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Politics in the Middle East

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Contents

Politics in the Middle East

Wazir Ali Baber

*International Relations theories and
Kurdish nationalism: a brief analysis*

1 – 9

Marija Petrović

*Women's rights in Islam:
Fethullah Gülen's contribution*

10 – 21

Ali Sarikaya

Erdogan and the presidential system

22 – 28

Debóra Kovács

Interview with Sayfo Omar

29 – 33

Daniella Vecsei

America's war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014

34 – 46

International Relations theories and Kurdish nationalism: a brief analysis

Wazir Ali Baber

Abstract: The Kurdish issue and particularly the struggle for separate Kurdish homeland have been subject of researches from different perspective in different disciplines for long time. Scholars across social sciences tried to analyse and understand by applying various methods to grasp the root cause and the main objectives of the struggle. This paper briefly explores the understanding of the issue and also analyses the issue by applying few mainstream International Relations theories and the particular focus is given to the recent debates among the concept of self-determination and territorial sovereignty of the countries like Turkey, Syria and Iraq where the Kurdish population are habitant for long time and struggling for a separate homeland. This paper suggests that the emergence of small groups where nationalism is used as a main driving force to achieve the ultimate target of separate homeland actually fuels the struggle from time to time.

Keywords: Kurdish issue, self-determination, nationalism, state sovereignty

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Introduction

The paper explores how Kurdish nationalists generate sympathy and support for their ethnically defined claims to territory and self-determination in international society and promote their identity at different platforms. It also focuses the conceptual and theoretical insights from the field of IR and studies on nationalism, and also draws attention on national identity, sub-state groups and international norms. It also include the brief the brief literatures of different fields, particularly International Relations (IR) and nationalism studies, and looks more closely at the territorial component of nationalisms. It shows that insights from nationalism theories regarding the meanings and roles of nations and nationalism is necessary in understanding the challenges nationalist separatist movements pose to state sovereignty territorial stability and security.

In this regards, Kurdish nationalism and its ideal national homeland, Iraqi Kurdistan which is a good case to use in explaining how such groups frame their self-determination claims to territorial autonomy or independence based on their distinct cultural and ethnic characteristics in order to help them to maximise their legitimacy and influence in international society. The ethnicist assumptions in relation to territory and national self-determination are at their most prominent in the notion of Kurdistan that encompasses sections of the territories of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Additionally, these ethnicist assumptions emphasise maps depicting Kurdistan (assumed total territory with majority population of Kurds in these countries). Kurdish activists in the region and in the diaspora have always promoted the idea of Kurdistan to international society, typically framing their promotions using the language of human rights and self-determination to make their claims as legitimate as possible to those democratic countries whose influence they are trying to gain. They have been quite successful in generating support among Kurds and in generating sympathy for their cause in international society. Their long-standing promotion of Kurdistan and Kurdish identity has enjoyed some success compared to other ethnic groups' claims to distinct identity in the same region such as the Assyrian Christians and Turkmens in Iraq.

But in Turkey the situation is totally different because according different authors Turkey is where the most seemingly complicated and pressing Kurdish challenge presently seems to lie. The PKK and the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in Turkey, the pro-Kurdish party with representatives in the Turkish Parliament, repeatedly state their desire for Kurdish autonomy within Turkey. In recent years they have become more assertive in their insistence that they

are ready to negotiate a solution as long as their currently imprisoned leader, Abdullah Öcalan who was captured by Turkish armed forces in 1999, is released and the Turkish government agrees to sit at a negotiation table with him (Huriyat Daily News, 2012). However, as long as the government continues to declare publicly that they refuse to negotiate with what they consider a terrorist organisation, there is no immediate sign of a solution. Kurdish nationalists have claimed ownership of this territory since very long and Kurdish nationalists in the diaspora are particularly attached to the idea of greater Kurdistan probably because of the absence of a Kurdish state or a clearly definable Kurdish homeland (Bruinessen, 2000).

Today both Kurdish nationalists and their sympathisers use the aspirant idea of Kurdistan to refer to the region and their identity. For them, notions such as ‘South-Eastern Turkey’ or ‘northern Iraq’ appear as insufficient or inappropriate titles to refer to the region and their identity. This understanding of Kurdistan has moved beyond the discourse of Kurdish nationalists and become embedded in the language used by other influential Kurdish groups who has aspiration with respect to the geography and distribution of Kurds in different countries in the region. Some officials from certain states have adopted similar conceptions when supporting the Kurdish cause and encouraged their states to put pressure on regional governments, particularly evident in the cases of Turkey and Iraq (Filner, 1997). For instance a report prepared by the Congressional Research Service, a research centre that works for the US Congress and provides policy and legal analysis for the members of the House and Senate, included a map which titled as ‘Kurdish Area’ highlighting the same boundaries and territories as indicated in the aspirant Kurdish nationalist map.

I. Kurdish nationalism: a brief literature

The literature on Kurds is mainly composed of in depth historical analyses of the Kurds and histories of the development of Kurdish national identity and Kurdish nationalism. These studies provide an alternative historical account of the region and its people, different from the historical narratives and arguments of the regional states. The observations of different authors on the social structure and political organisation of Kurdish society give detailed accounts of a case usually neglected in the academic and non-academic literature examining regional states. Among these, Martin Van Bruinessen, David McDowall and Denise Natali have written the most significant and reliable sources. Natali and Hussein Tahiri combined these works locate the longevity and power of Kurdish nationalism in the regional and local

historical events, particularly the WWI, when the Kurds came closest to a possible Kurdish state in their history. Additionally, they also emphasise that their peripheral location had given Kurdish tribal leaders in the past some degree of authority in their internal affairs. Therefore, centralisation, assimilation or exclusion policies of the new states led Kurdish leaders to react and mobilise dissident movements against the states they are located. These reactionary movements have enabled the endurance of Kurdish nationalism and where Kurdish identity and territorial integrity are central focus for Kurdish leaders.

Martin Van Bruinessen work titled as 'Agha, Shaikh and the State' has been one of the most influential historical and sociological studies undertaken on the Kurds (Bruinessen M. V., *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*, 1992). This book examines the social and political structures of Kurdistan and deals with the role of tribal loyalties within Kurdish societies. Van Bruinessen tackles the question of how tribal and primordial loyalties transform into national loyalties in the Kurdish case, and emphasises the role of economic and political circumstances in this transformation. Through a detailed analysis of the Sheikh and tribal order among Kurdish society and through his observations from his fieldwork in the region, Van Bruinessen other work titled as 'Kurds, States and Tribes' provides significant insights into the internal structures of Kurdish society and how they have responded to the formation of new states in the region and to economic, social and political changes (Bruinessen M. V., *Kurds, States and Tribes*, 2002).

On the other hand, McDowall work on 'A Modern History of the Kurds' represents a comprehensive historical account of the Kurdish society in the Middle East and their interactions with the regional states where Kurds in majority. In this book, McDowall traces the problems experienced by the Kurds back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the policies of the Ottoman and Iranian empires towards their Kurdish populations, and provides useful insights in understanding the internal and external dynamics that shape Kurdish nationalism (McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 2004). In the report he prepared for the Minority Rights Group, McDowall explores the issues that affect the identity and political development of the Kurds. He argues that although Kurds have mainly blamed the states where they have been living for years for their inability to create their own state, and that this is indeed a contributory factor, in addition Kurdish tribal structure and internal rivalry at the beginning of the twentieth century (which is a more or less continuing feature of Kurdish society) also defined the political progress of the Kurdish society (McDowall, *The Kurds*, 1996). In addition, McDowall indicates that the map of Kurdistan he has highlighted

in the report is not a political map, but merely indicates the location of the Kurds. He also acknowledges the heterogeneous composition of the population in this region.

Denise Natali's work is another intuitive work on the Kurds that entitled as 'The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran'. Natali provides an analytically sophisticated and comparative analysis of the Kurdish societies in the Middle East and the implications of state formation processes on the development of the Kurdish identity in each state. Natali emphasises the development of transnational Kurdish nationalism, but argues that this has not managed to unite the Kurds under one movement (Denise, 2005). In addition to these studies mentioned looking at Kurds and Kurdish nationalism, there are many other studies looking at the development and structure of Kurdish society and Kurdish nationalism in a regional context or more local contexts. Most of these studies perceive a pervasive Kurdish identity that led to the emergence of Kurdish nationalism back in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and explain the endurance of Kurdish nationalism based on this assumption.

Although the literature on the Kurds is mainly constituted of historical and sociological studies there are also a considerable number of studies that aims to construct a connection between Kurdish nationalism and international politics. Some of these studies look at the influence of the problems encountered by Kurds and the activities of Kurdish nationalists on Middle Eastern politics and vice versa. Among these, Robert Olson's work is particularly important because of his focus on the centrality of the Kurds to understanding Middle Eastern politics in international relations mainly in relation to Turkey and Iraq (Olson, 2009). Olson looks at the policies of regional states, particularly Iraq and Turkey, towards the Kurds and the Kurdish parties' response to those policies. He discusses the relationship between Kurdish political parties and regional states and the implications of these on the wider Middle Eastern politics, and he addresses the issue of Kurdish independence only in relation to the Kurds of Iraq.

