

## **ANALYZING THE STRUCTURAL CHANGE OF KURDISH NATIONALISM WITH THE APPROACH OF BRUBAKER**

**Mr. Mustafa Şencanlar**

Department of Foreign Languages, Kocaeli University, Turkey

Department of International Relations, Sakarya University, Turkey

mustafa.sencanlar@kocaeli.edu.tr

### **Abstract**

Ethnic tensions have increased world-wide with globalization. Ethnic groups are thought to be at the centre of these tensions in analysis. When ethnic groups are thought to be at the heart of these tensions, analysis becomes more difficult. Brubaker uses the term "groupism" for the sort of analysis that is based on ethnic groups. With the "groupism" approach, ethnic identities are believed to be stable and homogenous. Brubaker claims ethnic identities are not homogenous and not stable but variable structures. If ethnic identities are considered to be social and political processes in a certain context, it is easy to understand changes in ethnic based nationalist movements. After the Arab Spring, some important events occurred concerning Kurdish nationalism in Syria. The "Regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism came into prominence when Kurds took hold of Rojava. Despite this development, Mesut Barzani is out of favour with PYD leaders in Syria and came close to Ankara in 2013. This situation brings into question the search for self-determination of Kurdish nationalism in the region. To understand the present situation, the approach of Brubaker is important, because despite the existence of ethnic identities, the existence of "regionalism" upsets the notion of a single, fixed identity. Kurdish nationalism can be analyzed as a political process directed by leaders in different countries in the present context.

**Keywords:** Kurdish Nationalism, Brubaker, Groupism, Regionalism

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Local political movements based on ethnicity and identity have spread worldwide. These movements have turned out to be globally effective and locally constructed ideologies.(Keyman, 2011, p.27). Researchers prefer to use modernist, ethno-symbolist or primordialist approaches to analyze these identity based local movements which is accepted easily. Rogers Brubaker criticizes these traditional analytical approaches. Brubaker (2004) does not accept the idea of using ethnic groups so easily. He calls this ethnic group based analysis "groupism". For "Groupism", tangible and limited groups are basic elements of social analysis and movements. "Groupism" evaluates ethnic groups, nations or races as significant entities. Researchers reify certain groups by using terms like Serbians, Croatians, Muslims etc. When researchers reify ethnic groups, these groups are thought to be homogenous entities. (p.8) However, researchers use groups as homogenous entities while analyzing nation structures which causes trouble in analyzing the structural changes in nation structures.

As Brubaker claims terms like race, nation or ethnicity are used not only in politics but also in political analysis. (Brubaker, 2000, p.4). As for Kurdish nationalism, researchers claim Kurds are of the centre of Kurdish nationalism. So, when Kurds are thought to be the basic component of Kurdish nationalism, the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism comes to the fore. As a result of this approach, the search for self-determination in

the Middle East is commonly accepted in social analyses. Kurds are believed to be a homogenous and stable group in the Middle East, so the search for self-determination is easy to use for Kurdish nationalism. The "Regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism was on the rise until some Kurdish leaders had political conflicts in the region towards the end of 2013. So, until this last period, it was quite normal to use Kurdish groups as the main components of Kurdish nationalism. In the last period of 2013, Masoud Barzani, the president of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, developed different policies which led researchers to question the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism.

Brubaker asserts that policy-makers use identities for the advantage of their politics, but this does not require researchers to use identities in social analyses. For example, researchers have used the term "nation" in their analyses to explain self-determination for about 150 years. However, it is not required to use "nation" to analyze self-determination. The aim of political analysis should be to explain how terms like "nation" and "ethnic" are reified in politics. (Brubaker, 2000, p.5). The ethnic policy-makers who rule in the Middle East embody policies developed by using terms such as "ethnic" or "nation". Iraqi Kurdistan Region is the most important region for Kurdish nationalism and its relations the Democratic Union Party, PYD, in Syria is critical for Kurdish nationalism. After the Arab Spring, the PYD took control of some important regions in Northern Syria, and Masoud Barzani has good relations with the PYD which affects the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism positively. But, towards the end of 2013, Masoud Barzani is out of favour with the PYD and developed good relations with Ankara for the flow of petroleum. These changes cause us to question the "regionalism" feature which is interrupted by new policies. The "Groupism" approach has difficulties in analyzing this interruption. Not evaluating Kurdish nationalism as homogenous helps to understand this interruption resulting from the policies Kurdish leaders adopted.

