disturbances within the army. Arab Nationalism, which had risen in that period, caused the officers in the Iraqi Army to take a stand against the administration. The military coup was made on July 14, 1958, with the cooperation of nationalists and leftist groups. Under the command of General Abdulkerim, the military junta took over the government and the Kingdom of Iraq was overthrown and declared a republic (Kayili, 2008, p.40-44). Like all Iraqis, Iraqi Turkmen thought that would live in equality in Iraq and that the democracy would be a good opportunity for them. But they were disappointed. When Molla Mustafa Barzani, who had previously been in Moscow for political and military training, came back, he was welcomed as a hero in Iraq. He then declared Kirkuk the capital of Kurdistan. They brought a communist who had had education in Moscow to be the mayor of Kirkuk. This situation was unacceptable for the Iraqi Turkmen due to the fact that Kirkuk was a Turkmen city. Subsequent events and a rapid liquidation process began in the staff of the municipality, and other people who were not from them were taken away, and communists were placed (Al-Hirmizi, 2005, p.96-98).

In order to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the Republic, Iraqi Turkmen attended the ceremony like other societies in Iraq. But the Kurdish and Communist soldiers opened fire using automatic weapons against the Iraqi Turkmen and began a massacre lasting three days (Turker, 2019). The Iraqi Army declared a curfew in Kirkuk. However, it was understood that this prohibition was soon declared only for the Turkmen. Within this period, leading intellectuals and administrators of Turkmen such as retired Colonel Ata Hayrullah, Cahit Fahrettin and Kasim Neftci were taken from their houses and executed. Some Iraqi Turkmen were insulted and tortured, and some were tied to the back of the truck to be killed (Saatci, 2017, p244-46). People's lifeless bodies were hanged on power poles to intimidate the Iraqi Turkmen. Stores, shops and trade centre's belonging to the Iraqi Turkmen were looted. All these ferocities influenced deeply the Iraqi Turkmen, and they decided to struggle for permanent settlement in Kirkuk (Ertugrul, 2006, p.142-43). Hence, they changed their policy and established the foundation, culture centre for playing an active role in Iraq.

### **The 1991 Altinkopru Massacre**

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, the Kurds living in north Iraq rebelled against the Baghdad government to establish an autonomous region. The UN has urged Iraq to leave Kuwait, including the US and Western countries. When Saddam Hussein ignored their demands the Gulf War began, and the Iraqi army was defeated in a short time. By the way, The Kurdish rebellion expanded their influence. However, the Iraqi military, which recovered for a short time, organised operations to suppress internal insurrections. These forces, which would act against the Kurds, have started to target the Iraqi Turkmen. The Iraqi army began to massacre the people

without distinguishing (Nakip, 2008, p.32-33).

When the soldiers started to move towards Kirkuk, the Kurds found the resort to evacuate the city. The Iraqi Army opened fire on the town, killing many innocent civilians. Altunköprü from Kirkuk continued to kill the Turkmen who were trying to escape to safe places such as Erbil. Many people were killed on the way. On 28 March 1991, the army under the control of Altinköprü executed over 100 people who were involved in the root of the uprising. On the 31st of August, the members of the army entered Erbil and took Turkmen politicians and leaders who fled here to Baghdad. Before long, many people were executed (Yaycı, 1999, p. 7-8).

### **Commemoration Of The Massacres In The Culture And Political Discourse Of The Iraqi Turkmen**

Iraqi Turkmen have been influenced deeply by these massacres. Especially the Kirkuk massacre in 1959 influenced their literature, history and past memories. Hence, Iraqi Turkmen have worked harder in order to continue their activities in both cultural and political fields. They gave great importance to teaching Turkish and resisted pressure in order to protect their culture.