II. International Relations and Kurdish nationalism

The case of Kurdish nationalism and its promotion of the notion of Kurdistan within international society demonstrate and prove the necessity for adopting an approach that brings together different fields and perspectives for the study of sub-state nationalist actors, their

territorial claims and their relationship with international society. Moreover, the analysis of the territorial claims of sub-state nationalists from a theoretical perspective is largely neglected both in the studies of nationalism and international relations studies. Therefore, through the study of the territorial aspect of Kurdish nationalism because of its neglect brief emphasis have been given to highlight the some areas in IR where Kurdish nationalism is highlighted.

In International Relation studies there is a lack of substantial research dealing with self-determination of some groups here in the case of Kurds and nationalism with a focus on territorial demands. Mainstream International Relation theories usually treat the domestic and the international spheres as separate and consider nationalism as an ideology related to the domestic sphere and see the principle of self-determination as mainly related to international law (Griffiths and Sullivan, 1997). Considering nationalism as a domestic phenomenon and understanding self-determination merely in terms of its legal implications rather than its political implications limits the ability to incorporate these phenomena into the study of IR theory. Realism and neo-realism see the ‘international’ as defined by the relations between states and by the structure of the international system. Power and interest define the norms and rules states adhere to and the behaviours they follow. Therefore, neo-realism would be explanatory in understanding how and why the ‘external’ meaning of self-determination has begun to be used in relation to the human and democratic rights of sub-state groups (Waltz, 2010). A rational choice perspective assumes that a particular usage of self-determination serves the political and economic interests of the actors that uses it. This serves also one of the important motivations for Kurds leaders to emphasise on the self-determination during different elections campaign.

Constructivists on the other hand emphasise the role of norms and ideas in shaping the actions of political actors. As such, constructivist theorists assume that politics is socially constructed and that specific occurrences do not take place independently from the international constitution in which more or less recognised principles and ideas exist (Adler, 1997). Based on the general constructivist arguments Risse and Sikkink argue that international democratisation is central to understanding the norms of socialisation (Risse and Sikkink, 1999). Risse and Sikkink, through an analysis of a number of cases, look at the conditions under which international human rights norms are implemented. Therefore, the argument of Risse and Sikkink to understand the use of Kurdish sub-state nationalist groups’ use of self-determination in relation to human rights and democracy discourses.

The English School of IR, particularly international society thinking, provides the possibility of studying sub-state groups' activities within an international context with an emphasis on the common interests, rules, norms and values in inter-state relations that influence the states' and other actors decisions and behaviour (Hedley and Watson, 1994). According to this view, ideas seem to disseminate not only through interactions between states but also they become part of a set of international institutions that are separate from individual states. The international society approach to understanding international relations sees international society as the result of shared interest and identity among states that creates and maintains norms, rules and institutions (Buzan, 2001). Therefore, the English School's international society approach provides the conceptual and theoretical tools to study and understand why self-determination in relation to human rights and democracy is increasingly used by sub-state groups and why international society provides a normative framework for this use. Overall, these theories assume that norms, rules and patterns of behaviour disseminate among states and transnational actors, but the ways they explain the formation and dissemination of norms and shared behaviour vary. When taken as complementary explanations, these theories and arguments in IR provide a more complete analytical and conceptual framework to understand the relationship between sub-state nationalist groups and international society. However, the study of nationalism as an international phenomenon is largely neglected in IR studies.

Conclusions

The goal of nationalism is the desire for autonomy, usually in the form of a sovereign state, on behalf of the nation on a national territory. Especially in the twentieth century, after which clear examples of nation-state formations had taken place and the nation-state was accepted as the political norm, popular nationalist movements began to emerge without existing state institutions. Based on this, it could be assumed that a modern and political conception of nationalism not only applies to state nationalisms but also to sub-state nationalisms. In this sense, the idea of a national territory, which emerged as a result of the establishment of the nation-state system based on nation-state territories, provided a context for the emergence of Kurdish nationalism. To sum up, the issue of sub-state nationalist groups' demands for territorial autonomy and independence is under-theorised and understudied. Considering the general status of the Nationalism and IR literatures in relation to self-determination and sub-state nationalist groups.

The emergence of the concept of Kurdistan as a national homeland can best be understood by reference to material, political and ideational processes, rather than through an essentialist historical view that sees Kurdistan as a consistent and given feature of Kurdish national identity. The essentialist historical view deploys contemporary conceptions of national territory by building upon an idea of Kurdistan that had previously been used to define administrative or geographic regions. One of the key characteristics of this conception is to assume that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation. The perception that the history of the region is identical to the history of the Kurdish nation and that Kurdistan is a given feature of Kurdish identity, not a national aspiration, strengthens Kurdish nationalists' use of Kurdistan and its maps in order to promote their self-determination claims. Moreover, their contemporary conception of national territory is loaded with ethnicist and primordial interpretations of Kurdish territory and national identity.

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Women's rights in Islam: Fethullah Gülen's contribution

Marija Petrović

Abstract: The Gülen movement is named after Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish scholar and activist, whose teachings have continued to inspire many people to support intercultural dialogue and overcome differences. The aim of this essay is to present the ideas of Gülen in connection with women's rights and roles of women in the society, and also to dissipate some misconceptions about this issue among Westerners. As far as the woman's rights in Islam are concerned, it is an extremely important topic and awareness has to be raised about it. The Islamic jurisprudence has a great contribution to legal culture. In this document I attempt to introduce Gülen's ideas about the Islam and the Islamic law as well. Gülen underlines that the fundamental principles of Islam and the Islamic law include values such as justice, equity and human rights, freedom of religion and belief, thought and expression, right to own property, to marry and have children, to communicate and to travel, right for education.

Keywords: Gülen, Islam, Islamic law, women's rights

Introduction

To me the Eastern world is remarkably interesting. Many people in Europe are indifferent about Islam as this culture is far from them. As far as the women's rights in Islam are concerned, it is an extremely important topic and awareness has to be raised about it. Fethullah Gülen helps us to understand this issue, and he has a clear stand on Islam and women's rights in that religion. We need to consider that today there are differences among predominantly Islamic countries in how strictly they apply Islamic rules. In some places, traditions are stronger but in other places women are slowly given more freedom. Universities

are in the process of accepting women and more and more countries are granting women the right to vote. In Turkey, for instance, the rules for wearing chadors are much more lenient and the principle according to which all women can freely decide to wear a veil or not prevail. Furthermore, there is no reference to Islam in the Turkish constitution at all. The Gülen movement is named after Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish scholar and activist, whose teachings have continued to inspire many people to support intercultural dialogue and overcome differences. His teachings focus on working towards cultural and religious tolerance, liberal democracy and educating each other. He asks people not to mix religion with politics and to be involved in tasks of social welfare instead of satisfying materialistic desires. Gülen believes that differences should not be an obstacle to integration in the EU. He emphasises that the West has made important contributions to the sciences and the country should learn from the same. My aim with this essay is to present the ideas of Gülen in connection with women's rights and their roles in society, and also I would like to dissipate some misconceptions about this issue among Westerners. The West has some fallacies about the rights of Muslim women, that is why I pursue to show how Gülen thinks about these significant questions. There are some stereotypical tendencies of Western conception about Islamic law, including mainstream Western feminist conceptions about women's rights in Islam. It happens to be that Westerners do not know that Gülen is following Quranic practice. Gülen's commitment to the rules of Quran, even if it collides with some traditions which are making the norms in Muslim communities, but because of this it is an important part of the women's rights. I would like to stay neutral on this topic, but I believe that it is important we know about new ideas, thoughts on Islam or anything connected to the Islamic world. If we read and find out more about different ideas of Islam, we can try to understand this culture better. Gülen repeatedly highlights the words of Allah. Women and men are equally judged by Allah. Allah Says: "For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast [and deny themselves], for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise – for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward." [Quran 33:35]

Fethullah Gülen and the Islamic law

The Islamic jurisprudence has a great contribution to legal culture. Many outstanding Islamic lawyers had assent to the world legal thought. Law is a major part of all cultures in the world. Gülen underlines that the fundamental principles of Islam and the Islamic law include values such as justice, equity and human rights, freedom of religion and belief, thought and expression, right to own property, to marry and have children, to communicate and to travel, right for education. These rights are the main principles of Islamic jurisprudence. (Hunt and Aslandogan, 2007)

The sources of Islamic law are fundamentally different from any other system of law. Gülen is stressing that the spiritual approach of existence should have priority. If we all accept this, we will be happier and jurists will find solutions for many problems. (Khan, 2012)

Fethullah Gülen, while commenting on the expectations from government, mentioned that any government, however bad it might be, is better than anarchy. Without law and order there is simply chaos. He considers freedom of individuals to express their concerns, ideas and interest of officials to improve the country, an important part of governance. He states that his views are based on Islam which promotes activism for the well-being and betterment of society. Regarding Shariah, the Islamic law, Gülen mentioned that individual's right to choose and practice their religion is different from Shariah and in-fact such a right is in sync with the teachings of Quran. If a state fails to provide such basic rights and freedom, the state laws should be reviewed and reformed. (Knowlton, 2010) He adds that Islam does not suggest a particular type of government but gives people the freedom to choose the form of government they find appropriate.