This article aims to explain that Kurdish nationalism has a structural change in its new context as a political process and its "regionalism" feature has been interrupted. Evaluating Kurdish nationalism with Kurdish identity and ethnic groups is a traditional way which does not explain interruption in the "regionalism" feature. Therefore, Kurdish nationalism will be evaluated with the approach of Brubaker which does not analyze ethnic groups as stable structures.

Firstly, the modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches about Kurdish nationalism will be given to see the differences between analyses. After that, relations between Syrian and Iraqi Kurdish leaders will be used to explain the interruption of the "regionalism" feature. Brubaker's approach will be used to clarify the change in Kurdish nationalism.

## 2. "REGIONAL" KURDISH NATIONALISM

Kurdish communities are scattered in different countries in the Middle East, and Kurds, as an ethnic group, are thought to be at the heart of Kurdish nationalism. Karl W. Deutsch claims that the rate of literacy and the use of communication instruments increase in societies with urbanization leading to cultural union in societies. However, Kurdish communities are not united with other communities in the countries where they live. Anthony Smith's approach about this cultural union explains the situation of Kurdish communities. Smith asserts that the idea of cultural union is not so realistic since the use of communication instruments can present different ideas which can have different reflections in societies. (Özkırımlı, 2013, p.62). This approach clarifies why Kurdish communities do not have cultural union with other communities. For example, urbanization and the use of communication instruments have not helped the cultural union as expected in Turkey; as a result, Kurdish nationalism has gained ground in Turkey, and the region especially in the last 30 years. With a traditional approach, it is possible to put Kurdish nationalism in ethnic nationalism category which Smith (1991) accounts for in *National Identity*. The Kurdish Nationalism movement that is emerging in different countries symbolizes nationalist ideology before independence, and it aims to found an ethnic based country or structure. (p. 82). Kurdish nationalism is a separatist movement in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. As Kurdish communities are scattered across different countries, Kurdish nationalism can also be accepted as diaspora nationalism which is compatible with Smith's diaspora approach. This situation causes pan-Kurdish ideology and a separatist attitude against countries where Kurds live. (Somer, 2011, p.253). Brubaker does not deny the existence of identities, and the ethnic dimension of Kurdish nationalism is clear. The problem is viewing ethnic identities as stable and homogenous. Because of this disputable approach, Kurdish nationalism has been analyzed as pan-nationalistic ideology so far.

We can also account for Kurdish nationalism with John Armstrong's "other" term. Armstrong asserts that identifying ethnic groups require interaction with opponent identities. Namely, ethnic identification needs an opponent "other". (Özkırımı, 2013, p.208). Kurdish nationalism identified itself as a result of interaction with "others" in Iran, Syria, Iraq and Turkey by the help of its leaders. Kurdish nationalism aims to gain its independence by determining an opponent "other" which helps us to analyze Kurdish nationalism as "separatist".

Modernist Gellner claims some nations have connections with the past and some do not. Özoğlu uses this approach for Kurdish nationalism and alleges that Kurdish nationalism was constructed after WW1. Moreover, Özoğlu (2011) asserts that Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish identity do not have natural ties.(p.203). This means Kurdishness and Kurdish identity are connected to the past but Kurdish nationalism is a constructed ideology not having ties with past. Kurdish nationalism is believed to have two starting points: firstly, Kurdish identity with its own history and secondly, the search for self-determination in Kurdish populated regions. (Özoğlu, 2011, p.207). In this point, the countries with a high Kurdish population have territorial integrity problem since the idea of self-determination is in conflict with territorial integrity. When the desire for self-determination increases, commitment to international norms of territorial integrity lessens. Therefore, nationalist ideology takes precedence over international norms. (Woodwell, 2007, p.28). For instance, international norms ban terrorist actions, but Kurdish nationalism takes support from terrorist actions in Turkey. In the same way, after the Arab Spring, Syrian Kurds took control of Northern Syria, and this is a clear problem for the integrity of Syria. It is clear that Kurdish nationalism is constructed on two pillars: Kurdish identity and the search for self-determination.

