



# The 4th World Kurdish Congress (WKC2018)

Science and Culture for Progress in Kurdistan

November 22nd–24th 2018  
Washington, D.C., USA.

## Creating a roadmap towards a scientific, knowledgeable, inclusive, and united Kurdish diaspora

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to Washington, D.C. and to the 4<sup>th</sup> World Kurdish Congress (WKC2018).

WKC2018 continues on the path of previous successful World Kurdish Congresses to provide a scientific platform for developing educational, economic, cultural, and health programs that will provide a solid foundation for the future of Kurdistan. The 4<sup>th</sup> World Kurdish Congress aims to highlight the role of Kurdish diaspora in the process of nation building by providing academic and scientific solutions to current challenges in Kurdish societies.

**What are the key tasks of the Kurdish Diaspora? What is the motivation and pathway to unite the Kurds in their mission? How can one learn from the Jewish and Armenian diasporas to create an international Kurdish lobby organization? How can the diaspora take a leadership role to best serve the Kurdish people in this unique and critical time?**

In our view, the unity of Kurdish people based on national identity and interests is the first step for building a Kurdish nation. The diversity of opinion is an opportunity, not a problem. It is imperative to understand the 'Google Society' nature of our world, in which societies are interconnected, problems and solutions are cross-disciplinary, and data is power. WKC2018 aims to highlight these points and create a roadmap towards a scientific, knowledgeable, inclusive, and united Kurdish diaspora that will better grasp the 21<sup>st</sup> century opportunities for building a prosperous Kurdish nation.

The main goals of WKC2018 are:

- To provide a visible forum for establishing connections among Kurdish and non-Kurdish academics to share their knowledge and expertise and support each other.
- To work towards creating an international Kurdish lobby to gain support from other international communities and diaspora to serve Kurdistan.
- To encourage participants to be proactive and create diverse think thank groups in their own area of expertise to support the Kurdistan Regional Government.
- WKC2018 aims to restructure its organization and elect new Board of Directors to include and inspire the new generation of Kurdish academics and scientists and expand the network for Kurdish Diaspora.

We appreciate your effort participating in the 4th Scientific World Kurdish Congress. We wish you a rewarding and enjoyable time in the Congress and in Washington as you greet new Kurdish colleagues for networking.

**Professor Alan Dilani, Ph.D.**

Architect / Public Health

Founder and president of WKC

# Final Program

## Day 1 (Thursday 22, November)

15:00 – 19:00 Registration

19:00 – 21:00 Reception and get-together

Welcome speech and introduction to WKC2018 by

**Dr. Carol Prunhuber**, Journalist and writer, USA

**Prof. Alan Dilani**, Ph.D., Founder, World Kurdish Congress, Sweden

## Day 2 (Friday 23, November)

### Session 1 – Education in Kurdistan: Challenges and Opportunities

Chair: **Prof. Fereydoon Rahmani**, Ph.D., Canada

09:00 – 09:20 **Dr. Asmat M. Khalid**, Ph.D., Global Peace Foundation; Former Minister of Education, Kurdistan Regional Government, *Education in Kurdistan after 1991*

09:20 – 09:40 **Dr. Dawood Atrushi**, Ph.D., Director General, Ministry of Higher Education, Kurdistan Regional Government, *Role of Kurdish diaspora in higher education in the Kurdistan Region*

09:40 – 10:00 **Dr. Soraya Fallah**, California State University, USA, *Dual Immersion Education, a model to create two ways “connected generation” of Kurdish children A model to connect heritage identity and outside knowledge?*

10:00 – 10:20 **Dr. Kamran Qaderi**, Ph.D., USA, *Hojin, the first science magazine in Rojhelat*

10:20 – 10:50 Discussion

10:50 – 11:30 Coffee break

### Session 2 – Self-Sufficient and Knowledge-Based Economy in Kurdistan

Chair: **Mr. Sartip Kakaee**, Canada

11:30 – 11:50 **Prof. Almas Heshmati**, Ph.D., Sogang University, Korea, *The triple curses effects on Kurdistan region’s economy and self-sufficiency*

11:50 – 12:10 **Dr. Karim Arabi**, Ph.D., CEO, Atlazo, USA, *Knowledge-based economy as the engine of progress for Kurdistan*

12:10 – 12:30 Discussion

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

### Keynote Speaker

**13:30 – 14:00 Prof. Peter Galbraith**, Juris Doctor, *Kurdish nation building and the role of diaspora*

Discussion

### Session 3 – Innovation in Global Healthcare Infrastructure and Kurdish Society

Chair: **Dr. Dawood Atrushi**, Ph.D., Director General, Ministry of Higher Education, Kurdistan Regional Government

14:00 – 14:20 **Prof. Alan Dilani**, Ph.D. Sweden, *Building for health in Kurdistan*

14:20 – 14:40 **Denise Zahran / Nada Alzalloum**, University of Wisconsin, USA, *Improving the healthcare system in Kurdistan by utilizing internal architecture and healthcare administration*  
 14:40 – 15:00 **Raz Abdulqadir**, Pen State University, USA, *Role of genetic variation in breast milk nutrition in Kurdistan*  
 15:00 – 15:20 Discussion  
 15:20 – 15:40 Coffee break

#### **Session 4 – Kurdish Rights in Iran, Turkey, Syrian Conflict and Middle East**

Chair: **Dr. Carol Prunhuber**, USA

15:40 – 16:00 **Gulan Abuzeyit**, Brock University, Canada, *Investigating Kurdish women's experiences with education in Kurdistan with respect to oppression*  
 16:00 – 16:20 **Nawroos Shibli**, University of Waterloo, Canada, *The Kurdish question: The influence of the EU accession process on Kurdish rights in Turkey*  
 16:20 – 16:40 **Shukriya Mahmood**, United Nation, USA, *Can stability in the Middle East be achieved without solving the Kurdish issue?*  
 16:40 – 17:00 Discussion  
 19:00 – 21:00 Dinner and Networking with Cultural Performance