While looking into the role of women scholars in Islam, it is important to note that even in the past, women have played a significant role in religious scholarship and continued to do so. Their contributions are confirmed by sources as biographical dictionaries. The contribution, especially in imparting religious scholarship including the hadith, is well recognised. For instance Aisha, the Prophet's widow, is known to be high a profile transmitter of hadith and interpreter of the Quran and was widely consulted for her knowledge of religious law. There are references of around 1075 women in al-Sakhawi's chapter on women who are well recognised for their religious devotion and contribution to religious scholarship. Unlike the stereotypes that women and men have been segregated in Islam, there are various accounts

which give proof that women studied with men. The scholarly women went ahead and imparted knowledge in madrasa, study circles and private homes.

The same can be seen in elite backgrounds where women enjoyed support from their families to acquire advanced religious instruction. They did not solely study but trained with scholars and worked towards earning ijaza which gave these women the permission to teach others. These women travelled far and wide to many places in their quest for knowledge. Some of these women were rewarded with certificates such as *kathirat al-riyasa* or “plenitude of leadership”. (Afsaruddin, 2005)

Regarding the issue of terrorism which is being associated with Islam, Gülen mentioned that killing a person is considered a serious sin. The Quran treats all individuals equally and killing one innocent person is the same as killing the whole of mankind. Regarding jihad, Islam considers human life as honourable and makes rules to preserve peace and happiness but at the same time allows Muslims to fight in exceptional circumstances like in case of rebellion, anarchy among others. The Quran explains this issue in Surah Baqara (2:191) by stating “tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.” Islamic law does allow Muslims to protect religion, honour, and sacred values while maintaining justice. In addition, Islam does not justify war to convert people to Islam or force Islamic rule. Islam does not allow individuals to start wars in the name of Muslims but it is the duty of the state. According to Gülen, Islam defines rules regarding the treatment of enemies such as forbidding the killing of innocent civilians including women, children, and elderly among others. (Albayrak, 2015)

Gülen repeatedly reminds the reader of the major cultural values and practices of the Ottomans: (1) the spirit of dialog; (2) the fact that the Ottoman state was multilingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious; (3) respect for women; and (4) the intellectual and cultural rapprochement (Tanzimat period) between Ottoman society and the West began in the nineteenth century. (Ebaugh, 2010)

As far as the women’s rights are concerned first of all I reckon that it is necessary to underscore that Gülen always stresses that “women can assume any role.” Furthermore Gülen also disproves the fallacy that women are inferior to men. (Hunt and Aslandogan, 2007)

Women's rights in Islam according to Gülen

In these days employment of women is considered an important economic need for many countries. As part of interviews, Fethullah Gülen shares insights on any restrictions imposed by Islam on the involvement of women in various work fields. He claims that Islam does not restrict contribution of women to certain fields of life as long as the working conditions are suitable to the women. Women indeed have contributed to every field of life with participation varying from battles to education. And the same is applicable to women of distinct backgrounds. For instance: Women who lived with the Prophet were recognised and trained by both men and women in the matters of religion. Qualified and educated women worked as teachers. Gülen cites example of Abu Hanifa according to whom women could also be judges and adds that the Directorate of Religious Affairs (in Turkey) is working in that direction of recruiting female officers for various departments which would even facilitate women who are looking for information. Gülen highlights that the most important thing to ensure is that the working women can practice their faith. He clarifies that neither Islam limits women's role to their homes nor does it consider them inferior. Women in the past were more involved in the household work which along with their physical and emotional aspects contributed to interpretations seen in texts. He though raises that both men and women are distinct and have their own strengths and weaknesses. He refers to the Prophet's sayings which show deep respect and acknowledge the leading role of women. For instance: "Paradise is under the feet of mothers", to a person who asked, "For whom do I have responsibilities?" he said "to your mother; and then to your mother; and then to your mother; then to your father." Gülen points out that anytime the women role has been restricted so as in battle field it has aimed to protect her and not to discriminate against her. Traditions which appear negative to us now were actually well-meant and applicable to that time. (Gundem, 2005)

While discussing about issues of women's rights, Gülen agrees that the local traditions and interpretations in some Muslim communities have led to oppression of women but at the same time he criticises most of the Western forces campaigning for women's right for not working towards freedom of body and soul but instead limiting their actions to the physical aspects which end up with women being treated as objects of pleasure. Gülen raises the issue that Islam is not suppressive in nature and in-fact gives more freedom in matters of personal choice. He also mentions that secularism and devoutness to religion can exist in a democratic setting.

Gülen explains that an ideal Muslim woman is one who observes religion and adopts immortal values in her daily life. She is free to contribute to various aspects of life and work as long as the work environment suits her. Islam does not prevent her from doing so. To support this, Gülen mentioned the societies where religion is practiced in its pure form, women enjoy freedom and engage in business, military forces, practice religion together with men and play crucial roles in judicial matters especially issues like that of dowry. He also mentions that this is well known and had admirers in the likes of Lady Montagu who visited the Ottoman capital in the eighteenth century to witness the society. In fact Turkish women enjoyed superior legal, economic rights compared to English women who were denied the right to own property upon marriage by the British common law. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote the Turkish Embassy Letters, unfortunately she is not well known by English readers today, although Gülen was talking about her and her values. She travelled to the Ottoman Empire a lot during the early eighteenth century, and she had a profound knowledge of women's rights. She learned that women under Islamic law could have their own property and had the right to stipulate their marriage contract. None of these rights were available to English women according to the English common law till the end of the nineteenth century. (Hunt and Aslandogan, 2007)

For polygamy, Gülen points out that Islam does not require Muslims to marry more than one woman. In fact, according to the Quran polygamy is permitted only under special circumstances. Islam made this possible only to safeguard widowed women and this has even helped in rebuilding and securing their life and those of their children.

With regard to veil and dress restrictions, Gülen believes that though the veil is a tradition compulsory for women it is of secondary importance. Islam has no rules for clothing or sense of dress and instead teaches one to be modest. (Yavuz, 2013) In connection with the headscarf or hijab for women in Turkey in the past it was barred for wearing in public universities. Gülen remarks that in those times the education of women was a very important. (Hunt and Aslandogan, 2007) In connection with the hijab Gülen mentions that the primary principle is faith, believing in God and furuat, which is the secondary principle of Religion in Sharia. Wearing a hijab is in a category of furuat according to Sharia. (Anon, 2013) At the present in Turkey women can decide whether they want to wear headscarf or not at universities and other places, but we can see Gülen's way of thinking about this issue.

In regards to the feasibility of the co-existence of Islamic tradition and modern concepts, Gülen is optimistic. While Islam is flexible to new interpretations provided they are compatible with the Quran and acceptable to the scholars and supported by reasoning, the modern concepts give the individual a right to choose whatever lifestyle suits to her.

There are discussions both in the Western and Islamic worlds regarding the appropriate model for women. However, these discussions tend to forget the importance of diversity of thought and belief. We seem to miss the similarities in life experiences and focus solely on traditions and beliefs. Though it is true that traditions in culture and society are an important part of Islamic world, it does not mean that the Western way of constant change is better. Gülen movement focuses on the middle path. Gülen movement supports the idea that both women and men are complimentary and have traditionally held distinct roles because of their strengths and weaknesses that can be physical or emotional. Both the sexes are considered to be equal in a spiritual way in Islam. The Gülen movement offers a different view point and an inside view on Islam in contrast to the Western media which happens to create a false impression of the religion. It is a non-biased and moderate take on Islam, which makes it attractive to the non-Muslim audience.

Understanding commonalities or similarities across religions are important as all religions try to be a guide to life and help to build character and moral values. They focus on making individuals responsible members of society. If we understand this instead of associating us with a religion, we can open our mind to the dialogues among cultures and faith to discuss and develop understanding of the different viewpoints.

Gülen movement supports a re-interpretation of Islam in a modern context and provides the necessary impetus to cross cultural understanding and co-operation. The suggestions try to re-utilise the tool of *ijtihad*. The movement works towards the creation of a progressive society and shares a new approach to acceptance and tolerance without compromising any traditions. (Najjaj, 2013.) Gülen says that each individual is responsible for his or her own actions and considers that community should teach and encourage people to observe religion but not force their ideas upon them. For instance: veiling is a must but following it is a user's choice and no authority should force it upon the people. (Yavuz, 2008)

Margaret Rausch wrote an article about gender and leadership in the Gülen Movement: Women Followers' contributions to East-West encounters which show Gülen's ideas very well about rights and the role of women in Islam. Gülen and his movement encourage practice

of central principles of Islam and support freedom of choice in matters of secondary importance. It rejects any notion of restrictions imposed by religions. While he suggests both men and women to dress modestly including head coverings by women and encourages gender segregation, he does support the equal right of both genders to hold positions of importance and leadership be it in religion, administration or authorities.