Brubaker (2004) says nationalism approaches are generally based on group: this he calls "groupism". Namely, while we are talking about ethnic structures or ethnic conflicts, we mention ethnic groups. (p.9). In this situation, group names represent ethnic structures. Moreover, this representation of ethnic groups can even be a primordialist approach. Here the problem is using ethno-political categorization in scientific social analyses. Policy-makers use ethnic structures in ethno-politics; however, researchers should avoid using ethno-political categorization. Policy-makers use ethnic structures to increase interest in nationalist ideologies. Researchers should be cautious of this. (Brubaker, 2004, p.10). If researchers did not use ethnic groups as the main components of their analyses, they would not reify ethnic identities as policy-makers do; by this means, researchers would make a sound analysis by avoiding "groupism".

### **3. RISING HOPES FOR REGIONAL KURDISH NATIONALISM**

Kurdish nationalism has had temporary difficulties in different countries. However, we can say the self-determination hopes of Kurdish nationalism were on the rise until the last quarter of 2013. The Iraqi Kurdistan Region was founded with the help of the USA which is an example of foreign intervention. Similarly, Syrian Kurds started to take control of Northern Syria (Rojava) during the Arab Spring which is also a foreign effect. The ultimate aim of Kurdish nationalism is founding a big united Kurdistan. (Ergil, 2013). Kurds have de facto control over a region with the intervention of the USA during the Gulf War. This intervention gave Kurds an autonomous region. With 2003 Iraq intervention, Kurds declared autonomy constitutionally. (Olson, 2008, introduction). Barzani is one of the most important figures for Kurdish nationalism as he has struggled in the region in the name of Kurdish communities in Iraq. Kurds in different countries attach importance to his policies. (Bolat, 2013). If Kurdish communities are given importance in analysis, we can say the Iraqi Kurdistan Region is very significant for "regionalism" of Kurdish nationalism. So, the policies Masoud Barzani and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region Government develop have the power to affect the course of Kurdish nationalism.

Analyzing nationalist movements in its spatial and temporal context is the right approach. The period after the Arab Spring is quite important for the fate of Kurdish nationalism. At a Kurdish conference held in 2013, one of the speakers Prof. Mithat Sancar says: " the war in Rojava is not a civil war in Syria, it is a war shaping the Middle East". By saying this, he attributes a regional meaning to Kurdish nationalist actions in Syria after the Arab Spring. He also claims Kurdish communities can be together with a new model of interaction. In this conference, in spite of self-determination offers, most participants recommended that Kurds be given certain rights in their present countries. (Aydın and Yılmaz, 2013). Although the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism gains more ground with good relations with the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and the PYD after the Arab Spring, self-determination hopes are questioned by Kurdish intellectuals in this present state. As a result, the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism becomes a matter of debate.

When ethnic groups are thought to be the basic components of Kurdish nationalism, it is normal to say that actions of Kurdish people in Rojava raises hopes for regional self-determination. Additionally, Masoud Barzani's policies about Rojava are influential for the fate of Kurdish nationalism. At the beginning of the civil war in Syria, Barzani was an influent figure in Northern Syria. Around 25 political parties have been founded in Syria with the support of Barzani. Moreover, Barzani established the Kurdish National Council to gather Kurdish parties under a single roof. (Zengin, 2012, p.135). He has also developed good relations with the PYD. As a result of these efforts, the Kurdish National Council and the PYD league worked together and on 11th of July 2012 in Erbil they founded Kurdish Supreme Committee together. (Zengin, 2012, p.136). In spite of these efforts, Barzani developed some positive relations with Turkey and also some agreements between Barzani and the PYD have not been put into effect. (Zengin, 2012, p.138). It is obvious that Kurdish leaders try to be together by thinking Kurdish groups are important for them. So there was a period raising hopes for Kurdish communities in different countries, but policies which Kurdish leaders follow were not as expected.

Researchers assume nationalist movements as belonging to ethnic groups which requires attaching too much importance to the term "identity". Semantically, "identity" means uniformity. However there are situations refuting uniformity in nationalist movements, so speaking of "identity" is not so realistic. Unfortunately terms like "self-understanding" and "identification" do not match "identity" in social analysis. (Brubaker, 2000, p.18). Kurdish policy-makers utilize Kurdish identity to put forward the uniformity of Kurdish communities in different countries which help them to sustain their policies. Good relations of ethnic based parties in Syria and Northern Iraq are significant since Kurdish policy-makers use ethnic rhetoric to maintain their hegemony over the region. For a certain period of time, unity of Kurdish communities in different countries are obvious. Here the important point is this unity is a result of policies Kurdish leaders develop. Kurdish leaders need a concrete identity for their policies. So it is normal for Kurdish leaders to use ethnic identities in their politics.