## **Day 3 (Saturday 24, November)**

#### **Session 5 – Equity, Justice, Human Right, and Women in Kurdistan**

Chair: **Prof. Michael Gunter**, Ph.D., Tennessee TECH, USA

09:00 – 09:20 **Prof. Merle A Jacobs**, Ph.D. York University, Canada, *Social dislocation and gender rights*  
 09:20 – 09:40 **Prof. Fereydoon Rahmani**, Ph.D. York University, Canada, *Disappearance of agency at the age of war: Rooftop societies in the Middle East and Kurdish struggle for self-determination and human rights*  
 09:40 – 10:00 **Samira Lavei**, York University, Canada, *Women as guerrilla combatants: inside look at Kurdistan*  
 10:00 – 10:30 Discussion  
 10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

#### **Session 6 – Kurdish Nation Building and the role of Diaspora**

Chair: **Prof. Alan Dilani**, Ph.D., Sweden

11:00 – 11:20 **Mostafa Nosraty**, MSc. *Applying methodology of project management to leadership*  
 11:20 – 11:40 **Jim Karygiannis**, Member of the Canadian House of Commons, *Role of diaspora in nation building: historical perspective*  
 11:40 – 12:00 **Prof. Michael Gunter** Ph.D., Tennessee Technological University, USA, *Kurdish nation building and the role of the Kurdish diaspora*  
 12:00 – 12:30 Discussion  
 12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

#### **Session 7 – The future of World Kurdish Congress and election of new board members**

13:30 – 15:00 Chair: **Prof. Alan Dilani**, Ph.D., Sweden

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break

**Session 8 – Workshop for Mentor and Mentee (WKC M<sup>2</sup>)**

15:30 – 17:00 Chair: **Prof. Alan Dilani**, Ph.D. Sweden

Round table discussion aiming to connect experienced and young professionals and build a lasting mentor-mentee relationship. This workshop will provide an effective platform for mentors to assist young and talented Kurdish scholars (Mentees) to learn from experienced professionals (Mentors).

**Mentors** will have the opportunity to share their experience and knowledge with the up-and-coming generation of young leaders, help them with professional and career development, building new relationships, and exploring new opportunities within the diverse field of science.

**Mentees** will have the opportunity to connect with an experienced professional, who will provide continued guidance on how to achieve career and professional goals, deal with unprecedented issues, diversify skills, and expand professional networks.

17:00 **WKC2018 will close**

## Dr. Asmat M. Khalid, Ph.D.

Born in Amedi- Duhok 1953  
BSc, PGD and MSc civil Engineering – Mosul  
University- Iraq  
PhD Bolton University UK  
President of Duhok University 1992-2012  
Member of the committee of higher KRG 1992 -2012  
Minister of Education KRG 2012- 2014  
Adviser for the president of Iraq 2015-2018



### **Education in KRI after 1991**

Kurdistan region under Saddam regime was subjected to a comprehensive destruction operation including all the villages and small towns. In Kurdistan region the same Iraqi education system was applied which was mainly designed to support Baath Ideology and Regime and all the teachers and students of college of education should be members of Baath Party.

After 1991 within KRG, MoE was established with new law and programs to provide education services. Large number of villages was rebuilt and educational services were needed. KRI was under three sanctions so the revenues were very limited.

After 2003 the situation relatively improved until 2012 when Baghdad applied another sanction on KRG and decided not to pay the salaries. In 2014 ISIS destructive attacks started creating very difficult situation

KRG and MoE all the time tried its best to provide good quality education but were not very successful. The main reasons for that were in addition to what mentioned before, weakness in planning, shortage of fund and interference of political parties especially in selection of high rank administrators. The outcomes are thousands of graduates yearly with low scientific and technical level. They have negative impact on Higher education and increase of the non-employment rate at the same time there is a hi need to the technicians and skill labour in the market, so and urgent reform is required.

## Dr. Dawood Atrushi, Ph.D.

Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHE) in Erbil  
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Dr. Atrushi's main responsibility is development of physical infrastructure of higher education institutions in Kurdistan Region. Creating a proper physical learning environment is the core of his job. He was Vice President for International Relations at University of Duhok (UoD) during 2006 – 2014, before he moved to MoHE. He attended the UoD in 2005 after spending 17 years of his life in Norway where he did his University studies. He took his PhD in Civil Engineering in March 2003 at NTNU in Norway. Recently he completed a master degree in higher education entitled 'Research and Practices in Higher Education' at Kingston University London where he also did his postdoctoral research.



Beside his main responsibilities, he is also involved in academic issues related to reviewing engineering education in Kurdistan, reform process of polytechnic education and development of academic relations with Finland.

### **Role of Kurdish diaspora in education in the Kurdistan Region**

Higher education in the Kurdistan region is witnessing exciting times and the potential is big for development and growth given the growing interest in capitalizing on talented human resources who can make a difference in society. Despite of its relatively short age, there has been a huge investment and tremendous efforts in establishing and expanding this sector. Today, there are 31 public and private universities accommodating about 130000 undergraduate students. This rapid expansion has responded well to the growing number of students in the Kurdistan region, but it has also brought a big challenge to prepare qualified graduates with adequate knowledge and skills. The higher education in Kurdistan, as in many other countries in MENA region, has consistently faced a variety of challenges, specially the quality of education. An increasing number of students seeking places in H.E., a high rate of graduate unemployment, lack of adequate budget and ability to attract and retain top academic talent are some other challenges. Furthermore, even if past investments in education generated maximum returns in terms of economic growth, greater equality, and reduced poverty, the Kurdistan region would still need to reshape its education systems to face up to a number of new challenges such as globalization, the increasing importance of knowledge economy, youth bulge and financial requirement.