The scholarly body investigates focus on gender in the Gülen movement makes efforts to illustrate that Islam has actually helped women achieve rights much ahead of time compared to their European counterparts.

Margaret Rausch's paper comprises a study of non-native US women who are involved in the movement and analyses their understanding of hizmet and the role it plays in their lives. Margaret Rausch's paper also tries to highlight the focus of the movement on education of individuals, their personal development and on creation of dialogue and platform to help to resolve the misunderstandings that people have developed about the community and work towards breaking the stereotypes through inter-religious and inter-cultural discussion and co-operation.

Gülen's ideas have inspired people to help create institutions or get involved in them which focus towards education, social welfare, help creating inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue.

Education is considered to be closely linked to hizmet. Parents, regardless of gender, play a critical role in imparting values, nurturing and guiding the child. While teachers impart knowledge, teaching is considered to be sacred and requires both understanding and patience. Teachers' job does not just end with imparting of knowledge but they must spend time understanding the individual's behaviour and feelings. That addresses the queries and acknowledges the individuality.

The Gülen movement considers that individuals must focus on self-development and instead of giving up the material world; they must develop resistance to the materialistic desires. They must work towards self-perfection developing tolerance and mutual understanding. These efforts along with hizmet would eventually lead to a better world.

The movement believes in the development of individuals who offer service to others altruistically and to help to build institutions and forums which encourage people to come

together and engage in dialogue to resolve world problems. He considers every act of service to be equally important much like the individuals.

Gülen talks about welcoming women to various fields including administrative but his instructions are limited to males which makes it important to understand the perspective of women engaged in the Gülen movement.

While understanding the significance of hizmet, women mentioned that it created a sense of fulfilment and provided meaning and purpose to their lives, while they worked towards pleasing God. Women feel that hizmet comprises assistance to others and the creation of a forum for understanding and exchanging ideas. The same is facilitated through exemplifying actions while one focuses towards self-improvement and self-perfection.

According to women, hizmet gives them an opportunity to be involved in prominent positions without focusing on racial, marital status among others. They follow the teachings of Gülen which advocates gender segregation but at the same time, they feel free to work and pursue education and consider themselves responsible for interpreting the teachings and its application. (Rausch, 2009)

Conclusion: Cross-cultural-dialogue

From the European perspective, there are plenty of rules in Muslim women's lives which we cannot understand and thus feel that their rights are violated. In Hungary amongst other countries, we European women have the chance to decide if we want to focus on our role as a mother or consider our career to be more important and live with our rights. That right is entitled to us as well as to men. Gülen shows us, that women in Islam have the same rights as in any other country. In an interview to the high-profile academic journal "Muslim World", which focuses on Christian and Muslim relations Gülen states: "Women are equal to men in the rights of freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom to live a decent life, and freedom of finance. Equality before the law, just treatment, marriage and founding a family life, personal life, privacy and protection are all among the rights of women." (Hunt and Aslandogan, 2007) Personally, I have been to Turkey twice during the last year, and I have talked about this topic with young Turkish girls. They said, they feel they are completely equal to men, and also the Turkish government proved it to them. For instance, a woman can earn the same salary, as a man. As we know many women are still dissatisfied with gender

inequality in respect of salaries. According to Gülen, women should be appreciated all over the world. In my opinion the differences between the roles of women and men are evident in certain areas of life, which I do not necessarily consider negative, because both women and men can show their talent in different things. Gülen is teaching us to find the meaning of life. It is the beginning of everything, also it is the way to understand women's and men's situation and to understand the world. Gülen teaches us about the main things in life. He deals with all the important questions, and if we read his texts carefully, they can be a link between us and the world and we can find the answers to any question. Gülen is talking about the meaning of the life. We need to understand the purpose of the life, which is a process. (Gülen, 2006) Gülen says that happiness comes from within and from our relationship with God. Our generation needs to learn how to achieve happiness. (Gülen, 2006) I believe that if we find our peace, happiness, and we all find God, as Gülen teaches, it can be a peaceful life for women and men as well. In my point of view the cross-cultural dialogue is the solution to any kind of problem in the world, and thanks to the moderate voice of the movement there is increased hope for co-operation and cultural dialogue. Fethullah Gülen is always referring to the Quran: "And their Lord has accepted them, and answered them: 'Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: you are members, one of another; those who have left their homes and were driven out from there, and suffered harm in My Cause, and fought and were slain - verily, I will blot out them from their iniquities, and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath – a reward from the Presence of Allah, and from His Presence is the best of rewards.'" [Quran 3:195]

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Erdogan and the presidential system

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The presidential form of government has become one of the leading democratic political institutions along with the parliamentary system of government. However, the presidential system exists in different forms in various countries depending upon the political situation and environment of the given time when it was established. For instance the American presidency, which is regarded as the oldest and purest form of presidential government, came into being under different circumstances and situation as compared to the French presidency which is considered by the academicians as semi-presidential because of its peculiar co-existence of the presidency and the cabinet. (Understanding presidential system, Anon., n.d., p.2) The United States (US) has a presidential system, as do countries it has influenced regionally, culturally or militarily, including Latin American countries and the Philippines. With the exception of the US, presidential systems in the past have often been associated with politically unstable and authoritarian regimes. Countries that have adopted a form of the parliamentarianism include the United Kingdom (UK), much of continental Europe, Israel, Japan, many of the former British colonies in Africa and Asia, and most Caribbean countries. The French hybrid system has provided a model for a number of countries and is highlighted throughout this section. Countries that have adopted the French Model include former French colonies in West Africa – such as Cote D'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, and Senegal – and a few eastern European states, such as Poland and Bulgaria. Portugal also has a hybrid system, with similar elements as the French model. The Portuguese system has influenced former colonies

like Mozambique and Angola. (United Nations Development Program, 1999, p.1) The president represents one of the three branches of power in the federal government of the United States. The rules governing the election and functions of the president are contained in Article II of the US Constitution. The official residence of the president is the White House in Washington D.C. (Szilágyi, 2009, p.310)

As a product of the Turkish Revolution, (Ataturk's reforms and basic principles of Kemalism, Atatürkism), the new secular nation state of Turkey was established by Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia between 1919 and 1923. In a country where the Ottoman Sultans had ruled for centuries, as Allah's Shadow on earth, Mustafa Kemal had the courage and vision to do away with centuries of tradition and corruption by announcing that: "The Turkish State is a Republic", on October 29, 1923. To achieve this first of all he separated the Caliphate (religious leadership of all Moslems) and Sultanate (political leadership), then abolished firstly the Sultanate, then the Caliphate. Later, he replaced the sharia, which is the Law of Koran, with a modern civil code adopted from Swiss civil code, and a penal code modelled on the Italian Penal Code. The new legal system was based on Roman Law (1925-26). Another far-reaching cultural reform was the reform of the alphabet: he abolished the use of Arabic script and adopted Latin characters in 1928. After that, Ataturk gave to Turkish women complete equality in the society. They acquired the right to vote and to be elected to parliament before the women of many European Countries. Reform was carried out in every area of social life. The first political party of the Republic, the Republican People's Party, was established. As Frey emphasised, the statement that Islam was the religion of the state was deleted from the constitution. Religious tribunals were done away with, the fez was outlawed, and the religious dervish order was proscribed. The wearing of religious garb outside of religious buildings was forbidden. The Western calendar and time standards were adopted. A national system of education was established, a national railway network was being built, and the expansion of secular higher education began. Ataturk's Revolution accomplished the basic modernisation of the educated elite and brought it into active political participation. As Frey said, now the possibly more difficult task of modernising the ill-educated masses of the society and involving them in the political process was being undertaken. On account of these exceptional services, Turkish people gave to Mustafa Kemal the name "Ataturk" a venerable name, which means the father of all Turks. As Dankwart Rustow said, Ataturk achieved the transformation of an empire into a nation, of a transitional into a western cultural image. Mustafa Kemal combined the three roles of victorious battlefield commander, state founder

and chief sponsor of large-scale educational establishments (Rustow). Atatürk was a man of action, a man of ideas and a pragmatic far-seeing statesman. The driving force of his life was science, particularly the positive sciences. He built up a socio-political system, called Kemalism/Atatürkism. These are the basic principles of Atatürkism:

- Full independence
 - Anti-imperialism
 - Rationalism and scientism
 - Republicanism
 - Nationalism (Patriotism)
 - Etatism (policy of state control), which is very different to socialism and communism
 - Laicism (Secularism)
 - Revolutionism
 - Contemporaneism
 - Populism
- Pacifism: Atatürk formulated the most essential principles of Turkey; “peace at home, peace in the world.” This compact sentence carries Atatürk’s thoughts about the internal and external policies of Turkey with absolute clarity. (Arslan, 2005, pp.133–134)