Barzani is naturally one of the Kurdish leaders using Kurdish ethnic identity in political rhetoric. Barzani tries to maintain his political patronage over Kurds not only in Iraq but also in Syria. For this reason, he welcomed over two hundred thousand Kurds migrating to the Iraqi Kurdistan Region until September 2013. The stability in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region enabled Kurds to migrate the region. Firstly, a refugee camp called Dumiz was organized for Syrian Kurds near Duhok city. After that, near Suleymaniye and Erbil other camp places were organized for Syrian Kurds. Another important point is while Barzani is helping these Syrian Kurds, he does not take any financial support from the Central Iraqi Government. This situation affects the Iraqi Kurdistan Government negatively as home rental prices go up and salaries go down because of refugees. Inhabitants of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region are worried about financial issues. There were about two million Kurds in Syria before the civil war and over ten percent of them have migrated to IKR. In total around 20 percent of Kurds escaped from the civil war in Syria. There are reasons for this: firstly, conflicts between El Nusra and the military wing of PYD, YPG, continue and secondly, Kurds have difficulty in meeting their basic needs. Barzani closed the door after the first migration wave because of problems with PYD, but later on 15th August 2013 he accepted refugees again for a certain period. (Orhan, 2013a). It is clear that Barzani tried to develop policies to accept Kurds in his region under difficult circumstances. He also defends Kurds' rights; he made an international announcement in the Independent newspaper to investigate whether there was a massacre over Kurds in Northern Syria or not. ("Independent," 2013). His policies show he is interested in Kurdish communities in other regions and by doing this, he influences social analyses in Kurdish nationalism and researchers use Kurdish communities as the basic components of Kurdish nationalism.

#### **4. THE FOOTSTEPS OF STRUCTURAL CHANGE IN KURDISH NATIONALISM**

Brubaker asserts researchers should use "groupness" instead of groups. "Groupness" means emotional attachment to groups. This emotional attachment changes in different contexts, so researchers encounter unforeseen variability in groups. According to this approach, groups are not stable entities. "Groupness" is sometimes on the rise and on the decline. Ethnic structures do not need "groupness" to exist as they can survive with their own symbols and institutions. Additionally, ethnic conflicts should not be analyzed with ethnic groups as they are variable structures. (Brubaker, 2004, p.4). This approach enables us to see change in Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish identity as possible. This approach does not deny the existence of ethnic groups. Ethnic groups exist with their symbols in the policies nationalist leaders make. Kurdish nationalism is directed by its leaders which affect attachment to Kurdish nationalism in different contexts. Ethnic structures and identities are variables in their spatial and temporal context.

The Iraqi Kurdistan Government wants to use its petrol resources for the welfare of its region, and the Government also wants to maintain its influence over Kurds in Syria. However, the Government has developed good relations with Turkey for the flow of petrol and this happened simultaneously with declining relations with Syrian Kurdish leaders. These are the first footsteps of possible change in Kurdish nationalism in the present state.

Civil war in Syria creates a region for Kurds to be active. Bashar al-Assad cooperates with the PYD in Northern Syria since he cannot control the region in the civil war. The PYD acts quickly and flies their flags in government buildings in Kobani, Amude, Afrin and Derik regions. Moreover, Barzani supports PYD's actions at that time. PYD is thought to have control over 1,5 million Kurds. (Korkmaz, 2012, p. 499). However, relations with Barzani and PYD have started to decline.

The Kurdish Supreme Committee was organized in Erbil by the Iraqi Kurdistan Government. In this committee some Kurdish parties are on the side of the PYD which has negative impact on the Committee. When some Kurdish party leaders were arrested while entering Syria from Iraqi Kurdistan, the competition between Kurdish leaders came to light. Moreover, 74 KDP, Barzani's party, members are detained by YPG in Syria. After this detainment, Iraqi Kurdistan closed the Semalka Border Gate. (Erkmen, 2013). The PYD started a power struggle in the region as YPG gets stronger. So, the Kurdish Supreme Committee which has PYD members and Kurdish party members has started to lose its effect. As a result, PYD and Barzani separated from each other while participating in the Geneva Conference II which was held for the future of Syria. PYD wanted to participate in the Conference alone as Kurds, but they were not invited. Kurdish parties under the influence of Barzani joined this conference with the Syrian National Council which represents opponents in Syria. (Orhan, 2013b). It is evident that the struggle for hegemony between Kurdish leaders has interrupted the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism in the region for an unknown period of time.