The delicate balance between responding to growing student number, increasing market demands and providing quality education must be at the core of decision making associated with education policies and strategies. Political will from KRG is a must to make this happen.

Diaspora, specially the academicians, can play a significant role in developing the education sector and improving the quality of education in Kurdistan. To make this happen, the efforts needs to be organized in collaboration with the KRG Authorities.

## Dr. Soraya Fallah

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She embraces change in educational institutions, academically familiar with educational research methodologies, about conducting action research, creating shared vision, collaborating with fellow educators and other stakeholders, about valuing professional growth of all employees in an educational settings, assessment of staff and students by using data and technology, proficient in policies and practices to ensure equity in schools, family and community collaboration for the betterment of student achievements, school and human resources management, about responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources at the local, state and federal level, about ethical practice and applying knowledge for policy change and finding one's entrepreneurship capacity in education. She is the recipient of numerous awards for her projects and writings and is an international speaker in human rights. She has the ability to design and implement research-involving fieldwork. She worked closely with marginalized communities of immigrants and earned their trust while adhering to the most rigorous ethical guidelines. Her doctoral research "Giving voice to an invisible population: The experiences of families of students with disabilities from the Middle East, North Africa, and Southwest Asia (MENASWA) in the United States special education system" was a multilayered research, based on mixed methodology. It possessed originality and was the first doctoral research to take part in the Statewide Research Competition in CSUN's history.

### **Dual Immersion Education, a model to create two ways "connected generation" of Kurdish children A model to connect heritage identity and outside knowledge?**

The purpose of this research is threefold, investigating dual-language immersion education system and its effect on children and involvement of their family in the U.S, then will show that how these types of education and implementation of it could be a model for Kurdish children in schools, both in Kurdistan and the countries they reside. The researcher finally analyzing inter- constituents' relations, as well as its social impact on such system. The success of such system shows how dual immersion is able to work as a functional and cohesive unit despite some cultural differences. Dual-immersion or dual-language immersion schools emphasize bi-literacy, bilingualism, and bi-culturalism. This Action Research project focused on dual-immersion elementary schools in the U.S. Children and families are more connected than before, there are many places in the world where people have to speak at the very least two languages. It is important for children, to be able to express oneself in more than one language and learn science in world's dominant language and their "heritage languages". The investigator used qualitative methods representing the finding of a current action research, in which the researcher utilizes the review of the literature to show the impact of existing dual immersion education on children and family.

Keywords: dual-immersion, bilingual, parental involvement, cultural and social capital, qualitative study, heritage languages.



## Dr. Kamran Qaderi, Ph.D.

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### **Hojin, the first science magazine in Rojhelat**

A group of Kurdish scholars around the globe have started publishing a Kurdish science magazine called Hojin in Rojhalat, Kurdistan. We started this movement 5 years ago when the Iranian government did not give us a certificate to publish it but we printed the first volume anyway and sold it to people we knew closely since we could not take it to the libraries or schools. But after 4 years continuous efforts talking to the government and setting up an organization called Hojan, we succeeded acquiring a certificate for the magazine. In 1396 (2017-2018), we published 4 volumes of this magazine (one each season) and sold several in Rojhalat and Bashur. Hojin is the only science magazine published in Rojhalat therefore it is very important to keep publishing it in a regular basis.

In this magazine, we are trying to enhance the basic and general knowledge of the middle-class Kurdish people who do not know any English at all. In future though, we might publish in English as well, but at this time our goal is to enlighten our people to know more about what there is in the world and how they can contribute. This will directly secure a healthy environment in Kurdistan and as a result improves the lifestyle of people living there.

Our website (<http://hojan.org/>) and our channels in Telegram (@hojingovar), Facebook (@Hojan: هۆژان), and Instagram (@zanist4kurd) are free to share and use. But our magazine, just like any other magazines out there has some restrictions on it. We hope that we can find someone who can sponsor our magazine so we can publicly publish it online anywhere so people can get and read it for free. Unfortunately, at this time we cannot do that because we have to pay for the printing, papers, employees such as editor-in-chief or graphist's wages and etc. Our only source of income is the magazine sales and our own money.

Our people are welcoming our magazine little by little and we are very optimistic that Hojin will take over in a near future since it is the first and only science magazine in fully pure Kurdish in Rojhalat. Briefly, this is an attempt to develop a powerful science magazine "Hojin" with all obstacles and limitations in Kurdistan.

As of now we have had plenty meetings with sponsors in all Kurdistan cities. They have nicely made donations to Hojan institute (in charge of Hojin magazine) to help publish the magazines in high volumes and get the other projects going. We are looking for Kurdish scholars around the world to support Hojan financially or academically or in any other way. Kurdistan needs such magazine to be developed with support of all Kurdish scholars and this is a relevant forum to discuss the issue of our science magazine, Hojin. Please look into the Hojan webpage to have an idea about some of our other projects.

<http://hojan.org/>

## Prof. Almas Heshmati, Ph.D.

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Almas Heshmati is a Professor of Economics at Jönköping University and Sogang University. He held similar positions at the Korea University, Seoul National University, University of Kurdistan Hawler, and the MTT Agrifood Research (Finland). He was Research Fellow at the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), The United Nations University during 2001-2004. From 1998 until 2001, he was an Associate Professor of Economics at the Stockholm School of Economics. He has a Ph.D. degree from the University of Gothenburg (1994), where he held a Senior Researcher position until 1998. His research interests include applied microeconomics, globalization, development strategy, efficiency, productivity and growth with application to manufacturing and services. In addition to a large number of scientific journal articles he has published books on EU Lisbon Process, Global Inequality, East Asian Manufacturing, Chinese Economy, Technology Transfer, Information Technology, Water Resources, Landmines, Power Generation, Renewable Energy, Development Economics, World Values, Economic Growth, Development and Growth in Africa.

