

Your topic: Details of my essay: What are the prospects of a Kurdish nation state?

Your topic's description: First Class, Harvard Referencing, I do not have further details for this neither do I have attachments.

Your desired style of citation: Harvard Referencing

Number of page: 8

Words: 2000

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Introduction

Kurds are a people with their individual identity, which is based on a joint race, language, religion and geographical territory called Kurdistan, where they have been living for a long time. The divisions of Kurdistan boundaries were forced by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which is recognised as the sense of injustice to sharpen Kurdish nationalist views in the different countries in different ways. The paper will give the introduction about Kurds, and will discuss the prospects of a Kurdish nation state. The paragraph about the discussion related to topic will include the relationship of Kurds with its surrounding states.

Discussion

The introduction about Kurds

The total numbers of Kurds are around 35 million people, and they are termed as a nation or at times as non-state nation, this means that they are an ethnic group that has the characteristics of a nation but their own state (Criss, 1995). The homeland of Kurds, Kurdistan is divided among 4 countries which are Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The Kurdish population of each of these four countries has many different ways to deal with them. The Kurdish people have been willing to have their own independent nation state from a very long time; however, they are not able to have one due to many obstacles and other conflicts.

Prospect of Kurds as a nation state

For the Kurds to achieve a nation state is a tough task. They have never really stood up as a nation would, whenever a crisis has occurred, there have been small groups that fought for the whole population or individuals might have played a significant role. Kurdish nationalism was developed when the downfall of the Ottoman Empire and the competition of great powers in this area took place. When the Ottoman Empire in World War 1 was defeated, a treaty of Sevres was signed in the year 1920, which said that an independent Kurdistan would be made. However, the treaty never turned into a reality because the military renewal of Turkey brought up a whole new situation (Hann, 1997).

The other treaty, which was of Lausanne and was signed in 1923, did confirm the creation of other Arab states; however, Kurdistan was completely ignored and the district of Mosul which was supposed to be a part of Kurdistan was given in the hands of Iraq. The Kurds felt that the stronger countries had betrayed and ignored them due to which the Kurds land was divided into surrounding states. When the Kurds land was divided into surrounding states, instead of making their relations stronger with the states, they further made it worse by having conflicts. The relation of Kurds with Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey is discussed in the following paragraphs.

The relation that Kurds have with the government of Iraq is different from what the former has with Iran and Turkey. Iraq had promised that it would take responsibility to make sure that Kurd are given their self-governing right, when the former became an independent nation-state in 1932. However, nothing materialised until the 1991 Gulf War when the Kurdish uprising took place after the war. Kurds finally got a legal foundation to have more power in

their own national affairs. Nonetheless, things had already started changing. The prejudiced reactions of the succeeding governments in Baghdad had become extremely violent and ruthless to the point that, the then president Saddam Hussein, had started using chemical weapon in his traditional killing (which he termed as cleansing) to eliminate the Kurdish conflict, with its people.

The Turkish government does not accept the existence of the group and due to this, since the formation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 there have been huge targets of assimilation (Hassanpour, 1994). The state has not recognised the Kurds or Kurdistan as the existence has not been memorised, due to which the Kurds cannot have cultural and linguistic rights. However, the Kurds identity has seen the better part of the previous century. The struggle of Kurds for the identity recognition has shown that Kurds can resist domination of the Turkish nation-state.

Iran accepts the linguistic and cultural rights of the Kurds, and is less abundant than Iraq and Turkey, believing that the background is the universality and growth of Islam, whereas there has always been opposition to any suggestion of Kurdish independence. The conflict that the government of Iran and Kurdish nationalism has is that they are not the exact diversity of Islam, but are the strict boundaries of the nation-state called Iran (Beriker-Atiyas, 1997).

The case of Kurds and Syria is different from all three above, in a way that the Kurdish identity exclusion started when Syria's nation-state goes all the way back to 1940s and it started becoming apparent later in 1950s and 1960s. For Kurds, nothing changed; they were without a nation before too and even now they remain in statelessness, having no idea how they should make a nation of their own. The way Kurds are treated in Turkey and Iran, it is worse in Syria as

the strategies of denial, cruel tyranny and integration is more woeful and worse than those of Turkey and Iran.

Since the Kurds felt that they were betrayed and ignored, a political unrest was started and there were continuous revolutions in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran. The only better treatment and cultural autonomy that the Kurds received was from Union Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). During this time, there were new central governments who were trying their best to force their national unity by forcing the majority language and culture on those who are minor in number under their rule. Everyone knew that Kurds can be a dangerous potential security risk, and they had to be stopped or had to be shut down (Kreyenbroek, & Sperl, 1992).