The disagreements between PYD and Barzani affect Kurdish communities negatively. Around 45000 Kurds migrated from Syria to Iraqi Kurdistan only in two weeks in August 2013. Poverty and hunger are important factors to escape from Syria. But PYD does not want more Kurds to migrate to Iraqi Kurdistan as they think they need a Kurdish population in Rojava, so they banned migration to Iraqi Kurdistan at the end of August 2013. This is also about disagreements between leaders of two regions. After this, Iraqi Kurdistan prohibited trade with Rojava. ("Suriye'deki PYD," 2013).

Researchers should avoid analysis which is compatible with politics based on ethnic groups. Kurdish leaders do politics based on Kurdish identity which aims to show Kurdish identity as stable. However, as Brubaker (2004) claims ethnic identities can change in certain states. A very important point is that analyzing ethnic structures as variable does not reduce its importance. On the contrary, it helps us to understand its importance in its new context. (p. 11). Consequently, analyzing Kurdish ethnic groups and identities as variable enable us to understand change in the structure of Kurdish nationalism due to this fight between Kurdish leaders.

#### **4.1. Reasons of Declining Relations**

Barzani has the potential to affect the structure of Kurdish nationalism. Barzani visited Diyarbakir in Turkey which is a very important stage for Kurdish politics. Kurdish media reported this visit would have influence over Kurds since this visit is thought to be a move against PYD and PKK, Kurdish military organization in Turkey. ("Hem PKK'ya," 2013). Relations between Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan proceeded to another phase with Barzani's Diyarbakir visit. Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan agrees on carrying the petrol over Turkey. In this visit, Barzani shows he does not approve of the PYD in Syria. ("Erdoğan ile Barzani," 2013). These new developments have a great impact on the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism.

Iraqi Kurdistan and Turkey have tried to have good relations for a long time which also affected relations between Barzani and PYD. Barzani gives importance to these relations with Turkey as he is responsible for the economic welfare and security of Iraqi Kurdistan. For example, KDP has delivered PKK terrorists to Turkey to maintain good relations. According to data given by Turkey, KDP delivered 151 PKK terrorists escaping to Iraqi Kurdistan since March of 2013. ("Barzani Yönetimi," 2014). This is another example showing Iraqi Kurdistan is not attaching importance to regional Kurdish nationalism in the present state. Turkey is taking advantage of this situation and supporting the flow of petrol over Turkey which plays a role in the structural change of Kurdish nationalism. For example, Turkey has had relations with Iraqi Kurdistan and the Central Iraq Government

separately since 2008 which shows the importance of Iraqi Kurdistan for Turkey. Also, Turkish companies have been investing in Iraqi Kurdistan intensively which is allowed by the Iraqi Kurdistan Government. (Duman, 2013). Turkey is the only stable and safe country for the flow of petrol for Iraqi Kurdistan. Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan have worked on petrol transfers and the flow of petrol over Turkey ready in May of 2014. ("Kuzey Irak petrol," 2014)

Rosa Luxemburg is one of the theorists who analyzed nationalist movements without ethnic groups. She uses the term "bourgeois nationalism" to explain the search for hegemony of policy-makers with the help of nationalist ideologies. She claims that the search for self-determination is an intangible and metaphysical right. Self-determination struggles lead to "bourgeois nationalism". (Löwy, n.d., p.87). Similarly, the search for self-determination in the Middle East causes struggles for hegemony between elite nationalist leaders. The PYD has started to have hegemony over Kurds in Syria which causes conflict with Barzani resulting in a decline in regional Kurdish nationalism. With the efforts of the PYD, the West Kurdistan Provisional Government was declared towards the end of 2013 and also an assembly consisting of 82 members was declared. ("Rojava'da geçi," 2013). Kurds have taken control of Cezire, Kobani and Afrin in Northern Syria. They are also trying to establish connections between these regions. (Orhan, 2013c). Firstly Kurds declared their autonomy in Cizre Canton on 21st January of 2014. Cizre Canton has a government and 22 ministers. ("Suriyeli Kürtler," 2014). A short time later, Kurds declared their autonomy in Kobani as well. ("PYD Kobani," 2014). These autonomy actions raised hope for regional Kurdish nationalism at the start. However, declining relations between Kurdish leaders reduces hopes for regional self-determination of Kurdish nationalism.