### **The triple curses effects on Kurdistan Region's economy and self-sufficiency**

Kurdistan Region is an agricultural society in stage of partial transformation to industry, services and information technology consuming society. Rapid urbanization, political rent seeking, and business driven development strategy based on speculative property development, import and distribution of goods have led to high dependency on neighbouring economics and natural resources extraction. The Region's economy is heavily dependent on revenues from gas and oil resources extracted by foreign oil companies. There are indications that the region suffers from the triple curses of natural resources, inefficient and rigid institutions, and a traditional education system aimed at training public servants. The educated labour force does not meet the private sector development needs. There is a desire to diversify the scope of economic activities, sources of revenues and to increase self-sufficiency for the Region.

Economic diversification is viewed as a long-term solution to the high economic dependency, curse of natural resources and inefficient institutional structure. Diversification can take place in both public and private sectors and in each of the agriculture, industry and service sectors. This study aims at possible diversifications at both private and public sectors. Diversification in private sector refers to private sector development and generation of new sources of incomes, which reduce the burden on government in provision of support and subsidies to households. Diversification in public sector revenues can be achieved through privatization of some of the public services reducing public financing of those services. Another alternative public sector diversification is through development of a national taxation system and broadened tax-base that reduces the regional governments dependence on revenues from natural resources. A combination of the three different policy measures is expected to diversify the economy and reduce dependency on revenues from natural resources and massive imports of goods and services.

Keywords: Curse of natural resources, economic diversification, self-sufficiency, Kurdistan Region.

## Dr. Karim Arabi, Ph.D.

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Dr. Karim Arabi is founder and CEO of Atlazo, Inc. developing ultra-low power semiconductor for healthcare market. He was also Executive Chairman of Appulse Power, an innovative AC/DC chipset designer, acquired by Silanna Semiconductor. Previously, he was Vice President, R&D at Qualcomm where was head of Corp. R&D ASIC department responsible for research and development and new product development. Karim was VP, Engineering and Technology at Dialog Semiconductor responsible for driving overall technology and new product development. Karim held technical positions at PMC Sierra and Cirrus Logic and was co-founder of Opmaxx, an innovative startup in analog design and test acquired by Credence. Karim obtained his Ph.D. and M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering from Polytechnique Montréal, Canada and his B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering from Tehran Polytechnic. Dr. Arabi has published more than 100 papers and holds key several patents.

### **Knowledge-based economy as the engine of progress for Kurdistan**

The current economy in Kurdistan is heavily reliant on oil and natural resources. Unfortunately, economies mainly driven by natural resources have proven not sustainable. In addition, majority of countries that heavily rely on natural resources are trapped in an economy that is unable to diversify and grow leading to reduced productivity. Kurdistan has an opportunity to charter a path where exploiting natural resources play an important role, but at the same time a knowledge-based economy relying on human resources is established and encouraged. This talk presents potential opportunities to be explored and initiatives to be pursued in order to establish a path towards an effective knowledge-based economy that is competitive on a global scale.

## Prof. Peter Galbraith, Ph.D.

Peter Galbraith (1973, PPE) First United States Ambassador to Croatia and United Nations' deputy special representative for Afghanistan

Peter was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1950 and he attained a BA at Harvard before completing an MA in PPE at St Catherine's and a Juris Doctor degree from Georgetown University Law Center.



He is a bestselling author and former U.S. diplomat. He began his career as a professor at Windham College in Putney and at the School International Training in Brattleboro. In 1977, he was elected the youngest ever Chair of the Vermont State Democratic Committee and helped lay the foundation for today's progressive politics. In 1979, he joined the staff of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee where he uncovered and helped stop Saddam Hussein's genocide against the Kurds. In 1993, President Clinton appointed him the first U.S. Ambassador to Croatia where he negotiated the peace agreement that ended the Croatian War. He served on the staff of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 1979 to 1993, where he took a special interest in Kurdistan. As an author and commentator, Galbraith, a longtime advocate of the Kurdish people, has argued for Iraq to be "partitioned" into three parts, allowing for Kurdistan independence.<sup>[5]</sup> Beginning in 2003, Galbraith acted as an advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government in northern Iraq, helping to influence the drafting process of the Iraqi Constitution in 2005.

## Prof. Alan Dilani, Ph.D.

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### Prof. Alan Dilani, Ph.D.

Dr. Dilani is a global authority on interdisciplinary research regarding the interaction between design and health. Dilani is a founder of the International Academy for Design and Health (IADH) and the journal, *World Health Design*. He has been engaged worldwide in several universities in the field of Design and Health developing a "Salutogenic Design Program", in both medical and design institutions. He holds a Master of Architecture in Environmental Design from the Polytechnic of Turin, Italy and a Ph.D. in Health Facility Design from the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. His research center developed at the Karolinska Institute, Medical University, a multidisciplinary research approach, led to a new design theory called "Saltugenic Design" that not only fosters functional efficiency in building infrastructure, but also improves health processes. He has been served as advisor for several Ministries of Health around the world developing briefing with a vision of Salutogenic approach to healthcare infrastructure. He is the author of 15 books and numerous articles in the field of Design and Health. Dr. Dilani has been awarded in 2010 from the American Institute of Architect, Academy of Architecture for Health for his promotion of high-quality design research and in 2017 he received the first Fellowship of Academy for Design and Health in the city hall of Vienna.

### **Building for health in Kurdistan**

In a globalised and interdependent world, the continuous improvement of the quality of life, health and wellbeing of Kurdistan citizens will be founded on the recognition that a healthy population is the foundation for knowledge society. Using the environmental infrastructure as a strategic tool is one of the most cost-effective and enduring approaches to improving public health, through interdisciplinary knowledge research and education system to support innovation for better life condition.