Turkey has been ruled by a single party system for long time. (The Republican People’s Party – CHP) was the only party between 1923 and 1945, when the National Development Party was established. After winning the first multiparty elections in 1946 by a landslide, the Republican People’s Party lost the majority to the Democratic Party in the 1950 elections. During the single-party period, President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk repeatedly requested that opposition parties be established against the Republican People’s Party in order to transition into multi-party democracy). (Ruysdael, 2012, p.214) The majority of Turkish population consists of Sunni Muslims. In the period of Ottoman Empire, Conservative wing was in power. After the collapse of Ottoman Empire (1918–1923), Conservative wings were quite active with Atatürk who was founder of Turkey (1923) during Turkish war of independence. Ultimately in the year of 1923 New Turkey was established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk and his politicians completely followed western-oriented policy. The Kemalist model of laicism unintentionally facilitates a politicisation of Islam “from below”, i.e., by political parties and social groups. Their aim is less to transform Turkey back into an Islamic state than to weaken the Kemalist monopoly on the interpretation of religion, to exploit anti-Western

resentments, to win electoral votes from the Kurdish population, and to end the restrictions on religious freedom. The politicisation of Islam “from below” began with Turkey’s transition to a democratic multi-party system. The election victory of the conservative religious Democratic Party (DP, Demokrat Partisi) of Adnan Menderes in 1950 represented an important turning point in Turkish history as political power was no longer viewed as an administrative tool for pushing through an elitist state-building project (Kemalism), but was seen instead as a participatory instrument for asserting its own (religious) interests. Prime Minister Menderes can be credited with having prevented the splintering-off or radicalisation of religious groups and with expanding the state’s social legitimacy through his liberal stance vis-à-vis Islam. By integrating such groups, the Democratic Party was able to ensure that they did not become an “underground movement” but instead became part of the parliamentary system. In the 1970s, the first Islamist parties in Turkey emerged from a democratic, parliamentary environment under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan. They not only represented the rights of people with religious interests in a pluralist process of political expression, but also marked out the terms under which parties with Islamist goals could operate and the terms under which they could participate in government. The 1980 military coup triggered, under the auspices of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (TIS), a turning point in Turkish politics: the expansion of state-run religious services, the introduction of religious education as a compulsory subject in public schools, and the use of the Diyanet, the state agency for religious affairs, for the “promotion of national solidarity and integration”. These changes not only led to a nationalisation of Islam, but also to an Islamisation of the nation. The military granted Sunni Islam a discrete and important role in the country’s socio-political development; it was the “new” old source of legitimisation for the Kemalist state. Under the aegis of Prime Minister Turgut Özal an official revaluation of Islam as part of Turkish identity took place. The state was no longer regarded as a mere collection of institutions and agencies, but as the champion of a collective identity. Özal’s liberal economic and social policies promoted religious interest groups; the development of an Islamic business world and of the religious but pro-democratic “Anatolian bourgeoisie” is one of Özal’s main achievements. The rise of the Islamist Welfare Party (RP) is primarily owed to endogenous factors and would have been inconceivable without the ideological change at the highest level of the state under the influence of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis. The party operated – due to pressure from its coalition partner – within Turkey’s democratic and republican parameters. The RP’s era, however, did witness an Islamisation of the public sphere and a politicisation of religion. The “Process of February 28” led to a split in Necmettin Erbakan’s movement and

triggered ideological change in Turkish Islamism that has deepened its dynamic integration into parliamentary democracy. The reform-oriented wing of the Islamist movement succeeded in freeing itself from the ideology of the Welfare Party and in ushering in a post-Islamist phase. This wing became institutionalised in the conservative religious AKP. The AKP can be classified as a hybrid political group that represents a unique synthesis of reformism and conservatism that crosses class boundaries. Its spectacular victory in the 2002 parliamentary elections was not just a result of this ideological change but must also be regarded – just as in the case of the RP’s prior success in the light of socioeconomic problems. (Karakas, 2007, pp.2–3)

The AKP submitted a draft constitution to the ad hoc Constitutional Consensus Commission suggesting a dramatic political system change for Turkey in October 2012. In the proposal executive authority is bestowed upon the president who is responsible for domestic and international policies. He is also the head of state overseeing the implementation of constitution, and state organs’ proper and harmonic functioning. Presidential term is set for five years. One can only be elected for two terms; there is no need for it to be consecutive. Political parties having at least five percent of the votes in the last national election or at least 100 thousand people may nominate their candidate for presidency. Parliamentary election and presidential election have to be held on the same day every five years. (Boyunsuz, n.d., p.2)

Right-winger and Conservative people in Turkey have felt rejected from Turkish society for a long time. On the other hand, they have been quite angry with Kemalists. Both of sides have been claiming that they founded the country and they have a right to rule the country. Instead of taking joint action, both sides have been still accusing themselves of being somebody’s pawn. After AKP government particularly wins the election in 2011, Conservative and right wing parties and supporters said that they would make a civil constitution. Unfortunately it never happened. Because they wanted to hold the reins of power with the bureaucratic ways instead of democratic ways. Before we accept the presidential system, we have find an answers for these questions:

Why does Erdogan insists for presidential system that much?

Does he think the presidential system is the best system for future of Turkey?

Is Turkish democracy ready for being ruled by presidential system?

Especially the acts and political discourses of Erdogan recently cannot convince us to believe Erdogan is Democratic leader. Turkey has substantially a freedom of the press and Human rights problems. Although Turkey states any time that it is so willing in joining the EU, unfortunately Turks does otherwise. Primarily Turkey has to find a solutions for alleges of corruptions, freedom of press, detention of journalists. Beside that it has to stop using Syrian migrants for a trump card against EU and interfering with Syria internal affairs and also supporting some terrorist organisations. If Erdogan does these, he can convince everyone that he is aim in bringing democratic system into Turkey.

All Erdogan thinks is to bring the presidential system for holding the reins of power. Presidential system is the best way for him to hold reins of power and be only one leader of Turkey. Another substantial question:

If Erdogan's political intention is so clear, why do the most of people still support Erdogan?

Because Erdogan knows how to use Islam religion as trump card for election, he knows how conservative people feel rejected from the politics. When Erdogan is in a tight corner (Corruption, wrong policy against PKK, cooperation with ISIS, Gezi Parki Protests, Arrests of Journalists...) he alleged that EU, USA and Israel do not want Islamic leader. The 2013 protests in Turkey started in late May 2013, initially to contest the urban development plans to redevelop Istanbul-Gezi Park into a complex with new mosque and shopping centre. However, the character of the protests changed quite substantially when the Turkish police attacked protesters with considerable violence, and what started as an environmental protest to save 600 trees in Gezi Park quickly turned into a nation-wide political demonstration against Tayyip Erdogan and his government. Some of those hasty proclamations of a "Turkish Spring" concentrate on Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan's increasingly anti-democratic and authoritarian ruling style, and compare Erdogan's rule with Mubarak's. Some others in the media debated whether the Taksim-Gezi Park protests could be compared to the protests against neoliberalism, such as the 15M movements in Spain, the anti-government protests in Greece, the "occupy" protests in Europe and the Americas. (Gökay and Xypolia, 2013, p.1)

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Interview

Sayfo Omar, Journalist and researcher of the University of Utrecht

Debóra Kovács

Introduction: The ICRP conducted an interview with Sayfo Omar, journalist and researcher of the University of Utrecht about the future prospects of the Middle East and the migration problem affecting the region and Europe. Therefore the interview focused on his opinion and former academic researches about foreign policies of the Middle Eastern countries, the challenges of migration and the threats of terrorism.

How would you assess the respective foreign policies of some of the Middle Eastern countries on the conflict in Syria and the so-called Islamic State?

Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia, these three are the main regional powers. Let's just start with Turkey and its aspects. As the successor state the Ottoman Empire, Turkey has a strong presence in the Middle East. After winning the 2009 elections, the AKP declared a zero-conflict policy with the bordering countries and many political analysts explained this behaviour as a neo-ottoman restoration and a peaceful and realistic foreign policy.

The government strengthened the relationship with Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories and Egypt. Recently, Turkey has good relationship also with Saudi Arabia sharing a number of regional interests. Also, as we take a look back to the last few decades, we can realise that Turkey and Iran have a number of shared projects, for example several projects of energetics, and also, their opposition to the Kurdish statehood.

The bitterest rivals are definitely Iran and Saudi Arabia. Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution Iran was a nationalist Persian power. Then it adapted expansive policies declaring an export

of the revolution – affecting the Shiite population of the region – which was regarded by the Sunni elites in the countries like Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and others as a challenge. It was exactly the reason, which gave birth to the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980. The Sunni leader Saddam Hussein thought it was a threat that the country's more than 60 percent Shiite population was meant to be manipulated by external wills in many ways.