At present state, the struggle for hegemony over Kurds between Kurdish leaders has increased in the region. As a result of this struggle, Iraqi Kurdistan digs trenches between Iraqi Kurdistan and Rojava to prevent passing. Iraqi Kurdistan Government announces this trench is to prevent threats from Syria. ("Irak Kürt Yönetimi," 2014). The trench is 605km long and 3m deep - 2m wide. Muhammed Hassan, one of the commanders of Iraqi Kurdistan, say people migrating from Syria will be accepted at Peshabur border gate. Although he says Iraqi Kurdistan is helping PYD, he criticizes PYD as they take tax from people at border gate. ("Irak Suriye sınırındaki," 2014). PYD leader, Salih Muslim, criticizes Iraqi Kurdistan by saying he does not understand why they dig trenches. He says Iraqi Kurdistan should support them ethically, economically and militarily. He says, on the contrary to Muhammed Hassan, they cannot even carry a sack of rice across the border. (Zaman, 2014). It is clear that Kurdish leaders are in rivalry which affects the fate of Kurdish communities in different countries.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Kurdish leaders raised hopes of the Kurdish people in different countries for regional self-determination. This is also a result of the spreading of ethnic nationalist movements worldwide. Kurdish leaders constructed their politics on ethnic identities which kept the idea of self-determination alive. The conflicts occurring in the region are a natural consequence of the search for self-determination. Brubaker (2004) thinks one of the important questions about ethnic conflicts is whether there is really an ethnic conflict or not. Actually manipulators, victims, media, policy-makers make us call some developments "ethnic conflicts". Protagonists of ethnic conflicts are not stable ethnic groups but ethnic policy-makers. (p. 16). This approach does not reject ethnic conflicts. This approach claims policy-makers have a struggle for hegemony and control ethnic groups. For Kurdish nationalism, Barzani is a very important policy-maker who wants to have influence over Kurds. However, Barzani focuses on the welfare of Iraqi Kurdistan rather than Kurdish communities in other regions at present. Additionally, his rivalry with other Kurdish leaders in Syria affect Kurdish nationalism negatively which causes interruption in regional the search for self-determination.

Barzani is out of favour with PYD leaders and says in a speech "PYD claims they have had a revolution. Who have they beaten? The only action they make is controlling the region which the Syrian regime gave them." He also adds that PYD does not represent Kurdish communities and he is worried about Kurds in Rojava. ("Barzani: Devrim," 2013). It is obvious that he tries to emphasize Kurds in other countries which shows his ethnic group based policy. But Brubaker's approach lets us evaluate that Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish identity are not stable and homogenous. So, Barzani's ethnic group based policy is disputable in every respect.

How should we approach ethnic groups? The point is ethnic structures and nationalist movements are political, social and cultural processes. This means groups are not limited entities but variables having fluctuations in certain contexts. (Brubaker, 2004, p.11). If we approach Kurdish nationalism with "groupism", we need to use the

term "Kurdish groups". This way of analysis hinders us from understanding how the competition between Kurdish leaders influence the structure of Kurdish nationalism. This means Kurdish nationalism should be analyzed in its new context as a political, cultural and social process. Evaluating Kurdish nationalism as a process enables us to understand interruptions in the "regionalism" feature. Kurdish groups still exist in different countries; so, the "regionalism" feature of Kurdish nationalism must be stable according to the "groupism" approach. However, it is clear that the search for self-determination of Kurdish nationalism is at stake now. In this new context, the "regionalism" structure of Kurdish nationalism is changing.

Brubaker (2004) suggests that analyzing ethnic conflicts with ethnic based terms is an easy way in social analysis. This approach is easily accepted which causes researchers to use ethnic terms. (p.17). Brubaker's approach helps us to understand ethnic structures are variables in their spatial and temporal context. Researchers should not see ethnic identities as homogenous and stable while analyzing ethnic based nationalist movements. As for Kurdish nationalism, this movement is directed by its leaders with an ethnic group mentality. Barzani's rhetoric over Kurdish communities continue, but his relations with the PYD and The Turkish Government refute this rhetoric. The conflict between Kurdish leaders influences unstable and not homogenous Kurdish nationalism and interrupts its "regionalism" feature.

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