The Iraqi Turkmen Culture and Assistance Association, the first non-governmental organisation of Iraqi Turkmen, was founded on November 9, 1959. The association played an important role in the recognition of the Iraqi Turkmen as well as occasionally in political studies. Under the Ba'ath regime, it was the voice of the nation during the difficult situations faced by the Turkmen of Iraq. Furthermore, between 28-30 August 1960 Turkmen Teachers in Kirkuk organised a training congress to obtain the cultural rights of Turkmen (Ertugrul, 2006, p.144-45). In addition, the Turkmen Kardaslik Ocagi (such as foundation) was established in May 1961, and Kardaslik Magazine was published to serve in social and cultural areas. With the publication of the Kardaşlık Magazine, the national and cultural movement of the Iraqi Turkmen started to sprout again. Besides, this magazine had an important role in Iraq literature. As a matter of fact, the most well-known poets and writers of Iraq sent articles to this magazine (Nakip, 2008, p.37). In addition to historical research, folklore research and discussions, the journal also provided a great opportunity for literature.

However, the Kardaslik magazine was closed by the Iraq Government, and it was established again in 1999 in Turkey where Iraqi Turkmen were now living. The Kardaşlık magazine was published as 64 pages every three months. The Kardaşlık Magazine, which was released in three sections (Turkish, Arabic and English), has a rich collection with a total number of 5248 pages. In the Turkish part of the journal, there are 1289 articles, 532 poems and 154 news items. In the Arabic section, 317 articles, 15 poems and 19 news items were published, and in the English part, there were 124 articles, three poems and one news item. In the 2-page Turkmen Album, which has become the traditional magazine of Turkmen, four photographs have been published each with a historical value and a visual document. Thus, a total of 320 photos were posted in the Turkmen Album. In addition to this, there are 2374 photographs in our magazine and 376 book pictures in the front and back covers. In this way, a total of 3070 photos, documents, maps, pictures, figures and graphical charts were printed (Saatci, 2019). Moreover, the Iraqi Turkmen try to contribute to the literature by writing many articles about themselves. In addition to the journals, they regularly publish every year, they publish many books on Iraqi Turkmen. Also, they have released until now about 200 books. Furthermore, they provide necessary support to the thesis and report to those who want to study Iraqi Turkmen as all these studies are related to their socio-economic, culture, population and politics. Thus, massacres and other memories are reminded in Turkmen society.

Turkmen writers organised in Turkey a conference relating to Turkmen literature such as history, poems and memories in 2000. They gave some information about Turkmen literature.

According to Turkmen writers, there is a common theme of Turkmen literature of loneliness, and disillusionment in the countries where they settled, massacres, desire to contribute to national struggle and homesickness.

Turkmen writer Ali Marufoglu, who is the most important Turkmen writer, wrote the first book concerning Turkmen living in Iraq after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The book, which is called "Olaylar Konusuyor", consists of ten stories, and five poems. The book mentions protecting national existence, their national identity and cultural traditions. Ali Marufoglu is the narrator of the story 'City Monsters' about the Kirkuk massacre on 14 July 1959. The narrator observes the brutal plans of city monsters before the massacre, the conversations between the killers. He highlights the city monsters and the atrocities that the monsters carried out in different Turkmen regions for three days during the massacre. In addition, the negative attitude of the narrator towards those who did the Kirkuk massacre is remarkable. The narrator sometimes judges them which is evident by the name of the story. For example, the narrator in the story says that the terrorists are crueller than the monsters in the mountains by likening the culprits to the beast (Marufoglu, 1964, p.115). Besides this, in the story, emotional expressions are used for Turkmen, and their heroism is given dramatically.

Iraqi Turkmen have started to emphasise their cultural characteristics, especially their music. By placing music in the common denominators of the Iraqi Turkmen, they continued to use it as a sign of identity. Iraqi Turkmen sing 'Hoyrat'. An 'Hoyrat', with both his words and his tunes, awakens the ambience of bravery and heroism; love, expatriate, joy, grief, mourning, love of the motherland, grudges and such emotions functioning; It is the name of Turkish folk literature and music that is fed by classical elements, which has received its share more than the concept of art. Also, Turkish TV channels have shown music programmes related to 'Hoyrat' (Terzibası, 1975, p.23). It has played an important role for society for both Iraqi Turkmen and Turkish people because of its meaning. Abdülvahit Küzecioğlu and Abdurrahman Kızılay have contributed Iraqi Turkmen music to the inclusion of introducing and repertoire in Turkey. The 'Hoyrat' expresses the problems and innocent aspirations of the Turkmen in Iraq. It is a cultural symbol which means 'coming together' for both Turkish singers and Iraqi Turkmen singers (Saatci, 1993, p.43-44). Therefore, 'hoyrat' has an important role for collective memory in Turkmen society.