Research on Salutogenic direction highlights the impact of wellness factors that inspire the government and decision maker toward healthy society to develop the condition that stimulate health and wellbeing and thereby promotion of health and prevention of diseases in all level of society. An increase in the consideration of Salutogenic research leads to social innovation in Kurdistan and economical growths through interdisciplinary application of sciences such as medicine, public health, psychology, design and engineering with culture, art and music! The lecture discusses interdisciplinary approach of science to promote health and economic growth within the current knowledge society that will impact Kurdistan.

Keywords: Knowledge society, Health promotion, Culture

## Denise Zahran & Nada Alzalloum

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Denise Sameer Zahran is an undergraduate student studying Architecture at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. She will be graduating from her undergraduate program with a major in Architecture, minor in Anthropology, and a Certificate In Cultures and Communities in December 2018.

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Nada Alzalloum is from Milwaukee Wisconsin in the USA. Her current position is a health unit coordinator at Froedtert Hospital and the Medical College of Wisconsin. Her highest form of education is a Bachelor's Degree in Healthcare Administration and a minor in Business. Her field of work and research is non-profit organizational work to better help refugees and people from the Kurdish Region of the Middle East.

### **Improving the healthcare system in Kurdistan by utilizing internal architecture and healthcare administration**

The healthcare aspect of Kurdistan is very well funded and staffed. There is an abundance of hospitals, clinics, equipment and workers. Although the hospitals and clinics have access to equipment and experienced professionals, they lack proper utilization of healthcare administration knowledge within the system and the interior architecture. The current state of the interior architecture of these buildings includes separate rooms for certain patients, adequate waiting areas, and storage spaces but there is a lot of room for improvement. The problems affecting healthcare in the country today include integration of public and private sectors of healthcare without overall regulation, unevenly distributed staff, and patient overcrowding. Facilities are not always properly maintained or up to universal healthcare standards. All these problems can be solved with dedicated members and proper enforcement of the World Health Organization's (WHO) laws and regulations.

The solutions to this dilemma start with healthcare administration systems of family medicine within all districts that utilize electronic medical records. Contracts or laws regulating the public and private sectors along with the time spent working at a clinic before transferring hinders physicians from referring patients to their private clinics during public clinic hours. It also prevents staff from using the training they received at public sectors to transfer to a private one. Other approaches include a healthcare information system and free public education on general healthcare procedure to avoid overcrowding, confusion and exploitation of facilities.

In addition to using these solutions to advance the interior architecture and better utilize space, it is recommended that improvements are made. These improvements include necessary portable storage units and designated sanitation spaces like washer/dryer areas.

Updating the division of each patient room and the expansion of the common spaces are other alterations. Using electronic sign in stations will help maintain patient flow while the staff can communicate with each other by utilizing white boards within each space. These interior architecture changes can be taken into account when redesigning a space, which is needed for a large population, as well as keeping the staff in a comfortable, well-maintained environment.

All these resolutions can already be within budget and implemented healthcare administrative goals for the country. Focusing on what is already present and expanding would help speed up progression within the healthcare system in Kurdistan. By redesigning the interior of these buildings and implementing the new organizational systems explained above, there will be a better flow to the medical services as well as improvement to the amount and quality of the treatment of patients. Doing so would eliminate the stress placed upon staff as well as patients while relieving the overwhelming thought that providers would have to build a system from scratch. This would instead show them that they already have a foundation, which would be like building a house upward with the pillars already set instead of having to build from scratch.

Keywords: interior architecture, organization, Medical Information Systems, public education, public/private sectors, family care centers.

## Raz Abdulqadir<sup>1</sup> & Shannon L. Kelleher<sup>2</sup>

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### **Role of genetic variation in breast milk nutrition in Kurdistan**

Breast milk is the gold standard for infant nutrition and confers significant health benefits to the infant-mother pair. Although the majority of women globally intend to breastfeed, in US only 13%, in Southern Kurdistan only 19% meet the global public health recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months. A major barrier to meeting this goal is lactation insufficiency (i.e. altered milk composition such as zinc or failure/reduced ability to lactate). Therefore, identifying mechanisms that contribute to lactation insufficiency will aid in developing strategies to improve breastfeeding rates and infant-mother health in Kurdish population.

Few studies have explored the role of nutrigenomics in lactation biology. Recent studies from our lab found that non-synonymous genetic variation in the zinc (Zn) transporter ZnT2 (SLC30A2) is common in women and is associated with both low and elevated milk Zn concentrations. Of those variants, a serine to arginine substitution at amino acid 338 (S338R) was detected from milk from these women had abnormally low milk volume, low Zn and significantly elevated milk sodium levels. Because low zinc concentration elevated has been associated with breast dysfunction, in this study, we characterized the functional consequence of expressing the S338R variant on breast milk composition in women and in mammary epithelial cells (MECs) ectopically expressing this variant in vitro.

We hypothesized that mothers with S338R variant would express biological factors in milk that reflect suboptimal lactation performance. We found that milk from women expressing S338 R had significantly higher levels of MMP-2 activity, which increase in response cell death. Consistent with the milk analyses, MECs transfected to express S338R in vitro had significantly greater cell death, compared to MECs expressing wild-type ZnT2. To determine if this increase in stress is associated with mammary gland involution, we measured p-STAT3, a marker of involution and found that STAT3 activation was significantly increased in S338R expressing MECs compared to MECs expressing wild-type ZnT2. Collectively, our data suggest that women expressing the S338 R variant in ZnT2 may have enhanced stress in the breast that may lead to precocious involution and suboptimal lactation; this explains why some Kurdish women cannot lactate or their children to be zinc deficient. Importantly, this study suggests that nutrigenomics may have important implications for breast function and implicates factors in breast milk as useful bioreporters of breast (dys)function and lactation performance that can help.