After Saddam Hussein's death a vacuum of power was generated, which were filled by the Shiites – in line with the principles of democracy. It meant that Iran and Iraq could establish closer ties. The backbones of ISIS in Iraq are actually ex-Baathist officers who lost their privileges after the fall of Saddam. Also the majority of Iraqi territories which are under the control of ISIS are inhabited by Sunni Arab Iraqis who regard both the Shiite-led government and the militias of the Kurdish autonomy as a potential threat.

In the case of Syria we can see that it was mainly the rivalry between Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, the Kurdish or local rebels and government forces that created a vacuum for ISIS to rise.

Due to the current war-like conditions occurring in the region, a high rate of migrants have died in attempt to reach Europe in order to find asylum and in the hope of starting a new life. Considering the statistics of lost lives, should it be taken into account as a shaping factor of the migration policies and the refugee crises management of the Middle East?

It's the people who gave legitimacy to a politician. As a result of the recent conflicts, integrational crises and economic challenges, Western European citizens are tend to oppose the migration more openly.

The consequences of these factors have changed politics as well. The mainstream central and far-right politicians need to get along with an increasingly radical view in order to maintain their legitimacy. The Netherlands and Germany recently oppose immigration but they shared a liberal view on this topic until the last (few) years – even Merkel is changing her view on controlling the number of immigrants, although she still looks back onto the integration as a success.

As long as it happens far away, human lives are just numbers. Let's take an example here: we have to remember the fact that Gaddafi's coast guards held back the African immigrants at the

shores of Libya under a successfully implemented agreement with Italy. It led to some scandals in the press of Italy, but it happened way before the migration crisis, so the people couldn't feel the weight of this distant happening.

When it comes across with names and faces, the society is always more sensitive. In my point of view, the social circumstances pose a limit for the feelings of empathy to emerge. The floating ships will be forgotten just like the humanitarian crisis at the times of the siege of Aleppo.

Despite the varied political stands on different issues, what do you think is the strongest binding tool that can help maintain the diplomatic relations among countries in the Middle East?

The diplomatic relations are based on the intergovernmental relations in the Middle East but those are not always solid. The biggest anomaly of the Middle East is the rising population. The generation of the baby-boom in the 1980s is growing up today. The climatic stress is also a negative factor with its slowly rising oil price and shrinking water sources – which are a must to have in the Middle East. Such factors often could be regarded as fuelling forces behind political and ideological conflicts, these long lasting ongoing conflicts will last for a while in the area, however the joint decisions of the countries in the region seem to be rational.

Some of the Western analysts are tend to believe that the actors of the Middle East are irrational because of the religion-guided principles. We have to see that religion has a big impact on both politics and society. It is an intensive societal phenomenon, but still staying in the borders of rationality. For instance, last year, while waging proxy-wars in Syria, Yemen and Iraq, Saudi-Arabia and Iran reached a compromise to limit the oil output in order to limit the damage that low energy prices caused in their economies.

Some consider the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a nuclear power in the region. What are the challenges to its role as a stabiliser in the region?

It is more a dialogical issue, than an actual possibility. It happened before, when Saudi Arabia wanted to purchase nuclear weapons from Pakistan, moreover, during his campaign even

Trump urged the allies of the United States to buy nuclear weapons to stabilise the territory – the idea was welcomed with enthusiasm in Saudi Arabia, concerned about Obama’s nuclear agreement with Iran.

Saudi Arabia has the largest arms arsenal of the Middle East, only Israel has more developed facilities. All in all, I think the chance of Saudi Arabia to own a nuclear weapon is low, and so is the case for Iran.

If Trump turned down the nuclear agreement with Iran – which is unlikely – that could create an interesting scenario. If Saudi Arabia lost an income of its own, its expansion would start to improve. But I think it is more a political PR than political reality.

Could Turkey stay as a stabiliser in the Middle East in the future?

We are witnessing the increasing role of regional powers. The Middle East is going through a transformation, where the role played by regional powers will become increasingly important. If Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran can reach compromises, that can make stability.

If there comes a time when Palestinian and Israeli people can live together in peace, what will be the positive reason/influence for that?

Currently, I cannot see a prompt solution. It is neither in the immediate interest of any of the parties involved. Israel is recently one of the safest and most prospering countries of the region that also has a strong support from the Trump administration. Therefore, the Israeli government is not in a rush to change the status quo.

As for the Palestinians, the memories of 1948 and 1967 are fading away. Both Fatah and Hamas are struggling with a set of social and economic problems. Many of these challenges are local, fuelling tensions between the rival factions. The case of a Palestinian state is not an immediate priority for them.

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America's war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014

Daniella Vecsei

Abstract: However, the war between the United States and Afghanistan started in 1979 in the first place, the aim of this research is to give an understandable image of the actions from 2001 to 2009. During this period, not only one but two US presidents have taken his part. Firstly George W. Bush declared war against the Taliban after they denied the extradition of Osama Bin Laden, who was responsible for the September 11 attacks and the leader of Al-Qaeda. In 2003, NATO was also involved in the warfare as an ally and have taken over the direction of ISAF. Then, in 2008, Barack Obama won the elections with the oaths, that he will end this war until the end of his presidency. Moreover, this study makes an attempt at describing the social, political situations in Afghanistan and at collecting all the significant actions, which is determined the outcome of the war, for instance, Jellyfish, Anaconda, Fury and Achilles.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Taliban, military intervention, terrorism

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1. Introduction

“The war of Afghanistan has been the longest war in the history of the United States. It started in 1980 and has continued ever since. It was started by the Democrat Jimmy Carter and has been continued by every US government.” (Pataky and Morvay, 2010) The country is officially known as the Islamic State of Afghanistan and is a geographically, historically and linguistically diverse country. It is quite disadvantaged geographically but the barren, inaccessible areas situated in the middle of the country have always helped the governors, ethnic or religious groups in preserving their independence and autonomy. The tribalism and

religion are closely interlinked, however, the role of the tribes are still stronger than Islam. Traditions, such as tribal common law have been present in the society for centuries. Associations and armed conflicts have become basic elements of the community over the years. The first phase of the Afghan war began in 1979, when the United States with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have jointly tried to maintain the country's resistance to the Russians. At that time the US turned had its interests not in Afghanistan, but to the Soviet forces because they wanted to prevent a possible future struggle when they would not be able to use the country as a base. The second phase took place between 1989 and 2001, when obtaining full control over country has become a goal for the United States and its allies by using a stronger Muslim guerrilla group. In the following years armed conflicts were followed by one another in the country, almost 40,000 people died in Kabul between 1992 and 1995, for which, ultimately, the radical Islam advertisers, Taliban promised a solution. Taliban were raised and educated in religious schools located in the lands of Pashtuns brought up by area. They learnt their fanatic, common and religious law, the Pashtun in these schools, parallel to the acquisition of martial arts were thought by the Pakistani Secret Service. Their goal is to unite and cleanse the country from the mujahedeen, a group (people fighting for Islam, men of action) aided by the West and other anti-Islamic activities in the country. By the end of 2000 they were controlling 95% of the country. During the seven years of their governance, strict measures have been taken regarding the interpretation of Islamic law, such as banning women from earning a salary and education. They also gave shelter to jihadists, like the Al-Qaeda. There was a change at 9/11 when terrorist attacks were committed against the United States by Al-Qaeda lead by Osama Bin Laden. In response, the US launched an armed campaign to destroy Al-Qaeda, moreover they forced the Taliban to extradite Bin Laden, which they resisted. Supported by the United States, Karzai was elected as interim president on the 22nd of December, 2001. Parallel to this, the Taliban system collapsed. (Pataky and Morvay, 2010)

2. "The day that changed the world." (9/11 Attacks, 2010)

The Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organisation that was set up in 1988 under the leadership of the rich Saudi Arabian entrepreneur, Osama bin Laden. Its members fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union's veterans. It is assumed to have so-called "sleeping-agents" in more than 60 countries. The main danger of the organisation is the loose connection within the groups that it is formed out of and the fact that these are hard to detect and are extremely

secure financially. On 11 September 2001 four planes were hijacked by the organisation, two crashing into the World Trade Center, one in the building of the Pentagon, while the passengers of the forth one managed to take back control, making the plane miss the targeted White House and crashing in Pennsylvania instead. The US policy has turned against Afghanistan, in addition to the Taliban government that not only was closely connected with Al-Qaeda, but also cooperated in the act to get Osama bin Laden hidden. In December 2001, the US launched an air attack against the Tora Bora cave system where it was located a hidden terrorist organisation and the Taliban militants. Initially, the military operation is believed to be successful, then turned out to that the most likely targets already have left the hiding place well before the bombing. As a result, it was decided by the US Armed Forces Central Command chief, General Frank that further allied Afghan forces to come up against them. (Harmat, 2012)