Iraqi Turkmen have additionally organised memorial ceremonies for those who lost their lives in the massacres in Iraq. The most important of these is the 1959 Kirkuk Massacre. In the commemoration event held on July 14th each year, the Turkmen killed in the massacre are remembered. Their memory is therefore kept alive within society. A monument was built in order to remember the victims of Kirkuk, Mosul and Tal Afar (Nakip, 2008). One significant witness spoke during the ceremony about the 1959 Kirkuk Massacre. Kubat Mukhtar, who was one of the witnesses of the massacre, spoke about how his family were killed. "The gunmen, who we had never seen before, opened fire on us in our house with automatic weapons. They killed my two brothers Cihat and Nihat and my sister Emel in front of us. They could not go to hospital due to a curfew, and all of the wounded people died" (Turker, 2019, p.22). Iraqi Turkmen acknowledge that the Kirkuk massacre in 1959 was an attempt to leave society without leaders and apply an assimilation policy on Turkmen. Hence, for a long time, there has been a rivalry between the Kurds and Turkmen. Iraqi Turkmen believe that Kurdish politicians have tried to take over Turkmen settlements (Simsir, 2004, p.207-8). For these reasons, the Iraqi Turkmen policy is based upon preventing to establish a Kurdish state in Turkmen regions.

Iraqi Turkmen have continued to migrate to Turkey since 1920. Migration increased notably after the massacres. About over 70.000 Iraqi Turkmen live in Turkey. Some Turkmen prefer to study in Turkey because of a bias towards Iraqi Turkmen. Thus, Iraqi Turkmen have

established their own foundations and education centres. They have over 15 foundations<sup>2</sup> in different cities in Turkey, but especially Istanbul is central for them because Istanbul is an important and developed city for trade, transportation so on. Iraqi Turkmen generally do not attend the politic arena in Turkey because they work in non-state organisations (Saatci, 2017, p.90-91). However, they maintain their political studies in various levels of management in political parties. The fact that they cannot take part in the parliament as a deputy is considered to be a significant disadvantage, but they try to be effective by taking part in various governmental positions. For example, Ersat Hurmuzlu who was one of the most important Iraqi Turkmen intellectuals, has served as the Middle East advisor for the 11th Turkish President Abdullah Gul. He played an active role in the development of relations with many middle east countries.

On the other hand, Iraqi Turkmen who live in Turkey, usually join the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) because their ideology is similar to that of the MHP. Both sides want to establish a strong policy regarding Iraqi Turkmen in Iraq. Hence, MHP during each election term of parliament declares its support for Iraqi Turkmen and advises the Turkish Government to find a solution related to their issues.

As a political discourse, after the Kirkuk massacre in 1959, Iraqi Turkmen had to be influential in politics. However, the Iraqi government did not allow any ethnic society to be established in Iraq. As I have previously mentioned regarding this issue, the Iraqi Turkmen established the “Kardaslik Ocagi” in order to make decisions related to their policy. Despite years of persecution, the Iraqi Turkmen, who did not deviate from the barbaric roads, always refused the armed struggle and tried to make their voices heard by cultural and political means. The most important reason why the Turkmen do not apply for violence can be attributed to the formation of educated, intellectual and elite (Gundor, 2004, p.30).

After the first gulf war in 1990, many political parties were found in Iraq. Iraqi Turkmen have established some political parties represented by the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF). The Iraqi Turkmen Front, which was established on April 24, 1995, and aimed to unite the Turkomans' parties and organisations, was formed by the gathering of the Iraqi National Turkmen Party, the Turkmen Party and the Turkmen Union Movement (Al-Hirmizi, 2005). The aims of the ITF have explained that the Iraqi Turkmen and other people should have their legitimate rights within the framework of territorial integrity. The ITF offers to establish a democratic structure that respects their human rights and freedom within Iraq. Today, the ITF has ten seats in the Iraqi Parliament, and they follow effective policies. Ersat Salihi<sup>3</sup>, who is the leader of the ITF, emphasises that Iraqi Turkmen always prefer to use a policy of peace and negotiation. Hence, since the massacres, the ITF have adopted various political and cultural principles. They have referred to the Turkmen movement for all of these principles (ORSAM, 2011, p.29-30). The movement is a civilised, and national movement believing in the principles of the Islamic religion and respects all kinds of