## Gulan Abuzeyit, MEd, BEd, BA

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Gulan Abuzeyit is a Kurdish-Canadian teacher who has lived in Canada since the age of five. She arrived in Canada in 1992 after her family fled Iraq and lived in Diyarbakir refugee camps or four years. Gulan graduated from the University of Waterloo in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and moved back to Kurdistan shortly thereafter, where she taught English for two years. It was there that she realized her passion for education and returned to Canada to obtain a Bachelor of Education from Brock University, as well as certification with the Ontario College of Teachers. Further, Gulan obtained a Master of Education degree in 2018 and completed a qualitative research study exploring Kurdish women's education in Kurdistan. Gulan's goals include pursuing a PhD and continuing to contribute to the literature on Kurds and education, and hopes that her research can positively impact growth and development in Kurdistan.

### **Investigating Kurdish women's experiences with education in Kurdistan with respect to oppression**

As the largest ethnic minority in the world without a nation-state, the Kurds are often misrepresented in literature, academia, and the media. Worse still, they are repeatedly not represented at all and marginalized – their history and experiences generalized with that of the dominant, oppressive majority. The following thesis sought to address such gaps in the literature and contribute to the knowledge on the Kurdish people. The study provides a qualitative study that aimed to answer the question: What do Kurdish women's experiences reveal about women's education in Kurdistan with respect to oppression? The study was framed within a postcolonial feminist framework to explore Kurdish women's lived experiences within education in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The study used feminist research methods to collect and analyze data. Through purposeful sampling, 5 Kurdish women living in the KRI were recruited and interviewed by the researcher through one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. The researcher used an interpretive approach for data analysis to investigate participants' experiences as women and as members of an ethnic minority. The study highlighted the unique social categories in which Kurdish women find themselves, and found that women's lived experiences were determined by the intersections of gender, ethnicity, religion, location, SES, and age, among other social categories. Such categories affect women's quality of life, freedom, and education, as identified by the women themselves. Further, the women identified the following factors acting as barriers that impede their equal access to education and opportunities: gender norms, family, culture, distance, disability, language, and conflict. The study also lays out how women make sense of and cope with such barriers and inequality, before concluding with recommendations for changes based on participants' knowledge and lived experiences. The thesis presentation will also address how the methodology underlying the study, the sensitive nature of the topic, and the geo-political context of the region can create barriers for researchers and scholars from pursuing and conducting research on the Kurds and Kurdistan.

## Nawroos Shibli, Ph.D. candidate

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Nawroos Shibli is a Ph.D candidate at the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Ontario in Canada. Her research focuses on understanding the discourses, structures and behaviours that perpetuate and intensify the prevalence of acute Islamophobia and racism against Muslims at home and abroad; she hopes to examine how the international community has responded to groups affected by this structural racism and whether there are frameworks and remedies in place to help prevent the continued rise of islamophobia as a transnational phenomenon. In parallel, she is also interested in studying and deconstructing the nature, limits and successes of Kurdish democracy in Northern Iraq. During her university career, she was also a Graduate Research Fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation and a transcriber for the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee). Currently, Nawroos is a Senior Research Fellow with the Canadian Arab institute. She also serves as an Editorial Assistant for Stability: International Journal of Security and Development.

### **The Kurdish Question: The Influence of the EU Accession Process on Kurdish Rights in Turkey**

This paper examines the changing nature of Kurdish economic, political and social rights in Turkey, primarily, the influence of Turkey's EU accession process on its minority policies towards the significant Kurdish minority in the country. Has the European Union, as a democratizing force and institution, influenced Turkey's minority rights regime through the EU accession process and with regards to Turkey's significant Kurdish minority? More specifically, how has the Turkish government's position on minority rights changed overtime? Has Turkey met Europe's requirements and minority rights norms standards? Have lasting and significant reforms been made with regards to the treatment of Kurds in the country? These are some of the questions that this paper will address. As the largest stateless nation in the world and the largest minority group in Turkey (which comprises roughly 18-25% of Turkey's total population, or about 14-20 million), Kurds represent the most effective case study of how Turkey's policies have changed overtime vis-à-vis the influence of Europe's minority rights regime. Included in this analysis are other factors leading to Turkey's gradual (but stalled) rapprochement with its historically oppressed Kurdish minority, including regional changes, economic opportunities with regards to oil and gas deals, and the nature of the protracted ethnic conflict and military clashes between Turkish forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Prior to Turkey's bid for EU membership, the Turkish government's relationship with its large Kurdish minority was strained, with a long history of human and minority rights abuses, and a denial of the Kurdish identity. After and since its candidacy for EU membership, have some changes been made. As such, the future of Turkey's minority rights policies and recognition of the Kurdish identity is contingent partly on Europe's emphasis on minority rights standards as part of the EU accession process, and partly on economic and political regional factors which can impact Turkey's desire to change its position on its "Kurdish Problem." This project relies primarily on secondary literature and corresponding empirical data on Kurdish minority experiences in Turkey, along with research on the EU accession processes. I consider the multi-disciplinary insights from history, political science, and anthropology.

Keywords: Kurdish Question, European Union, Turkey, Human Rights, Minority Rights,

## Shukriya Mahmood, Ph.D. candidate

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Shukriya Mahmood is a PhD student at Claremont Graduate University in International Security and Foreign Policy department who has MA in the same topic from England. Shukriya is an intern in the UN office of High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) for September 2018 – January 2019.

Shukriya is a board member of the International University of Erbil, also assistant lecture in Salahadin University and International University of Erbil. Shukriya is a board member of the BAN (Internal Peace Movement) based in Paris 2016 - present with the focus on peace building among the Kurdish population in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Shukriya is an editorial journalist since 2009 who is fluent in English, Kurdish (Kurmanji and Sorani), Persian, Turkish, Arabic (spoken and written).