3. 2001–2003

On 20 December 2001, ISAF was created (Security Assistance Force International), whose role is to ensure the functioning of the transitional Afghan government and for the operation of the subsequent military governments, and social security benefits. Later, on 11 August 2003, NATO took over political control of the organisation. Initially, the attacks and the war with great success has been achieved, there were facilities, which have even been abolished in full. On 17 September, 2002 was released the Bush doctrine, which is a non-mental protection guidelines collective name. Three main objective of respect for political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other nations and human dignity. Also in March 2002, it entered into force the Operation Anaconda, with the aim of hiding in the city of Gardez neighbour sulphur-lying areas of Taliban and Al-Qaeda terrorists have to be bypassed. The operation has been successful, so even Britain has sent further 1,700 troops to help the Allied forces. A deployment to some 2,500 land-based troops took part, including Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders, French, Germans and Americans. In addition to the TSI Rika Air Force B-52, M-15 and AC-130 combat aircraft and helicopters, it has also been made. This is not only our soldiers of the enemy armed forces, but the terrain and weather-volume affair also had to contend with. The operation took place over 2500-3000m asl, 5-10 degrees cold. In contrast, they enjoyed a big advantage for Al-Qaeda militants who know the terrain and have already stained the snow were accustomed to rocky terrain, which are an excellent

opportunity firing and provided shelter for them. Most of siege weapons 82 mm mortars handheld RPG-7 anti-tank guns and 57-mm guns recoilless filled out. (Witte, 2015) The victory for the Americans bomb blows on them by the air force, while the Allied forces conclusive phase helicopters have been deployed. The eight months war-method finally managed to achieve just that weakened the terrorists and the Taliban militants, but were driven out of the valley they have not succeeded. By 2002, the Taliban government also lost his position as commissioners. His replacement in the US and allied forces together a new government was appointed, headed by Hamid Karzai was then an attempt was made to reinstate the country's international legal system. The Taliban was defeated and forced to retreat south of Afghanistan. The United States for the sake of the subsistence of the new government incarcerated the survivals of the Afghan movement in the compound of Guantanamo Bay. In 2003, a turning point occurred in the Afghan war since the outbreak of another war between Iraq and the United States. With the United States have not given as much attention to the area as previously, the Taliban have strengthened again. The eastern and southern provinces were divided into four military districts and the recruitment of young people to Taliban's new army has begun again. In Pakistan the recruitment is supported by Pakistan fundamentalist Islamic parties, for instance, Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and the Laskar-e-Taiba. The reorganised Taliban groups have opened a so-called "jihad", which refers to the holy war that was announced against the foreign occupiers and the puppet regime in Afghanistan. Mullah Dadullah has been directing the operation, which have become a more actively resistance since February 2003. (Witte, 2015) The Taliban groups carried out several surprise missile and bomb attacks against the American and allied forces who were stationed there. Furthermore the Taliban still enjoy the help of the local population and an extremist organisation which was led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, since they are also considered the American soldiers as intruders. These attacks rein in the United States and the allies of the following countermeasures scale in the course of the year 2003. In March the US has launched another attack on the 20th in the US against terrorists "brave blow" as the south of Afghanistan, perhaps, one of which was the Taliban's main headquarters. Then, on March 29 came to life in "Desert Lion", code-named Operation of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment coating underpinning them. It has been proved to be effective on the first day, since succeeded in discovering two places where guns were hidden, which was filled with rockets and mortars. It was the so-called "Avalanche" action sequence between December 2 and 30, which aims to prevent the onset of the Constitution against the seating large tribal council (loya jirga) any acts of violence. President Karzai in his speech on 10 April 2003 stated that

until security and stability shortages caused by Taliban guerrilla wars and the rise of warlords does not disappear, the reconstruction of the country is threatened. (Kőszegvári, 2004)

4. 2004–2007

Under the Bonn Conference in 2004, firstly there was held a presidential than in 2005 the parliamentary elections were held in Afghanistan elections, moreover a new form-invention was adopted in 2004. Nevertheless, Karzai's government and the ANA (Afghan National Army) is still poor and still undermines the development of growth and stability in the presence of warlords and corruption, as well as to groups of leaking a gradually increasing number of new Taliban as well. (Tharoor, Ishaan, 2011)

4.1. The country's unstable assist

The country's unstable situation in the northern part of the country is still can be said as a relatively stable block, but in the south every day are packed clashes between the Taliban and ISAF soldiers. Both of them, in spite of the European community is still not left her line of "failed states" occupying eighth place in the country. Such aid organisations are involved in supporting the country like the United Nations programs of UNICEF, UNHCR, PRTs, which were created thanks to the operation of military forces and the collaboration of civils. Nowadays 25 PRTs are operating in Afghanistan, only with 13 countries are supporting of their aim to maintain security and assist the Afghans in the reconstruction and economic development. Even Hungary also participated in the funding, in the autumn of 2006, the country took over the management of the Baghlan provincial PRT. In addition, notable financial support provided by the World Bank, 1.56 billion dollars spent on reconstruction projects in Afghanistan, and 28 donor countries have helped ARTF (Common Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan) under the World Bank's work. (ISAF's mission of Afghanistan, 2015)

4.2 The Afghan opium trade

The opium trade in Afghanistan is not new, but even more production began after the fall of the Taliban government, mainly in the southern part of the country. By 2006 the country's poppy-growing the 82% of the world's cultivation, namely 165,000 hectares, which is 59% more than the 2005 results, which was reported to 104,000 hectares. Nevertheless, the black market generated the decrease of the country's economic development distorts relationships in society. The opium trade is not only bad for the personal health but also for the security situation in the country as well. In respect of in the country's peripheral regions numerous drug laboratories are in operation, which continues to flow into the Tajikistan through Turkmenistan to Russia and Europe. (William, 2011)

4.3. The 2005 election and its effects

On 18 September 2005 legislative elections, 6,000 candidates pitted against the 420 provincial council seats and for the 249 seats in the lower house. There is no accurate census defined during the elections, which leaves room for manipulation, instead of the provincial division, it was decided by the population ratio. This election is considered to be the world's most-handed response pouches. However, President Karzai, taking advantage of the presidential veto, he imposed an electoral system in which political parties election performance were restrained, so finally there were 76 registered and 19 registered parties. But the expected twists, turns and peace after the elections were still lagging behind and a never-before experienced wave of violence swept the country. In addition, it resulted the use of remote-controlled bombs, suicide bombings, shooting down US helicopters and land-air rackets. One reason is that the government forces in the capital was outside of Kabul and they could not reach them, so there the local warlords and drug barons could vindicate their will. In October, a new organisation has been established between the hostile forces, they entered an alliance between Jaish al-Muslimin's influential commanders and their troops were united. From the resistance point of view, it is all happened in the perfect time, because then they were free to use the tribal band on the border betwixt the two countries without any punishment, as the Pakistani army was occupied with the damage, which was caused by the Kashmir earthquake. After that, they changed their tactics, avoided large offensives, used installed roadside bombs (the number of bombs increased by about 60% compared to the previous year), and committed kidnappings. Civilians, police stations and patrols were attacked. The Taliban

seemed determined not only of the military and security aspects of the basics but also an entirely new point as well. (Afghanistan, 2010) During the years of the expulsion of the Soviet Union, between Karzai and co-operative warlords were able to manage an increase in material possessions. So after the Russians the withdrawal, the new ruling elite became rich, meanwhile the Taliban and Marxists, remained poor. As the history proved it so many times, the poor do not like the rich elite, while the Taliban do not pose a potential problem in the ex-communist candidates, but they threatened the wealthy mujahedeen. With this, new kinds of Taliban group were born with class consciousness. In the rest of the year of 2005 about 10 priests loyal to the government, more government members, such as the President and hundreds of civilians were killed in Helmand province Ulema council. Suicide attack committed on 28 September, when waiting in front of the Afghan army soldiers training centre, a bomb was exploded. Similar attacks occurred on October 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th and 11th. From the attacks almost at the same time NATO decided to extend the engagement of Britain, so they take over the leadership of ISAF from May 2006. From 15 to 17 June 2006, they launched a new offensive against Taliban fighters in a range of 4, which showed a particularly high activity. In the offensive “Mountain Attack” 10 thousand American, British, Canadian and Afghan soldiers took part. As the “Jellyfish” is another large-scale military operations took between 2–17 September to the beginning of southern Afghanistan, where Canadian soldiers and the Afghan army and police, a total of about 2,000 people came out against the Taliban. At the same time he was known as the “Mountain Fury” is running on action in eastern Afghanistan, where 4,000 Afghan police and border guards and 3,000 coalition soldiers played a role. This year, the Taliban groups are once again gained power, produced numerous uprising and on the Afghan-Pakistan border they started to recruit their forces again. Most of the fighters repeatedly were enlisted and imported from religious schools. The number of attacks, the number of terrorist attacks against civilians and guerrilla attacks also were getting higher. (MTI, PLT, 2010)