<sup>2</sup> Irak Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği, Antalya Irak Türkmen Birliği ve Dayanışma Derneği, Yurt Dışındaki Iraklı Doktorlar Derneği, Irak Türkleri Adalet, Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği, Irak Türkmenleri Kardeşlik ve Kültür Derneği, Türkmeneli İnsan Hakları Derneği, Türkmen Aydınlar Derneği, Türmeneli İşbirliği ve Kültür Vakfı, Kerkük Vakfı, İhsan Doğramacı Erbil Vakfı, Türkmeneli Dernekleri Federasyonu, Irak Türkmenleri Basın Konseyi

<sup>3</sup> Erşat Salihi is an Iraqi Turkmen politician and activist. Salihi, who joined the Iraqi Turkmen Front party in 2004, was elected as a member of parliament for the first time from Kirkuk in the 2010 Iraqi parliamentary elections. In 2011, he became the leader of the Iraqi Turkmen Front. In 2014, he was elected as chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the Iraqi House of Representatives. He resigned from the presidency of the Iraqi Turkmen Front on March 28, 2021.



religious beliefs. As a national movement that believes in living together, it rejects the idea of racist orientations and the supremacy of any nation or race. The Turkmen movement is a nationalist movement and a unitary national movement that denies regional differences and local, feudal orientations. The Turkmen movement is the common community of Turkmen living in various cities, towns and villages and believing in every world view, leading them to unity and brotherhood. Iraqi Turkmen have accepted the Iraq state as a homeland and have worked for the survival and supremacy of the state despite various injustices. Iraqi Turkmen support a unitary, democratic and pluralist parliament in Iraq. They argue that in this state, the governments must change by means of peaceful methods and elections and that the elections must be in international norms and should not be by ethnic principles. However, Iraqi Turkmen do not resist the unitary government, and they can adopt autonomy for cultural and political rights equally (Al-Hirmizi, 2018, p.63-65). The Turkmen movement sees the Arab nation as a source that enriches the Turkmen culture and shares a shared history. Also, although Iraqi Turkmen do not agree with the Kurds, they respect their rights, and they want to live in peace. The Turkmen movement demands that the local education throughout Iraq is done in their primary language, the local schools are supported continuously and strongly, and this right should be taken under the guarantee of the state. The Turkmen movement demands both Turkish and Arabic education in all educational processes in the Turkmen regions. Thus, they can protect their native language and culture (Saatci, 2017, p, 220).

### Conclusion

Memory forms a sense of tradition which passes on from generation to generation. The study of memory shows us a way to reinterpret the past. Additionally, collective memory is important as regards creating a sense of national belonging. It leads to achieve a policy against war, conflict, massacres so on.

Iraqi Turkmen have been influenced deeply by conflicts, discrimination, violence policy and massacres. The 1959 Kirkuk massacre has especially influenced their literature, history and memory in their life. Hence, Iraqi Turkmen have worked hard in order to continue their activities in both cultural and political fields. When the Turkmen writers organize a conference, they give information about history, poetry, and memories in order to be not forgotten within Turkmen society. Moreover, Iraqi Turkmen have started to emphasise their cultural characteristics, especially their music. By placing music in the common denominators of the Iraqi Turkmen, they continued to use it as a sign of identity.

The Iraqi Turkmen have organized many memorial ceremonies for those who lost their lives in the massacres in order to keep their memory alive within society Furthermore, they have been faced many times with problems and difficulties from past to present and have been unable to benefit equally and fairly from Iraq's institutions. However, since 2012 they have been recognised as the third nationality in the Iraq constitution. Therefore, they have chosen to adopt a policy of negotiation with the Iraqi state and other ethnic groups.

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## Appendixes

Appendix-1: İraqi Turkmen massacred in 1959 Kirkuk Massacre



Appendix-2: İraqi Turkmen massacred by the İraqi state



Appendix-3:Qardashliq: Review Of Culture Art Literature And Folklore