### **Can stability in the Middle East be achieved without solving the Kurdish issue?**

Understanding the relationship between development, economics and security within a country is critical to understanding the causes of conflict within a country. Indeed, equality guarantees security.

A State that ignores the welfare of its citizens poses a significant military threat despite poor financial performance. This paper addresses the New Classical Theory of Economy and particularly discusses the relationship between the economy, security and effects of underdeveloped regions in a State. It will also discuss the correlation between the economy and the security of the Kurds. The financial situation in the four Kurdish inhabited countries in the Middle East will be analyzed to shed light on the causes of conflict within the region. Each Kurdish region will be analyzed based on population, natural resources and geopolitics. This paper firstly explains the effects of a country's economy on security. Secondly, it analyzes the Kurdish identity and the historical background of the Kurdistan's division. Thirdly, it discusses Kurdistan's geography and economic values. Finally, this paper provides recommendations to solve the Kurdish issue.

## Prof. Merle A Jacobs, Ph.D.

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### **Social dislocation and gender rights**

Equity and Rights when social dislocation takes place is about social disorder, shared space disruption, breakdown of established community structures, and the dislocation of kinship and/or community. The discussion of trauma for groups who are socially dislocated is also the discussion of the positive aspects of the human spirit. The migrant's experiences of gender within two or more cultures provide women and men with a base for questioning the changing gender terrains and also search for answers. Due to their vast multi-cultural and international experiences and connections, scholars need to identify through collecting the stories of both genders to have narrative and identity in order that we understand the issues pertaining to gender in a continuous historical and social self rather than just within a framework of human rights, which provides a misleading discourse.

## Prof. Fereydoon Rahmani, Ph.D.

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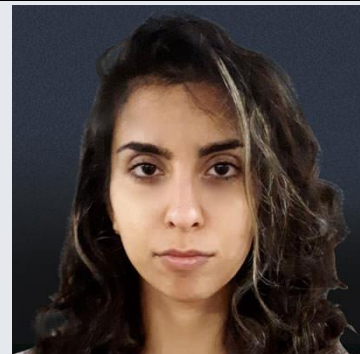
### **Disappearance of agency at the age of war: Rooftop societies in the Middle East and Kurdish struggle for self-determination and human rights**

For centuries rooftops of private or public structures have provided Iranians and many communities in the Middle East not only a sanctuary to run away from inveterate states' punishments and tortures, but have been also functioning well as places for social, cultural and even political interactions. Throughout the history rooftops have also provided refreshing cool bedrooms for the hot, long summer season within the major Middle Eastern nations; A broad bedroom with an immense opportunity for family and neighbors' socialization. Rooftops as well have played a tremendous role in organizing religious functions or ceremonial events especially customs or practices which state or ruling powers forbade to the public. Wherever citizens felt their rights had been curtailed or they were prevented from practicing their desired habits or collective behaviors then rooftops at the urban settlements could provide more secure performance arena.

In January 1936 when the Iranian Shah supplementary to his country's westernization and modernization plan issued his famous Unveiling Decree known as "Kashf-e Hejab" triggered a controversy between the polarized diverse social classes. The swift and forceful implementation of the policy along with door-to-door search for the women's traditional veils (chador) turned the entire society into new hostile scenery. Many women were beaten, their headscarves and chadors torn off, and their homes forcibly searched. Especially in a society which for thousands of years women, even in the pre-Islamic era had practiced veiling, such spontaneous law enforcement could have triggered series of social or clerical resistance. Until this day women of many Iranian aristocracies as well as the court were also part of the veiling female. The majority of the lower-class Iranian who felt their rights and honor was attacked by the autocratic system believed that veil assured women's pride, honor, respect and virtue. So, they were passionately looking for way out or escape route. Then again, the rooftop became a public arena and sanctuary for the majority of the veiled women who were not seeing the official public places and streets as useful safe haven for their daily social practice.

## Samira Lavei, Ph.D. Candidate

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Samira Lavei is a first-year of Ph.D. student, studying political science and specializing in International Relations and Gender and Politics. She is affiliated with York University and is researching on female guerrilla fighters in Latin America (Colombia) and Kurdistan.

### **Women as guerrilla combatants: inside look at Kurdistan**

It is often argued that women carrying out similar roles as men during times of combat represents a step forward in achieving empowerment and gender equality as the image of the female warrior has been romanticized in the media. It is, however, a misconception that the involvement of women in combat is a milestone in achieving feminist objectives. This major research paper (MRP), using a critical feminist framework, will argue that gender relations within non-state militant groups, specifically guerrilla groups are repeatedly altered and influenced by the hierarchal structures of power throughout the process of militarization including before, during and post conflict. Therefore, while participation in guerrilla groups is altering gender relations, it does not always facilitate empowerment and at times can reproduce marginalization and oppression of women in the guerrilla group and the community. This paper begins by situating discussions of gender within the field of international relations and then moves on to explore the topic of women and war and specifically the varied roles that women hold in situations of conflict and violence. Furthermore, using a critical feminist lens and drawing from case study of Kurdistan-Turkey and Kurdistan-Iraq, will argue that gender relations within non-state militant groups, specifically guerrilla groups, are continuously altered and influenced by the hierarchal structures of power throughout the processes of militarization before, during and post conflict. This paper is divided into three main sections. First, this article will provide an overview of the construction of gender and its place within the study of International Relations (IR). Second, the paper will provide an overview of the varied roles that women play in war as civilians and as combatants. The last section of this paper will examine the role of women and gender relations in the case study of Kurdistan- Turkey and Kurdistan-Iraq.