The stronger countries were playing double games with Kurds in the sense that they at times, used Kurds as pawns for their own purpose, but also making sure that their own Kurdish population was under their hands but encouraging those Kurdish populations that were in the surrounding lands. The Turks had become fond of the concept that a modern unified secular nation state must violently crush all the Kurdish forms of different identity. There were numerous revolts in which the Kurds were mercilessly crushed and the use of Kurdish language was completely banned. The same scenario took place in Iran and Iraq, despite the fact that the Kurds living there were promised that they would be given independence. However, what the stronger countries did not realise is that these killings and suppressions only made the Kurdish people more strong to have their own identity and movement.

There are many nationalists parties that have emerged independently in various states. Some of the main parties are The Kurdish Democratic Party, The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the severely extreme is the Marxist Kurdish Workers Party, which is from Syria and has

openly said that it is responsible for terrorist attacks inside Turkey. Each of the parties operate underground or in open, whatever suit them according to their circumstances, and their alliance which is known as the Kurdish Front, controls the Kurdish freedom fighters, known as the Peshmergas (those who sacrifice themselves). The basic problem that Kurdish national movement has is that, among the groups itself, there are disputes regarding tribal, territorial and ideological factors. Each group's party chief wants has his own kind of organisational setup and wants to be the sole and independent tribal leader wanting to have control over his troops, which happens to be in a bigger structure of the Peshmergas. Another problem with the Kurdish national movement has been that there is no unity, due to which there are fragmentations and this allows the central governments to take advantage of these conflicts that is taking place among those groups (Jwaideh, 2006).

It is predicted that if the people of Kurds, do actually get a Kurdish nation state, it will start by destroying the territorial integrity and political order of other state, in process threatening other states as well. If the Kurds want to have an independent nation state, they would have to start from Iraq. The Kurds living in Iraq would have to come out and show the government of Iraq that they want a separate state with their own government, and no involvement of Iraq should take place in it. From the Iraqi point of view, they would never allow the Kurds to have a separate nation state, merely because of their national pride. The government and people of Iraq knows that if the Iraqi Kurds are given a hand to go ahead and make their own independent nation state, they not only destroy the political order of Iraq, but would also go ahead and make their own nation state much bigger than that of Iraq. Furthermore, the Kurds do not really require anything as they have their own oil pipelines, which unfortunately run through Turkey; they can

use this oil to not only make a new state for themselves but also gain much of the economic stability (McDowall, 2004).

The smart thing for the Kurds to do is to accept the boundaries that they are in and start their work on the features of Iraq's significant federalist constitution that are delicately negotiated, so as to make their own route. The Kurds can use the oil that is theirs and do exactly what their northern neighbour did which was to build a prosperous free society. It is being said that that Kurdistan of Iraq can become the main point of comparative freedom, openness, and economic dynamisms, if the Kurds living in Iraq can be influenced to postpone their dream of having an independent nation state.

The dream of people of Kurds to have an independent Kurdish nation state is something that will remain a dream, forever, most probably. When the downfall of Saddam Hussein took place who murdered many innocent Kurds, the success story behind the Kurds actually started coming out. In other words, the Kurds started living again freely with no threat over them. They knew that with Saddam gone, they could initiate the talk to having an independence Kurdish nation state again. What they were not aware of was, no matter what they tried, having an independent state was something they would never get (Somer, 2004).

If the Kurds in Iraq were facing tough times with regard to wanting an independent state, the Kurds in Turkey were suffering as well. The Kurds in Turkey are known as Turks, instead of their real identity. Furthermore, these Kurds which were known as Turks were allowed to live peacefully in Turkey, but were not allowed to have separate identity or federalism, because there were other ethnic groups living in Turkey and when they were not allowed to have freedom, the Kurds were not allowed to have it either too. However, a change was coming and this is

something that the government of Turkey was not willing to see. The number of Kurds had outgrown the number of Turks in the country; and soon enough, the Turks will be seen as the minority in their own country. Eventually, the Kurdish nation state will take place, but it will take a lot of amount of time and many sacrifices as well as many alliances on the Kurds' part.

Conclusion

The prospects of a Kurdish nation state are that, it will take place, however, it is too far away and at the moment, it looks impossible due to many reasons. The reasons being that the people of Kurds do not behave like a nation, they have too much of conflicts with its surrounding states, and furthermore, the Kurdish freedom fighters do not behave as one movement and each one of them tries to over-power the other group. These conflicts are what the surrounding states (Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey) take advantage of and are still ruling the Kurds. If the Kurds want a Kurdish nation state then they have to resolve all their conflicts, not only among them but among them and states as well.

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