4.4. International cooperation against the Afghan threat

In 2006, while in the south, ISAF has established a new PRT's, while the Italians and Spaniards occupied their places west of the country, ISAF and NATO forces are trying to suppress guerrilla wars taking place in the northern part of the country. The more southern areas, the British took over the leadership and established a PRT are most hit by the

insurgency in Helmand province seat. This will be the country's largest facility of 1,000 people, which is responsible for disseminating and drug trafficking in the basic seed crops prevention. Earlier this year, 2,000 British troops will arrive in Afghanistan thus increasing the number of troops stationed there on 4,800. According to the decision of the British Parliament on November 14 they wanted to create Britain's anti-coalition insurgency, preventing guerrilla attacks, in view of the long-term role that the British are talking in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the United States was processing the withdrawal of their forces from the war to commandeer them to war of Iraq. To help to manage it, the British sent 5-800-strong British force which controlled the central command of NATO and with this, America could conduct nearly 20,000 people to another war scene. Besides Britain, the Netherlands has sought to take his part of the aid, as they increased their forces from 950 to 1,300. Al-Qaeda takes possession of the same in Britain as did it with Spain, Mullah Dadullah Taliban leader acknowledged that they are responsible for the terrorist attacks in London, the threatening of the British Queen Elisabeth II. and the Helmand assassinations. They intended these attacks as an open message to represent the fates of ISAF forces in the southern parts of the country, and that even in Kabul they could not feel themselves in safe, since the hands of Al-Qaeda could reach so far as well. The fact that the Taliban's second leader announced all the things, which was mentioned above, this was an open declaration of war indoors, which is now not only one of the previous target, but also posed a threat to the international forces. (Afghanistan, 2010)

4.5. 2007

On 6 March 2007, a military operation was launched by NATO and the Afghan military forces that was called "Achilles" and was against the Taliban who were staying in Hilمند range. In the offensive about 5,000 soldiers took part, from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) ranks Canadians, Britons, Americans and Dutch and Afghan army soldiers. Their strategy was to try to encircle the conflict zones as a "belt" to prevent the arrival of the new generation. In the months after November, the insurgents again declared jihad against NATO-ISAF forces. Moreover, the training camps started to actuate once again, the rebels returned back to their former strongholds and the Taliban regiment showed up repeatedly in several provinces over again. They started to close the schools for girls, public executions were back and religious courts operated with extreme interpretations were

established. As a consequence, President Musharraf for the first time proclaimed a state of war emergency and then suspended the constitution on 3 November 2007. The new elections were printed out only by pressure from the international forces on 8 January 2008. (Kitekintő, 2007)

5. 2008–2010

In 2008, with Barack Obama won the elections of U.S. presidency, not only in the direction of American foreign policy, but also a new political journey began in Afghanistan at the same time. Obama is not only as a president, but during his election campaign, also preached that terrorism counting only would be possible to defeat with the pull down of the Afghan war. The main objective of the new President was to put an end to the Iraq war as quickly as possible, so he could devote full attention to the Afghan situation, and its way to win. So soon after 27 March 2009, the first real Afghanistan strategy was announced, which is included immediate basis, plus 4,000 people sent to the theatre of war, and the number of soldiers stationed there also increased 17,000 persons. Based on 2008 assumptions Pakistan involved in the war and the spirit of this strategy AFPAK were called out, and Afghanistan-Pakistan special envoy posts were being created, and for its leadership post the routinely acting Richard Holbrooke was appointed. As well as to ensure effective involvement of Pakistan \$ 1.5 billion aid was spent on local schools, roads, hospitals and the rebuilding of the Al-Qaeda expulsion. (Péczei, 2015) President Barack Obama on 1 December 2009 announced the new strategy on West Point Academy, the so-called McChrystal, which considered the Afghanistan purposes as available if they increasing the number of combat troops and put more emphasis on protecting the population. The affected areas can be divided into three parts: the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar city and its environs and Paktika, Paktia and Khost provinces. Although the security situation seemed to improve, but the allied forces had to realise within a short period of time that radical Islamic terrorists were also present in the trained Afghan army. In 2009, the US-seeding costs were 23% of the costs of war, and the war in Afghanistan was nearly US \$ 336 billion between 2001 and September 2010. (Pataky and Morvay, 2010)

6. The capture of Osama Bin Laden

Osama bin Laden, or on its full name Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian militant Islamist who was supposed to be the founder of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organisation. Al-Qaeda was founded at the end of the war of Afghanistan with his 15 partner, in the Pakistan Peshawar. This organisation became the first in the world which were not interested in any boundaries and regulations. A member of a terrorist organisation could be anyone, if he undertook to represent and support for their cause. Osama bin Laden's head after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, a \$ 25 million bounty has been set, and then only in rare sound recordings has made his voice heard in which he continued to exhorted his comrades to fight terrorism against the Western world. The first news was leaked out to the public on May 2, 2011 regarding to the capture, that the White House and the Pentagon have been made Bin Laden's arrest in March 2011. Then arose that perhaps the terrorists hiding in a certain town of Abbottabad. On Sunday night at half-past two, three types of Apache attack helicopters set sail which were stationed in the Arabian Sea on an aircraft carrier mother ship, called Carl Vinson. The villa's argument, which was surrounded by a 4-6 meters fence, the terrorist immediately opened fire on the commandos, but still could not restrain them, goes from stairs to stairs they bought the house. The firefight lasted forty minutes, in which a fatal headshot killed the most wanted criminals of all time, furthermore one of his wife and his eldest son were killed as well that night. To confirm whether indeed Bin Laden was carried out at night, the American commandos took the dead body with themselves, and after a successful DNA's investigations, they buried Bin Laden in accordance with the ordinary Islamic traditions: wrapped in white fabric and buried in the waters of the Arabian Sea. After that, President Obama personally called his earlier predecessor, George W. Bush, who proclaimed in the war against terrorism almost 10 years ago. (Harmat, 2012)

7. The withdrawal

The Afghan and the Western governments decided upon the withdrawal process in January 2010 at the London Conference. In July 2010, half a year after that, President Hamid Karzai announced the program on the start of the summit held in Kabul. The process is not reversible, which land was handed over once, there the control will not be able to take back by ISAF. The pull-out process will proceed slowly and will take place every six months to a transfer area. (Thompson, 2014) The first withdrawal was performed in the summer of 2011

and until the summer of next year, the President must call back the 33,000 soldiers he sent in December of 2009. Obama argued with the reason to the extraction of the troops, that America is managed a successful and a severe blow to Al-Qaeda and inflicted a serious loss on the Taliban as well. “With regard to our position to these talks is clear: they must be managed by the Afghan government, which must step up its ability to defend his people, and those who want to be a peaceful Afghanistan part, must break with Al-Qaeda, abandon violence, and adhere to the Afghan constitution” – these words were announced by the US president. In addition, Obama also is expressed his intention that the U.S. intends to continue to pursue the fight against terrorism in cooperation with Pakistan. (MTI, 2011) In 2013, the exodus of attacks was further disturbed, since the past 12 months, 2730 civilians died in Afghanistan. The US president urged the Afghan President, Karzai to sign a bilateral security agreement in which he promises that western soldiers will remain in the country after 2014. All this was necessary because people feared that once the withdrawal will be completed, than violence and civil war will break out in the country again, “This is the year when we will complete our military mission in Afghanistan” – sound were made in the words of US President in the White House Rose Garden. The US left 9,800 troops at the end of 2014 in Afghanistan, but by the end of 2015, this number of staff will be reduced by half, while in 2016, it is going to be like zero. In addition, the president also said that in 2014 they will managed to close this transitional phase and Afghan forces will take over the security tasks entrusted to take care of the security duties. The United States in 2015, Bagram and Kabul withdraw its military one, and until 2016, they will reduce their power and military power to a normal functioning embassy in Kabul. Regarding the ISAF forces, they can only keep in the country if the bilateral security agreement between Washington and Kabul will be signed. The development of Afghanistan entirely on the “half empty, glass half full” type. There are areas which are succeeded in development over the years, but other areas are still in need of development. These include the situation of women, perhaps they were the most painfully affected victims during the events of the past two decades. First, the Soviet invasion, then the civil war and finally the Taliban regime. The raising in connection with the international outrage of the status of women is understandable, because women and girls were absolutely suppressed during the Taliban regime. Women in Afghanistan were suffered from racial discrimination: they were not allowed to work and learn, they could leave the house only with their male member of their family, moreover they had to wear burqa, which covered everything of their faces excepting of the eyes. Those women who may have violated any rule, had to expect for serious punishment. For example, if an ankle was flashed, it meant a

leg fracture, while prostitution accused suspension. The beating, stoning and hanging up of a women is become a common punishment in the country. Although the situation has eased since the fall of the Taliban regime, the situation is even today cannot be said unproblematic. High domestic violence continued and many young women is still forced into an arranged marriage, which is connected between the father and her future husband's family, some girl as early as 12 years of age can become wife as well. Thus, the stabilisation of Afghanistan is extremely important not only for its security role, but its "intangible value" as well. In the point of the country's past, it can be said that only with fortunate developments in the external and internal conditions will only be able to exceed its current state. "Afghanistan is a failed state, but it is still the best we have ever had" – echoed one of the Afghan NGO leader, Aziz Rafiee. (WL, 2013)

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