**Keywords** Gender, Social Construction, Feminism, International Relations, Intersectionality, Sexual Division of Labour, Social Hierarchy, Guerrilla Warfare, Class, Race, Ethnicity, Power Structures, Hegemonic Masculinity, Femininity, Kurdistan, Peshmerga, PKK, Military, Conflict, Kinship

## Mostafa Nosraty, M.Sc.

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Mostafa Nosraty is a registered professional engineer in Canada (P.Eng), a registered international project manager (PMP) and an international certified energy manager (CEM). He is a graduate of chemical engineering, holds a master's degree in industrial management & productivity and is an MBA. Over the past 20 years, he has lead multi-million dollar businesses and projects within world most largest and well-known companies such Clariant of Switzerland, AkzoNobel of Netherlands and Evonik of Germany. Currently, he is a resident of Canada and is the project manager at KMX Corporation. He also is the founder



and leader of a Kurdish dance group who has performed in more than 50 prestigious programs within USA, Canada and Mexico. In 2017 he was officially recognized for his “Strong leadership and positive impact to Canadian culture” by the Government of Ontario.

### **Applying methodology of project management to leadership**

Warren Bennis once said, “Leadership is the capacity of translating vision into reality” and I would like to add “effective project management is the capacity of bringing that reality into existence”. This might create a new link between leadership and project management, although they already have many in common. Leaders manage emotions and project managers manage activities, cost and results and both are the game of Pain & Gain.

Project Management nowadays is far more developed than its traditional definition or perception that was about controlling schedule and cost. It now covers a much boarder area of involvement and responsibility so that It is believed that sustainable development -in any area- is not achievable without effective project management. This might explain why the term of project leadership is being used more frequent instead of project management. On this basis, immerse studies and resources have been dedicated in developing this important study-line and well-known universities are now offering specialized MBA degrees in project management and even in its subsidiaries.

By definition, project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to meet the project requirements. This methodology if applied effectively and managed well can produce significant success and I believe that it is transferable to leadership regardless of the type of mission of the leader; whether it is development of a house, raising the level of cultural awareness in a community, building a mega power plant or leading a nation. Development of Kurdistan (industries/ culture/ people) is a project by itself, isn't it?

Given the level of complexity in todays' world, the conventional and personality-based leadership is not enough any further to face the challenges of the new era. Kurds – like all other nations- are required to empower themselves with science and take knowledge-based approaches towards their challenges and issues especially in the higher levels and in their leadership roles. This paper discusses powerful techniques and skills of effective project management and outlines how these methodology and tools might be learnt and used by leaders to help them succeed in their missions, small or big.

Keywords- Project management, Leadership, Kurds, Strategy, NPV, SWOT, WEP

## Jim Karygiannis

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Member of the Canadian House of Commons



### **Role of diaspora in nation building: historical perspective**

On May 2, 2011, he was re-elected for an eighth consecutive term having been first elected to the House of Commons in 1988.

Jim is the Liberal Party Critic for Veterans Affairs. He previously served as the Liberal Critic for Multiculturalism, with responsibility for stakeholder and community outreach. Prime Minister Paul Martin appointed Mr. Karygiannis Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development in October 2005. Prior to this, Jim served as the Parliamentary

Secretary to the Minister of Transport, with special emphasis on Transport and the Environment. He was appointed to this post in December 2003. He has been a member of several Standing Committees of the House of Commons, including the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. Jim served as an Associate Member of the Standing Committees of the House of Commons on Canadian Heritage, Foreign Affairs and International Development and Justice and Human Rights. Jim has been the Liberal Party's Associate Critic for Small Business and Associate Critic for the Departments of National Revenue and Multiculturalism. Scarborough-Agincourt is the most ethnically diverse federal riding in Canada. Jim Karygiannis is an effective voice for the people he serves, taking their concerns, on a wide variety of issues, including: immigration; taxation; justice; and, Canada's global responsibilities, to Caucus and the House of Commons for debate. Jim Karygiannis has long been a strong advocate for social justice and human rights. He has presented Motions in the House of Commons condemning acts of barbarism perpetrated against religious and cultural minorities throughout the world. These Motions passed with unanimous consent of the Members of Parliament. He has travelled extensively speaking out against human rights violations.



## Prof. Michael Gunter, Ph.D.

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MICHAEL M. GUNTER is a professor of political science at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee. He also is the Secretary-General of the EU Turkey Civic Commission (EUTCC) headquartered in Brussels. In the past he taught courses for many years during the summer at the International University in Vienna, as well as courses on Kurdish and Middle Eastern politics, among others, for the U.S. Government Areas Studies Program and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C. He is the author of 10 critically praised scholarly books on the Kurdish question, and editor or co-editor of five more books on the Kurds, among others. He has also published numerous scholarly articles on the Kurds and many other issues in such leading scholarly periodicals as the *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Policy*, *Middle East Quarterly*, *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, *Orient*, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *Maghreb Review*, *American Journal of International Law*, *International Organization*, *World Affairs*, *Journal of International Affairs* (Columbia University), *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, *Current History*, *Third World Quarterly*, *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, *Insight Turkey*, *Turkish Studies*, *Terrorism: An International Journal*, and *Arms Control*, among numerous others. His most recent books are *Out of Nowhere: The Kurds of Syria in Peace and War*, London: Hurst Publications, 2014; *The Kurds: A Modern History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2017; *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018; and *Routledge Handbook on the Kurds*, London & New York: Routledge, 2019.



### **Kurdish nation building and the role of the Kurdish diaspora**

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the role of the Kurdish Diaspora in Kurdish nation building. This article will first examine the modern origins of Kurdish nation building or nationalism through the lenses of essentialism vs. constructivism. Essentialism argues that the origins of the nation and nationalism have ancient roots and thus date back to some distant point in history. The constructivists, on the other hand, maintain that nationalism is a recent construction that in effect has invented nations. This paper will illustrate that constructivism more accurately explains the rise of Kurdish nationalism and nation building, and then examine the role of the fledgling Kurdish diaspora in this process of Kurdish nation building.